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‘AS TO THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH’: THE NOVELS OF CHARLOTTE SMITH AND THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AND ROMANTIC EDUCATION DEBATES

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PhD
2019

**‘AS TO THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH’: THE NOVELS OF
CHARLOTTE SMITH AND THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AND
ROMANTIC EDUCATION DEBATES**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
the University of Northumbria at Newcastle for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Research Undertaken in the Faculty of Arts, Design & Social
Sciences

April 2019

Abstract

This work examines Charlotte Smith's novels through the lens of her engagement with the eighteenth-century education debates. Despite the burgeoning scholarship on Smith's works and her evident interest in education, as demonstrated in her didactic works for children, this is an area as yet unexplored in Smith scholarship. It highlights the significance of Smith's voice in the education debates as she provides a different perspective on education, upbringing, and their outcomes: the product of childhood, or the adult. Not only this, but, as a single mother of twelve children, whom she strived to raise, educate, and find places in the world for throughout her career, Smith offers a unique perspective on late-eighteenth-century education not offered by other, more prominent, female voices such as Maria Edgeworth, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, and Priscilla Wakefield. By examining Smith's views on education in her novels, it also offers another perspective on Smith's interest in education as it focuses on her novels rather than the didactic fiction she produced for children.

This work has found that Smith was concerned with the outcomes of both male and female education. She explores theories for both throughout her novels and examines in detail what she perceives to be the outcomes of popular educational theories. She is critical of certain educational philosophies and demonstrates herself to be a staunch advocate of others – though often with additional caveats. Smith's unique perspective on education and upbringing offers significant food for thought for both scholars of Smith's works and scholars of eighteenth-century education.

Contents

List of figures

Acknowledgements

Author's Declaration

Introduction: 'The slight skirmishings of a novel-writer'

Chapter One: 'The Wars of Idea(l)s in the 1790s: Print culture, Revolution and the dissemination of ideas in the eighteenth-century education debates

Chapter Two: 'The grounds of that elegant and useful knowledge': the store of knowledge concept and balanced reading

Chapter Three: "'I know of no book that can escape their censure'": Surveillance, Censorship and Education

Chapter Four: 'Dear objects of my tender care!': Paratext, intertextuality and the presence of other tales in Charlotte Smith's novels

Chapter Five: A Philosopher and a Gentleman: Masculinity, the Professional Man and the Problems of Parents

Chapter Six: Acting up and playing the part: Performance, Gender and the Expense of Education

Conclusion

Bibliography

List of Figures

Figure 1. 'The Female Philosopher, smelling out the Comet,'

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1538328&partId=1

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the time I was able to spend exploring and examining Charlotte Smith's works and her engagement with the eighteenth-century education debates. This work would have been impossible without the Emerging Eighteenth Century Studentship awarded to me by Northumbria University and the Long Eighteenth Century Research Group.

Thank you to my wonderful husband, Luke – without your support, patience, and endless cups of tea, this thesis would not exist.

Huge thanks to my supervisory team – Professor Clark Lawlor and Dr David Stewart – for your unfailing support and advice, and for helping me work out what I was trying to say.

Thank you to the many brilliant people who make up the English Department at Northumbria University for your encouragement, camaraderie, and conversation. I would particularly like to thank Dr Helen Williams, Professor Richard Terry, Professor Emeritus Allan Ingram, Dr Leigh Wetherall-Dickson, and Dr Ashleigh Blackwood.

Finally, thank you to everyone involved in the Chawton House Visiting Fellowships, especially Dr Gillian Dow and Sandy White, and Dr Brianna Robertson-Kirkland and Emma Brodey: the time I was able to spend in the library was invaluable; the time spent with colleagues – unforgettable.

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I also confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Any ethical clearance for the research presented in this thesis has been approved. Approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee on 10th May 2016.

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 81571 words.

Name:

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Introduction: ‘The slight skirmishings of a novel-writer’

During the past two decades, Smith scholarship has undergone a significant transformation. In October 2006, Jacqueline Labbe organised the first Smith conference, memorialising the bicentenary of Smith’s death, with such key speakers as Stuart Curran, editor of *The Poems of Charlotte Smith* (1993) and Chatto and Pickering’s *The Works of Charlotte Smith* (2005-7), and Judith Stanton, *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (2003). Ten years later, in October 2016, a second conference was organised by Labbe and Elizabeth Dolan. Again, Stuart Curran was present, as was Lorraine Fletcher, author of *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (1998). In her introduction to the second Smith conference, Labbe noted that the number of references relating to Charlotte Smith had increased exponentially since the bicentenary conference – there were now more than double the number of articles, books and book chapters with content on Smith than there were in 2006.

Despite this increased interest in Smith as a writer, however, there is still very little scholarship which addresses her engagement with the topic of education. This current work is an attempt to begin to address this gap in Smith scholarship. It focuses on Smith’s engagement with debates on education via her novels, rather than her works for children which are more explicitly didactic and were published later in her writing career, supported by the sales of her novels. I do, however, refer to these later texts as her novels and works for children are linked to each other through reviews and Smith’s own purposes in publishing the latter.

When first starting out on this research project, the focus was to elucidate Charlotte Smith’s thoughts on female education in the 1790s. As I explored her novels, however, I realised that it was not just the outcomes of female education she was concerned about but also those of male education. My research expanded to include Smith’s explorations of education for men and women. I should stress, too, that, while this work is interested in Smith’s thoughts on education,

it is not an examination of early or childhood education practices in the late eighteenth century. Smith's exploration of education is preoccupied with the men and women, the adults, that early education and upbringing produced, and also their continuing education via experience and life-long learning. The opinions and advice on education throughout the novels are directed at adults, educating them, while also exploring the numerous outcomes of different educational philosophies. It is likely for this reason that scholarship on Smith rarely engages with her interest in education, and why Smith and her novels are rarely mentioned in scholarship on eighteenth-century education. Her interest in the outcomes of early education and upbringing, combined with her desire to help her readers to self-improve, means that her novels are not an obvious source for the scholar of eighteenth-century education: she focuses on adults, rather than children – though she draws upon their early experiences on occasion to focus the reader's attention on the significance of the outcomes of their education and upbringing.

The first part of the title of this work, 'as to the education of youth,' is taken from Smith's fourth novel, *Desmond* (1792), and is stated in a debate by a 'young *abbé*' in defence of monks in his argument against the Revolution. Desmond's friend, a supporter of the Revolution, responds with his own argument, also using the phrase 'the education of youth.' For both men, the topic of the education of young people is significant and inextricably wrapped up in discussions and debates of the politics and culture of France. Education was a controversial topic in the eighteenth century, as it arguably still is today. The experiments and developments of this period, especially the Romantic era, had an impact on educational theory which can still be seen in current debates on education: the child as an individual, the impact of wealth and class, the value of language and oracy.

This work aims to examine in detail one individual's reactions to these various topics and discourses, and arguing that it is difficult to pinpoint a single overarching perspective on the correct conduct of education. Smith was just one figure in the debates on education, offering her

views from an unusual perspective: the impact on the adult, a ‘citizen’ already formed, rather than a child, a ‘blank slate,’ waiting to be written upon. Further to this, we should also take into consideration the unusual position of Smith herself: she was a single, working mother (something more readily associated with modern women than eighteenth-century women) who strove to raise, educate, and find places in the world for each of her many children (between nine and twelve, depending on which point in her writing career we focus on).¹

The decade in which Charlotte Smith began and ended her novel-writing career, producing ten novels, was one of turmoil: political upheaval; revolution; cultural and societal change; technological reforms. Culturally and socially, numerous voices and perspectives were being pushed forward via the burgeoning technology of the printing press; writers such as Hannah More were condemned by non-evangelical writers for their efforts in educating the poor and aiding social mobility; levels of literacy at all stations were rising.² The print boom, with its connections to novel-writing, circulating libraries, and the expansion of reading audiences, was widely discussed and debated, and often derided by conservative writers.³ The changes which took place in the 1790s would echo throughout the following century: cheaper and cheaper books as the costs of printing declined with the advancement of new technologies; the establishment of schools, child labour laws, and the 1870 Education Act; the Napoleonic wars.

¹ For further information on Smith’s life and career, see the biographies by Florence Hilbish *Charlotte Smith, poet and novelist (1749-1806)* (thesis, University of Washington, 1941) and Loraine Fletcher *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998)

² R. D. Altick notes that Hannah More was ‘condemned for her innocent attempts to instruct the poor.’ *The English Common Reader* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1967) pp.73

³ For discussion of responses to the education debates, see Alan Richardson *Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice, 1780-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994). For discussion on the debates around circulating libraries, see Jacqueline Pearson, *Women’s Reading, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999).

Debates which had begun to form in the 1780s developed dramatically throughout the 1790s, encouraged by the vast and drastic changes occurring in Europe. The French Revolution had a significant impact on British thinking, from politics to culture. Bound up in these all these social, cultural and political issues were what we now know as the education debates.

As Barnita Bagchi argues, education was inevitably tangled up in the ideals of class, culture, politics, economics, and, even, philosophy. It is no wonder, then, that the education debates were also caught up in the debates revolving around the printing press and the availability and accessibility of literature. Rousseau – one of Smith’s greatest influences on theories of education – wrote:

Reading is the curse of childhood, yet it is almost the only occupation you can find for children. (*Emile*, 1762)

Rousseau writes extensively in *Emile, or On Education* (1762) on the use, or rather non-use, of books in a child’s education. He would rather they learned from experience, through using their ‘feet, hands, and eyes.’ He argues that,

To substitute books for them does not teach us to reason, it teaches us to use the reason of others rather than our own; it teaches us to believe much and know little. (1762, 107)

Despite this evident distrust of books by one of the most influential philosophers on education in the period, the numbers of books for children were booming by the end of the eighteenth century. Larger numbers of these books were available than ever before, matching the printing boom for adult books. As Andrew O’Malley notes,

A market for a variety of literatures specifically designed to cater to the pedagogical needs of children emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century out of a complex nexus of historical, economic, social and cultural factors unique to this period in England. (1, 2003)

Both O’Malley and Bagchi wrote in 2003 and 2004 respectively of the complexity of the cultural and historical period which produced the printing boom, leading to the mass production of larger number texts than had ever been available previously for both children and adults. These

texts, by the 1790s leading into the nineteenth century, were also more readily available and affordable than ever before. While O'Malley focuses on the development of 'the modern child' and Bagchi focuses on the writings of female authors and their respective educations and upbringings, they both draw the same conclusions about the effects of the socio-political turmoil on education at the end of the eighteenth century.

Writing between 1788 and 1799, Smith's novels offer the modern reader a detailed insight into the changes and debates of the period. Her novel *Desmond* (1792) has been examined in recent decades as a text which is part-novel, part-journalism. It was her only epistolary novel, through which she delivers a narrative of forbidden love and obsession paralleled with her interpretation of the events of the French Revolution as they unfolded around her.⁴ As has been noted by other scholars of her novels, such as M. O. Grenby and Jon Mee, Smith's novels show a narrative of development over time in terms of her political opinions and social commentary, as influenced by the events of the French Revolution, British popular opinion, and the marketability of her novels. After *Desmond*, Smith's overt support for the Revolution diminishes until she finally turns to North America, rather than Europe, as the safe haven for her final characters, Delmont, Medora, and Medora's parents, in *The Young Philosopher* (1798). Grenby argues that her shifts in political ideals over the decade is influenced by how she must market her novels to make a living – by the middle of the decade there was far less support for the revolutionary cause, therefore the larger audience Smith catered to would have expected a more conservative perspective of current events. Others have argued that Smith herself, like many of

⁴ In a letter to her publisher, Thomas Cadell Snr, Smith mentions her visit to Paris with a friend in 1791/2, so we know she spent time in France near the beginning of the revolutionary period.

the initial radical and liberal supporters of the revolution, had become disillusioned by the violent turn which the revolution took during The Terror in the middle of the decade.⁵

The French Revolution also exacerbated many fears surrounding the print trade. Around a century after the publication of Smith's novels, Hardy's Tess laments having not had the opportunity to learn from novels – she associates them with protection against the 'tricks' of men. While the panic surrounding the effects of novel-reading may have somewhat lapsed by Hardy's time, the eighteenth century was the peak of the anxiety. Ana Vogorinčić describes the phenomenon surrounding novel reading in the eighteenth century as a 'moral media panic' (2008, 103). Numerous scholars, such as Jacqueline Pearson, have discussed at length the dangers attributed to women's novel-reading.⁶ The 'panic' surrounding reading in the period, however, extends beyond that particular gender and genre boundary. In an article entitled 'Reading: a health warning,' Roy Porter describes the number of ailments believed to be caused by reading, from John Milton's complaint that reading has ruined his eye-sight to the cause of a young woman incarcerated in a madhouse for the effects novel-reading has had upon her mind.⁷ Given that reading could be seen to have ill-effects both mentally and physically, it is no surprise that moralists and educationalists throughout the period were concerned about the reading being

⁵ For further information on Smith and the French Revolution, see Paula Feldman and Theresa Kelly, (eds.), *Romantic Women Writers: Voices and Counter-Voices* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995); Amy Garnai, *Revolutionary Imaginings in the 1790s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); M. O. Grenby, 'Writing Revolution: British Literature and the French Revolution Crisis, a Review of Recent Scholarship' *Literature Compass* 3/6 (2006); Jillian Heydt-Stevenson, 'Northanger Abbey, Desmond, and History', *Wordsworth Circle* (2013) 140; Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993); Jon Mee, *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community 1762 to 1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁶ Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999)

⁷ Roy Porter, 'Reading: a Health Warning', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds.) *Medicine, Morality, and the Book Trade* (Folkestone: St Paul's Bibliographies, ltd., 1998)

undertaken by their pupils and life-long learners of all stations, ages, and genders. In William St Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (2004), he notes the fears and supposed benefits of reading discussed by readers of the period in which Smith is writing. There was an upheaval in reading culture toward the end of the eighteenth century:

the number of men, women, and children who read printed texts began to grow rapidly. The more highly educated members of society read more books, journals, and newspapers than ever before and on a wider range of subjects. Low-income groups, whose reading had long been the English-language Bible, short chapbooks, and ballads, now had access to other print including book-length literary texts. When, at around the same time, school education began to make the reading of extracts of English literature a central part of the curriculum, whole communities were able, by means of reading, to make new imaginative escapes from their immediate here and now. The rapid expansion in reading occurred across all strata of society, whether categorized by income, by occupation, by educational attainment, by geographical location, by age, or by gender.⁸

As he also notes, 'it was [...] a time when reading and its likely consequences caused much worry to those in power.'⁹ He continues:

There were more worries about book-length-texts than by newspapers [...] The reading of books of ancient history, geography, science, and technology would, many considered, produce benefits, as would the reading of the English-language Bible and associated religious works. They disliked the philosophical and historical works of the European Enlightenment which questioned or undermined accepted beliefs [...] Feared too was the reading of plays, poetry, and novels, and other 'romance' which offered readers means of escape into attractive alternative worlds. When literature elevated the feelings of readers, many believed, it could help to sustain religious and moral values. But when it conferred an apparent legitimacy on ideas, emotions, and types of behaviour which readers had not previously seen articulated and fixed in print, it became dangerously unsettling.¹⁰

This is the cultural context of Smith's novels: fears rife over the reading of imaginative fiction or new European philosophy; a need to control and police print (both in terms of self-policing and government and public censorship). The debate surrounding reading and genres was inextricably

⁸ William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009) 10-11

⁹ Ibid., 11

¹⁰ Ibid., 12-13

linked with education in the period: a constant questioning about what should be, or can be safely, read and by whom.

By drawing on Smith's biography, we can also see the influences her life has on her novels, the most obvious being that she is an 'Author by profession'¹¹ – she wrote novels as a way of earning money for herself and her many children, being the sole earner of the household for a long period as a single mother.¹² Her surviving letters demonstrate her concerns and fears for her children's welfare. As a number of Smith scholars, such as Diane Boyd, have pointed out, this image or representation of herself as a mother without male support (no – reliable – husband, father or brother to provide for her or her family) vulnerable and striving to do her best in the circumstances, is also part of her 'marketing' or 'branding strategy' and thus colours the perception of her works. Even later in her career as she becomes more politically outspoken, this representation remains.¹³ This image works to her advantage in writing children's texts and domestic or sentimental novels. As Alan Richardson notes in his book, *Literature, Education and Romanticism* (1994), female authors by reason of their gender had both a privileged yet restricted role in writing publicly about what was considered their own sphere.¹⁴ Smith's novels demonstrate her concern with the domestic sphere, especially in terms of the effects of upbringing and education on her younger characters – including what they read and how they

¹¹ Charlotte Smith, *Desmond* (1794) 46

¹² For further exploration of the phrase 'Author by profession' and the idea of the author as a professional in the eighteenth century, see Dustin Griffin, 'The rise of the professional author?' in Michael F. Suarez, S. J. and Michael L. Turner, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain* Vol V (132-145) (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009)

¹³ For further examination of Smith's public image as a writer, see Diane E. Boyd, "'Professing Drudge': Charlotte Smith's negotiation of a Mother-writer Author function' *South Atlantic Review* 66 (2001) 145-66 and Sarah M. Zimmerman, 'Charlotte Smith's Letters and the Practice of Self-Representation' *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 53, (1991) 50-77

¹⁴ Alan Richardson *Literature, Education and Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994) 167

read, even how they apply their reading to their own lives, using parallels and examples to actively teach her readers to consider and reflect on their own reading habits.

Smith is rarely discussed in terms of her thoughts on education, especially the didactic elements of her novels. The works which are currently published about Smith, analysing her writing and discussing her life, tend to examine her as a reviver of the sonnet, or exploring whether she should be considered as a reformist or radical novelist, or as a mother who used her status as such to sell her works in order to support her family. She is rarely discussed as a novelist who sought to educate her readers and her novels are rarely considered as didactic, perhaps due to the focus on her political leanings and the desire to tease out which side of the political fence she sat on: Jacobin or anti-Jacobin? Did she fully support the Revolution or do her novels demonstrate a desire to recant her initial support for the revolutionaries over time? Studies of Smith's novels are inevitably coloured by her sympathies for the revolutionaries and her overt political opinions.¹⁵ Discussing Smith's political affiliations and opinions on the wars and revolutions during her life-time is unavoidable but only recently have scholars looking at Smith's works been able to step back from examining the politics of Smith's novels and began to look at the other themes and debates which Smith engages with: education, masculinity,

¹⁵ For examinations of Smith's position in the revolutionary debates see: Adriana Craciun, *British Women Writers and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993); Anne Mellor, *Mothers of the Nation: Women's Political Writing in England, 1780-1830* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2000); Angela Keane, *Revolutionary Women Writers: Charlotte Smith and Helen Maria Williams* (Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers, 2012). Smith is often discussed as a 'woman writer of the revolution' because she responds to the events in a way that cannot be ignored as they stand at the forefront of her novels and often structure the events within them, she also responds to the texts being published at the time such as Burke's *Reflections* and Paine's *Rights of Man*, and Wollstonecraft's *Vindications*. Smith is, inevitably, a prominent voice in the debates surrounding the Revolution.

parenting and motherhood.¹⁶ Inevitably, these are tied together with each other, as well as the politics and events of the period, but they are also debates in their own right which Smith engaged with alongside current affairs and politics.

Numerous studies of 'Jacobin' novels name Smith as a 'Jacobin' or radical novelist, however, they rarely actively engage with work beyond that because she is an anomaly. Her transient life means that she cannot be easily included in the concept of the Wollstonecraft-Godwin circle based in the London literary scene; her dependence on her novel for money means that her politics are sometimes obscured or that definitive statements about her political thoughts cannot be made as she was influenced by popular public opinion in order to produce saleable work. M. O. Grenby discusses the difficulties of placing Smith within the revolutionary debate in his *The Anti-Jacobin Novel* (2009) and his introductions to the Pickering and Chatto editions of *The Wanderings of Warwick* and *The Banished Man*. Smith is difficult to pin down in many ways because she is an outlier or anomaly, she does not fit with the majority of novelists within the categories we as scholars choose to focus on because her extraordinary life does not fit into any neat categories of eighteenth-century relationships – there were very few female novelists on the run with their nine children, hiding from their husband and creditors.

It is perhaps due to this unique perspective which Smith offers scholars that, in the past decade, Smith has begun to appear more frequently in analyses of female writers of the 1790s. For example, Adriana Craciun draws on Smith as an example in *British Women Writers and the*

¹⁶ See examinations of Smith's novels via the themes, such as Mark K. Fulk, 'Mismanaging Mothers: Matriarchy and Romantic Education in Charlotte Smith's *The Young Philosopher*', *Women's Writing*, 16, (2009), 94-108; Angela Keane, *Revolutionary Women Writers: Charlotte Smith and Helen Maria Williams* (Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers, 2012); Megan Woodworth, *Eighteenth-century Women Writers and the Gentleman's Liberation Movement: Independence, War, Masculinity, and the Novel, 1778-1818* (London: Routledge, 2011)

French Revolution (2005) and Megan Woodworth dedicates significant time to Smith's exploration of masculinity in *Eighteenth-century Women Writers and the Gentleman's Liberation Movement* (2011).

This work builds on recent works such as these, using them as a foundation upon which to examine such ideas Smith had about masculinity and politics in relation to her arguments and concerns about upbringing and education which, as mentioned earlier, is inextricably tied to such things as gender and politics, among others.

Due to the education debates' interwovenness with such a multitude of topics and the necessarily limited scope of this project, this work has had to focus more narrowly on a select few interlinked topics within Smith's novels and eighteenth-century education: the impact of the events and culture of the 1790s; reading, censorship and intertextuality; masculinity and gender performance, and the links to wealth and social status. As stated earlier in this introduction, this work aims to begin to open up scholarly discussion about Smith's novels and the education debates, but cannot hope to cover such a vast and complex subject in its entirety. However, by focusing on Smith's fiction for adults, this thesis offers the first full consideration of a particular aspect of Smith's intervention in these wider debates. Smith's novels – by virtue of being novels – offer formal and imaginative resources unavailable to other forms. Fiction and the novel form allows her to make unique comments on particular aspects of the period's debates. The ability to explore narrative structure, conversation between characters, the use and play with novelistic conventions of her era, and the cultural status and expected readership of the novel, offered Smith a unique virtual space in which to explore the concepts she was interested in. For example, one such concept explored is the consequences of different theories of education and upbringing on young people and the resulting adults.

Chapter One provides context and an exploration of the impact of the tumultuous events and changes of the 1790s, and late-eighteenth-century more generally, as well as situating Smith within the context of the education debates themselves. By examining Smith's place in the 'war of ideas' during the 1790s, this chapter demonstrates the ways in which the education

debates were connected to numerous other debates raging throughout the 1790s, instigated by the French Revolution. This chapter will look at how Smith and other writers of the period used novels and print culture to disseminate ideas – and how some writers used print culture to examine and condemn the proliferation of printed materials, especially novels, including Smith's own. It also focuses on the relationship between Smith's politics and philosophy and her views on education. It also begins to draw upon the issue of gender, examining in detail Smith's views on women's involvement in the public sphere and politics.

In Chapters Two and Three, I examine Smith's engagement with issues surrounding reading and compare her thoughts and arguments to those of other writers on education. The chapter will follow a structure that moves from close-reading of the novels' characters to a broader view of the novels themselves as educational tools. First, it will examine the characters as readers, then the readers of the novels themselves. In order to do so, I will draw on both the content of the novels and responses to them by readers and reviewers, such as those found in periodicals, diaries, letters, and marginalia. To identify what Smith does differently to other educational writers in the period, I will also draw on the works of other educationalists and novelists, some of whom allude to Smith's works in their own, such as Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818) – this will also highlight Smith's influences and demonstrate what educational theories she engaged in and subscribed to herself in terms of reading. This will allow me to place her within the tradition of novelists using their works for education and also novelists who use their works to engage in the discussion of novels themselves.

Widening the focus from reading within the novels and the audience of the novels, Chapter Four examines Smith's use of or reference to other texts, such as her own poetry or the texts and writers which influenced her thoughts on education and to which she was responding in her writing. For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's educational philosophy and theories greatly influenced Smith, but she rejected his concerns about reading and the availability of books for children and young people. Outside of the narrative of the novels, there are numerous insights

into Smith's motivations and beliefs surrounding education and upbringing – this chapter begins to examine some of these in detail.

Chapter Five examines the links between masculinity and education according to Smith – keeping in mind her own experience of raising sons, for whom she was concerned as they had to leave the country to find work, having no money or connections to set them up at home. In particular, this chapter examines the role of parents in the raising and educating of sons – there were numerous concerns surrounding the involvement of mothers, which Smith refutes. She even emphatically argues for the involvement of mothers for the emotional and social education of sons. This chapter also includes a section on masculine women, in particular looking at Ellen Newenden, and the potential issues inherent in absent mothers for female education and upbringing.

The final chapter focuses on gender and performance, and how education impacts the ideals surrounding these. Continuing on from Chapter Five, there is some analysis of masculinity but it looks at gender more generally, specifically how young ladies and men are brought up to perform in society in certain ways, to adhere to social ideals of gender. Smith, in some ways, disagrees with these social ideals and addresses those areas within her novels. Attached to these ideals of gender, this chapter also examines Smith's thoughts on 'expensive' educations and tutors in detail. According to Smith, money and tutors could have a negative influence on one's education and could lead to the performance of gender or expectations laid upon young adults. Further to this is another element of 'expense' in education: the consequences of education. For example, the character of Miss Hollybourn left without a suitor equal to her intellect and knowledge; Lady Newenden's degeneration and demise and the subsequent death of her guilt-ridden father; and the parallels of George and Adolphus Delmont, two brothers whose very different educations lead to the production of very different men.

This work cannot cover the full range of Smith's interaction with the late-eighteenth-century and Romantic education debates, thus the conclusion summarises this undertaking and builds upon it by suggesting further potential areas for research and identifying questions raised by the examination of Smith's novels in relation to the education debates.

Chapter One: 'The Wars of Idea(l)s in the 1790s: Print culture, Revolution and the dissemination of ideas in the eighteenth-century education debates

“Education” [...] was a site of irreducible tension [in the eighteenth century] – tension between a view of education as, on the one hand, a form of social control, a way of guiding and indoctrinating the pupil into gendered social norms and acceptable models of femininity, and, on the other, a more outward-looking model of education with the stress on opening up opportunities and freedom, impelling the pupil toward a more open-ended model of development. (Barnita Bagchi, 2004, 6)

‘A revolution posits the notion not only that individuals are malleable, but also that the whole body politic may be changed.’ (163, 2002)

Julia V. Douthwaite, *The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster*

In this chapter I contextualise Smith’s contribution to the various debates on education during the period and demonstrate her position in comparison to other writers and theorists, providing a foundation for the later chapters. I will explore the links between education and print culture and novels during the decade in which Smith produced her own ten novels, as well as her didactic children’s works. In Barnita Bagchi’s *Pliable Pupils and Sufficient Self Directors* (2004), she discusses ‘polite female education [as] a web in which ideological, curricular, pedagogical and personal issues were enmeshed’ (2004, 6) during the eighteenth century. I argue that this applies to both male and female education the period. Polite education of young middle- and upper-class girls and boys, especially as they entered their adolescent years, was fraught with politics and social ideals, as well as economics and gender. Throughout her novels, Smith explores the debates and ideologies surrounding education and their links with wealth, gender, politics and social ideals. The links between education and the other debates ongoing throughout the 1700s are particularly relevant to the decade in which Smith was writing, one of political upheaval which gave a sense of urgency to the debates which had developed, pushed forward by the advent of the French Revolution. As Megan Woodworth notes in *Eighteenth-Century Women Writers and the Gentleman’s Liberation Movement* (2011):

There are many things to be considered in a study of the French Revolution and the wars it gave rise to: the intellectual upheaval produced by the French Revolution; the shock waves that reverberated throughout the English republic of letters; the political manoeuvrings of the Pitt administration; and whether or not the revolutionary wars were in fact driven by ideology. (78)

Due to the impact of the political turmoil which surrounded the French Revolution on debates during the 1790s, the Revolution is a significant point of discussion in this chapter, as it was in Smith's works from 1790 onwards. For the purposes of this work, however, it is also significant due to the reform of French education by the National Assembly. As Julia V. Douthwaite notes,

Many of the deputies to the Assembly were learned men, lawyers and professionals who built their plans for reform on a foundation of progressive principles that sound very familiar to readers of Genlis, Locke, and Rousseau. The idea of progress was one of the most common metaphors in eighteenth-century thought, as was the assumption that it (that is, mankind's progressive improvement in morality, philosophy, technological expertise, or scientific knowledge) would unfold naturally under the proper circumstances. (161, 2002)

Education was inevitably bound-up in these various debates – French and English – just as Smith's own thoughts and writing interacted with them.

I do not intend to attempt to discuss and summarise each and every writer who wrote on the topic of education during the period. Not only do I not have the space to dedicate to such a large topic, but also many literary scholars and historians, such as Alan Richardson and Hugh Cunningham, have already discussed and examined the subject of the education debates in their own works.¹⁷ I have selected a small number of writers who made a significant contribution to the debates, and whose works serve as useful examples of what has been labelled as conservative, liberal or radical (by the writers themselves, by their contemporaries, or by 20th- and 21st-century scholars), and who also provide points of contrast or comparison with Smith's own ideas about

¹⁷ See, for example, Hugh Cunningham, *Children and childhood in Western Society Since 1500* (London and New York: Longman, 1995) and Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice, 1780-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994)

educational philosophy and methodology. The writers I have selected are Maria Edgeworth, Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Mary Wollstonecraft, Sarah Trimmer, Hannah More and Jane West. I draw on other writers throughout this chapter and the thesis as a whole, but this small selection has been chosen to demonstrate the traits and characteristics of works considered radical, liberal, and conservative.

During the eighteenth century, there were several platforms for the dissemination of ideas, whether philosophical, political, or theoretical. Subjects as far-ranging as radical politics and agricultural methods were being discussed and debated through the mediums of poetry, essays, pamphlets, even plays. Novels were a popular format for the discussion and dissemination of ideas. At the beginning of Smith's novel-writing career in the late 1780s, liberal-thinking on these topics was being explored through novel-writing. It was later spurred on by the French Revolution which, as Jon Mee argues, 'profoundly shaped the English novel in the 1790s' (199, 2015) Jon Mee discusses the idea of 'the novel wars of 1790-1804,' the period during which Smith produced many of her novels, and he argues that

the novel in this decade did find itself shaped by the "war of ideas" (Butler, 1975), but – like the pamphlet war itself – it was neither conducted as a straightforward exchange of fire between two distinct ideological camps [Jacobins and Anti-Jacobins], nor was it untouched by developments in the novel as a form. Questions of literary medium and political perspective were not neutral in relation to each other. (199)

Rather than a spectrum of ideas, on education ranging from radical to conservative, in which we can situate and label theorists and novelists, we are presented with several multi-faceted debates involving economics, gender, politics, social values, class and station, and a whole host of different topics and perspectives which impacted on the topic of education as a whole. While we cannot label a writer wholly conservative or wholly radical in their educational ideals and theories, as it may change depending on the area of education, these terms are however useful for defining differences between writers in terms of their politics, religious and social ideals, which all impact on educational ideals and aims. In this chapter, I examine and explore Smith's situation in relation

to the other writer's and theorists of the day, demonstrating the complexity of educational debate in the period and developing the context for the subject-specific chapters. Education was part of the 'war of ideas,' and indeed the 'novel wars.'¹⁸

Several writers, including Smith, debated the topic of education through their novels. Education, wrapped up as it was in politics, was a focal point of the debates during the Revolution. Smith, like William Godwin, and other politically radical and liberal writers, saw the potential of the novel form as a platform for the discussion of larger topics. As Jon Mee notes, 'In Godwin's eyes, the novel as "romance" was uniquely adapted to communicating philosophical issues in an accessible and persuasive form.' (199, 2015) Several of those we might term 'Jacobin' novelists used the novel as a platform for their ideas, just as poets such as John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester, had used their poetry in the late-seventeenth and early –eighteenth centuries.¹⁹ Lois Whitney argues in her introduction to *Primitivism and Progress* that popular forms such as novels and poetry were used to disseminate ideas from the thinkers and philosophers to the readers of the period, and that

It is only by a study of all these vehicles of popularization that it is possible to arrive at an adequate understanding of the actual modification of thought in its transmission from philosopher to layman. Society at large did not read Berkeley or Hume, Hartley or Helvétius, but society at large did attend the theatre, subscribe to the magazines, buy pamphlets, and read novels – and even poetry it seems, at least in rather larger amounts than at present. It is to this literature therefore that I have looked for the form in which the thoughts of the times became a social force. (5, 1934)

¹⁸ Jon Mee 'The Novel Wars of 1790-1804' *The Oxford History of the Novel* Vol. II (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015) 199-215

¹⁹ Though we must keep in mind that, as Jon Mee argues, 'Jacobin' can be a contentious term as the 1790s 'war of ideas' was not necessarily polemic – not all radical writers had the same opinions as each other, some may have agreed on points with more conservative writers.

Throughout the eighteenth century, debates and discussions were increasingly conducted via the press. Not through didactic or scientific texts, or the voluminous works of philosophers but via more accessible (easier to read, or watch or listen to, or cheaper to purchase) texts such as novels, plays, and periodicals. Many periodicals even published extracts or discussions on non-fiction texts, offering readers access without the expenditure, to a selected, possibly edited, version of a chapter or more. These were often texts related to reading – the purpose of many literary periodicals was to aid or guide the reader in their pursuit of literature, after all, so it served a purpose to offer extracts from texts which perhaps supported the views of the periodical's writers and editors. For example, one particular chapter, 'On the Literary Education of Women,' from Vicesimus Knox's *Liberal Education* (1788) was offered to readers of *The Scots Magazine* (44, 340-2, 1782). It was also reviewed in *The Edinburgh Magazine*, *The Critical Review*, *The London Magazine*, *The Monthly Review*, and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, alongside several more. In fact, it was deemed worthy of two reviews, several months or years apart, in each of *The Edinburgh Magazine* and *The Critical Review*, one on the initial publication and a second after the publication of new editions.

What this 'borrowing' from texts by periodicals demonstrates is the way in which the debates on education were conducted: information and advice were published, circulated, discussed (or argued with), and republished. The debates, though textual in nature, were no doubt discussed verbally by readers – there seems to be an expectation that people would read and engage in the debate, continuing the dialogue beyond the texts, either by a discussion with others or via a new text, or even the republication of a text in a new format. In other words, the texts were part of a widespread, growing and developing dialogue. As Clifford Siskin notes that texts in the period were written with the idea of 'conversation' in mind. He argues that

In the eighteenth century that negotiation [the contact between the reader and the author via the text] was conducted in terms of the distinction between public and private and the notion of conversation. (1998, 163)

Before the text, the reader required an ‘Author’ as a ‘point of connection to a text’ (163), the text functioning as a speech act. The representation of the ‘Author’ of a text – whether real, fictional, or somewhere in-between – was, Siskin argues, ‘a part of the effort of every genre to close the communicative distance of print.’ (166) He states,

Conversation became a crucial term in the eighteenth century for describing not just the private individual exchanges, not the public ones generated out of their multiplicity, but the flow *across* those newly reconstituted fields. (164)

This ‘notion of conversation’ being something that can be perceived as both verbal and textual, public and private, is important to our understanding of the eighteenth-century education debates, which were conducted via these concepts of ‘conversation’. As Siskin notes in the quotation above, ‘conversation’ was an important term in the eighteenth century. *The Edinburgh Magazine* dedicated an entire issue to the concept of ‘familiar conversation’ in 1797, and it was used as a didactic technique in texts for children, and even sometimes in works for adults. It also described the ‘dialogues’ that occurred between texts, as well as verbally between people. The Dissenting academies used it as a tool for learning.

The concept of conversation was important for Smith in terms of education, we can see this not only in her works for children, where she used the popular technique of dialogue between child and adult, but also in her novels for adults. It was a significant theme in her second novel, *Ethelinde*, for example. In the first chapter, in which the reader is introduced to the important characters (Ethelinde, Sir Edward Newenden, Ethelinde’s father, and Lady Newenden), they are also introduced to important themes, and a contrast between Ethelinde and Lady Newenden – one of those themes is ‘conversation,’ and the contrast which is made is the manner in which the two ladies conduct themselves in conversation with Sir Edward. ‘During the journey,’ between London and Grasmere Abbey, Sir Edward’s country seat, Smith writes,

[Ethelinde and Sir Edward] read together in Italian and Spanish; in the first of which, Ethelinde was a tolerable proficient, and in the latter he had been her instructor. Lady

Newenden, on whose education great sums had been lavished, had learned everything, but could do nothing. (I, 15)

Throughout the novel, Lady Newenden's inability to communicate with her husband, and subsequent (implied) adultery, then her death, alongside Sir Edward's infatuation with Ethelinde, demonstrate the need for a husband and wife to be of equal intellectual ability – able to converse and enjoy each other's company. Lady Newenden's behaviour and inability to converse in an educated manner with her husband, especially when contrasted with Ethelinde's ability to do so, signals to the reader Smith's opinion that the ability to converse intellectually with others, especially one's spouse, is of paramount importance if one desires happiness in life and relationships.

In this way, Smith agrees with Mary Wollstonecraft and Anna Barbauld. Mirroring Smith's argument in *Ethelinde*, Wollstonecraft in *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) argues that,

Marriage may become more sacred [when] your young men choose wives from motives of affection, and your maidens allow love to root out vanity. [...] the mother will not neglect her children to practice the arts of coquetry, when sense and modesty secure her the friendship of her husband. (x)

Similarly, though Barbauld speaks from a different political 'camp' to Wollstonecraft in many ways, Barbauld believes that men and women should be educated to be companions to each other – marriage should be a partnership. In *Evenings at Home*, Barbauld and John Aikin, her brother, present their readers (i.e. families, children and their parents) with the view of husband and wife as a partnership. As Michelle Levy notes, 'we are presented with a domestic space that is neither privatised nor feminized, but rather is populated by men, women and children.' (2006, 127) 'These people are all given space to contribute to the education of the family. William McCarthy notes that, in a letter to Elizabeth Montagu, Barbauld (then Aikin) 'demand[s] equal participation in their marriage by her future husband.' (2001, 358) The household, Barbauld argues, requires a partnership to thrive. This message is presented in both the framing narrative (the parents collecting stories for the children's education) and the stories themselves. Ley summarises the message of *Evenings At Home* thus:

Both girls and boys must be taught to value the domestic affections, and to see them as essential to both their own happiness and the welfare of the nation as a whole. (127)

For Barbauld and Aikin, the ability to communicate with one another and work together is of paramount importance, as Smith demonstrates in *Ethelinde* and as Wollstonecraft argues in her defence of female education.

Smith also emphasises that the ability to contribute to enlightened conversation with the opposite sex can make a woman more attractive or beautiful to a man; as well as the need for young men to hone their own conversational skills. The idea that intelligence and understanding could make a woman more attractive to a man was the opposite of what many writers on female education argued in the period. Ethelinde's ability to engage with Sir Edward is noticed not only by Sir Edward himself on the journey, but also his ward, Davenant. Smith writes,

The rapid and vacant mind of Davenant, even open to momentary impressions, was amused with [Miss Newenden's] singularity, and he fancied himself instructed by her skill in horse flesh. To keep up a conversation with Sir Edward, demanded more knowledge than he had acquired, and more attention than he was willing to exert. From him therefore he generally tried to escape. Yet in despite of that imbecility of mind, which ever required that he should be told what he was to like or dislike, he was often distracted by the animated beauty of Ethelinde; and as she conversed with Sir Edward by the table where he was at cards with Miss Newenden, he insensibly neglected his game while he gazed at her. (I, 19-20)

Conversation is not only an important educational technique for Smith, Barbauld, and Wollstonecraft, but also an important ability, as educated conversation can make one a better companion, and lead to a happier marriage and partnership, which is then carried over into the next generation.

Conversation, in its many forms, was a useful technique for the dissemination of ideas during the late eighteenth-century education debates, both within and outside of the texts produced. One could argue, it was the most useful – given the all-encompassing definition provided for it in the period. The eighteenth-century debates were one huge conversation, reaching

across a multitude of platforms, both textual and verbal – used as both a teaching technique and method of dissemination. Smith’s novels, alongside many other writers’ fictional, non-fictional, and even poetical, texts, were a part of this, contributing to a vast web, or in Jon Mee’s words ‘war,’ of ideas within the debates.

For the remainder of this chapter, I will demonstrate where she is situated within this web in terms of the other novelists, pedagogues, and philosophers who engaged in the education debates via their works. What I am doing throughout this work is examining the writings and reactions of a single individual to various issues and topics within the eighteenth-century education debates, though there were many others involved in similar work. I argue that it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to argue for a single, overarching – i.e. easily labelled – perspective on education, due to the complexity of the issues involved. Education was linked to politics, economics, wealth, social values and status, as it arguably remains today. To begin to identify where Smith situates herself within this web of ideas, and to demonstrate how difficult it is to label a writer on a ‘spectrum’ as simply ‘radical,’ ‘liberal’ or ‘conservative,’ I draw on a variety of different writers on education from the period. By doing so, it will become clear that, just as there are multiple methods of dissemination, there are also many overlapping and opposing views, creating the ‘web’ of ideas. Those we might consider and label as ‘conservative,’ ‘liberal,’ or ‘radical’ in their points of view complicate our simplified analyses of them by agreeing with points from a different ‘camp.’ By exploring this ‘web of ideas,’ or these ‘wars’ of ideas, in this chapter, I will then be able to demonstrate Smith’s own complex views on education by comparing and contrasting her work with those against whom she reacts or is influenced by.

While Smith, and a number of her contemporaries, used novels to disseminate their ideas on education, as noted earlier, there were some who did not agree with the idea of disseminating philosophical or didactic thought through novels and thought the ability to utilise the genre in this manner was a reason to label novels as potentially dangerous. Many scholars have noted and

examined the backlash against novel-reading and novel-writing during the period. For example, Jacqueline Pearson specifically focuses on the effects novels were feared to have had on female readers in *Women's Reading in Britain, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (2008), and Roy Porter examined the phenomenon from a medical-historical perspective in many of his works.²⁰

Clifford Siskin, however, complicates arguments surrounding eighteenth-century fears of reading and the proliferation of writing by asking us to view it from yet another useful perspective.

In the introduction to *The Work of Writing* (1998), he states:

A recurring topic of concern was the probable effects of [writing]. As with the speculations [...] regarding the influence today's technologies on attention spans, family values, and even scholarly productivity, so, back then, the new technology gazed self-reflexively on its own unknown potential: a large part of what people wrote and how they wrote had to do with often discomfiting expectations regarding the productive power of writing. Thus to classify the innumerable warnings against young women reading novels as simply a manifestation of Augustan conservatism is to miss the historical point – the particular attitude toward change was secondary to a privacy issue: writing's capacity to produce that change. (3)

The idea that writing (and reading) could effect change can be seen as a point of fear and concern, as many scholars have noted – as in the fears Pearson examines in her work surrounding the effects of reading on the female mind, for example. But one can also argue, as Siskin has, that this ability to effect change was simultaneously viewed in a positive light by those that chose to utilise their ability to write and publish, which can be seen in how much of the discussion and argument about education, among other topics, was conducted via print. The idea that one could produce a change in a person's mind via reading and writing is at the heart of the hopes and fears surrounding the education debates. The ability to write and publish could be seen as either positive or negative, depending on the perspective of the person engaging with a particular text. As Siskin states,

²⁰ See, for example, Roy Porter, *Madness: A Brief History* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002) and *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003)

For those experiencing these specific historical changes – both the initial proliferation and their innovatively transformative roles within it – a central concern became who and what else would be changed and in what ways. (5)

On the one hand, a writer could disseminate valuable and useful knowledge to a large audience; on the other, he could cause irreparable damage on a large scale because of the same ability to reproduce and disperse a text in a way one cannot do with purely verbal communication.²¹ It is in this way that the education debates grew, proliferated and dispersed, reacting against or influenced by the growing number of voices able to contribute to the ever-expanding discourse.

The proliferation of voices and perspectives in the eighteenth century lead to fears and the desire to control the production and publication of texts. Siskin contrasts two significant periodicals, each affected in some way by governmental control:

Joseph Johnson's *Analytical Review* was one of the most important forums for liberals and dissenters during the 1790s until Johnson's arrest for sedition in 1798. *The British Critic*, on the other hand, was initially funded by Secret Service money from William Pitt. (169-70)

This was the atmosphere in which contributors to the eighteenth-century education debates, were subject to in the late 1780s and increasingly so throughout the 1790s, with the advent of the French Revolution. While the threat of the law instilled fear among some involved in the book trade, many, like Smith, continued to make their voices heard.²² As E. J. Clery argues,

In the 1780s and 1790s, [...] a number of women writers[...] irregular private lives attracted virulent negative publicity [...] Mary Robinson, Mary Hays, Helen Maria Williams, Charlotte Smith, and Mary Wollstonecraft. Literary scholars have tended to agree that these personal attacks damaged their reputations and limited the effect of their works. But it may be worth considering a different view: that this group of writers

²¹ Clifford Siskin, *The Work of Writing* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1998) 164

²² Smith's publisher, Thomas Cadell Sr., for example, was worried about the impact of publishing *Desmond* might have on himself and his business, causing him to reject it through fears of being accused of sedition 'on account of its revolutionary sentiments.' Judith Stanton, *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2003),

bravely allowed the destruction of their own moral standing in order to shed the burden of iconic status and gain intellectual independence. Wollstonecraft wrote in *A Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution* in 1794, “What is often termed virtue, is only want of courage to throw off prejudice.” She and a number of sister writers seem to have woken up to the realisation that when they exercised their understanding freely they had nothing to lose but their respectability and that, in important ways, the loss might be a gain. (2016, 45-6)

These ‘radical’ women writers involved themselves in writing on numerous topics, including education, often, but not always, aligning themselves with liberal and experimental educational philosophies and pedagogical methods.

Adriana Craciun writes in her book on cosmopolitanism and British women writers in the revolutionary period that ‘for [Laetitia Matilda] Hawkins and other counterrevolutionary writers, this revolutionary intercourse of ideas opened up a particularly dangerous new social role for English women, that of the “Female Philosopher” or female politician.’ (2005, 9-10) Jane West, in her *Letters to a Young Lady*, describes these radical British women as ‘Petticoat philosophist[s]’ (I, 32, 1806) and Richard Polwhele describes them as the ‘unsex’d female’ or ‘unsex’d woman.’ (1798) These women, as listed in Polwhele’s poem, are Charlotte Smith and her fellow radical and liberal women writers, from Mary Wollstonecraft at the head of the group to Anna Barbauld, involving themselves in discussions of politics and the public sphere. As Craciun notes, ‘counterrevolutionary writers like Richard Polwhele, Hannah More and Jane West helped create the category of Female Philosopher’ (27) a sadly neglected term in current scholarship until more recently²³ which Craiciun rightly argues

²³ See Adriana Craciun *British Women Writers and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2005); Andrew McInnes *Mary Wollstonecraft’s Ghost: The Fate of the Female Philosopher* (London: Routledge, 2017); Miriam L. Wallace *Revolutionary Subjects in the English ‘Jacobin’ Novel* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2009); Maria DeBlassie ‘From the Philosophical Wanton to the Respectable Lady: Rewriting the Female Intellectual’s Moral, Sexual, and Political Identities in the Courtship Novel, 1790-1850’ (thesis, University of Washington, 2012)

retains some potential value to Romantic women writers, some of whom identified themselves as philosophers and wrote in defence of the “rights of woman”, a 1790s struggle that we recognise as an important origin of modern feminism. (27)

These Female Philosophers were ‘discredited,’ states Craciun, ‘through three strategies: by associating them with Rousseau’s radical politics and sexual transgressions, implicitly comparing them to the “philosopher whores” or pornography, and literally demonizing them as Satanic.’

(28) There were also published a number of satirical prints like the one featured below²⁴, ‘The Female Philosopher, smelling out a comet,’ which mocked the idea of the female intellectuality.

²⁴ See *Figure 1*



Figure 1 'The Female Philosopher, smelling out a comet' R Hawkins (1790) britishmuseum.org

It is no wonder, then, that Smith felt the need to defend her writing in the preface to *Desmond*. Prior to *Desmond*, the only prefatory material Smith offered to her readers was a poem dedicating her first novel to her children. There is a significant difference between the two introductory writings beyond the fact that one is poetry and the other prose. In the prefatory poem introducing Smith's debut novel, *Emmeline*, she offers her readers the image of a mother writing only for the sustenance of her children. She entitles it "TO MY CHILDREN," leaving the reader in no doubt that the Charlotte Smith of the title page is a mother, and her 'maternal love' (44, 9) 'animate[s] the heart and guide[s] the hand' (10) implying that her love for her children has forced her to write novels in order to earn money because she and her children were 'robb'd[...] of all that fortune gave' (5): she has no choice in the matter. The poem strives to present the reader with a sympathetic image. As Donelle Ruwe argues, 'In her prefaces and her letters to her publisher, Thomas Cadell, Smith insists on creating and perpetuating a "mother-writer" author function.' (145) We can see this clearly in the poem. The Preface to *Desmond*, however, presents us with not only the 'mother-writer,' to use Ruwe's phrase, who describes herself as an '*Author by profession*' (46) or by necessity, to earn money for her family, but Smith declares herself as a woman writer with the right to discuss and contribute to the debates within the public sphere, such as politics and the French Revolution, against 'those who object [...] and exclaim against the impropriety of making a book of entertainment the vehicle of political discussion.' (47) Smith argues that while she is a mother and a woman, writing 'books of entertainment' to earn a living for her family, she is also entitled to comment on contemporary issues. Dustin Griffin describes her use of the term '*Author by profession*' as an apology, stating that

women authors [...] laboured under a special burden, sneered at as "prostitutes" since before 1700, merely because they dared to present themselves in print. [...] Smith [...]

feels obliged to apologise for becoming an “Author by profession”, pleading that she is “compelled by [financial] circumstances.” (143)²⁵

I do not agree that this is an apology or an excuse for her writing, but a demonstration to the reader of the circumstances under which she is forced to write. She does not apologise to the reader, instead she explains her circumstances and the reasoning behind her writing, just as she does in the poem prefacing *Emmeline*, defending her choice and standing her ground. More than this, in *Desmond*, she also defends her choice of subject matter: the French Revolution. She creates a new facet of her authorial persona, she is not simply the mother writing to earn money for the sake of her children, she wants her writing to deliver a message and be a vehicle for something more than entertainment. In the case of *Desmond*, it is a ‘vehicle of political discussion’ which, she argues, women have a right to comment on and be involved in. ‘But women it is said have no business with politics. Why not?’ Smith questions,

Have they no interest in the scenes that are acting around them, in which they have fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, or friends engaged! – Even in the commonest course of female education, they are expected to acquire some knowledge of history; and yet, if they are to have no opinion of what *is* passing, it avails little that they should be informed of what *has passed*, in a world where they are subject to such mental degradation; where they are censured as affecting masculine knowledge if they happen to have any understanding; or despised as insignificant triflers if they have none. (45)

For Smith, history and politics go hand-in-hand, history providing one with the knowledge to comment on current events.

²⁵ The term ‘author by profession,’ according to Dustin Griffin, ‘signifies an alternative to the traditional models (whether that of the learned man who writes for fame or the gentleman who writes for pleasure), and that this alternative took a very long time to attain widespread respectability.’ Dustin Griffin, ‘The rise of the professional author?’ in Michael F. Suarez, S. J. and Michael L. Turner, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain* Vol V (132-145) Cambridge: Cambridge UP (2009) 138

Desmond's journalistic quality has been commented upon by scholars and Smith sets forth her aim to recreate a picture of the reactions throughout Britain and France to the French Revolution as a 'witness, in England and France, during the last twelve months.' (45) As Craciun notes,

Smith's Preface to *Desmond* locates her knowledge of French politics in her own direct experience, bypassing Laetitia Hawkins's earlier admonition that "every female politician is a heresay politician." [...] Smith claims authority as an eye-witness and a participant in those increasingly circumscribed activities, international correspondence and conversation. (139)

As ever, Smith links her ability as a 'female politician,' or Female Philosopher, to education. She argues against the counterrevolutionaries and anti-feminist writers such as Polwhele, More, Hawkins, and West, that her 'female education' gives her enough knowledge, in this case in the subject of history, that she has the ability to comment on and address politics in her own period. Smith summarises the arguments against women's involvement in the public sphere thus:

Knowledge, which qualifies women to speak or to write on any other than the most common and trivial subjects, is supposed to be of so difficult attainment, that it cannot be acquired but by the sacrifice of domestic virtues, or the neglect of domestic duties. (45-6)

She uses herself as an example to her readers that this is not the case. She uses her 'mother-writer author function,' as described by Boyd, as evidence against the idea that by writing her current work, she is neglecting her domestic duties. She states:

I however, may safely say, that it was in the *observance*, not in the *breach* of duty, I became an Author: and it has happened, that the circumstances which have compelled me to write, have introduced me to those scenes of life, and those varieties of characters which I should otherwise never have seen. (46)

Her circumstances lead her to write, she does not ignore her 'domestic duties' for her work. She is utilising the authorial image of the mother-writer as set up in her earlier novels, which she knows had been accepted previously, to demonstrate that her writing and her involvement in the public sphere, even in her new role as a 'female politician,' she does not neglect her family.

Further to this, she even suggests that the opposition to and prejudice surrounding the French revolution stems from lack of progressive education, and that the pro-revolutionaries and supporters are more enlightened,

To those however who still cherish the idea of having a *natural* enemy in the French nation; and that they are still more *naturally* our foes, because they have dared to become freemen, I can only say, that against the phalanx of prejudice kept in constant pay, and under strict discipline by interest, the slight skirmishing of a novel writer can have no effect: we see it remains hitherto unbroken against the powerful efforts of learning and genius – though united in that cause which *must* finally triumph – the cause of truth, reason, and humanity. (47)

She asks her reader what the ‘slight skirmishing of a novel writer’ can do if the philosophers of the age have had no effect? She argues this, diminishing her own contribution to the debate, declaring it ineffectual and not at all dangerous, in the full knowledge of the anxieties surrounding the potential and feared effects of novels and novel-reading as discussed in the previous chapter. This is perhaps why novel-reading receives such a staunch defence by Geraldine later in the novel, as shall be discussed in the Readers and Reading chapters later in this thesis.

From *Celestina*, Smith’s novels are far more overtly political than either *Emmeline* or *Ethelinde*, however, I do not want to ignore those initial novels in this chapter as I feel they bear significance to the later novels. As I have discussed, these two earlier novels set up Smith’s writerly persona, but they also establish her political leanings, including her thoughts on education.

Desmond marks the point at which Smith’s novels become less popular than they had been previously. While she steps back from more overt discussions of the events of the 1790s, she alludes to them, disguising them in the backdrops of other periods. *The Old Manor House* and *The Wanderings of Warwick*, for example, are set during the American Revolutionary War, Smith draws on a successful example of revolution as the French Revolution turns violent. From 1793

onward, we can see her become progressively more disillusioned with the Revolution, she returns time and again to the representation of a successful revolution, 1790s America.

Eventually, in her final novel, *The Young Philosopher*, we see her characters, disillusioned with the state of England and the continent of Europe, turning to America for the hope of a new life.

The Old Manor House, published in 1793/4, and *The Young Philosopher*, published at the end of the decade in 1799, when set side-by-side provide an interesting insight into the development of Smith's thoughts on politics and education. Throughout Smith's novels, there are a number of character 'types' that develop from *Emmeline* to *The Young Philosopher*. In this chapter, I will focus on the 'philosophers' or scholars, both male and female, that exist in the novels. These characters are usually the protagonists, the heroes and heroines, of their novels, from the self-educated Emmeline to the Rousseauian Medora of *The Young Philosopher* or the soldier-poet Godolphin and the young, home-educated philosopher George Delmont. *The Old Manor House* represents Smith's initial reaction to the Terror, written during and published soon after; while *The Young Philosopher* demonstrates her assimilation of the events of the Reign of Terror onwards, and her subsequent disillusionment with the revolutionary wars of France and Britain. There are a number of similarities between the protagonists and a number of significant differences, the parallels between the novels and their characters demonstrate the development of Smith's ideas on education as they evolve throughout the revolutionary period.

Initially, in *Emmeline*, we see a young woman, mostly self-educated through her reading in a dilapidated library; then, in *Ethelinde*, we are presented with an educated young woman who self-improves and continues to learn from her reading, utilising the skills provided by her education the details of which are never discussed other than by contrast to Lady Newenden's, they weren't 'expensive'. By the time we come to *The Old Manor House*, we are presented with another young lady, deprived of education as Emmeline was, but with no 'noble blood,' legitimate or otherwise, to raise her to distinction. She does, however, like Emmeline, have

access to a private library, collected by a noble family. Monimia is an orphan, of a low station, she is a maid under the care of her aunt who works in the same household, Rayland Hall. She captures the interest, and heart, of a young man favoured by Mrs Rayland, the current owner of Rayland Hall and the last of her line. Orlando takes Monimia under his wing and decides to provide her with the education Mrs Rayland would prevent her from having. Initially, he teaches her to read and write, then provides her with his favourite works to read, giving her access to his library (with the help of another servant – who provides a contrast for Monimia). Through this reading, Monimia gains a new perspective on herself and the world around her, she is transformed from a young girl with no knowledge of the world, superstitious, as inculcated by her Aunt Lennard, and believing herself plain and insignificant, to a young woman with self-value and the knowledge and abilities to judge the world for herself.

In contrast, Medora, educated by her mother, with an interest in botany and reading, exceeds Delmont in many respects in terms of her worldly knowledge and abilities. The two are contrasted. Both are educated by their mothers initially, though Delmont eventually is sent to school but at a much later age than was usual for boys at the time. Both are provided with an education based on Rousseauian principles. The ambiguity of the title of *The Young Philosopher* makes the parallel between Medora and Delmont even more interesting. Most believe the ‘young philosopher’ in question to be George Delmont,²⁶ however, due to the ambiguity of the title in which Smith does not name a particular character as she does in others, the ‘young philosopher’ could equally be thought Medora. Through Medora, Smith provides a positive example of the ‘Female Philosopher’ of the 1790s, against the counterrevolutionary depictions of the ‘petticoat politicians’ and ‘philosopher whores’ of didactic writings and satirical prints. It is interesting that Smith’s novel-writing career should culminate in a novel in which there exist both a male and female ‘philosopher’ as the protagonists. Unlike previous novels where education of the male

²⁶ See Adriana Craciun, *British Women Writers and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

and female protagonists do not occur in tandem, we are presented with the education of Medora and Delmont developing, in different ways, and both characters learn from each other. This is very different from the relationship between Monimia and Orlando, in which Orlando is about to undertake his education at Oxford just as Monimia begins her far more basic learning of how to read and write. While Medora and Delmont begin their relationship on a level playing field in terms of education, Monimia and Orlando are unequal, Orlando guiding Monimia.

In *Desmond*, we see one family made of a strange mix of illegitimate and legitimate yet fatherless children, living happily together in Smith's idealised resolution to the various conflicts between nationality, politics, gender and family. They settle in cosmopolitan bliss: a French émigré happy to relinquish his title; an English sympathiser to the revolutionary cause, an English widow remarried and taking care of her late husband's children and new husband's illegitimate child by his French mistress. The ending seems overwhelming idyllic and unrealistic, exceptionally optimistic. In stark contrast, the cosmopolitan family at the end of *The Young Philosopher* conform to social conventions: there are no illegitimate children, no remarriages, no one lusting after married women or French mistresses. They turn from the results of the French Revolution, from the changes it has wrought in England, toward a new ideal: America and the New World – a setting already problematized in Smith's previous novels in terms of the slave trade and other colonial issues but is still idealised through comparison with England and France.

America often features as an alternative or a potential ideal for Smith throughout her novels. It is to the American Revolution that she looks in her novels as a way of exploring the potential for beneficial change that the French Revolution has to offer. She even returns to the period of the American Revolution in *The Old Manor House* as an alternative setting the two previous novels, *Desmond* and *Celestina*, as a way of addressing the French Revolution without encountering the distaste of readers and reviewers who found her sympathy for the revolutionary cause galling - and which led to the decline in popularity of her novels. In her mind, she holds

America as an ideal resolution to revolutionary war and potentially the resolution to the problems she sees as inherent in English society. Her heroes, heroines and philosophers turn to America as an example or refuge in her post-American Revolution set novels. Her villains or anti-heroes and anti-heroines are often satisfied with the state of English law and politics, and view the revolutionary wars with contempt - or, in their own ill-educated way, ignore the state of politics and law entirely.

Smith's novels occupy a 'grey area,' drifting between radical, liberal and conservative in her support of the French Revolution and her involvement in the various debates in the 'war of ideas' during the 1790s. Her occupation as a professional writer (i.e. the need to write for a popular audience in order to make a living) and her own experiences (hoping for change in Britain following the beginning of the Revolution, the horrors of the Terror and the changes in the literary world in reaction to 'Pitt's Terror,' and meeting and helping the many French émigrés following the Terror, including her son-in-law) could have been the causes which led to the seeming changes of Smith's opinion of the Revolution during the 1790s. Her opinions on education, women's rights, laws, and more, in Britain, however, develop over time but remain firm in the view that something must change. Smith uses her novels to explore how this change might be conducted in what Megan Woodworth describes as the 'experimental space of the novel' (77)

As M. O. Grenby argues in his introductions to *The Banished Man* and *The Wanderings of Warwick*, Smith occupied a middle-ground according to scholars of the Jacobin and anti-Jacobin polemic. Reformist, Girondin not Jacobin, 'ameliorationist.' (Grenby, 2006, xvi)²⁷ But she uses her novels in a similar way to the Jacobin or radical novelists, exploring reform and revolution and change in an experimental genre, a genre with fewer reader expectations than a treatise or

²⁷ Charlotte Turner Smith, *The Works of Charlotte Smith*. General editor, Stuart Curran. Part II, vol. 7. Volume editor, M. O. Grenby. 14 vols. (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2005-2007)

poetry, and therefore more open to changes of form (including mixing sub-genres such as epistolary, gothic, sentimental fiction, among others.) and also more easily saleable than a non-fiction genre or poetry, thus supporting her endeavour to raise money for her family.

In *Eighteenth-Century Women Writers and the Gentleman's Liberation Movement*, Megan Woodworth argues that 'Smith and West's political positions are far more complicated than their broad political categorization can account for.' (79, 2011) There are numerous attempts to 'place' Smith within a rhetoric of radicalism or liberalism, Jacobinism or Anti-Jacobinism. While categories or labels like this can be useful in analysing texts from the 1780s and 90s, they can also be limiting. As Woodworth notes,

There are many things to be considered in a study of the French Revolution and the wars it gave rise to: the intellectual upheaval produced by the Revolution in France, the shockwaves that reverberated throughout the English republic of letters; the political manoeuvrings of the Pitt administration; and whether or not the revolutionary wars were in fact driven by ideology. (78)

However, the polemics which we as modern scholars focus on within the 'war of ideas' concept posed originally by Marilyn Butler, has, Woodworth argues,

Hindered nuanced readings of many women's novels by drawing attention away from the ways in which women novelists work with and rework various sub-generic conventions and respond to earlier novels. (79)

The eighteenth century was an age of experimentation with, and exploration of, education and educational methods. There was no national curriculum as we have today, and educational institutions were scarce and unregulated by government or national laws. Debates raged on topics revolving around who should be educated, where and by whom. One of Smith's biggest influences, in terms of educational philosophy, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for example, recommended that children be educated by someone outside of the family (specifically, a tutor, as in *Émile*, and not in a school), and also argued that he did not believe that reading should be taught to young children of either sex. In *Emile*, he states: 'If I am not willing that a boy should be obliged to learn to read, by a much stronger reason am I against using this compulsion with girls.' (III, 31) *Emile* touches

on a number of contentious issues, such as private versus public education, whether education should be conducted by a child's parents, and the uses and abuses of the ability to read. His advice and progressive methods were championed by some, critiqued by others.

Mary Wollstonecraft appears to have had a love-hate relationship with Rousseau. Many of his opinions regarding women, Wollstonecraft disagrees with, while she admires his progressive thinking on education for boys and wishes he had applied it to girls, as well. She states in *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman*:

Consequently, the most perfect education, in my opinion, is such as exercise of the understanding as is best calculated to strengthen the body and form the heart. Or, in other words, to enable the individual to attain such habits of virtue as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. This was Rousseau's opinion respecting men: I extend it to women, and confidently assert that they have been out of their sphere by false refinement, and not by an endeavour to acquire masculine qualities. (19-20)

Rousseau was known also for his experimental education practice, not merely his writings. He abandoned his five children at the Hospice des Enfants Trouvés and 'claimed it was for their own good' (Rachel G. Fuchs, 1984, 63), as they should not be raised by their parents – as in *Emile*.²⁸ Thomas Day, a great influence on Maria Edgeworth and friend of her father's, attempted an experiment whereby he adopted two young girls whom he hoped could be educated or moulded into perfect wives – he intended to marry one of them when they became of marriageable age. James Keir, a contemporary of Day's, writes about the experiment in *An Account of the Life and Writings of Thomas Day* (1791):

The most singular of these projects was an experiment on female education, in which he proposed to unite the purity of female virtue with the fortitude and hardiness of constitution of a Spartan virgin, and with a simplicity of taste that should despise the frivolous vanities, the effeminate manners, and the dissipated pleasures, which, according to *Rousseau's* declamation, constitute the female character of the present age. With this view he received into his guardianship two female children, whom he intended to educate himself according to his preoccupied to his preconceived system. And he actually

²⁸ For an examination of Rousseau's rationales for abandoning his children, see Matthew D. Mendham's 'Rousseau's Discarded Children: The Panoply of Excuses and the Question of Hypocrisy,' *History of European Ideas*, 41.1, 131-152

proceeded, during some years, in the execution of this project. The experience, which had at first been wanting to him, at length gave him convincing proofs of the impracticability of this mode of education, while his acquired knowledge of mankind suggested doubts of its expediency. Finding himself obliged to relinquish his project of forming *Rousseau's* children of nature in the centre of England, he nevertheless continued these children under his protection and maintenance, and gave them such education as this kingdom affords. (27-8)

The experiment was later satirised by Edgeworth in her novel *Belinda*, Day's experiment represented by Clarence Hervey and his isolated, romance-reading pupil, Virginia, who falls in love with a portrait, instead of her tutor-suitor.²⁹ More pointedly, Virginia sees Hervey as her adopted father, rather than a potential lover – a parallel, perhaps, with Day's own failed experiment to educate and form a perfect wife. The experiment is also subtly referenced in Smith's fifth novel, *The Old Manor House* (1793), in which a young man, Orlando, educates a young maidservant, Monimia, hoping to marry her when he has found a way to make his fortune for her. Much like Edgeworth's Virginia, Monimia and Orlando are also named after characters from fiction, *Orlando Furioso* (1516) by Ludovico Ariosto and *The Orphan* (1680) by Thomas Otway. Smith's characters do not become Quixotic characters like Virginia, however, and are remarkably pragmatic and 'unromantic,' as we shall see in Chapter 3, in which I examine readers and reading within Smith's novels.

Edgeworth and Smith both utilised the novel genre to explore and deliver their perspectives on education. Not all writers on education believed that the novel was ideal for the delivery of ideas, many conservatives considered novels dangerous or a drain on the time of readers. The idea that novels could disseminate potentially dangerous ideas or, at the very least, could waste a person's time, was one of the reasons Sarah Trimmer established the first periodical focusing on the education of children. Trimmer was a conservative, evangelical writer, who, Mitzi

²⁹ Hervey's betrothed is named Virginia St Pierre after the heroine of Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's novel, *Paul et Virginie* (1788).

Myers states, ‘when she is noticed in modern literary and cultural histories at all, she figures most conspicuously not as the guardian of education,’ as she was recognised in her period, ‘but as its gorgon, a monstrous egotist determined to imprint her own conservative image on English culture, charitable practice, educational provision, and childhood reading.’ (vii, 1990) To Jane West and many others of the period, Sarah Trimmer was a ‘benefactor to the nation at large’ (*Gentleman’s Magazine*, 81, 1811), but to others she was too conservative. As Myers argues, however, ‘neither image is wholly correct, but the interplay between these alternative views emblemizes a key shift in English history with much larger implications than the interpretation of one writer.’ (iv) *The Guardian of Education*, Trimmer’s periodical, contains reviews, letters, and articles on the conduct of education in England in the final decade of the eighteenth century, and the first decade of the nineteenth. As Myers states,

Trimmer’s large contribution to the shift in manners and mores that marks off Enlightenment from Victorian England is encoded in the most the most venturesome of all her pioneering projects, the *Guardian of Education*. This five-volume periodical is repeatedly cited in historical studies of children’s literature, but it is far more than the first systematic reviewing organ for children’s books or even a retrospective history of juvenile literature to date, valuable as these achievements are. The work provides a useful entry into the period’s popular, political, and women’s culture as well. (x-xi)

What the periodical demonstrates is the intermingling of various cultural issues, from politics to gender, as noted by Barnita Bagchi in *Pliable Pupils and Sufficient Self-Directors*, and it does so often retrospectively, as in the case of the reviews of Smith’s works, making it a good place to start for a brief survey of education’s links to novels and print culture during her career.

In the advertisement for *The Guardian of Education*, Trimmer states the aims of the periodical thus:

The design of the work is, FIRST...To caution YOUNG MOTHERs, and others of the FEMALE SEX who are engaged in the important Business of Education, against the Attempts which are making to *banish* CHRISTIANITY *from the* NURSERY *and the* SCHOOL, in order to introduce PHILOSOPHY (as it is falsely called) in its stead; to direct their Attention to the peculiar Circumstances of the present Times, as they are

likely to affect the PRINCIPLES and MANNERS *of the* RISING GENERATION; and to assist their Endeavour for the Cultivation of RELIGION in the Minds of Children, upon the BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY.

SECONDLY...To assist PARENTS and GOVERNESSES in their Choice of Books for the Instruction and Amusement of CHILDREN and YOUTH, as far as the PRINCIPLES of RELIGION and GOOD MORALS are concerned. (I, 1802)³⁰

Her main aims in the production of the periodical, as she puts forth in this advertisement, are to educate those in charge of the education of children, specifically here the ‘female sex,’ concerning religion, and especially to provide guidance in the selection of appropriate books for children. She was evidently concerned with the content of works for children, particularly relating to Christian education, which she fears is being neglected.³¹

As M. O. Grenby states, novels produced for children were available in the same genres as for adults.³² Many writers, conservative and liberal alike, were concerned about the ever-growing accessibility of these various works for children. As Michelle Levy notes,

Trimmer believed that children were the targets of deeply subversive ideologies disguised as harmless stories, and that the rise of printed works intended for young readers made it difficult to exercise the necessary supervision. (2006, 146)

Several years before *The Guardian of Education*, Maria Edgeworth advocated to parents, tutors, and governesses the censoring and editing of children’s works by cutting-up and blacking-out

³⁰ Reprinted in the first volume of the periodical before the introductory essay to the periodical, no page number present.

³¹ I have not discussed religion as a topic of a particular chapter in this thesis as Smith, unlike Trimmer, Hannah More and Jane West (whose works I discuss later in this chapter), did not have a religious agenda in her works for adults or children. Smith’s ideas on education are largely secular, much like many of the more radical or pro-revolutionary writers of the period, such as Wollstonecraft, Barbauld and Godwin. See Adriana Craciun *British Women Writers and the French Revolution* for a more in-depth discussion of secularism versus religious agenda in writing of the Revolutionary period (2005) 176-7

³² See M. O. Grenby ‘Children’s and Juvenile Literature’ in Peter Garside and Karen O’Brien, eds., *English and British Fiction 1750-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)

unwanted and ‘inappropriate’ sections in *Practical Education*; Vicesimus Knox in the chapter of *Liberal Education* (1785) reproduced by *The Scots Magazine*, mentioned earlier in this chapter, wrote at length on restricting the reading of young ladies until their understanding was developed enough to choose their own reading materials. What Trimmer offered in *The Guardian of Education* was what many periodicals had done before, the ability to decide whether or not something was worth reading, or purchasing, or even appropriate to read, only she was undertaking a systematic survey of children’s, rather than adult’s, books. This made acting on the advice of writers like Edgeworth and Vicesimus Knox that much easier: in censoring or restricting the reading of children and young people, one had to know whether something was suitable or not, without reviews, where does one start? Reviews offered a solution, albeit that opinions would be inevitably skewed by the biases and prejudices of the editors and writers. As Michael Gamer states, discussing reviews of novels in the period, the periodicals were

Ranging in tone from the merely negative to the condemnatory, the remarks should suggest to us that, in spite of the popular and artistic successes of a host of novelists in the first half of the century, little had changed between the attitudes of critical readers and reviewers of the mid-eighteenth century and those of the *Athenian Mercury* six decades later [...] an emerging disjunction between popular taste and the critical judgement of the Reviews. Its lengthy initial condemnation of fiction – lumping the generality of novels with lewd and scandalous publications – smacks of anxious self-consciousness, as if the act of praising an individual novel required a certain quantity of general abuse for the genre as a whole to maintain the reviewer’s authority and credibility. (535)

Reviews were inevitably influenced by the desire to ‘maintain authority’ as well as the reviewers’, and periodical’s, own prejudices, aims, and audience. Trimmer’s periodical, despite its new focus on children’s literature, is no different, so we must be aware that the periodical demonstrates only one facet of the reception of literature for children during the period. It does, however, provide a valuable insight into the conservative, evangelical perspective of Smith’s contribution to children’s literature and where it sits in relation to other writers of the period, as well as providing valuable

information regarding the traits of the works of conservative educationalists and their arguments within the debate.

This insight also applies to the themes of education in Smith's novels for adults. In 1803, Sarah Trimmer's *Guardian of Education* reviewed the first of Smith's works for children: *Rural Walks* (1795) and *Rambles Farther* (1796). They are initially described as potentially 'useful' for young ladies, 'by contributing to guard them against the dangers to which those in the higher circles of society are exposed from the fascination of flattery, and the suggestion of vanity.' (II, 381) The review, however, ends with a warning or caveat:

But we would advise attention to the age of the young people into whose hands they are put; as by being prematurely read, they may conduce to nourish that rage for novel reading which ought to be repressed as much as possible; but which we fear cannot be entirely subdued in the fashionable world, especially in times like the present, when pleasure and amusement are such grand pursuits. (II, 381)

If we view Smith as a radical or liberal writer – her sympathies for the French *émigrés* and her separation from her husband eliminate the possibility that she could be considered a conservative like Sarah Trimmer – this review demonstrates the kind of cross-overs between the views of radical, liberal and conservative writers, as well as the issues they may have had with the works of political and social opposites.

Alongside Sarah Trimmer, two significant conservative educationalists are Hannah More and Jane West. Both had a significant impact on the education debates and made names for themselves within the subject. Both More and West wrote similar styles of didactic texts, across several genres, often aimed specifically at young women. Even the titles of some of the texts followed similar formulas:

Letters to a Young Lady Jane West (1806)

The Accomplished Lady; or Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education Hannah More (1799)

Essays on Various Subjects, Principally Designed for Young Ladies More (1777)

Much like Trimmer, both More and West also believed that religion and education should be combined, and many of the titles, as well as the contents, of their educational works reflect this:

Considerations on religion and public education More (1794)

Practical Piety More (1811)

Scriptural Essays Adapted to the Holy Days of the Church of England (1816)

Many radical and liberal writers, such as Wollstonecraft and Edgeworth, did not agree with the conservative view, and believed instead that religion and education should be separate subjects in a child's upbringing.

Wollstonecraft argued that taught religion was no better than learned behaviour; if something was not truly understood, the adherence to it could have no value. She mocks the idea in *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman*:

With respect to religion, she never presumed to judge for herself; but conformed, as a dependent creature should, to the ceremonies of the church which she was brought up in, piously believing that wiser heads than her own have settled the business:- and not to doubt it is a point of her perfections she therefore pays her tythe of mint and cumin – and thanks her God that she is not as other women are. These are the blessed effects of a good education! These are the virtues of man's help-mate. (57)

As noted earlier in the chapter, Wollstonecraft argued that true belief and faith only come of a real education, the ability to think and reason for oneself. For Trimmer, More and West, however, religion should be taught and ingrained in a child's education from a young age – Christian morals, Christian behaviour, Christian belief, without question. For example, More's *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* contains a number of chapters relating to religion with 'Christian' or 'Christianity' in the titles:

CHAP. XVIII.

A worldly spirit incompatible with the spirit of Christianity.

CHAP. XIX.

On the leading doctrines of Christianity. – The corruption of human nature. – The doctrine of redemption. – The necessity of change of heart, and of the divine influences to produce that change. With a sketch of Christian character.

CHAP. XX.

On the duty and effect of prayer. (II, vi-vii)

By contrast, the chapter titles of Edgeworth's *Practical Education* published the year before *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* make no reference to Christianity or Christian morals and beliefs at all. They are far less spiritual, covering more didactic and earthly subjects than moralistic or religious:

Chap.

I. Toys [...]

II. On Attention [...]

VIII. On Rewards and Punishments [...]

XIII. On Grammar, and Classical Literature' (I, xi)

Interest in delivering Christian morals and beliefs, teaching religion, was certainly a conservative trait. While many radicals and liberals may not have gone as far as Rousseau in banning religion from children's upbringing completely, it was a separate issue from their didactic education.

Unlike Sarah Trimmer, both More and West wrote novels related to the topic of education, such as Jane West's *The Advantages of Education, or the History of Maria Williams* (1793) and Hannah More's *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* (1809) followed by *Coelebs Married* in 1814. Sam Pickering Jr. argues that

the way for the novel's respectability and resulting general acceptance by the reading public, was paved [...] by Hannah More. Combining religious lessons with a novelistic narrative, [...] More's *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* was the first nineteenth-century novel accepted enthusiastically by the large religious reading public. (78, 1977)

Her novel paved the way for later nineteenth-century novelists, such as Charles Dickens and Walter Scott, ‘whose concerns if not particularly theological were at least moral.’ (78) It is in this way that West and More differ from their fellow conservative, Sarah Trimmer: while Trimmer never turned her pen to novel-writing and was avowedly against the reading and writing of novels – as we saw earlier – West and More saw the potential benefits attached to the novel, like many other writers of the period, such as the dissemination of their personal educational philosophies and ideas.

For West and More, the type of education they aimed to deliver via their novels was strikingly different from their more radical or liberal contemporaries. As noted by Pickering, More’s themes in *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* were theological and moral, much like her didactic texts, the same can be applied to Jane West’s *The Advantages of Education*. Explicit reference to religion is uncommon in novels, even didactic ones, written by authors considered liberal or radical, and can be identified as a conservative trait. The lack of reference to religion in more liberal and radical authors’ texts can be linked to a divide, or point of contention, in the education debates, most prominently raised by Rousseau as mentioned earlier, of whether religion should be a part of a child’s education. There is a distinct absence of religion in children’s and adult’s works by Smith, Anna Barbauld and Maria Edgeworth. Wollstonecraft, on the other, raises the subject to argue that religion and piety should be joined with reason and understanding, in order to make it valid – religion as a personal choice, not simply a learned behaviour.³³

Religion was a major theme throughout the works of many conservatives, especially when linked to education; More’s religious novel came out of the aftermath of the French Revolution, a period of social and political turmoil. Pickering argues that

although reactions to the novels occurred, criticism was relatively mute until the French Revolution. However, with the Revolution, critical good will toward the novel was

³³ ‘Without knowledge there can be no morality!’ *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) 75

dispersed, and the novel became known as “one of the most universal as well as most pernicious sources of corruption among us.” (79)

Novels were blamed for both moral and political ‘corruption’ during the period of the French Revolution, usually by conservative writers, even into the turn of the nineteenth century. Pickering notes

At the beginning of the revolution, a strong parliamentary party believed a Jacobinical conspiracy was trying to overthrow Britain by spreading seditious writings among the lower classes. Fear of seditious writings soon led to irrational fear of all writing. Moreover, the novel [genre’s] broad church morality [as seen in the novels of sensibility produced by Richardson and Mackenzie] was no longer respectable. Reacting against the Revolution, Britain swung sharply to the theological right. (79)

At first, More, like Sarah Trimmer, disapproved of the novel. ‘More[’s attitude],’ Pickering states, ‘in her popular *Strictures on the Modern State of Female Education* (1799) was representative of religious readers’ disapproval of the novel at the turn of the century.’ (80) *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* (1809) was published in reaction to the fears surrounding the reading material currently available to the middle and lower classes. More, unlike Trimmer, as noted earlier, realised the potential of the novel to deliver the ‘correct’ advice or message, as well as the ‘incorrect’ and damaging messages. Just as Siskin argued, while there were fears surrounding the novel genre, many also saw the potential of the genre to create positive change. More aimed to utilise the genre to deliver her own ideas on education and theology, and access a wider readership – with the aim of encouraging ‘right thinking’ and influencing literary tastes much as Trimmer had hoped to achieve with her periodical. Pickering describes the atmosphere in which *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* was written and published thus:

As taxes for the Napoleonic wars and higher book prices coincided with greater literacy, middle and lower class Britons could not afford to buy many books. To fulfil the demand for inexpensive reading, circulating libraries multiplied. Evangelicals [like More and Trimmer] believed the libraries’ indiscriminant [sic] circulation lists now threatened British morality, much as seditious writings had threatened the Constitution in the 1790s. As she had done with the *Cheap Repository Tracts*, so Hannah More now rose to the occasion, writing *Coelebs* as a paradigm of what the novel could and should be. Hopefully

Coelebs would establish the religious novel as a staple of the circulating library and like the *Tracts* “counteract the delusive and irreligious spirit” of the age. (81)

Coelebs in Search of a Wife became, in Pickering’s words, ‘the first novel thought morally respectable by nineteenth-century religious moralists.’ (83)

Coelebs in Search of a Wife was evidently popular: between 1808 and 1813, it went through fourteen editions. Its impact also led to a parody in the form of the anonymously written *Coelebs in Search of a Mistress* (1810). The opening sentence of the parody mocks the style of the original, which draws on the style of the works of eighteenth-century moralists and publications like *The Rambler*. The narrator of *Coelebs in Search of a Mistress* states:

Many, I dare say, will be astonished to find that a bachelor, whose fortune is above mediocrity, and whose person is accounted by ladies agreeable, should prefer a mistress to a wife. (I, 1)

The anonymous writer parodies the moralists in a similar manner to Jane Austen in the opening to *Pride and Prejudice*, published three years later: ‘It is a truth universally acknowledged that a young man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.’ (1813, 1) Carol Adams, Douglas Buchanan, and Kelly Gelsch, note that

In one sentence, Austen sweeps away generalised statements taken for fact. Her readers would recognise the style from many eighteenth-century moralists who offered sweeping statements. (2008, 11)

Austen means to mock the sweeping statements of eighteenth-century moralists, and set up the character of Mrs Bennett. Both opening lines put one in mind of statements like this one from an ‘anonymous’ writer, Hymenaeus, in Samuel Johnson’s *The Rambler*: ‘I was known to possess a fortune, and to want a wife.’ (1751, 3, 115) The anonymous writer of *Coelebs in Search of a Mistress* intends to parody the statements of religious moralists, in particular, More herself. More was influenced by those earlier eighteenth-century moralists in a different way – she was their literary descendant.

While *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* was successful, it is not, however, the first conservative novel of that generation. Other conservative writers also saw the novel's potential for disseminating ideas, much earlier than More. Jane West, for example, was not deterred by the reception of the genre by her fellow conservatives during the Revolution. Sixteen years prior to the publication of *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, Miss Prudentia Homespun made her appearance in West's *The Advantages of Education* (1793).

A focus on Christian education is not a specifically conservative trait, however, as demonstrated by dissenting writer Anna Barbauld. If we look at Smith's own thoughts on religion and education, though, we find they are difficult to define when looking at her novels. Smith does not explicitly comment on Christian education within her novels, though she had a relationship with the dissenting tradition, like Barbauld, as has been noted by a number of scholars of her poetry.³⁴ The nature of Smith's thoughts on education and religion are more implicit. For example, in *The Young Philosopher*, one could argue that the values passed on to Delmont by his mother are centred in the liberal, dissenting Christian tradition. Early in the novel, philanthropy and a desire to help the less fortunate is demonstrated in the scene when young George Delmont brings 'cold victuals' to the 'unhappy wanderers' at the door despite the protests and 'remonstrance[s]' of Mrs Kempthwaite and Mr Jeans for his feeding of the 'tramps.' (1798, 22-3)

³⁴ See Anne K. Mellor 'The Female Poet and the Poetess: Two Traditions of British Women's Poetry, 1780-1830' *Studies in Romanticism*, 36.2 (1997) 261-276; Erinc Özdemir 'Charlotte Smith's Poetry as Sentimental Discourse' *Studies in Romanticism*, 50.3 (2011) 437-473; Jacqueline Labbe *Writing Romanticism: Charlotte Smith and William Wordsworth* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2011)

Educational values in different areas were shared between groups we might otherwise label as conservative, liberal, or radical. Definitively labelling an author as politically or educationally one or the other can be problematic due to these shared traits, such as the method of dissemination, or the cross-overs in opinions regarding education that I have been discussing. Looking at current discussions of Anna Barbauld's career in education and children's writing, for example, as recently as 2015 Caroline Franklin discusses Barbauld's conservatism in refusing to head a school for girls, even going so far as to suggest Barbauld is 'anti-feminist.'³⁵ Michelle Levy, however, argues for Barbauld's radicalism when she discusses Anna Barbauld's *Evenings at Home*.³⁶ There is a sliding scale throughout the various areas of education. Barbauld's situation between radicalism and conservatism in these two essays hinges on her approach to education: Barbauld refused to head the girls' school due to her opinion that private education in a domestic setting was the best option for schooling.³⁷ The same can be seen in a comparison of writers considered often under the same labels. While Wollstonecraft advocates women's rights to careers and a full education as legal citizens, we consider her in the upper levels of radicalism, Smith, on the other hand, while radical in her sympathies for the French Revolution and her involvement in writing on politics, she is by comparison with Wollstonecraft, much less outspoken in terms of women's rights. This is perhaps due to her need to maintain a certain public image of maternal devotion, a writer writing for the sake of her children, so she cannot risk the open treatises that Wollstonecraft puts forth, diminishing her own arguments, sarcastically, as the 'slight skirmishing of a novel

³⁵ See Caroline Franklin 'Enlightenment feminism and the bluestocking legacy' in *The Cambridge Companion to Women's Writing in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015) 115-128

³⁶ See Michelle Levy 'The Radical Education of *Evenings at Home*,' *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, 19 (2006) 123-50

³⁷ As William McCarthy notes, Barbauld was not 'antifeminist' in her refusal to head a girls' school, she wanted more time to focus on her writing and, as *Evenings At Home* and *Lessons for Children* demonstrate, Barbauld's preferred educational setting was the home. McCarthy discusses the same letter referenced by Franklin at length in his article: 'Why Anna Laetitia Barbauld refused to head a women's college,' *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 23.3 (2001) 349-379

writer.’ (47) No matter Smith’s reasoning for not joining Wollstonecraft in writing political and philosophical treatises, it serves to show that, in discussions of education, there are many grey areas which were influenced by the topics discussed in this thesis.

A multitude of these works was produced in the printing boom for children’s works and educational works about children. As we have seen in the discussion so far, many texts in the debate were aimed at children, young people, or parents. As Andrew O’Malley notes, however, ‘the concern for acquiring useful knowledge was, of course, not only manifested in the proliferation of educational works for children.’ (5) Many writers, industrialists, and pedagogues also produced work with the aim of educating their adult readers, not merely in parenting and children’s education, but aiming at adult self-improvement and self-education. O’Malley mainly links this to radical and dissenting writers of the middle class, with their focus on equality and social mobility. He argues that,

Starting from a position of equality, unhindered by obstacles to their development, and, by the same token, unaided by unfair hereditary privilege and hierarchy, the children who would naturally succeed would be those who had received the best education and who, by dint of industrious application, had acquired the most useful skills and knowledge. This conception of the infant mind as the site on which the aspirations of republican middle-class ideology could be realised explains in large part the dissenter’s enormous focus on education. Dissenters from all walks of life participated in the development of a middle-class pedagogy – not only such professional pedagogues as Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, but also such leading dissenting scientists as Joseph Priestley and Rasmus Darwin, and such dissenting industrialists as Josiah Wedgwood. (5)

He points specifically to *The Analytical Review* as an example of this middle-class, dissenting pedagogy aimed at adult readers. He states that

rather than dictate taste and knowledge to the public “from above” – from a position of privilege – as other learned journals and critics did, *The Analytical Review* sought to provide the public with the tools to make an informed choice of reading materials. [...] While challenging a system of privilege at the level of textual authority and dissemination of information, *The Analytical Review* also espoused dissenting republican radical political philosophy. (5-6)

As we can see, Sarah Trimmer's *Guardian of Education* was not the only review periodical concerned with the direct education of its readers. While many periodicals offered guidance on reading material in the form of reviews, few set out their aims for the education of readers in the same manner as these two. For many review periodicals, the aim was similar to that laid out by one frustrated reviewer in *The British Critic* in 1815:

There are, we believe, few readers who are quite aware of the severity of the labour which we reviewers undergo in their service; and fewer still who feel a proper degree of gratitude for the beneficial consequences which result to them from that labour. [...] What numerous drains do we not every month prevent from being made on their pockets, time, patience, and temper! Benevolently acting as their tasters, we run the risk of being poisoned ourselves, to save them from the risk of being so. [...] To Miss Caroline, or Miss Fanny, confined at home without company on a rainy afternoon, and who has consoled herself with the hope of a rich treat from the last new novel, which John has been dispatched to procure, it must assuredly be a shocking thing to find, that the anxiously-expected novel is so “abominably stupid” that she cannot get through it; and that she has no other resource than to strum over again her favourite airs, draw half a rose, or a bit of a tree, or add a score of meshes to a piece of netting, which is now taken up for the hundred and fiftieth time. It is to avert the fair such a serious evil as this, that we encounter Christabelle. Forewarned, forearmed, says the old adage. (442-3)

Reviewers were ‘tasters’ of literature, saving their readers from potential harm – such as wasted time, money, or patience should they encounter an “abominably stupid” book. Although many reviewers were clearly concerned with such things as the morality or suitability of a work, it is rarely so clearly expressed as in periodicals focused on education in general and education about reading.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, one of Smith's biggest influences (and, indeed, arguably the biggest influence on educational philosophy during the second half of the eighteenth century) was Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Smith refers to Rousseau and his ideas on philosophy, politics, and education throughout her novels. His works are one of the few from writers on education that are directly referenced and quoted. As argued previously, however, this does not mean Smith agreed with every point of Rousseau's philosophy and methodology.

Rousseau's thoughts on education were a point of contention throughout the period. He is a great example of why it is difficult to label a writer on education as simply radical, liberal or conservative. He had an enormous impact on the debates – for some, his ideas were too liberal or conservative, for others he did not extend his radical methods far enough. His conservative and misogynistic ideas on female education did not stop his 'radically-minded' female readers extending his ideas to girls in their own writings on education. As noted previously, Wollstonecraft complained that Rousseau did not extend his refreshing educational philosophy to girls. Wollstonecraft examines and argues with Rousseau's idea on education in her political tract, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), referring to his most famous (or, perhaps, infamous, depending on your perspective) work *Émile*, in particular. In the very first chapter of the tract, Wollstonecraft notes Rousseau's liberal ideas surrounding the development of 'virtues' through the development and use of reason – and argues it should be applied in the same manner to the education of women. 'The most perfect education, in my opinion,' she states,

in such as exercise of the understanding as is best calculated to strengthen the body and for the heart. Or, in other words, to enable the individual to obtain such habits of virtues as will render it independent. In fact, it is a farce to call any being virtuous whose virtues do not result from the exercise of its own reason. I extend it to women, and confidently assert that they have been drawn out of their sphere by false refinement, and not by an endeavour to acquire masculine qualities. (1792, 19-20)

She continues and criticises writers on female education for their role in the subjugation of women:

I may be accused of arrogance; still I must declare, what I firmly believe, that all the writers who have written on female education and manners, from Rousseau to Dr Gregory, have contributed to render women more artificial, weak characters, than they would otherwise have been; and, consequently, more useless members of society. (20)

It is not only his views on female education that she disagrees with. She states in the first chapter:

Disgusted with artificial manners and virtues, the citizen of Geneva [Rousseau], instead of properly sifting the subject, threw away the wheat with the chaff, without waiting to

insure [sic] whether the evils which his ardent soul turned from indignantly, were the consequence of civilisation or the vestiges of barbarism. (12)

She argues against the idea of isolation being beneficial to the education of either young men or women. Private versus public education, and the degrees of isolation or socialization within those categories, were constant sources of debate for educators, parents, and philosophies, alongside the related topic of whom should undertake the education of children at various stages. Wollstonecraft disagrees with Rousseau's idea of educating in isolation, away from society (including the child's parents). She accuses him, and other writers, of being short-sighted, and states that,

I do not believe that a private education can work the wonders which some sanguine writers have attributed to it. Men and women must be educated, in a great degree, by the opinions and manners of the society they live in. (19)

Despite *The Vindication of the Rights of Women* being full of these refutations of and arguments with Rousseau's philosophy and methodology, Wollstonecraft's censors equate them with each other – both the same form of dangerous, radical thoughts on education. Just as the writers labelled then and now as 'conservative' did not necessarily agree with each other on all points, nor did those we would now consider 'radical' or 'liberal.' On some points, such as female education, Wollstonecraft views Rousseau as not liberal enough – comparing him with more 'conservative' writers such as Dr Gregory – but on others, such as the total isolation of the pupil/child from society, he goes too far, as Wollstonecraft feels socialization is necessary for a person to become a useful member of society.

What every writer on middle-class education agrees on is this end-point or goal of education: the creation of useful and productive members of society. While this 'useful member of society' may look and act differently depending on the ideologies of the writer, education aims to create an individual who can aid in the progress of the class, or the nation, or humanity in general. Over the next six chapters, I examine Smith's novels for her views on education, and demonstrate her views in comparison to other writers on education, showing the 'member of

society' she hoped to create through her own educational methods and philosophies. While over the decade in which Smith was writing, her methods and views developed and changed, ultimately, as we shall see, her aims remained the same.

Chapter Two: ‘The grounds of that elegant and useful knowledge’: the store of knowledge concept and balanced reading

“Miss Grimes reads novels, and is very much distressed at not having yet found in real life a hero who answers to ‘her ideas’.” Ellesmere to D’Alonville, *The Banished Man* (1794, IV, 79)

‘Miss Goldthorp was a young lady naturally of a very tender and susceptible nature, who, notwithstanding her aunt boasted of the care she had taken to prevent it, was deeply read in romance and novels, by some one or other of the heroines of which she occasionally “set her mind,” so that with a great versatility of character she rarely appeared in her own.’ *The Young Philosopher*, (1794, 35-6)

In this chapter, I examine Smith's attitude toward reading, and novel reading in particular, as demonstrated through the characters in her novels. I also demonstrate the links between her discussions of reading and the educational theories of the period, in particular, the development of Locke's *tabula rasa* theory through Hartley's 'associationism,' explaining the fears linked to novel-reading and its effects on the mind. As Clifford Siskin argues, the anxieties surrounding the new media of the novel and the explosion of the press throughout the eighteenth century are very much similar to the current moral media panic that surrounds television, film, and video games and their potential effects in our own time.

In the eighteenth century, however, the fears stemmed from the theory that our minds could be 'imprinted' with the wrong information, perspectives, or morals, which could be dangerous. As Andrew O'Malley discusses in *The Making of the Modern Child*, Hartley's theory of associationism and Locke's theory of the mind as *tabula rasa* filtered through to the educational writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Maria Edgeworth, Anna Barbauld, among others, from the writings of Joseph Priestley and even summaries and extracts in periodicals to the average person. In the introduction to her book, *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress*, Lois Whitney notes that writers used platforms such as essays or treatises for philosophical thought and theory which filtered down to the layman via more popular genres, such as novels or periodicals. She states that

‘it is only by a study of [...] vehicles of popularization that it is possible to arrive at an adequate understanding of the actual modification of thought in its transmission from philosopher to layman. Society at large did not read Berkeley or Hume, Hartley or Helvétius, but society at large did attend the theatre, subscribe to magazines, buy pamphlets, and read novels.’³⁸

During the eighteenth century, writers and philosophers, educationalists and theorists, were aware that the average person did not necessarily engage with philosophical or scientific essays directly. In his explanation of the aims of the *Spectator*, Addison expresses his desire to ‘[bring] Philosophy out of the Closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-tables and in Coffee houses.’³⁹ The purpose was a balance between ‘instruction’ and ‘diversion’, much as Smith describes the reading undertaken by Emmeline, ‘in which instruction and amusement were happily blended’.⁴⁰ Given that Addison’s *Spectator* was among the reading Emmeline undertakes, Smith’s description of the reading could have been inspired by Addison’s description of the *Spectator*.

Smith, among a number of other writers such as Maria Edgeworth and Mary Wollstonecraft, endeavoured to produce a similar effect, simultaneously educating and amusing their readers, via the novel form – a ‘vehicle of popularization’ in Whitney’s terms – as Addison strived for in his periodical. Though it must be kept in mind that educational theory, as we saw in chapter one, evolved and changed throughout the century. The ideas of each generation could influence and impact the next, and each had different experiences and influences to build on. Ideas about education fell in and out of fashion, the same way language and modes of writing did. For example, Smith was of another generation to Austen, drawing on different sources and influences – evidently some which seemed old-fashioned to the younger writer.

³⁸ Lois Whitney *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965) 5

³⁹ Joseph Addison, *The Spectator* 10 (March 1711) 1

⁴⁰ Charlotte Smith, *Emmeline* (1788) 47

The information gained from reading is frequently described in eighteenth-century literature as a 'store' of knowledge or information.⁴¹ In this section, I would like to examine and map out the idea of the 'store of knowledge' and its development through several different writers' works, including Smith. It is an idea that is inextricably linked with concerns about reading – particularly with reading the right texts in order to 'store up' correct knowledge for later use. Some writers even disagree with the idea of the store-house, linking it to rote-learning and fears about the effects of unreflective reading habits. In the second *Vindication*, Wollstonecraft uses it to warn her readers that, while a solid foundation of reading can build up a good 'store of knowledge,' one made from 'trashy' reading such as novels can cause issues later in life.

This idea of the 'store of knowledge' can also be found in popular fiction besides Smith's novels. Austen writes about Catherine Morland's reaction to General Tilney's library:

exhibiting a collection of books, on which a humble man might have looked with pride. – Catherine heard, admired, and wondered with more genuine feeling than before – gathered all that she could from this store-house of knowledge, by running over the titles of half a shelf, and was ready to proceed.⁴²

It is this idea of the mind as a store and processor of information and knowledge that connects each of the topics this chapter will engage with: balanced versus unbalanced reading; extensive vs intensive reading; rote-learning vs reflective learning/reading; censorship of texts; physical and mental dangers of reading. With the ever-increasing production of books, the ability to access texts with more ease than in previous times, young people had greater opportunities to discover new texts by themselves – with little or no guidance. According to educationalists like the

⁴¹ Numerous writers who refer to this concept will be discussed in this chapter, such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Hester Chapone, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen.

⁴² Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1818) 133

Edgeworths and Vicesimus Knox, there was a need to educate young people in tasteful and ‘good’ reading so that they were better able to select their own reading material.

This idea of the mind as a store of knowledge links to Locke’s theory of the mind as a *tabula rasa* or ‘white paper’, part of the developing eighteenth-century theory of associationism or association of ideas.⁴³ The concept describes the ability of the mind to create links, intentionally or unintentionally (more often), and find patterns in the information it receives through the five senses. Thus, seeing and hearing texts – reading them by oneself or hearing them read aloud by another – a person can store information from the text and create associations or links between disparate pieces of knowledge or information from both the text itself and any other information it has received or will receive from various sources. The idea that the process is involuntary is sustained throughout the development of the theory. As Barbara Owen Oberg notes, in Hartley’s theory, ‘the process of association goes on independently of [a person’s] will’.⁴⁴ It is a point of concern when linked to the idea of the mind potentially storing the wrong information or knowledge – especially in terms of the education and upbringing of children and young people.

Locke’s theory specifically argues that a child’s mind is a blank slate, ready to take on every impression it receives. Locke explores this further in *The Essay on Human Understanding*, expressing his concerns about the effects that could potentially be produced by the process of imbibing the wrong ideas which can lead to further prejudices and wrong connections. He states early on in the chapter ‘Of the Association of Ideas’ that

those who have children, or the charge of their education, would think it worth their while diligently to watch, and carefully to prevent the undue connection of *ideas* in the

⁴³ Though, it should be noted that John Locke does not use the specific phrases ‘tabula rasa’ or ‘blank slate,’ these are phrases used to refer to his works by later philosophers and scholars.

⁴⁴ Barbara Owen Oberg ‘David Hartley and the Association of Ideas’ *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37 (1976) 450

minds of young people. This is the time most susceptible to lasting impressions; and though those relating to the health of the body, are by discreet people minded and fenced against, yet I am apt to doubt, that those which relate more particularly to the mind, and terminate in the understanding of the passions, have been much less heeded than the thing deserves: nay, those relating purely to the understanding have, as I suspect, been by most men wholly overlooked.’ (II, 124)

Thus we can see from very early in the century, there is an anxiety about improper, dangerous, or purposeless information and knowledge surrounding the education of children and young people.

Writers such as the Edgeworths and Mary Wollstonecraft echo these sentiments when they voice their concerns about upbringing and education in both their fictional and non-fictional works. In Wollstonecraft’s posthumously published, fragmented novel *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* (1798), she notes the effect of the ‘force of early associations even on strong minds’⁴⁵ and earlier in the second *Vindication* (1792) she warns her readers about the dangers or issues inherent in storing the wrong knowledge or information. In the second *Vindication*, Wollstonecraft begins her discussion of associationism acknowledging the benefits of ‘a well stored mind’ in which ‘the individual is [...] rendered independent of the casualties of life.’⁴⁶ As we can tell by Wollstonecraft’s use of language, specifically using terms like ‘association of ideas,’ she is drawing on and invested in the theory of the association of ideas, or associationism. She continues her argument, noting the benefits of the mind’s ability to build connections and store information:

The great advantages which naturally result from storing the mind with knowledge are obvious from the following considerations. The association of our ideas is either habitual or instantaneous. The latter mode seems rather to depend on the original temperature of the mind than on the will. When the ideas, and matter of fact, are once taken in, they lie

⁴⁵ Mary Wollstonecraft *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* (1798) 109

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 35

by for use, till some fortuitous circumstance makes the information dart into the mind with illustrative force, that has been received at very different periods of our lives.⁴⁷

Wollstonecraft's statement specifically links the two concepts of associationism and the store of knowledge. Wollstonecraft warns, however, despite this beneficial capacity to store information which our mind can retrieve at a later date when an event or sensation causes the mind to make a connection, it can be just as easy to store the wrong information leading to bad decisions or poor judgement. Wollstonecraft states:

if such is the force of habit; if such is the bondage of folly, how carefully ought we to guard the mind from storing up vicious associations; and equally careful should we be to cultivate the understanding, to save the poor wight from the weak dependent state of even harmless self-ignorance.⁴⁸

The Edgeworths express a similar concern in *Practical Education* relating to young children, arguing for private education over public:

in private education there is little chance that one error should balance another; the experience of the pupil is much confined, the examples he sees are not so numerous and various as to counteract each other [...] Experience must preserve one uniform tenor, and examples must be selected with circumspection. The less children associate with companions of their own age, the less they know of the world, the stronger their taste for literature, the more forcible will be the impression that will be made upon them by the pictures of life, and the characters and sentiments which they meet in books. Books for such children ought to be *sifted* by an academy of enlightened parents.⁴⁹

This focus on the theory of the association of ideas in children's and young people's education can be traced in numerous popular publications in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. A letter to the editor published in *The London Magazine* laments that 'the Association of Ideas [was] too little attended to in the Education of Children.'⁵⁰ Referring to

⁴⁷ Wollstonecraft, 147-8

⁴⁸ Ibid., 155

⁴⁹ Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Maria Edgeworth *Practical Education* (1798) 324-5

⁵⁰ Anonymous 'Letter to the Editor', *The London Magazine* (July, 1762) 390

Locke's chapter 'Of Association of Ideas' quoted earlier, the anonymous writer states that 'if this taste, and incoherent assemblage of Ideas, be so fatal in its consequences, we may reasonably infer the salutary effects of the contrary, namely, the just and due regulation of them.'⁵¹ The writer, much like Rousseau, advocates using sensations of pleasure to effect and encourage correct behaviour:

The mind is as it were hurried in pursuit of that, which it has once strongly connected with the notion of pleasure; till at last the idea of pleasure, and it became so inseparable, that the intellect makes no longer any distinction between them. Were parents to take the pains they ought to effect this, and begin the work in time, they would, in some measure, anticipate the corruptions of nature, and see their children become, considerable proficient[sic], in the school of virtue, before the follies and dissipations of youth had taken hold of them.⁵²

By associating good behaviour, or moral behaviour, with rewards, one would instil a sense of pleasure in behaving virtuously. They then link this association to the idea of teaching children to take pleasure in their duty toward God. They conclude by 'referring the reader to Mr. Locke, for instances, in which the combination of ideas so remarkably affects our notions and reasonings.'⁵³ This simplified version of Locke's theory, applied to behavioural conditioning in children, puts one in mind of Addison's attempt to use the periodical as a platform to access a larger audience and educate his readers about philosophy. By examining only the first two of Smith's novels, we can see her own attempt at delivering ideas on education and upbringing via a more popular format than a philosophical or theoretical text or treatise.

In her first novel, Smith refers to the concept of the store of knowledge – knowledge built up from reading that could be used at a later date: in Emmeline's case, it is a source of strength on which she draws, from her balanced reading, to enable her to endure the tragedies in

⁵¹ Anonymous, 391

⁵² Ibid., 391

⁵³ Ibid., 392

her life. The reading she undertakes, ‘Spencer and Milton, two or three volumes of the Spectator, an old edition of Shakespeare, and an odd volume of Pope’⁵⁴, not only give her ‘a taste for poetry, and the more ornamental parts of literature’ but also ‘the grounds of that elegant and useful knowledge, which, if it rendered not her life happier, enabled her to support, with the dignity of conscious worth, those undeserved evils with which many of her years were embittered.’⁵⁵ In her reading, Emmeline has achieved what Wollstonecraft said should be the aim of a person’s education and reading, a ‘well stored mind’ which renders the individual independent of life’s tragedies and misfortunes.⁵⁶ The emphasis for Smith is on the need for ‘useful knowledge’, rather than purely ‘elegant’ or ornamental. The necessity of useful knowledge is repeated throughout Smith’s novels.

Smith emphasises the necessity of useful knowledge in the Preface to *Desmond*. In the Preface, however, she expands the argument: there is no point in storing knowledge if it holds no purpose. Using history as her example, Smith questions the need for women to learn about history if they are not supposed to apply what they have learned to current affairs and politics. ‘Even in the commonest course of female education,’ she argues,

[women] are expected to acquire some knowledge of history; and yet, if they are to have no opinion of what *is* passing, it avails little that they should be informed of what *has passed*, in a world where they are subject to such mental degradation; where they are censured as affecting masculine knowledge if they happen to have any understanding; or despised as triflers if they have none.⁵⁷

In her argument for the uses of female knowledge, she both defends her own novel – possibly the reason why *Desmond* is the first of her novels to come with any direct guidance for the reader in the form of the Preface – and also the use of knowledge by women generally. She uses herself

⁵⁴ Charlotte Smith, *Emmeline* (1788) 47

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 48

⁵⁶ Wollstonecraft, 35

⁵⁷ Charlotte Smith, *Desmond*, 45

and her novel-writing as an example against the prevailing notion that women acquiring and using knowledge can distract them from their domestic duties or be in some way dangerous.

Smith states that

Knowledge, which qualifies women to speak or to write only on any other than the most common and trivial of subjects, is supposed to be of so difficult attainment, that it cannot be acquired but by the sacrifice of domestic virtues, or the neglect of domestic duties. – *I* however, may safely say, that it was in *observance*, not in the *breach* of duty, *I* became an Author.⁵⁸

To defend her novel and her own learning, she employs what Diane Boyd describes as her ‘mother-writer author function’⁵⁹ demonstrating that she utilises her knowledge and abilities of something other than domestic duties to support her family. In doing so, she allows that other women might, and should, do the same – to make use of the practical accomplishments and knowledge they have acquired for more than just husband-hunting, a particularly distasteful practice to Smith.

Following on from Smith’s staunch defence of women’s education and their use of the knowledge they acquire in *Desmond*, Smith’s *The Old Manor House* provides its readers with a contrast or parallel between two characters: Monimia, Orlando’s chosen bride, and Miss Hollybourn, a young lady thought more suitable due to her better education and higher status. The contrast attempts to highlight why Miss Hollybourn’s expensive education does not, in fact, make her a better candidate for Orlando’s wife as it contrasts the two different types of education which transform the two young ladies’ minds and behaviour. Monimia and Miss Hollybourn are opposites in a number of ways: firstly, Monimia is always referred to by her first name, a more familiar manner than Miss Hollybourn, indicating their status in society as well as

⁵⁸ Smith, *Desmond*, 45-6

⁵⁹ Diane E Boyd, “‘Professing Drudge’: Charlotte Smith’s negotiation of a Mother-writer Author function’ *South Atlantic Review*, 66 (2001) 145

the level of familiarity between the young ladies and Orlando. Secondly, Monimia is an orphan raised by her aunt Lennard whereas Miss Hollybourn is the only child of two doting parents. Thirdly, Monimia is a dependent and Miss Hollybourn is an heiress. Finally, Monimia is restricted in her education by her aunt Lennard and her benefactress, Mrs Rayland, whereas Miss Hollybourn is provided with the best education that money can buy.

In Volume I, we are introduced to Monimia, in which the bulk of the plot focuses on Orlando's desire to educate and instruct her, against the will of Mrs Rayland. Monimia stands in stark contrast to Smith's earlier heroines, Emmeline, Ethelinde, and Celestina, because her intelligence and understanding are not idealised. She does not have an 'intuitive' knowledge like Emmeline; she has not been raised and educated in the way Ethelinde and Celestina were by their families. Monimia, though an orphan like Emmeline, is not imbued with an intelligence and understanding beyond her education – she has to start from scratch. First Orlando teaches her to read and write, then to reflect on her reading and acquired knowledge which she can then apply to her own life. As they plan their clandestine meetings, hiding the learning forbidden by Mrs Rayland who 'had, with that absurd prejudice of narrow minds, declared against [Monimia] being taught any thing but the plainest domestic duties, and the plainest work.' (I, 26-7) She shares the notion of Lady Castlenorth in *Celestina*, a lady of similar age and status to Mrs Rayland, who "always consider[s] it a misfortune when girls are educated above their fortune." (I, 90) Orlando seeks to address this and

to make her amends for the injustice of fortune. If there was any dependence to be placed on expression of countenance, the animation and intelligence that were visible in the soft features of Monimia promised an excellent understanding. What pity that it should not be cultivated! What delight to be her preceptor, and, in despite of the malignity of fortune, to render her mind as lovely as her form! This project got so entirely the possession of Orlando's imagination, that he thought, he dreamed of nothing else; and, however difficult, or even impracticable it seemed, he determined to undertake it.

Orlando, attempting to persuade Monimia into disobeying her aunt and Mrs Rayland, states that

“I would find you proper books; for you may one day have occasion for more knowledge than you can acquire in the way in which you now live.” (65)

His suggestion that she might need more knowledge in future comes from his secret project: educating Monimia as his future wife. In opposition to Mrs Rayland, who fears social mobility, Orlando envisions Monimia in a station higher than she currently occupies and so wants to educate her ready for that station. This will be explored further in a later chapter on the relation of wealth and status to education.

Despite Monimia’s lack of education, or perhaps because of it, their childhood friendship grows into love. The reader witnesses them become closer through their lessons and the reading Monimia is instructed to undertake. Monimia’s reading provides her with ‘useful’ knowledge, which she applies to her life. Before the end of Volume I, through Orlando’s guided reading, Monimia

had learned now that, abject and poor as she was, she was an object of affection to Orlando, who seemed in her eyes the representation of divinity. The reading he had directed her to pursue, had assisted in teaching her some degree of self-value. She found that to be poor was not disgraceful in the eye of heaven, or in the eyes of the good upon earth; and that the great Teacher of that religion which she had been bid to profess, though very little instructed in it, was himself poor, and the advocate and friend of poverty. In addition to all this knowledge, so suddenly acquired, she had lately made another discovery. (114-15)

The discovery is that she is not so ‘plain’ nor did she have such a ‘bad person’ as her aunt had led her to believe. This reflection on her learning leads to observations and associations in situations outside of, though connected to, her learning. Like Emmeline, Monimia, through her reading, is provided, on reflection, ‘with the dignity of conscious worth’. Yet she remains humble because her knowledge is useful and practically applied – it supports her in her everyday life.

In Volume II, we are then introduced to Orlando’s second love interest, Miss Hollybourn – overeducated, boastful heiress of Dr and Mrs Hollybourn. Smith introduces Miss Hollybourn with a long list of her ornamental and academic accomplishments. In Lorraine

Fletcher's critical biography of Smith, she examines the novels through the lens of economy and wealth because 'the unjust power of money is [Smith's] constant theme' (180). When she comes to explore the character of Miss Hollybourn in the biography, she dismisses Smith's satire of the character as a 'bitter' reaction to 'inherited wealth' (179), that 'what [Smith] dislikes [...] is not accomplishments in a young woman but the ease with which they have been acquired, through inheritance and a protective family' (180). While I agree with Fletcher that Smith's satirical portrayal does not stem 'from an anti-feminist prejudice about learning in a young woman' (179), I do not concur with the idea that the satire is entirely about wealth – it is also about waste. Miss Hollybourn is incredibly accomplished, full of knowledge, but she merely regurgitates the knowledge and her abilities and boastfully displays these accomplishments to potential husbands as she has been taught to do by her parents. From the perspective of Miss Hollybourn's parents, the narrator states that: 'To dignify with mental acquirements this epitome of human loveliness, all that education could do had been lavished' (168). Smith lists her abilities and subjects that she has studied. Dr Hollybourn seems to agree with the eminent educational theorist, Vicesimus Knox, that promising pupils in the modern languages should be taught Latin and Greek. From Smith's sardonic tone, however, the reader gets the impression of a 'Jack of all trades' rather than a truly accomplished linguist, artist, or musician:

masters for drawing, painting, music, French, and dancing, had been assembled around her as soon as she could speak; she learned Latin from her father at a very early period, and could read any easy sentence in Greek; was learned in astronomy, knew something of mathematics, and, in relief of these more abstruse studies, read Italian and Spanish. (168)

Smith continues, explaining the impact of Miss Hollybourn's upbringing on her perception of her own abilities:

Having never heard any thing but her own praises, she really believed herself a miracle of knowledge and accomplishments; and it must be owned, that an audience less partial than those before whom she generally performed, might have allowed that she performed very long concertos, and solos without end, with infinite correctness, and

much execution. Then she made the most inveterate likenesses of many of her acquaintance; and painted landscapes, where very green trees were reflected in very blue water. Her French was most grammatically correct, though the accent was somewhat defective; and she knew all manner of history – could tell the dates of the most execrable actions of the most execrable human beings – and never had occasion to consult, so happy was her memory, Trustler's Chronology. (168-9)

That Miss Hollybourn believes herself so accomplished, never questioning or reflecting on her abilities, relying on rote-learning in history, belies the faults in the system of education instigated by Dr and Mrs Hollybourn. While she can do many things, unlike Monimia, she does not reflect and improve on her learning – she is merely 'storing' knowledge and regurgitating it, as is the feared outcome of this type of education according to Wollstonecraft, Edgeworth, and many others, as we have seen.

We can probably also assume that her abilities in the modern languages are not up to the standard Knox indicates in his *Liberal Education* for a female student of the ancient languages, who he said should demonstrate particular 'genius'. The further issue noted by Smith is that the combination of ability and praise, despite her parents believing her 'the most accomplished woman of her age and country' (169), the young men supposed to be courting her find her intimidating or unapproachable. She states:

The gentlemen, however, whom all these elegancies were probably designed to attract, seemed by no means struck with them; some of them, who had approached her on (169) the suggestion of her being an heiress, had declared that her fortune made no amends for her want of beauty; and others had been alarmed by the acquisitions which went so much beyond those they had themselves. (169-170)

Among these young gentlemen is the unimpressed Orlando. On their first meeting at Rayland Hall, Miss Hollybourn takes it upon herself to deliver an impromptu art history lesson on the paintings in Mrs Rayland's gallery, and

having sufficiently shewn her knowledge both in painting and history, and imagining her auditors amazed and edified by both, requested to know if the house did not furnish many other portraits of remarkable persons, or pictures by eminent hands. Orlando

answered coldly, that there were some in other parts of the house, but none particularly worthy her attention. (177)

Her impressive abilities continue to underwhelm Orlando. When dancing, Orlando is fixated on the meeting he intends to have with Monimia but he is forced to dance with Miss Hollybourn by Dr Hollybourn and Mrs Rayland in the hope that they might be suited to one another. So Miss Hollybourn,

who had learned for many years of the most celebrated master, exerted all her knowledge of the art, and displayed all her graces to attract him; while he, hardly conscious of her existence, proceeded mechanically in the dance. (185)

Try as she might, Miss Hollybourn's intellectual accomplishments cannot compare with Monimia's progress in reading, writing, and reflection. She is Orlando's protégée, he is developing Monimia's intellect and understanding in order to make her more suited for the station to which he envisions her rising.

Thankfully for Orlando, the process of educating his future wife is far more successful than Clarence Hervey's attempt to educate himself a beautiful wife in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801). Hervey laments that

“Nothing could be more absurd than my scheme of educating a woman in solitude, to make her fit for society. I might have foreseen what must happen, that Virginia would consider me as her tutor, her father, not as her lover, or her husband; that, with the most affectionate of heart, she could feel for me nothing but *gratitude*.” (472)

Virginia, like Monimia, is given a ‘romantic’ sounding name from a work of fiction, is encouraged to read romances and fairy tales by her would-be lover, and is brought up isolated from polite society – though she is provided with luxuries and not treated as a dependent like Monimia. Edgeworth satirises Smith's idealistic notion that an ‘unclassed’ or lower-class young girl could be educated in isolation from society into a wife fit for a middle or upper-middle-class marriage by her future husband. In Virginia's case, her reading and isolation leads her to fall in

love with the idealised hero of the tale from which she took her name, rather than Hervey for whom she was moulded.

We can trace the influence of Smith and the development of the concept of the store of knowledge in later writers like Jane Austen who many scholars agree was heavily influenced by Smith. As William Magee argues,

Jane Austen developed the same theme of the dangers of bookish living not only in the impish historical inversion of Delamere and the Earl of Essex. She also centred her satire on it in both the frenzied inversions of family life of Laura Lindsay in the juvenile *Love and Freindship* (1790) and the nearly fatal emotions of Marianne Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility* [...] As a likely source of this theme, Charlotte Smith may well have directed the course of even Jane Austen's most mature novels.⁶⁰

Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (1818), suggested by several scholars to burlesque elements of several of Smith's novels, such as *Emmeline* and *Desmond*⁶¹, parodies Emmeline's reading and intellectual capabilities – referring frequently to the store of knowledge concept. As William Magee notes in his exploration of the parallels between their novels, 'themes in Jane Austen's novels are also recurring ideas in Smith's. Starting with the grossly exaggerated intelligence of Emmeline [...] Charlotte Smith stressed education as a chief concern of [her] heroines.'⁶² Catherine's reading sometimes mirrors Emmeline's in terms of those whose works she reads, though not always in what they learn from such reading: 'From Pope, she learnt to censure those

⁶⁰ William H. Magee, 'The Happy Marriage: The Influence of Charlotte Smith on Jane Austen' *Studies in the Novel* 7 (1975) 121-2

⁶¹ See Jillian Heydt-Stevenson 'Northanger Abbey, Desmond, and History' *Wordsworth Circle* 44 (2013) 140-8 and William H. Magee 'The Happy Marriage: The Influences of Charlotte Smith on Jane Austen' *Studies in the Novel* 7 (1975) 120-32

⁶² *Ibid.*, 130

who “bear about the mockery of woe” [...] from Shakespeare she gained a great store of information.’⁶³

Unlike Emmeline, however, Catherine does not have the capacity to reflect on her reading. While Smith’s heroine reads books which ‘blend’ ‘instruction and amusement’, Catherine prefers running around the countryside, playing games,

to books – or at least books of information – for provided that nothing like useful knowledge could be gained from them, provided they were all story and no reflection, she have never any objection to books at all. But from fifteen to seventeen she was in training for a heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and soothing to the vicissitudes of their eventful lives.’⁶⁴

Catherine stores knowledge from her reading (whether novels, poetry, or Shakespeare) in order to ‘train for a heroine’, much like Miss Ashwood in *Emmeline* or Clarinthia Ludford in *Ethelinde*.

Unlike Emmeline, Catherine is provided with a library

of equal magnificence, exhibiting a collection of books, on which a humble man might have looked with pride. – Catherine heard, admired, and wondered with more genuine feeling than before – gathered all that she could from this store-house of knowledge, by running over the titles of half a shelf, and was ready to proceed. (133)

Catherine is done with this magnificent library with a cursory glance, contrasting with Emmeline’s own fruitful endeavours and enthusiastic pursuit of knowledge in the dilapidated library of Mowbray Castle. While Austen may be satirising Emmeline with her portrayal of Catherine, it also retrospectively highlights Smith’s desire for change in young women’s pursuit of knowledge. Smith wishes to see young women pursue knowledge for the pleasure of that pursuit itself, rather than as ‘training’ for a wife or a novelistic heroine. The young women in

⁶³ Jane Austen *Northanger Abbey* (1818) 6

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 4

Smith's novels who strive to pursue knowledge in order to make themselves fit as heroines or wives are inevitably the characters who are not, or do not become, either within the narrative.

Smith's characters, whether heroines or not, tend to pursue their various forms of knowledge through reading. She provides, alongside examples of useful and frivolous knowledge, examples of good and bad reading habits which can influence the type of knowledge stored in one's mind. Reading, as we have seen, was an integral part of any young person's education and there were anxieties about reading, that some young people might 'abuse' the ability as suggested by Rousseau.⁶⁵ Though unlike Rousseau, most educational theorists and writers did not discourage the learning of reading from a young age – most writers advised reading limited to certain genres or a balance in genres read (usually between reading for leisure and reading for instruction).

Smith was ambivalent about the novel genre, like many other female writers of her time, such as Burney herself who struggled with the idea of the impropriety of becoming a female novelist and writing novels or Maria Edgeworth who advertised her novel *Belinda* with a disclaimer that it was not a novel. Edgeworth states that

Every author has the right to give what appellation he may think proper to his works. The public have also a right to accept or refuse the classification that it presented.

The following work is offered to the public as a Moral Tale – the author not wishing to acknowledge a Novel. Were all novels like those of madame de Crousaz, Mrs Inchbald, Miss Burney, or Dr Moore, she would adopt the name of novel with delight: but so much folly, error, and vice are disseminated in books classed under this denomination, that it is hoped the wish to assume another title will be attributed to feelings that are laudable, and not fastidious. (3)

Austen attacks this ambivalence and desire to disassociate from the genre in her famous defence of the novel in *Northanger Abbey*:

⁶⁵ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* (1763) 31

I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding – joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine who if she accidentally take a novel up, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. (21)

Austen admired Edgeworth, Burney and Smith. *Belinda*, declared adamantly not to be a novel, is one of those Austen lists alongside Burney's *Cecilia* and *Camilla*, as

only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language. (23)

Their authors, however, come under attack for their treatment of the novel genre. Smith is one of the writers Austen would have had in mind during this attack. Smith's 'rough treatment' of novel-readers, even as she writes for them, and the manner in which she insists on describing her fictions as 'histories', aligning them with a more respectable genre, as Edgeworth would later in *Belinda*, brings her under fire. A heroine in Smith's works even pushes aside an 'insipid' novel she picks up in a similar manner to which Austen describes. Austen, however, very likely missed Smith's own contribution debate on novel-reading anxieties as it exists in Smith's most politically radical novel, *Desmond*. As Lorraine Fletcher notes, *Desmond* is the only one of Smith's novels that Austen does not discuss and critique in the Juvenilia.⁶⁶ In the letters between Geraldine Verney and her sister Fanny Waverley, Smith explores and examines reactions to novels and their mostly female readership, voicing the concerns she must contend with as a novelist trying to earn a living.

As part of a good 'classical education', 'Milton, Addison, and Pope, must be standing models in English' (341), according to Vicesimus Knox in *Liberal Education* (1785). This was not an original idea by Knox. These 'standing models of English' were recommended reading for

⁶⁶ Lorraine Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1998)

young ladies throughout the century, as a review of Knox's book in the *Gentleman's Magazine* agrees, Milton, Addison, and Pope were 'the models in English' (183, 1782). Smith, it seems, also agreed, perhaps reflecting her own education and reading habits as a young lady. She gives these authors, among others, to Emmeline for reading in her first novel. In the dilapidated library of Mowbray castle, 'which had been well furnished with the books of those ages in which they had been collected' (47), Emmeline discovers and restores 'Spencer and Milton, two or three volumes of the Spectator, an old edition of Shakespeare, and an odd volume of two of Pope [...] together with some tracts of devotion.' (47) These works form the basis of Emmeline's education and the idea of a novelistic heroine reading them is unusual enough that Emmeline's reading has been highlighted by numerous scholars, such as Joe Bray and Diane Long Hoelever. As Loraine Fletcher notes in her edition of *Emmeline*, 'Emmeline's reading gives her the basis of an excellent education.' (47) Smith argues that, even though Emmeline does not receive a formal education, the intensive reading of these works – she has access only to the works she can find in the castle – 'in which instruction and amusement were happily blended' (47) gives her

a taste for poetry, and the more ornamental parts of literature; as well as the grounds of that elegant and useful knowledge, which if it rendered not her life happier, enable her to support with the dignity of conscious worth, those undeserved evils with which many of her years were embittered. (47-48)

The old library, disused and left to fall to ruin like the rest of the castle, restricts and guides Emmeline's reading, giving her the foundation recommended by educationalists like Knox.

It is the first of a number of disused libraries which provide education to disadvantaged characters in Smith's novels. Much as Knox and the Edgeworths state in their own texts, this foundation in classical English makes Emmeline a more discerning reader than the other young ladies she encounters. For example, Emmeline's staunch supporter Augusta Delamere is described as 'deeply read in novels' (103), though not much else. Smith, counterbalancing Augusta's reading with Emmeline's, blames Augusta's literary education, or fashionable female

education in general, for Augusta's limited reading tastes, describing novel reading as 'almost the only reading that young women of fashion are taught to engage in.' (103) Augusta's reading, like many other young women according to Smith, lacks the balance of 'instruction and amusement' (47) found in Emmeline's.

This does not mean, however, that Emmeline dismisses novels entirely. While some novels which she encounters do not engage her, she enjoys others in a social setting among friends. For example, Fitz-Edward 'read[s] *Cecilia* to Mrs. Stafford and Miss Mowbray while they sat at work.' (203) Joe Bray suggests that 'Smith may have been influenced by the representation of reading in Burney's early novels.' (37) Although, in Austen's defence of the novel she disagrees with the reading that Smith gives to her heroine in *Emmeline*, the authors whose works she finds in the library. Austen is dismissive of miscellanies which reproduce 'some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator, and a chapter from Sterne, [and] are eulogized by a thousand pens', though she mainly takes issue with the fact that these reproductions receive more acclaim than a novel, an original work of fiction.⁶⁷ Austen does, however, specifically attack Addison's *Spectator*:

Now, had the same young lady been engaged in a volume of the Spectator, instead of such a work, how proudly would she have produced the book, and told its name; though the chances must be against her being occupied by any part of that voluminous publication, of which either the matter or manner would not disgust a young person of taste: the substance of its papers so often consisting in the statement of improbable circumstances, unnatural characters, and topics of conversation, which no longer concern anyone living; and their language, too, frequently so coarse as to give no very favourable idea of the age that could endure it.⁶⁸

Austen evidently does not agree with Knox or Smith on the point of Addison being essential reading for young ladies by the late 1790s to early 1800s when *Northanger Abbey* was most likely

⁶⁷ Austen, 23

⁶⁸ Ibid., 23

written⁶⁹. Addison's *Spectator* is old-fashioned and vulgar, according to Austen, unlike the novels Austen recommends – original and up-to-date prose, to amuse and instruct the reader. Smith and Knox were brought up and educated at a much earlier period than Austen. Austen had grown up with the literature of the 1780s and 90s, at the opposite end of the period to Steele, and periodical print culture was entirely different to that which existed in the time of Addison and Steele, as we have seen in the first chapter.

Unbalanced Female Readers

Paul Goring argues in *The Rhetoric of Sensibility*, that by the end of the eighteenth century, moralists warned against the effects of novels 'typically [by] deploying a stereotype of an unbalanced female reader, anti-novel discourse projects readers as potential automata – as quixotes who can become possessed, transformed, and unhinged by exposure to the written word.' (Goring, 2005, 167) Paralleled with the balanced readers, the heroines of the novels, Charlotte Smith presents her readers with unbalanced, anti-heroines whose role is to highlight the balanced reading and intelligence of the heroines; bad habits contrasted with good, and the effects these habits have.

Florence Hilbish states, 'Smith's greatest achievement in novel technique was character drawing, in which she rapidly developed from types and caricatures in her early works to living creations.' (423) This can be seen in the development of the unbalanced readers, characters whose reading habits are limited to a single form usually novels affecting their minds and often their behaviour, from Miss Ashwood, who only plays a minor part, and the naïve Augusta

⁶⁹ *Northanger Abbey* was first published in 1818 and advertised initially in 1816, however, we know it was written earlier. The references to Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) suggest late 1790s to early 1800s, but, as David Blair notes in his introduction to the Wordsworth Classics edition of *Northanger Abbey*, 'The compositional history of *Northanger Abbey* is unclear. Austen refers to it as having been completed for publication in 1803, but her sister Cassandra indicated that it was written in 1797-8.' (vi)

Delamere in *Emmeline* through to Miss Goldthorp in *The Young Philosopher*, who is more like Isabella Thorpe in Austen's *Northanger Abbey*: beautiful, manipulative when it comes to gaining herself a husband, imitating novelistic heroines in order to act the part she is expected to play while influencing those around her and plotting her own future, regardless of the wishes of her guardians. In other words, Miss Goldthorp is more developed as a character than her predecessors. While she possesses the trait of quixotism, that is only one small part of her personality and she is more conscious of how she uses the knowledge she gains from novels than her predecessors.

Ronald Paulson notes that there are a number of types of quixotism in novels in his survey of explicitly Cervantean imitators, such as Henry Fielding:

1. There is fashionable affectation – imitation of, immersion in a fashionable text [...]
2. [...] Quixote deviated, returning to an older and outmoded set of manners. [...] *unfashionable* imitation.
3. Finally, there is the imitation of a text that, whatever its old-fashioned virtues, binds or restricts – dehumanizes – the person, and is contrasted with living, human response. (61)

Smith uses the technique quixotism in her characters alongside paralleling to contrast those adversely affected by their over-indulgent reading versus those with a more balanced reading habit. In this section, I would like to map out the development of Smith's unbalanced female readers, demonstrating the development of quixotism as a stereotype or a naïve character flaw the character is not aware of, into quixotism as a conscious choice by the character, used to attempt to manipulate those around the character.

The Edgeworths treat extensively on reading for children and young people in their *Practical Education*; they are especially concerned about the reading of fiction. 'Stories are the novels of childhood,' the Edgeworths warn, 'we know, from common experience, the effects of which are produced upon the mind by immoderate novel reading. To those who acquire this taste, every object becomes disgusting which is not in an attitude for poetic painting; a species of moral picturesque is sought for in every scene of life, and this is not always compatible with

sound sense, or with simple reality.’ (333) This applies ‘especially in the education of girls.’ (332) What the Edgeworths are most concerned about is young girls ‘affecting’ novelistic virtues, ‘affecting’ to become like their heroines, rather than feeling and learning these virtues for themselves. The concern was with performance. The Edgeworths were part of a movement in opposition to the culture of sensibility,

it was an assault which operated on a number of political, social, and moral fronts, and which integrated a forceful critique of sentimentalism’s feminised expressions of virtue. And significantly where the body in fiction and the reading body were concerned, what underlies much late-century opposition to sentimentalism’s recognition that the exaggerated language of gesture is performance.’ (180)

The female quixotes of late eighteenth-century fiction were often set as examples against this performance of virtue and feeling, the performance of the role of novelistic heroine.

Smith’s unique approach, however, means that her quixotes are never main characters, as seen in earlier novels such as Charlotte Lennox’s *Female Quixote* or even later novels such as Austen’s *Northanger Abbey* and Sarah Green’s *Romance Readers and Romance Writers*. Her quixotic characters are peripheral because they attempt to imitate novelistic heroines whereas her actual heroines just *are* heroines without performance, without trying to be. Smith parallels the readers in her novels. Mary Poovey describes the technique, as used by Austen, as ‘doubling’ (43) which ‘provided an opportunity [...] to dramatize the negative counterparts of the heroine’s perfect qualities.’ (43) Emmeline and her counterparts, Augusta Delamere and Miss Ashwood, though Miss Ashwood plays a more minor role within the novel, serve to highlight the benefits of Emmeline’s balanced reading over their extensive novel reading. The ‘fashionable’ reading of novels has differing effects on how Emmeline perceives Augusta and Miss Ashwood, and vice versa. Miss Ashwood, for example, is described as an

insupportable torment to Emmeline, as she had taken it into her head to form, with her, a sentimental friendship. She had learned all the cant of sentiment from novels [...] She talked perpetually of delicate embarrassments and exquisite sensibilities, and probably had a lover, as she extremely wanted a confidant; a post which Emmeline with some

difficulty declined. – of “the sweet novels” she had read, she just understood as much as made her long to become the heroine of such an history herself, and she wanted somebody to listen to her hopes of being so. (235)

Miss Ashwood is a proto-type of the protagonist’s tormentor in *Ethelinde*, Clarinthia Ludford.

Clarinthia is Ethelinde’s cousin, and also imagines herself in the role of novelistic heroine, but is a little older than Miss Ashwood and takes things much further, being of marriageable age.

While both Clarinthia and Miss Ashwood desire a confidant for their ‘adventures’ and discussions of lovers, Augusta Delamere sees herself as the confidant and projects her ideals and knowledge of novelistic heroines onto Emmeline and her relationship with Delamere - Augusta’s ‘star-crossed lovers’ as it were, kept apart by their family. As the narrator notes, Augusta has acquired ‘many of her ideas [from novels], she imagined that Delamere and Emmeline were born for each other’ (103). Augusta’s projection of her novelistic ideals onto the relationship between Emmeline and Delamere, and her sentimental education via novels, causes Augusta to imagine that, despite ‘only know[ing] each other for a few days, a sisterly affection had taken place between them.’ (103) She also continues to invent, embellish, and idealize, the relationship. As the narrator speaks from the perspective of the romantically-minded Augusta, influenced by the novels she has read. The narrator states:

[Augusta] fancied that Emmeline could not be insensible to Delamere’s love; she believed she saw many symptoms of regard for him in her manner, and that she made the most heroic sacrifice of her love to her duty, when she resigned him [...] But from these two friends, so tenderly and justly beloved, Emmeline was now to depart, and to be thrown among strangers, where it was improbable she would meet with any who would supply the loss of them. Her duty demanded this painful effort, and she determined to execute it with courage and resolution. (103)

This short paragraph, though delivered by the narrator, clearly speaks from Augusta’s perspective. Emmeline had previously been happily living in Swansea and even met her friend Mrs Stafford there – until Delamere appears, again. He drives her from place to place, family to family, through his petulant and determined behaviour – she is more likely to feel irritated and exasperated at the effect of his attention. The reader knows this, having so far seen her driven

from both Mowbray castle and Swansea – by seating this idealization of Emmeline and Delamere close to the description of Augusta’s romantic turn of mind caused by novel-reading, Smith is highlighting to her readers the necessity of questioning what they read, rather than absorbing it and taking it at face value, and also to question the impact of their own reading on their minds and perceptions. She suggests with Augusta that extensive novel-reading, not balanced by other reading, can lead to an unbalanced perspective on life; it can lead one to idealize or romanticise a situation. Bearing in mind that Delamere’s volatile temperament leads him to abduct Emmeline later in the novel, it highlights how wrong idealistic perceptions can be, how they could be dangerous. Many other writers, including Jane Austen, have used a number of methods to highlight to their readers the issues inherent in projecting fictional ideals onto the real world. It is this problem, some writers might even call it a danger, that Wollstonecraft states to be the issue in reading and storing information as discussed in section one of this chapter.

In the same novels, *Emmeline*, the reader and Emmeline herself are confronted with a fleeting stereotype of a female Quixote in the guise of Miss Ashwood. Unlike Augusta, Miss Ashwood does not project her ideals onto someone else but feels that *she* could be the heroine. The reader is guided to see the relationship she tries to create with Emmeline as a joke. Emmeline, the reader is fully aware, is the true heroine of the novel so it is a source of amusement that Miss Ashwood seeks Emmeline for her ‘confidant; a post which Emmeline with some difficulty declined.’ (235) Miss Ashwood is looking for someone beneath her station, a Sancho to her Quixote or a Lucy to her Arabella, totally unaware, unlike the reader, that this is not Miss Ashwood’s novel it is Emmeline’s. Miss Ashwood has read “‘the sweet novels’” and ‘understood as much as had made her long to become the heroine of such an history herself, and she wanted somebody to listen to her hopes of being so.’ (235) Smith emphasises here that Miss Ashwood has not read the novels critically and reflectively, she has not fully understood them and is simply performing the role she has idealized in her mind of a girl with a lover and someone to confide in. Even her language is performed: ‘She had learned all the cant of

sentiment from novels; and her mama's lover had extremely edified her in teaching her to express it.' (235) Emmeline, however, 'studiously evade[s]' Miss Ashwood for this behaviour and Miss Ashwood is soon forgotten and lost in the narrative. This short section contains all the detail the reader is given before Miss Ashwood is lost in the group attempting to sabotage Emmeline's betrothal to Delamere, described simply as one of 'the two Misses Ashwood' (236) only a few pages later.

Smith develops this Quixote stereotype further in *Ethelinde* introducing Ethelinde's cousin, Clarinthia Ludford. Clarinthia is a more fully realised, older version of Miss Ashwood (who was only fourteen, whereas Clarinthia is seventeen) and is given more page time. She lives her life in imitation of novelistic heroines, creating 'imaginary miseries' (III, 157) and dramas, in order to 'establish in her own opinion the "heroine of a tale of sympathy", not unworthy of the place she contemplated with the most pleasure – a circulating library.' (III, 158) Like Miss Ashwood, Clarinthia performs the part of a novelistic heroine and is seeking a confidant in the heroine of the novel. Again the joke is on Clarinthia who, as a character, is unaware that Ethelinde is the true heroine, though she is more successful at gaining the heroine for a confidant than her predecessor Miss Ashwood. Ethelinde, as a last resort, is forced to live with her remaining family, the Ludfords, after her father's death. Despite Ethelinde's upset, as soon as she is calm,

Clarinthia was so eager to take advantage of it, that it appeared as if she had been less solicitous for the relief of her cousin than for some body to listen to those narratives which she had such a violent inclination to relate, and of which she was herself the heroine. (156)

Clarinthia then 'confides' in Ethelinde her tale of woe and misery: her clandestine correspondence with her lover has been betrayed by the "deceitful Miss Nelson" (157). Ethelinde discovers 'that the greatest charm Clarinthia found in having an *attachment*, was in having so placed it, as to be sure of opposition from her family, and to have laid a plan for such

imaginary miseries' as a heroine might face. Clarinthia writes her own 'history' and manipulates those around her, including Ethelinde, to gain her preferred outcome. Ultimately, her plans are frustrated when the 'characters' do not behave as she wants them to do so. This is the point at which Smith creates a heavy contrast between her true heroine, Ethelinde, and her false heroine, Clarinthia. Compared to Ethelinde's real miseries, the death of her father, the loss of her guardian Sir Edward, the imprisonment of her brother, Clarinthia's 'imaginary miseries' fall flat and perhaps seem farcical to the reader.

During Ethelinde's stay, Clarinthia 'had discarded her former lover who she once preferred, only because her father, who had at first opposed his pretensions, at length encouraged them, in consequence of the death of an elder brother, by which he became heir to a considerable fortune.' (169) She had acquired herself a new lover, from whom Ethelinde was asked to receive clandestine letters on Clarinthia's behalf. 'This Ethelinde resolutely refused, and a coldness arose from thence on the part of Clarinthia, which was soon aggravated into absolute hatred' when her discarded lover

had not [...] been three days in the company of Ethelinde, [and] his attachment to her cousin was entirely eradicated; and he very frankly told [Clarinthia], that being convinced he had nothing to hope, he had determined to persecute her no more with his passion [...] he entreated her interest with her amiable cousin. (169-170)

Clarinthia verbally attacks Ethelinde for this unplanned and unexpected turn of events, as

she was angry that she had not been able to secure one of those attachments, at once violent and hopeless, of which she had read so much, and by which the romantic coquettishness of her mind, would have found itself particularly gratified. (172)

When Clarinthia attacks Ethelinde, accusing her of the same behaviour she herself had been guilty of, acquiring and discarding lovers to heighten the romance of waiting for Montgomery to return.

"Lovers are with you such common acquirements that one or two, more or less, are not worth your attention." [...] "No, pray have the glory of refusing a man who was once

thought not unworthy of *me*; and boast of having for the sake of the dear Montgomery, discarded two men, both of fortunes superior to what even *I* have the right to expect.” (171)

Again the Quixote character chose her confidant based on social status. Clarinthia sees Ethelinde as socially inferior, and therefore unthreatening, until Ethelinde acquires one of Clarinthia’s discarded lovers despite not having Clarinthia’s family and fortune. This is not how Clarinthia had planned her ‘history’ as a heroine – Mr Southcote, her discarded lover, was supposed to pine hopelessly for her but instead he, rationally, moves on. Ethelinde, on the other hand, is not only totally unaware of Mr Southcote’s intentions but also, when Clarinthia verbally attacks her for her ‘discarding’ two men, Ethelinde is sat re-reading correspondence from Montgomery.

Ethelinde’s constancy is, of course, rewarded at the end of the novel, as the reader expects from the novel genre. Through this happy ending, Smith demonstrates to her reader the benefits of not performing and manipulating, playing the quixote, and hoping to create a dramatic story. Ethelinde, through her intellect, is recognized as an ideal companion by a number of men in the novel, including the married Sir Edward Newenden, but she stays constant to her poverty-stricken lover and they marry. Clarinthia creates her own miseries – both real and imagined – by attempting to create a history worthy of the circulating library and suffers for it, whereas Ethelinde, who endures real and undeserved hardship, is rewarded for her constancy and fortitude.

The final incarnation of Smith’s peripheral Quixote, and the most fully developed of the character type, is Miss Goldthorp in Smith’s final novel, *The Young Philosopher*. She is older again than Clarinthia Ludford, twenty-one, meaning she has more independence than her predecessors as she has achieved her majority and therefore has control of her own fortune, rather than it being under the care of her guardians, the Winslows.

William Magee notes that ‘Miss Goldthorp [...] who, being “very deeply read in romances and novels,” makes certain that men pursue her.’ (124, 175) Miss Goldthorp uses her

accomplishments and knowledge gained from novel-reading in order to gain herself a husband of her own choosing. Like Clarinthia, she wants men to pursue her and fall in love with her as suitors do the heroines of novels. Unlike all of the previous incarnations of the female Quixote in Smith's novels, Miss Goldthorp is introduced from the beginning as a rival to the heroine, Medora, and actually appears in the novel before her.

In the very first chapter, Miss Goldthorp is rescued by the novel's hero, George Delmont, making her appear as though she could be the heroine. She is also the only female quixote to appear in one of Smith's male-centred novels, meaning that the focus of the novel is on the development of George Delmont, excepting the interpolated narratives of Medora and her mother, Laura, in the later volumes. This makes all potential heroines, true or false, peripheral to the main character; Delmont's choice of heroine is part of his *bildungsroman*.

Miss Goldthorp, though she appears in the very first chapter, is not properly introduced to the reader until after the accident in the first chapter and Mrs Crewkherne's narrative of the decline of the Delmont family to Dr Winslow. The very first point Smith makes on Miss Goldthorp's character is that

Miss Goldthorp was a young lady naturally of a very tender and susceptible nature, and who, notwithstanding her aunt boasted of the care she had taken to prevent it, was very deeply read in romance and novels, by some one or other of the heroines of which she occasionally "set her mind," so that with a great versatility of character she rarely appeared in her own.

Once again, Smith's Quixote character is first introduced via her reading habits and the effects those habits have on her personality. Unlike Clarinthia, Miss Goldthorp does not want to be the heroine of her own novel, instead, she changes her personality and uses the performative gestures she has learned from the novels depending on the character she wants to be. In this way, she is far more manipulative than any of her predecessors and her entire personality is a

performance. Smith emphasises this in Miss Goldthorp's attempts to win Delmont, or "the dear youth" (36) quoting from sentimental fiction, through performing sentimental gestures:

[Her eyes] were fixed in gentle languor on [his] face [...], whenever his were turned another way; but the moment he looked towards her, they were cast down with bewitching consciousness, and no pains were spared to add to their expression by a blush; but it was not always to be had; however a broken sigh was no bad substitute. (36-7)

All these actions are performed with the consciousness of the effect she wants them to have, however unsuccessful. Her truly manipulative personality is demonstrated in the first paragraph of her introduction, in her treatment of her cousin Middleton.

The same paragraph also demonstrates the further development of Smith's quixotic character trope as it shows that Miss Goldthorp's novel-reading isn't entirely to blame, that in her upbringing she was encouraged by others to coquette and that the dysfunctional relationship she has with her guardians and cousin also has its impact. Interrupting the description of her reading habits and their effects with a dash, the paragraph runs:

As she hardly remembered an hour since she was ten years old, when she had not heard of a love from her friends or a maid, she could never divest herself of a sort of restless coquetry, which, when no other object was at hand, condescended to amuse itself with the mawkish attempts of Middleton Winslow to express the passion his father and mother insisted on his feeling for her. (36)

This upbringing, being encouraged to coquet and expected to marry her cousin who 'in reality [...] cared as little for her as she did for him' (36), emphasises that while novels taught her to perform, she would still have been a manipulative coquette without them. Even in her reading of novels, she demonstrates her rebellion towards her aunt and guardian, Mrs Winslow, who 'boasted of the care she had taken to prevent [her novel reading].' (35)

In this final novel, Smith argues that it is not novel-reading that creates the faults in young people but their upbringing. The excessive novel-reading, without much other knowledge,

simply exacerbates the issues. Medora, Delmont's chosen and the novel's true heroine, also reads novels but does not attempt to perform what she finds within them and is even incredulous that the events are possible in reality until she finds herself in a situation akin to a novel. Narrating her escape, Medora states that

[The arras] was nailed down so that I could not move it, nor could the wind perform any of those operations upon it which constitute a great part of the terror in some novels I had read at Upwood, little imagining then that I should so soon become involved in adventures, and really be in one of those situations I have sometimes thought, rather ingeniously imagined than really possible. (314)

Ultimately, while quixotism is one of her defects, exacerbated by her coquettishness and rebellious streak, Miss Goldthorp cannot be a heroine in one of Smith's novels. Delmont chooses Medora, Smith's version of the 'child of nature', raised with Rousseauvian ideals in mind, like himself. She is the opposite of Miss Goldthorp. Medora does not perform the part of a novelistic heroine, though she is accused by Mrs Crowling, one of her captors, of being an "artful girl" who "fancying herself like Pamela, I suppose, in the novel, [...] rambl[es] alone about our country" (329), she simply is a heroine of a novel.

In the novels, the true and false heroines are always recognizable to the reader. The contrast of ideal versus flawed making it clear, and heightening the sense of irony as one performs the art of a heroine, often for the true heroine, and one is truly a heroine without trying. The latter is always rewarded with a happy ending, the former punished with not getting their way. The women in the novels who make good heroines and therefore good wives are those who demonstrate good use of knowledge and intellect to back up their constancy and fortitude, rather than using their knowledge to manipulate others by performing a role.

Orlando; or, The Unbalanced Male Reader

if I am not willing that a boy should be obliged to learn to read, by a much stronger reason am I against using this compulsion with girls [...] There are very few of the sex who do not rather abuse, than make use of this dangerous invention. (V, 31)

Rousseau, while he advocates against teaching both boys and girls to read ‘too early’, female readers provoke more anxiety for him. His concern with male reading has more to do with his thought that reading is not as important as other skills for young boys than any fear that they might ‘abuse’ the ability or misuse it in any way. Orlando is a striking character – perhaps more so than his protégée-cum-fiancée, Monimia. He is Smith’s single example of an unbalanced male reader – like his female counterparts in Smith’s novels, Clarinthia, Augusta, Miss Goldthorp, and Miss Ashwood, Orlando has his head turned by romances, fairy tales, and fiction. As they are ‘in training for heroines’, he is in training for a hero. He is the hero of a fairy tale: his princess is Monimia in her high turret, guarded by the fearsome ‘dragon’, Aunt Lennard. (62) Despite Orlando’s excellent education, he projects a fantasy, encouraged by his leisure reading, of a fairy tale onto his relationship with Monimia.

When Orlando returns from school, no longer a school-boy but a young man of nineteen, he begins to think romantically of his childhood friend, and, the narrator states,

Her imprisonment, the harshness of her aunt towards her, and her desolate situation. Contributed to raise in his heart all that the most tender pity could add to the ardency of a first passion. Naturally of a warm and sanguine temper, the sort of reading he had lately pursued, his situation, his very name, all added something to the romantic enthusiasm of his character. (56)

Smith persistently reinforces Orlando’s perspective as skewed by romances when establishing the relationship between Orlando and Monimia early on in the novel. As Orlando attempts to discover a way to gain access to Monimia, away from the watchful eye of Aunt Lennard, the narrator describes the guarded turret in which Monimia sleeps:

Mrs Lennard slept at some distance; but there was no other way of Monimia’s going into any part of the house but by a passage which led through her room; for every other avenue was closed up, and the last thing she did every night was to lock the door of the room where her niece lay, and to take away the key. (61)

Orlando sees Monimia a prisoner locked in a tower, treated cruelly. This is emphasised by the ‘well secured’ window, ‘in effect only a loop’ or narrow opening, ‘secured by iron bars’. Rayland Hall ‘retained the same appearance of defensive strength which had then been given it,’ during the civil war, and, states the narrator,

No knight of romance ever had so many real difficulties to encounter in achieving the deliverance of his princess, as Orlando had in finding the means merely to converse with the little imprisoned orphan. Months passed away, in which his most watchful diligence served only to prove that these difficulties were almost insurmountable; nor would he perhaps, with all the enthusiasm of love and romance, have ever conquered them, if chance had not befriended him. (61)

In the repetition of ‘romance’ throughout these early passages, the narrator reinforces the idea that Orlando is romanticising the situation, influenced by his reading, rather than the narrator or Smith romanticising the situation.

Monimia is certainly not the one romanticising – despite Mrs Rayland’s fears that a romantic name, which referred to Otway’s play *The Orphan*, might cause Monimia to become romantic in mindset herself. For Mrs Rayland, ‘her name – Monimia – was an incessant occasion of reproach [...] “the girl will have nothing, why put such romantic notions into her head, as may prevent her getting her bread honestly? [...] I must insist on having her called Mary.”’ (I, 25-6) It is Orlando, however, whose ‘very name’ (56), derived from Ariosto’s epic poem *Orlando Furioso* (1516) as indicated by the quotation at the opening of the novel, which ‘anchors [Orlando] in the romance tradition, ensuring that his world is that of fantasy.’⁷⁰ While Mrs Rayland considers a young girl in danger of being given a romantic turn of mind, she misses that her favourite, though a young man, is affected by his reading. Mrs Rayland’s old-fashioned way of thinking leads her to miss that Orlando is just as susceptible to romantic thinking as Monimia could be.

⁷⁰ Jacqueline Labbe, *The Old Manor House* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002) 35

By creating a parallel between a young man affected by romance novels and fairy tales and a young woman who is not, with their equally 'romantic' names, Smith turns the 'romantic' or unbalanced reader stereotype on its head and makes that reader a young man rather than a young woman. This is highly unusual for her time. The most famous example of a novel in which a man is led astray by his reading is Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which was written over 100 years prior to *The Old Manor House*, and was highly influential throughout the eighteenth century. Despite the impact Cervantes' book had, there are far fewer novels concerned with the impact of reading on men because there were fewer fears about a male reader's mind being turned by fiction.

The Edgeworths, like Rousseau, identify more anxieties attached to girls reading fiction and romance than boys reading fiction. In *Practical Education*, Edgeworth states that 'with respect to sentimental stories, and books of mere entertainment, we must remark, that they should be sparingly used, especially in the education of girls.' (332) While the Edgeworths do advocate novels of 'voyages and travels' (336) such as 'Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver [...] the Arabian Tales' there is one caveat:

This species of reading should not early be chosen for boys of an enterprising temper, unless they are intended for a sea-faring life, or for the army. [...] to girls this species of reading cannot be as dangerous as it is to boys; girls must very soon perceive the impossibility of rambling about the world in quest for adventures [...] [Whereas] the taste for adventure is not repressed in boys by the impossibility of its indulgence, the world is before them, and they think that fame promises the highest prize to those who will most boldly venture in the lottery of fortune. (336-7)

As we have seen, fears about girls reading fiction suggested girls could become 'insensible', inured to the suffering of others, or even repelled by it, or simply expect everyday life to be as a novel is with them as the main character. The only fear for boys, according to Edgeworth, is that their reading might instil in them a thirst for adventure, should they read adventure books. Edgeworth describes adventures alongside fairy tales as books 'which amuse the imagination of

children without acting upon their feelings.’ (336) It is not a taste for adventure which Orlando acquires from his reading of romance, adventure, and fairy tales, such as the Arabian Nights. He is studious and reluctant to join the army. Instead, Orlando acquires a taste for being the hero, for rescuing the damsel in distress.

Unlike Smith’s female quixotes, however, Orlando’s education disturbs his quixotism. He is reflective and critical, which makes Orlando more aware of his fantastic thinking and the irrationality of his ‘knight errantry’ and hopes of rescuing the damsel in distress:

but in the midst of the fairy dreams which he indulged, reason too often stepped in to poison his enjoyments, and represented to him, that he was without fortune, and without possession – that far from seeing at present any probability of ever being able to offer an establishment to the unfortunate Monimia, he had to procure one for himself. (56-7)

Through Orlando’s success in his desire to ‘rescue’ Monimia, Smith is encouraging her readers to think more critically and reflectively. Unlike Clarinthia or Miss Ashwood before him, Orlando does not act out his part and expect the outcome as if he were in a romance or novel, he realises the futility of his attempt as he is and strives to better his own situation in order to achieve his aim. He is the only quixote of Smith’s novels to succeed in his aims of marriage and love because he is also critical and rational, and he finds real-world solutions to his romantic desires. Through this example of Orlando, Smith demonstrates to parents and educators the benefits of creating a critical reader through a good education, like the ones boys of the same rank receive – if girls were educated the same way, they would be able to reflect, like Orlando, and not get so carried away with romantic notions.

Florence Hilbish argues in her biography of Smith that Orlando is one of Smith’s best-formed male characters. In her early novels, men are peripheral to the heroines and as such aren’t fully developed as characters. From *Desmond*, however,

[Smith] improves in her conception of men, and makes them [frequently] the centre of interest. Desmond, Orlando, D’Alonville, George Delmont, are her most real and vivid heroes for the reader’s sympathy. (1941, 369)

More often than not, female novelists writing for a female audience tended to make heroines the focus of their novels: Frances Burney's four novels all centre on a young woman, as do Edgeworth's and Austen's, even Mary Wollstonecraft's unusual novels take a woman for their central protagonist due to her proto-feminist prerogative. So it is interesting that Smith should create a balance of gender in her works. Not taking into account the novellas in *Letters of a Solitary Wanderer*, more than half of Smith's prose fiction for adults takes for its focus a male protagonist, leaving women as the peripheral characters, even the heroines. The novels which do this are Smith's later, more mature works, after *Emmeline*, *Ethelinde*, and *Celestina*. This makes the development of the male characters even more significant as it is from a female writer's perspective. What makes Smith change from female to male protagonists is unknown but it is striking that the first novel in which she does so is her highly political *Desmond*, also her only epistolary novel. Perhaps the balance comes from the fact Smith, as a single mother to both boys and girls, recognized the need for male protagonists in novels as well as female. Novels were often read in family groups and boys would need role models as much as girls. While Smith's female characters who see life through the lens of the novels they read serve as a warning to young women, Orlando stands as an example of the effects novels, romances, and adventures, can have on young men – the desire to become a hero and the issues inherent in approaching real-life in the same manner which one read in a story, no matter of gender.

Lorraine Fletcher in her critical biography notes Smith's use of idealised, happy endings as a technique for tackling the subject of social reform. She states that

The reader is aware of the unlikeliness of the resolution [of Smith's novels], when the wealthy relative dies or the abandoned orphan turns out to be a legitimate aristocrat. The endings are in fact so unlikely that they make no attempt to deceive us: these are fictions, Charlotte implies, so the conventional endings do not compromise the exposure of poverty or social injustice. Her resolutions are obviously factitious, but the problems are honestly explored. And in her most sophisticated novels, *The Old Manor House* and *The Young Philosopher*, closure is entirely self-conscious. (112, 1998)

Like the endings, as this chapter has shown, the heroines are also idealized. The idealized heroines, contrasted with their anti-heroines, get idealized happy endings as a reward, while characters like Miss Hollybourn and Miss Goldthorp are punished and emphatically paralleled as the opposite to the heroines. They do not get married or receive a fortune of any kind, while their counterparts marry the heroes and are raised to a higher station (either by being recognized as legitimate aristocrats or through marriage). Here Smith is guiding her readers to see the two types in this light: those who are modest, balanced readers, who do not focus on acquiring knowledge simply to make themselves potential wives, are the ones who make better partners and wives which is recognized by the heroes. They are the ones who get the happy endings. Smith is aiming here for a different type of social reform: she is encouraging her female readers to seek knowledge for pleasure rather than 'to train for a heroine' or a wife. Life is not like a novel, therefore performing the part of a heroine will not get you married. She demonstrates through her portrayals of the misguided Miss Hollybourn who has been highly educated but only takes pride in her education because she thinks it will impress her suitors, and the unbalanced readers whose novel-reading leads them to focus on love and marriage rather than any deeper meaning or any other intellectual pursuit. Emmeline, Ethelinde, and Monimia, among others, pursue knowledge for the sake of knowledge, for the pleasure it gives them and for their own intellectual accomplishment, rather than to become marriageable, and therefore they have the better outcomes and are the heroines.

Chapter Three: "I know of no book that can escape their censure": Surveillance, Censorship and Education

'The only end of writing is to enable the readers better to enjoy life, or better to endure it.'

Samuel Johnson (1757)

"Why didn't you tell me there was danger in men-folk? Why didn't you warn me? Ladies know what to fend against, because they read novels that tell them of these tricks; but I never had the chance o' learning in that way, and you did not help me!"

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891)

In this chapter, I examine Smith's views on the 'moral media panic' of the eighteenth century, and her attitudes towards the idea of censorship and education with regards to reading. Reading was a significant part of education as well as a significant social and political issue during the eighteenth century. As discussed in the previous chapter, Clifford Siskin in the introduction to his *The Work of Writing* draws our attention to the parallels between the anxieties surrounding the proliferation of texts, novels or otherwise, and our own moral media panic surrounding the potential dangers of video games and films. Concern about the links between this new technology (i.e. print) and education was widespread throughout society and went beyond educational books and treatises or theories on education by pedagogues and philosophers. Paul Keen notes the growth of anxiety surrounding reading and knowledge from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the 1790s, he states

If, for literary heroes such as Steele and Addison, literature was an important means of affecting the nation's moral improvement, by the end of the century it had become embroiled in all the negative effects of fashion which they had set themselves so industriously against. The republic of letters was threatened on one side by political upheavals which cast into question the claim to authors to freedom of expression and, on the other side, by the growing popularity of fashionable literature, which effectively trivialised this freedom. Both problems made it increasingly difficult to argue for the paramount importance of literature as a public sphere whose greatest strength was its ability to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge; both tended to locate the source of these conflicts in emergent readerships whose judgement – whether it was because they were

too preoccupied with serious issues, or because they were not serious enough – could not be trusted. (115, 1999)

As Spacks argues in *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* there was a

Diffuse anxiety – multiplied anxiety of individuals – [that] accompanied what can be seen at a distance of time as an increasing focus on the individual in eighteenth-century England. The widespread concern over the possible effects of novel reading registers an aspect of that anxiety: worry over what it might mean for people to read in solitude. For women and the young in particular, the solitary experience of other's fantasies would perhaps encourage their own, and perhaps those fantasies would result in dangerous action (meaning, in most cases, sexual action.) (2003, 27)

She suggests that this concern and reaction is similar to

the kind of anxiety that now attends, for many, consideration of images of violence on television or pornography on the Internet – how might they affect children? – [this anxiety] once belonged to that idea of novel reading, specifically because of its privacy and that space for fantasy which privacy creates. (29)

Ana Vogrinčić describes it as an 'early moral media panic' (103, 2008), linking the unsubstantiated fear of novels to the similarly overblown fears surrounding violence in modern films, TV and video games, our current 'moral media panic.' This was the atmosphere in which Smith spent the majority of her writing career: one that was at once concerned about the impact of politically charged writing as well as fashionable writing that offered its readers 'nothing useful.' Both of which could, many critics feared, produce dangerous effects, like those Spacks discussed.

Throughout the eighteenth century, there was a widespread discussion and debate on the various topics within education outside of books like Rousseau's *Emile* and the Edgeworths' *Practical Education* – concern about education and its methods, as we have seen in previous chapters, also infiltrated popular print culture productions like periodicals and magazines. In the same manner as one might have reproduced a novel chapter or section in a periodical, sections of texts on education and methods were also included. As noted in Chapter One, a short section of Vicesimus Knox's *Liberal Education* (1781) was printed in the *Scots Magazine* (July, 1782) entitled 'On the Literary Education of Women'. The section advocates the teaching of French

and English classics to women in the upper classes, even suggesting that young ladies who ‘appear to possess genius’ (341) could use this as a foundation for learning the ancient classics in Greek and Latin. The overall take-home message of the piece was that reading should be restricted at first. Following the older model of what William St Clair in *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Era* calls ‘intensive’ reading as ‘many inconveniences arise from engaging young minds in the perusal of too many books.’ (Knox, 341) From this initial foundation the female pupil ‘will [then] be able to select [for herself] with some judgement, and will have laid the foundation, according to Knox, which will bear any superstructure.’ (341)

In this short section, Knox voices a concern echoed through many texts on education: the argument of ‘intensive’ vs ‘extensive’ reading. With the ever-increasing volume of books, more and more reading material was available, and it was becoming more difficult to censor or guide a young person’s reading. As noted in Chapter One, liberal and radical writers all shared concerns regarding the growing volume of material and its accessibility. It led More to write her novel, *Coelebs in Search of a Wife*, in an attempt to provide material to counteract the lure of the usual material found in early nineteenth-century circulating libraries. In the second volume of *Practical Education*, the Edgeworths advocate physically altering books for children to ensure they only read what their parents deem suitable. They describe a collection of books borrowed from a friend whose ‘editing’ of children’s books they admire thus:

We have several books before us marked by her pencil, and volumes which, having undergone some necessary operations by her scissors [sic], would in their mutilated state shock the sensibility of the nice librarian. But shall the education of a family be sacrificed to the beauty of a page, or even to the binding of a book? Few books can safely be given to children without the previous use of the pen, pencil, and the scissors[sic]. In the books which we have before us, in their corrected state, we see sometimes a few words blotted out, sometimes half a page, sometimes many pages are cut out. (II, 322)

Like Knox, they advocated ‘intensive’ over ‘extensive’. *Practical Education* critiques and recommends a number of books on various subjects for children, and states that

by reading much at a time, it is true that a number of books are run through in a few years; but this is not at all our object; on the contrary, our greatest difficulty has been to find a sufficient number of books fit for children to read. (II, 343)

Knox, like the Edgeworths for children, recommends authors for young ladies as we have seen in Chapter Three, the English classics: Milton, Addison, and Pope. Edgeworth and Knox were among a number of writers who tried to address the idea of ‘indiscriminate’ reading.

Often writers endeavoured to tackle the subject of ‘indiscriminate reading’ by engaging in or with the genre that encouraged it: the novel. Outside and inside novels, a number of the period’s writers (periodical reviewers, novelists, educationalists) attempted to provide guidance for the navigation of the vast wave of new writing and literature with which the presses were ‘heaving’ – a huge and inevitably unassailable task. As Paul Keen notes, during the 1790s, periodicals endeavoured to

‘organiz[e] the massive literary output into systematic shape, selecting what was worthwhile and castigating what was not, and ensuring the permanent place of these productions in the memory of the reading public by presenting them on a monthly or quarterly basis in volumes which were intended to be bound and preserved in public and private libraries. (1999, 117)

Some periodicals even offered snapshot reviews of books that they didn’t think were worth reading, like these simple, brutal reviews in *The Westminster Magazine*:

Know Your Own Mind. A Comedy. 8vo. 1s.6d. Becket.

If we *know our own minds*, we shall never lose time in reading it again. [...]

Memoirs of the Countess D’Anois. 2 vols. 12mo. 5s. Noble.

This is a revived Publication, which came uncalled for, and will return from whence it came.

The Offspring of Fancy. By a Lady. 12mo. 2 vols. 6s. Bew.

A sterile fancy can have no *offspring*. [...]

The History of Miss Barlowe, in a Series of Letters. 2 vols. 12mo. 6s. Fielding and Walker.

Another female Author, we suppose; and if so, she must be a poor housewife, or an awkward housemaid, if she cannot make a pudding, or a bed, better than she can a book. (1788, 325)

For one of the novels, *Munster Village*, the reviewer does not even bother to comment on the content or the title, they dismissively state:

Everyone knows what the generality of Novels are; and we think that those idle Readers, whose time or thoughts lie heavy on their hands, will be full as well entertained, and rather more profitably employed in perusing these volumes, as any of the rest of them.
(325)

One novel is the same as any other, according to the reviewer. By not discussing to plot or title, he is dismissing it as yet another novel – and ‘everyone’ knows what that means. The issue the reviewer has with ‘the generality of Novels’ is that they aim only to entertain their audience, the author has no aim beyond making a profit from entertaining writing. There is nothing particularly striking about this novel, good or bad, it’s simply another novel.

On the other hand, Frances Burney’s *Evelina*, reviewed directly afterwards, comes highly recommended as it

May prove equally useful and entertaining to the younger part of our *male* as well as *female* Readers; to the latter of whom we particularly recommend it, as conveying many practical lessons both on morals and manners.

In the reviewer’s eyes, a novel, in order to be commendable, should be useful as well as entertaining; the balance of instruction and amusement in a novel is what makes it stand out in the eighteenth-century market.

Three decades later, the reviewer for *British Critic* launches a diatribe on the sheer volume of novels being produced and the thankless job of having to review them for the sake of the readers of the periodical, lest they read something inappropriate, or god forbid, badly written, like Mrs Hanway’s *Christabelle*. ‘There are,’ he begins

we believe, few readers who are quite aware of the severity of the labour which we reviewers undergo in their service; and fewer still who feel a proper degree of gratitude for the beneficial consequences which result to them from that labour. Yet, to a very large portion of their gratitude we think ourselves fairly entitled. What numerous drains do we not every month prevent from being made on their pockets, time, patience, and temper! Benevolently acting as their tasters, we run the risk of being poisoned ourselves,

to save them from the risk of being so. Henceforth, then, we hope, that a more correct estimate will be formed of our merits, and that we shall be considered as public benefactors, and not merely as literary tomahawkers and butchers. (442)

The reviewer is both defending their work generally and the review of *Christabelle* in particular. It is his job to protect and guide his readers, to prevent them 'poisoning' themselves or wasting time and money on bad writing. For this novel, in particular, he states that

novel-reading ladies will give us abundance of thanks, for saving them from the disappointment which they would, perhaps, have experienced, had we not undertaken the serious task of reviewing Mrs. Hanway's "Christabelle." (443)

The reviewer comes across as sardonic when he discusses what he believes is the intended audience of the work.

To Miss Caroline, or Miss Fanny, confined at home without company on a rainy afternoon, who has consoled herself with the hope of a rich treat from the last new novel, which John has been dispatched to procure, it must assuredly be shocking to find, that the anxiously-expected novel is so "abominably stupid" that she cannot get through it; and that she has no other resource than to strum over again her favourite airs, draw half a rose, or a bit of a tree, or add a score of meshes to a piece of netting, which is now taken up for the hundred and fiftieth time. It is to avert from the fair such a serious evil as this, that we encounter Christabelle. Forewarned, forearmed, says the old adage. (443)

The reviewer becomes like an old-fashioned knight, protecting the damsel in distress from the evil that is the bad writing of *Christabelle*. Much like the reviews in *The Westminster Magazine*, the reviewer leaves on the final scathing remarks:

Our readers will, we flatter ourselves, acknowledge that [Mrs Hanway] stands fully convicted on her own evidence. As a proof that, for what she has inflicted on us, we harbour no malice against her, we will give her at parting a word or two of friendly counsel. We earnestly recommend to her, to procure, without delay, a grammar and a dictionary of her native language; and not, on any account or pretence, to write another line, before she has made herself mistress of the contents of those valuable books. (445)

Again, even these parting words are part of guiding what is read and written, advising Mrs Hanway not to write anything more until she had learned to write, whether she takes the advice or not. Reviewers attempted through their writing to guide the readers of their particular

periodicals or magazines. Though the reviewer of *Christabelle* writes as though it is a duty or battle, protecting their readers from harm, it is also part of the anti-novel discourse of the late eighteenth century. The reviews guide readers toward ‘balanced’ novels (such as Burney’s *Evelina*) which educate the reader, and away from novels which offer only bad writing or bad morals. Even the dismissive review of *Munster Village* in *The Westminster Magazine* discourages its readers from picking up the novel by suggesting those who would get any entertainment from it are ‘idle Readers’ with nothing better to do. (1788, 325)

As we can tell from these reviews, novels had an expected or stereotyped audience (young, unmarried women of leisure) and were written with certain audience expectations in mind – such as the novel’s hero and heroine get married at the end. The reviewers, novelists, and readers are part of what Stanley Fish calls an ‘interpretive community’,

interpretive communities are made up of those who share interpretive strategies not for reading (in the conventional sense) but for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions. In other words, these strategies exist prior to the act of reading and therefore determine the shape of what is read rather than, as is usually assumed, the other way around. (457, 1976)

As the reviewer for *The Westminster Magazine* states, ‘everyone knows what the generality of Novels are’; there are expectations that come with the genre. Those that defy these expectations, those that are considered ‘useful’ as well as entertaining, stand out from the general mass of novels. Like Richardson and Fielding before them, writers such as Smith, Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, Mary Wollstonecraft, attempted to utilise a genre usually known for triviality in order to educate their readers. Unlike Maria Edgeworth and Vicesimus Knox, Smith nowhere advocates the editing, restriction or censorship of reading for young people, only guidance or education so they can select literature that is beneficial for themselves. As in the above statement from *Desmond*, she even believes that some knowledge can be gained from reading novels in general and that even if young people were only to read novels it should not be discouraged.

Patricia Meyer Spacks notes that ‘the value of imaginative privacy [...] [was] not [...] so readily apparent,’ in the eighteenth century as it would be in the Romantic and Victorian periods, throughout the nineteenth century. Referring to Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, Spacks states,

When Jane Eyre huddled in her window seat, her feet drawn up, behind red curtains, for the delicious indulgence in reading, she creates a memorable image for reading’s self-enclosure. But it is a particularly nineteenth-century image. Brontë’s novel, published in 1847, draws on and helps to solidify the metaphors of romanticism. If it had been published a century before, Jane would not have inhabited the same setting or thought of reading in the same way. If she read for the sake of imaginative stimulation in 1747 or thereabouts, her creator would probably have introduced even into a fictional text some warning about the danger of such stimulation. (29)

Smith, writing in 1792 and advocating the right of women’s (indeed everyone’s) freedom to read, unsurveilled and unpoliced, presents her readers with the following passage relating to Geraldine Verney’s reading: While exiled to France with her husband, Geraldine finds herself seeking solace in her imagination and in fiction. She watches a ‘solitary Capuchin’ (338) and writes to Fanny

is there not satisfaction in beholding a being, who, whatever may have been his misfortunes, seems to have found consolation and fortitude in religion. – I have often entertained an half-formed wish that he would speak to me. – Perhaps his own suffering may have taught him that tender sympathy with the sufferings of others, which is often so soothing to the sick heart, and he might speak of peace to me. (338)

Solitary and alone herself, Geraldine seeks consolation in books but finds herself ‘sadly distressed here for want of books.’ (338) She again thinks of the Capuchin who ‘might supply me from the library of his convent.’ (338) Pursuing escapism she describes this tale of the monk, whom we later discover was, in fact, Desmond watching her from afar, and complains to Fanny how

this deficiency of books has compelled me to have recourse to my pen and my pencil, to beguile those hours, when my soul, sickening at the past, and recoiling from the future, would very fain lose its own mournful images in the witchery of fiction. (338)

She laments finally that other pursuits such as drawing or needlework are not enough to distract her as ‘the mind will stray from the fingers [...] I cannot find [...] enough employment to keep

me from sad and bitter reflection.’ (338) Only the ‘witchery of fiction,’ her own or someone else’s, the escapism offered by novel reading, can aid in taking her kind from the situation she finds herself and her children in. While Geraldine in 1792 is not ensconced and hidden from prying, watchful eyes like Jane Eyre would be fifty years later, she is still indulging in an escapism that Smith presents as beneficial. In the same manner that *Desmond* stood as a defence of women’s involvement and interaction with the ‘public sphere’ of politics, it is also a defence of women’s engagement in unpoliced, uncensored reading. Anticipating the mid-nineteenth century, Romantic view of reading as portrayed in *Jane Eyre*, Geraldine’s private reading, which she defends in her letter to Fanny, has demonstrable benefits to her as a female reader. Geraldine uses novels as escapism during her time in France. Reflecting, perhaps, Smith’s own experiences in France when exiled with Benjamin in the 1780s, from which sprung her first translation and publication – Smith herself used fiction and writing as a way to escape from her own situation for a little while.

In Chapter Two, I mapped out the development of Smith’s Quixote stereotype which ended with Miss Goldthorp whose novel reading only exacerbated the flaws she had gained during her upbringing. In the defence of novel-reading in *Desmond*, we can already see Smith arguing that, while reading can give one a store of ideas and knowledge, it does not create the character flaws or have the same effect that upbringing does. Novels ‘do no harm.’ Smith’s defence of novel-reading runs over two letters in *Desmond* and they stand out from the other letters in the novel because they focus entirely on censorship of reading for young women, compared to the more politically focused letters on topics from the French Revolution to slavery. Perhaps for Smith censorship of reading is a political issue, or at the very least her discussion of the censorship of reading demonstrates her awareness of the increasing censorship of literature during the French Revolution. In a novel so steeped in the progress of the French Revolution as it happened, to the point it has been described as ‘an interesting piece of journalism, recording the ideas of various social groups about the Revolution’ (Fletcher, 141), the

discussion between the two sisters of the censorship of Fanny's reading by an older generation of ladies stands out. For Smith, this is as important a subject to engage in as the effects of the Revolution on social reform. 'You know, I never am allowed,' begins Fanny explaining why she only ever has scandal and gossip to discuss in her letters,

To converse with any of the literary people I meet, as my mother has a terrible aversion to every thing that looks like a desire to acquire knowledge; and for the same reason, she proscribes every species of reading, and murmurs when she cannot absolutely prohibit the fashionable, insipid novel. (215)

'The sage matronly gentlewomen of [their mother's] acquaintance' (215) are imbued with the same power as the priest, barber, and housekeeper in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, over the worthiness of books.

Geraldine, later in her letter, also notes the similarities between the gentlewomen and the curate and barber in *Don Quixote*. Like Quixote's romances, novels are the main offender. Fanny writes

Novels, it is decided, convey the poison of bad example in the soft semblance of refined sentiment – One contains an oblique apology for suicide; a second, a lurking palliative of conjugal felicity; a third, a sneer against parental apology; and a fourth, against religion. Some are disliked for doctrines, which, probably, malice only, assuming the garb of wisdom can discover in them; and others, because their writers have, either in their private or political life, given offence to the prudery or the party of these worthy personages, whom my other, relying on their reputation for sanctity and sagacity, chooses to consult. (215-6)

Thankfully the books are merely prohibited rather than thrown from the window and burned. Just as the book burning 'cure' was ineffective for Don Quixote, Smith notes the futility of censoring and restricting a person's reading. Fanny, rather than accepting this change in what she can and cannot read, resorts to

Practic[ing] the *finesse* of a boarding-school miss, and to hid[ing] these objectionable pages, from an inquisition not less severe than that which the lovely Serena sustained; or I must confine myself to such mawkish reading as is produced, "in a rivulet of text running through the meadow of a margin," in the soft semblance of letters, from "Miss Everilda Evelyn to Miss Victorina Villars". (216)

Fanny makes a satirical reference here to Frances Burney's *Evelina* as one of the few novels deemed suitable. Fanny's issue perhaps is that the novels deemed suitable are old-fashioned, much like the matronly gentlewomen proscribing her reading. As Geraldine argues in her response, older novels, though more acceptable, are not necessarily any different or better to modern novels. She continues her defence of the genre

In regard to novels, I cannot help remarking another strange inconsistency, which is, that the great name of Richardson (and great it certainly deserves to be) makes, by a kind of hereditary prescriptive deference, those scenes, those descriptions, pass uncensured in Pamela and Clarissa, which are infinitely more improper for the perusal of young women, than any that can be found in the novels of the present day. (225)

Smith is making the point with the comparison of the contemporary reception of older and modern novels that, although they still follow the same genre expectations, and although novels in her eyes have become more refined and proper for consumption, older novels are accepted and well-received by right of being 'classics' whereas modern novels are condemned for being modern. Much in the same way Dr Pero Perez saves some 'books of chivalry' in *Don Quixote* by virtue of them being classics. 'This book' states the priest,

Deserves respect [...] because it is said to have been written by a wise King of Portugal. All the adventures in the castle of Miraguarda are excellent and very well contrived [...] I say then, subject to your judgment, Master Nicholas, that this and *Amadis of Gaul* shall be spared the fire, and all the rest perish without any further trial or enquiry. (59-60)

Geraldine argues, however, that

If every work of fancy is to be prohibited in which a tale is told, or an example brought forward, by which some of these ladies suppose, that the errors of youth may be palliated, or the imagination awakened – I know of: no book of amusement that can escape their censure; and the whole phalanx of novels, from the two first of our classics, in that line of writing, Richardson and Fielding, to the less exceptions lie, though certainly less attractive inventors of the present day, must be condemned with less mercy, than the curate and the barber showed to the collection of the Knight of the sorrowful Countenance. (223)

By alluding to the satire of *Don Quixote* and the futility of the 'cure' undertaken by the curate and barber, Smith highlights the futility of censoring novels or restricting young women from reading

them. Geraldine sardonically adds that if they cannot read novels, 'I really know not what young people (I mean young women) will read at all.' (233) She then questions the feared effect of novels on young women – that they might 'corrupt the imagination or enervate the heart'. (223)

But let me ask these severe female censors, whether, in every well-written novel, *vive*, and even *weaknesses*, that deserve not quite so harsh a name, are not exhibited, as subjecting those examples of them, to remorse, regret and punishment – And since circumstances more inimical to innocence, are every day related, without any disguise, or with very little, in the public prints; since, in the reading world, a girl must see a thousand blots, which frequently pass without any censure at all. (233)

Smith via the mouthpiece of Geraldine questions the vilification of modern novels when older novels and other genres, committing the same 'crimes,' go uncriticized and uncensored. From Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa* and Burney's *Evelina* to modern theatre, Geraldine appears exasperated and incredulous that these go uncensored and are even encouraged.

After her piece of mock-fiction, demonstrating the lack of harm in such 'silly' work, Geraldine states

I own it has often struck me as a singular inconsistency, that, while novels have been condemned as being injurious to the interest of virtue, the play-house has been called the school or morality. – The comedies of the last century are, almost without exception, so gross, that, with all the alterations they have received, they are very unfit for that part of the audience to whom novel-reading is deemed pernicious. (224)

She mocks 'the careful mothers, who dread the evil influence of novels, [yet] carry their daughters to its most exceptionable representations.' (225) As she hopes that her readers will question what they read and think for themselves, she also hopes that mothers, parents, and guardians, will also question what they have been taught by critics and educators to censure. Geraldine and Fanny's mother, much like the 'careful mothers,' simply follow what they have been told is not good for their children, rather than observing and coming to their own conclusions. Geraldine concludes sardonically that

It may be said, that, if they do not good, they do no harm; and that there *is* a chance, that those who will read nothing, if they do not read novels, may collect from them some few

ideas, that are not either fallacious or absurd, to add to the very scanty stock which their usual insipidity of life has afforded them. (225)

Geraldine finishes the letter with the example of the effect reading has had on herself and her own life, the manner in which she describes her youth, reading, and marriage, is reminiscent of Smith's own.

As for myself, I read, you know, all sorts of books, and have done so ever since I was out of the nursery, for my mother had then no notion of restraining me. (226)

Geraldine is a wide reader and again notes that only recently has their mother begun to restrain her children's reading; reiterating that recent events have changed how people perceive texts and censure them. She describes her youthful indiscriminate reading

Novels, of course, and those very indifferent novels, were the first that I could obtain; and I ran through them with extreme avidity, often forgetting to practice my lesson on the harpsichord, or to learn my French task, while I got up into my own room, and devoured with an eager mawkish pages told of a damsel, most exquisitely beautiful, confined by a cruel father, and escaping to an heroic lover, while a wicked Lord laid in wait to tear her from him, and carried her to some remote castle. (226)

She even describes her morbid 'delight' in the novels 'that ended miserably, and, having tortured me through the last volume with impossible distress, ended in the funeral of the heroine.' (226)

Having portrayed her young self as an avid and indiscriminate reader of novels,

Geraldine then argues that, unlike the quixotes that were explored in Chapter Two,

Had the imagination of a young person been liable to be much affected by these sort of histories, mine would, probably have taken a romantic turn; and at eighteen, when I was married, I should have hesitated whether I should obey my friends' directions, or have waited till the hero appeared, who would have been imprinted on my mind, from some of the charming fabulous creatures of whom I have only read in novels. – But, far from doing so, I was, you see, "obedient – very obedient;" and, in the four years that have since passed, I have thought only of being a quiet wife, and a good nurse, and of fulfilling, as well as I can, the part which has been chosen for me. (226)

Geraldine argues here that her youthful novel-reading had no ill effects – she was not disobedient, she did not pine after or wait for a hero, she did not expect her life to play out like a novel. Her tone hints that she might not have been happier were she a little more rebellious and

romantically-minded, if she had waited for her hero. Geraldine, despite the lack of censorship of her reading in youth, allowed to read what she wished, presents a stark contrast to the quixotic anti-heroines of Smith's other novels as discussed in the previous chapter. She demonstrates regret for her lack of quixotism, in the same letter in which she complains of her husband 'making Desmond's quixotism the subject of his ridicule.' (222) Like the quixotes discussed in Chapter Two, Verney demonstrates his lack of awareness that Desmond is, in fact, the true hero of the novel, and is therefore not a quixote. The end of Geraldine's letter signals the end of the explicit examination of censorship and novels in *Desmond*.

Further examples, less explicit than this forthright discussion, are scattered throughout the work, such as Geraldine's reliance on novels and books for comfort and escapism during exile with her husband in France. Another self-referential autobiographical detail, relating to Smith's own exile in Normandy. Geraldine expresses her incredulity and mocks the idea that even the novels could not possibly have any negative effect. She states

As to those others, those wild and absurd writings, that describe in inflated language, things that never were, nor ever will be, they can (if any young woman has so much patience and so little taste as to read them) no more contribute to form the character of her mind, than the grotesque figures of shepherdesses, on French fans and Bergamot boxes, can form her taste in dress – Who could, for a moment, feel any impression from the perusal of such stuff as this, though every diurnal print puffed its excellence, and every *petit-maitre* swore it was quite the thing – exquisite – pathetic – interesting? (223)

Again she draws comparisons with other romanticised objects and texts that young people come into contact with but which do not have an influence on their behaviour, appearance, or mind. Geraldine provides a paragraph of her own invention mocking these 'wild and absurd writings' in a similar manner to the way Cervantes mocks the chivalric writings of his own period.

In Cervantes' original, he has Don Quixote imagine what the author of his history will say about his first adventure. "Scarce had the ruddy Apollo," it begins,

"Spread the golden threads of his lovely hair over the broad and spacious face of the earth, and scarcely had the forked tongues of the little painted birds greeted with

mellifluous harmony the coming of the rosy Aurora who, leaving the soft bed of her jealous husband, showed herself at the doors and balconies of the Manchegan horizon, when the famous knight, Don Quixote de La Mancha, quitting the slothful down, mounted his faithful steed Rocinante and began to journey across the ancient and celebrated plain of Mantiel." (36)

In this section of *Don Quixote*, Cervantes is mocking the high-flung prose of the chivalric novels that the work itself is a satire of, contrasting Cervantes' more grounded prose, reminding the reader of his target. Geraldine's satirical quotation in *Desmond*, while inspired by Cervantes, has a different motive – she aims to demonstrate how 'those wild and absurd writings,' due to their ludicrously hyperbolic prose, could not possibly have an impact on their readers because it is too ridiculous, no matter how 'fashionable' they might be to read. She quotes,

The beautiful, the soft, the tender Iphigenia closed not, during the tedious hours, her beauteous eyes, while the glorious flambeau of silver-slippered day sunk beneath the encrimsoned couch of coral-crowned Thetis, giving up the dormant world to the Raven-embrace of all o'er-crowding night. (223)

While Smith emulates Cervantes, she did not agree with his argument against the genre he is satirising. Cervantes ridicules the chivalric genre he mocks, whereas both Smith and her character Geraldine enjoy novels and are actually mocking the idea that reading them could have dire consequences for their readers. Even the most ridiculous novels are more likely to be too absurd to have any impact at all on a person's health or character. Smith/Geraldine sets herself opposite Cervantes at the very beginning of this mock-quotation by describing the sunset and night whereas Cervantes described the sunrise and morning.

Smith's readers very likely would have been familiar with *Don Quixote* given its popularity throughout the period, and its many homages in novel and play form, including Henry Fielding's *Don Quixote in England*, so her allusions would not have been missed in this passage on reading and being a critical and questioning reader. Alongside Smith's discussion of the novel genre and censorship, the allusions to the various incidents in *Don Quixote* would have made Smith's message about novel-reading clear, her stance on the genre she wrote was that novel-reading did

no harm, and could, in fact, do some good, especially if a reader learned to question what they read and read well.

Smith's liberal attitude toward reading, however, was at odds with the political turmoil in the midst of which she was writing her later novels. Her 'rant' against censorship and surveillance of reading and writing is a reaction against this atmosphere of political turmoil. Political and social thought was under surveillance in the 1790s. Books and published writings were subject to examination by the highest powers; Smith satirises this attempt to control print and reading in *Desmond*, as we have seen. It was not, however, just writing for adults that was subject to this surveillance and looming faceless punishment. The manner in which political thought was under surveillance in the 1790s... O'Malley writing on Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1975) notes the similarities between the ideas Jeremy Bentham expressed about the 'Panopticon,' a prison designed to create an atmosphere which would transform inmates into self-regulating subjects, and the manner in which pedagogy in the 1780s and 90s attempted to make children into subjects who could regulate their own behaviour. He states:

Shame as a mechanism for regulating the behaviour of children, in Lockean pedagogy, operates in much the same way as the panopticism Foucault describes in his analysis of inmate surveillance: through the internalization of the gaze. Panopticism works because of the subject's belief (or fear) that he or she is under the constant scrutiny of a regulating authority. (O'Malley, 14, 2003)

Even outside of the of Bentham's physical prison, there existed panopticism as a form of surveillance, creating subjects that internalize fear or shame about certain actions or behaviours: 'The subjects [...] internalize the gaze of authority, submit and defer voluntarily to the power of reason, and learn to regulate their own behaviour in accordance with it.' (96, 2003) O'Malley notes the use of this in eighteenth-century children's books, such as Sarah Fielding's *The Governess, or the Little Female Academy* (1749) and Eleanor Fenn *The Art of Teaching Sport* (1785). He states:

Teaching children accountability for their actions was an essential part of the late eighteenth-century didactic goal of raising responsible, self-regulating subjects. The literature for children of the period was filled with examples of young people who, having internalized accepted models of behaviour, no longer required the direct intervention of their parents or guardians to correct their own deficiencies. (O'Malley, 96, 2003)

It was not, however, just children and criminals who were being formed into 'self-regulating subjects' in the 1790s. The culture of surveillance in the 1790s and early 1800s caused publishers, writers, reviewers, anyone involved in the industry of print, to be highly wary of the issues surrounding texts which voiced a political opinion. As we have seen in earlier chapters, Smith was writing throughout a volatile period. In Chapter One, I noted how the government involved themselves in the influencing of readers and the book trade. From threats of the law for sedition to funding the *British Critic* to police and review new publications using secret service money.

Smith was highly aware of the atmosphere within which she was writing and publishing. Her 'self-regulation,' like many revolutionary sympathisers, consisted of pushing the boundaries of these new laws and fear, to continue publishing her thought and opinions, but often concealing them to ensure she could not be prosecuted. Her 'self-regulating' readers and publishers, however, recognized her sympathies and radical opinions, causing her sales to decline. In *Desmond*, especially, Smith's prose is politically charged. In Lorraine Fletcher's article, 'Charlotte Smith emblematic castles,' she examines *The Old Manor House* as a parody of Burke's analogy of castles representing England and government. According to Fletcher, Smith transforms the technique for her own purposes creating 'the emblematic setting of a great political house.' (1992, 8) Much like the use of the great house to represent the wider political world, the microcosm of Fanny's reading proscribed by a nameless, faceless council of an older generation of women represents the censorship and surveillance of literature during the 1790s. As Geraldine notes, 'How long [...] has your reading been under proscription? We used to read what we would when we were girls together, and I never found it prejudicial to either of us.' (222) The letters are dated April 1791 and the novel itself was first published in June 1792,

meaning that Smith was writing the novel during the turmoil surrounding Paine's *Rights of Man* and the introduction of Fox's Libel Act. As Mark Rose notes,

The 1790s and early 1800s, in the period of the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars, were a time of anxiety characterised by fears of invasion or revolt in which political anxiety led to fierce battles over press freedom. (2009, 129)

Writing and reading were under surveillance. Smith probably felt this even more during the writing of *Desmond*. In a letter dated 7th September 1791, Smith writes to let Cadell know she is leaving for Paris so that he might direct his answer to her address in France, and so that she might flatter and attempt to persuade him to purchase *Desmond* once more.

I [...] once more trouble you to enquire within you will be the purchaser of my present work when it is complete [...] I have advantages which can hardly fail if profitably employ'd to secure the success of such a Book as I am about. However I need add nothing on the subject; as you are the best judge how far such a purchase may answer your purposes – I have therefore only to request you answer as early as possible address'd to me at L'Hotel de York – Rue Jacob – Fauxbourg St Germain Paris. (2-3)

Celestina was the first novel in which Smith touched on the subject of the Revolution, and it evidently caused Cadell some trouble, deterring him from purchasing another similar novel.

You declin'd the purchase of [*Desmond*] I think, because some circumstances in regard to the Painting of *Celestina* had given you some uneasiness which you was [sic] determined not to hazard again.

Within this atmosphere, as an 'Author by Profession,' Smith was still attempting to write about something important to herself and make a living. The frustration she must have felt comes out in the Preface, in which she defends her choice of topics. As Smith states,

I feel some degree of apprehension which an Author is sensible of on a first publication.

This arises partly from my doubts of succeeding so well in letters as in narrative; and partly from a supposition, that there are Readers, to whom fictitious occurrences, and others to whom the political remarks in these volumes may be displeasing. (i)

She goes on to defend her 'political remarks' and 'fictitious occurrences,' in particular 'representing a young man, nourishing an ardent but concealed passion for a married woman' (ii) and 'the political passages dispersed through the work, they are, for the most part, drawn from

conversations to which I have been a witness, in England, and France, during the last twelve months.’ (ii) During the period in which Smith wrote the letter, novel, and preface, the first three years of the French Revolution, there was much public and political anxiety surrounding reading and writing, not only what was being read and written but also who was the best judge of what should and should not be published and consumed by the public. Marilyn Butler notes, ‘In the second half of 1792, Pitt’s Administration began its series of moves to stop the spread of radicalism through the written word.’ (1984, 8) Starting with the conviction of Paine for seditious libel. As Rose states, however,

the rising sentiment against the use of libel laws for political purposes led eventually to the 1792 Libel Act, championed by Charles James Fox, which placed a limit on the state’s power to prosecute for seditious libel by giving to juries rather than judges the authority to determine whether a particular publication actually constituted a libel. (129)

Butler notes that

English juries were notably reluctant to find for the government, as they demonstrated when they threw out the charges of treason against the London radical leaders Hardy, Tooke, and Thelwall in November 1791. (8-9)

In 1791, as Smith wrote *Desmond*, however, Fox had introduced the Bill in parliament and the debate surrounding libel had already begun. Cadell’s reluctance to publish something mired in politics was probably due to the fact that, prior to the Act being passed, ‘what constituted libel still remained entirely at the ministry’s direction and the “bare fact” of publication [was] enough to convict a bookseller.’ (Braithwaite, 2003, 109) Such was the atmosphere of the debate to which Smith was contributing in *Desmond*—in the novel as a whole, in her preface, and more specifically the letters between Geraldine and Fanny. Smith defends the freedom of the press and defends her right as a woman to write about political themes, and defends the right for the reading public to read what they wish.

The best literature, according to Charlotte Smith, provides an emotional education, the ability to empathise and understand others, while at the same time teaching its reader to

communicate. We can see this in Smith's later works for children, especially *Conversations Introducing Poetry* which follows a similar format to Barbauld's *Lessons for Children*. Starting with simple poetry, Smith's book was designed to allow her small readers to progress from simple meanings, vocabulary and syntax, to poetry far more complex. While teaching the children moral lessons, she also endeavoured to teach them critical thinking and reading skills. In order to uncover the meanings behind the poems, the children must use their reasoning faculties to discover the underlying meanings rather than taking the poems at face value. Books, whether they contain poetry, novels, stories, histories, need to be read critically in order for the reader to gain any knowledge or insight from them. Just as Smith endeavours to teach this to her younger readers in later works like *Conversations Introducing Poetry*, I argue she is also subtly attempting to demonstrate this skill to her adult readers throughout the novels.

A striking characteristic of Smith's heroines is their desire for knowledge for the sake of knowledge. They have an innate curiosity for knowledge, reading, and accomplishments, unlike their counterparts (the anti-heroines, or antagonists) who only desire knowledge and accomplishments to make them 'marriageable.' They are usually in control of their own education to a large extent or guided by someone with a sympathetic and open mind. In the previous chapter, we examined the quixotic anti-heroines whose reading leads them astray due to their lack of critical thinking and reflection – their default of 'extensive' rather than 'intensive' reading. The heroines of Smith's novels, even those without a quixotic counterpart, all display this curiosity and thirst for knowledge – which, incidentally rather than purposely, leads them to be desired by the men in the novels and, ultimately, leads to their happy marriages. While asking her readers to read more critically, through the satirising of the quixotic anti-heroines, Smith also demonstrates that those who pursue knowledge and think critically, and use their knowledge as a source of pleasure and diversion, are the ones who end up the happiest. This further demonstrates Smith's method of 'guiding' or educating her readers about their reading habits – why they read, what they gain from reading, what they gain from the pursuit of knowledge

generally. By offering the readers both the quixotic anti-heroines and the idealised, independent heroines, Smith demonstrates to her readers the benefits of a good education beyond making one 'marriageable': happiness; both for oneself and in marriage, because education and self-awareness in one's pursuit of knowledge makes for a better companion in marriage. Not only is this being demonstrated to the female readers, however, this image of the happy, self-aware and intelligent heroine is also presented to the novels' male readers.

The first example of this contrast of heroine and counterpart character can be found in *Ethelinde*. In the first chapter, the reader is presented with the contrast between the heroine, Ethelinde, for whom the novel is named, and her cousin, Lady Newenden.⁷¹ Smith uses parallelism to contrast their situations, and highlight her conclusion about which character benefits most from their upbringing.

At first, Sir Edward Newenden, Lady Newenden's husband, provides the medium through which we view the contrasts between the two women. Each of the ladies interacts with him differently, and we are also invited to witness his particular thoughts and reflections as he compares them. As we saw in Chapter One, Lady Newenden struggles to engage in the intellectual conversation Sir Edward wishes his life-long companion could. He becomes more dissatisfied with his relationship as he becomes more infatuated with Ethelinde. Despite the money lavished on Lady Newenden's education, she finds no pleasure or use in it, beyond having married Sir Edward for his title. This leads to Lady Newenden searching for pleasure and enjoyment in less savoury and acceptable pursuits, like 'deep play' at late night soirees, and even the pursuit of attention from another man. Ultimately, Lady Newenden's is not a 'happy ending' story, and she dies with her reputation ruined – it is implied that her life-style brings about her

⁷¹ There is, arguably, a second heroine, 'the recluse of the lake' who is referred to in the second part of the title, which can refer to Mrs Montgomery, the mother of Ethelinde's future husband.

death, potentially through giving birth to the child of the libertine, Lord Danesforte, whose attention she openly seeks in front of her husband.

Lady Newenden's unhappy marriage is explicitly linked by Smith to her upbringing and education. She cannot enjoy the pursuit or exploration or use of knowledge in the way Ethelinde can because she was taught from a young age that the only value that education imparts to a woman is 'marriageability.' Once she was married, her 'expensive' education held no value for her, because she had never learned to enjoy it for its own sake – only what it could do for her marriage prospects. Another, similar, contrast which Smith offers to her readers is that between Orlando's two matches in *The Old Manor House*, Monimia and Miss Hollybourn. Monimia is a maid in the household of Orlando's aunt; Miss Hollybourn is another 'expensively' educated young lady in search of a husband (preferably with an inheritance and a title, which Dr Hollybourn assumes Orlando will inherit from his Aunt.) While Orlando finds pleasure in Monimia's pursuit of learning and curiosity, he is repulsed by Miss Hollybourn's boastful and pedantic parroting. Miss Hollybourn's suitors find her extensive education and boastful manner off-putting. Once again, Miss Hollybourn is brought up in the knowledge that the only use for her education is to enhance her value in terms of marriageability, so she uses her knowledge and accomplishments to try to impress Orlando – from 'dissertating' on paintings in the gallery of Rayland Hall to demonstrating her dancing skills, taught by the best masters. But these qualities are not, it seems, all that desirable – Orlando pursues the young woman whose mind is her own, who he is able to converse with, and who is both intelligent and modest, as well as curious and determined in her self-directed education. And whose education is not dictated by how 'marriageable' it will make her. Miss Hollybourn is rejected by yet another suitor; Monimia, our true heroine, overcomes many obstacles and eventually marries Orlando.

The female characters whose education is restricted and controlled – surveilled and censored by masters, tutors, and parents – do not learn to enjoy their education, or ascribe any

value to it beyond the outward appearance it displays to suitors. Smith's heroines, with their more open education, learn to enjoy their educations and the knowledge they gain. They continue their pursuit of education and knowledge beyond what is taught to them by parents and guardians, or informal tutors. They do not take their education for granted. By allowing them freedom in their pursuit of knowledge, through reading, they allow them enjoyment and curiosity, rather than pursuing education as merely a means to an end. By presenting her readers with such an extreme and tragic example as Lady Newenden, whose inability to enjoy her husband's company leads to her ruin and demise, Smith demonstrates the futility of a restricted education, designed purely for creating a 'marriageable' woman of no substance. By contrasting her with Ethelinde, who enjoys using her knowledge and learning new things, who is a desirable companion to the intelligent men of the novel, Smith demonstrates that a freer education, based on creating an intelligent and independent woman whose focus in life is not solely on pursuing men, will create a happier and more contented marriage based on love and companionship. This is the outcome Mary Wollstonecraft wishes for in her work, *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), as we saw in Chapter One.

As we have seen, Smith delivers her ideas on a multitude of topics like politics, education, and reading, by using the well-known format of the novel of sensibility – knowing she also needs to make money from them. Submitting to reader expectations by delivering a novel form that is expected (i.e. a romance that ends in marriage) means that she can sell her novels but still adhere to her ideal of blending amusement and instruction as put forth in the opening of her first novel *Emmeline*. Other writers realised this was a good way of accessing an audience for whom leisurely novel-reading was a staple. Despite her critiques of novel-writers and novel-readers and reservations about the novel form, Wollstonecraft engaged in the genre twice with *Mary, A Fiction* and *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* with the aim of creating something 'better' than the common novels whose only focus was on entertainment. As we have seen, many periodical reviewers despaired of the type of novel whose sole focus was entertainment, and they hoped to

influence their readers to try something of more substance. Many novelists and writers, like Smith, also sought to improve the genre and access a novel-reading audience with the intention of disseminating their own social and political values and agendas.

One thing Smith tried to do through her use of the novel genre was to educate her readers about the way they read and the way they interacted with the changing landscape of reading. More and more novels and books were being published and, as we have seen in previous chapters, this was more often lamented than welcomed. As William St Clair notes in *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, readers were changing their habits from ‘intensive’ to ‘extensive’ reading, leaving themselves very little time to reflect on the content – something which a number of writers worked against when delivering, like Edgeworth, ‘moral’ or educational tales. But readers of novels or imaginative fiction didn’t necessarily refer to it for the purpose of education, as the reviewer of *The Westminster Magazine* despaired. Smith was trying to combat this by asking her audience to pause and reflect – but in a more subtle manner than say Wollstonecraft or Edgeworth whose styles are distinctly didactic. Edgeworth does not even get past the Advertisement to her *Belinda* without informing her readers that, while they have a choice to classify it as they will, her book is a ‘Moral Tale’, something educational and didactic, in a form similar to a novel (i.e. both amusing and instructive). Smith makes no such distinction about the ‘type’ of novel she is writing at the beginning of *Emmeline*. She simply begins her first novel at the first chapter – no para-textual material to guide her reader, like a directed Advertisement, or a Preface that informs the reader about what they are about to read, it simply begins.⁷² This is in keeping with her desire to educate her readers via her novels through

⁷² This is a format which she changes later, beginning with *Desmond*, when she perhaps felt more confident in directly addressing her reader, having successfully sold three novels, but for *Emmeline*, *Ethelinde* and *Celestina*, Smith offers no guidance for her reader other than the novel itself, and the epigraphs which start appearing in her works in *Celestina* (but which still cannot be classified as a direct address). As we shall see in the next chapter, Smith’s choices

examples and contrasts, expecting them to use reflective reading and critical thinking to draw their own conclusions about the texts – rather than censoring her novels, or providing explicit guidance on how to read her novels. She asks the reader to guide themselves, using their own skills in critical thinking – asking them to emulate the heroines of her novels.

In order to effect the changes Smith desires, such as critical thinking and reflective reading, as identified in Chapter Three, Smith encourages her readership (especially the young women) to reflect on their reading and learning, and pursue their education and knowledge for pleasure, rather than purely to become marriageable. She does this by representing her arguments about reading and education through her characters. The happiest characters are the heroines who are intelligent, modest, and find pleasure in intellectual conversation or a good book. These are the characters who find happiness and companionship in their marriages. To cement this, she also provides contrasting characters, such as the quixotic anti-heroines or parallels, whose unblinkered pursuit of attention from male characters ends in dissatisfaction and disappointment at best, or ruin and death at worst.

Smith writes within a politically-charged atmosphere, but does not allow that to interfere with the messages about freedom, and against control, censorship, and surveillance, and limiting education for the purpose of creating marriageable women. Smith argues that reading, and education, should not be limited and controlled, or belittled in value to the extent that education from women should be purely about marriage. She believes education and reading of all kinds can have a positive influence on a person. Despite writing in this politically-charged atmosphere, Smith uses her novels to disseminate her ideas on politics and education, even though she knows her opinions and ideas may impact her sales.

regarding paratextual material have an impact on her reader's experience, and are linked to her methods and ideas regarding education.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the impact of Smith's use of paratext in her novels. Her use of prefaces, footnotes, and epigraphs, to guide and educate her readers further demonstrates her desire for her readers to expand their horizons and explore beyond the pages of the novel. She does not ask her readers to take what she states at face value, but to explore and decide for themselves. We shall see how her principle of teaching her readers to pause and reflect translates to her direct addresses to her readers, outside of the narrative and the examples of her characters.

Chapter Four: ‘Dear objects of my tender care!’: Paratext, intertextuality and the presence of other tales in Charlotte Smith’s novels

Smith’s use of doubling or mirroring her characters to create contrast, encouraging her readers to compare them and think critically about their actions and behaviours, and the consequences that come of them, is just one method (which Smith conducts in multiple ways) that Smith uses in her aim to educate her readers through her novels. In this chapter, I am going to widen the focus to include the novel form and Smith’s use of space outside of the main text of the narrative. The experimental and unfixed mode of the novel may have attracted Smith, like many other radical and political writers of the 1790s, to choose the novel form as the vehicle for her political and social commentary.⁷³ Smith uses the form of the novel for itself to guide her readers: quotations and epigraphs, prefaces, footnotes; the inclusion of content outside of the main text of the novels.

By ‘paratext’ I mean text which is sited parallel to the narrative of the novel, such as prefaces, epigraphs, and footnotes.⁷⁴ In this chapter, I also reference elements of intertextuality, such as allusions and quotations, and Smith’s use of autobiographical elements. All of these ‘extra-narrative’ elements add further layers of meaning to her novels. These parallel texts can provide the reader with information on how to read the novels as a whole, or even guide the reader in their approach to smaller sections of the novels such as chapters or paragraphs. Roger Chartier tells us that the form of a text affects the way we as readers approach it and that when

⁷³ For a further exploration of the novel as a vehicle for expression of political and philosophical thought during this time, see: Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993); M. O. Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001) and Jon Mee, *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community 1762 to 1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)

⁷⁴ For further discussion of paratext, see Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997)

the form changes, for example from an eighteenth-century first edition to a re-published critical edition, we receive that text differently because the form has changed alongside the intention behind the text. For example, *Emmeline* in its original form was a novel intended for an eighteenth-century audience reading for leisure, and perhaps improvement, whereas the Broadview Press edition published two centuries later has been intended for a scholarly audience, its footnotes and appendices aiming to situate the reader and provide context or to clarify archaic diction. Smith's own footnotes in these critical editions co-mingle with those of the editor. In some cases, this obscures the extent to which Smith used footnotes and intertextual and paratextual techniques in some of her novels.

In this chapter, I examine Smith's use of the novel form and discuss the reasons why she might have chosen the genre over the numerous other genres she could have selected. For example, poetry was Smith's genre of choice but most of her writing career was dedicated to producing novels. Despite her predilection for writing poetry, Smith turned to the novel to explore themes relating to education, the French Revolution and politics, among other topics. Of the sixty-three volumes of work she produced, only three collections of poetry were published (including the posthumous and fragmented *Beachy Head and Other Poems*). In comparison, she produced ten novels plus four works of fiction for children, meaning that prose made up the majority of the volumes she produced in her lifetime. Throughout her novel-writing career, she claimed this choice was simply because she needed to make money; it was easier for her to sell novels than poetry and she could expect more money for each work as the novels were often made up of multiple volumes for which she would be individually paid. Indeed, it was expected that the novels were made up of multiple volumes.⁷⁵ One could argue, however, that she is being disingenuous: if she had simply wanted to make money, she could have written formulaic

⁷⁵ This is highlighted in the advertisement by the publisher, Joseph Bell, introducing *The Wanderings of Warwick*, in which he complains that the work consists of only one volume, instead of the two which were promised.

courtship novels which were popular with circulating libraries and the Minerva Press. And often derided in Reviews and periodical magazines. Instead, Smith makes the most of the form and takes advantage of the opportunities it presents for the experimental exploration of various issues. Within the novel, Smith was able to imagine society and individuals in new ways, and present these new ideals alongside the negative qualities produced by society as it was in the moment she was writing. Smith's novels are, like many other novels of the period, a social commentary; they represent her perspective of society – both its good and bad points – and through them, she asks her readers to reflect on their own ideals, behaviours and prejudices.

One reason for Smith's choice of the novel genre, over other genres such as poetry and treatises which she could have utilised to deliver her commentary and views, is the opportunity the form presents to utilise the 'realism' of the genre. As Ian Watt argues in *The Rise of the Novel*:

This use of "realism," however, has the grave defect of obscuring what is probably the most original feature of the novel form. If the novel were realistic merely because it saw life from the seamy side, it would only be an inverted romance; but in fact it surely attempts to portray all the varieties of human experience, and note merely those suited to one particular literary perspective: the novel's realism does not reside in the kind of life it presents, but in the way it presents it. (11)

The novel form also allows Smith to extend her commentary beyond the narrative, to use her own voice and those of others in the spaces outside the text itself.

The novel form lends itself to this extension, more so than her volumes of poetry, offering Smith room to express her arguments and opinions in the frontmatter like dedications and prefaces and also the spaces within the chapters yet outside the text, such as epigraphs, footnotes, and poetry. Smith uses paratext differently in her poetical works than she does those of her novels. While she prefers to write poetry, as she mentions throughout her prefaces and letters, she does not use the paratexts she includes in them as a platform for her social commentary and political observations. Her paratexts in the *Elegiac Sonnets*, for example, focus on details such as giving the Latin names of flowers. The novel genre, however, gives her a

platform to air arguments and ideas regarding politics, education, and more, without interfering with the artistic integrity of her work. She uses the paratextual space provided to extend or undermine the arguments the narrator or characters make in her own voice. For example, as I will discuss later in this chapter, when Warwick discusses at length the rights and wrongs of slavery, Smith footnotes this lecture with her own personal thoughts, ensuring the reader knows exactly how she feels on the subject.

Within the narrative text, there are frequent quotations and allusions to poets, philosophers, and historians. Her titles, too, can give one food for thought: does the second part of the title *Ethelinde, or the Recluse of the Lake* refer to Montgomery or to his mother? The title as a whole represents the manner in which Ethelinde, Montgomery and Mrs Montgomery's histories become entangled in one another.

Smith borrows from her own repertoire of poetry to insert poems into her narratives and also creates new ones. A number of her characters are poets themselves, emphasising their own artistic mind and sensibilities. These characters, when they appear, are usually the heroes and heroines of Smith's novels, such as Godolphin in *Emmeline* or Celestina in *Celestina*. The inclusion of Smith's poetry could be a kind of marketing strategy – including her poetry to encourage readers to seek out her poetical publications or encouraging readers of her poetry to try her novels. It also demonstrates, alongside the use of her real name (rather than a pseudonym or publishing anonymously) that Smith was not ashamed of her occupation as a novelist. Her reluctance to own the genre and her desire for her readers to know that she only writes novels to support her family are all part of her 'branding'. She is not a trashy novel-writer but a gentlewoman forced into the trade to make a living.

Smith first demonstrates that she uses her poetry and her image as a struggling mother to sell her novels in the dedicatory poem which prefaces her first novel, *Emmeline*. *Emmeline* contains the least in terms of paratextual information compared to the later novels, it does not even

contain a prose Preface, but its allusions and quotations still provide the novel's readers with information. She uses her debut novel as an opportunity to introduce herself as a writer to a potentially new audience. Those who had read her melancholic poetry did not necessarily read sentimental novels and vice versa. She opens *Emmeline* with a dedicatory poem, addressed 'To My Children.' (44, 1788) Diane E. Boyd examines Smith's 'branding' in her article, "'Professing Drudge': Charlotte Smith's Negotiation of a Mother-Writer Author Function' (2001). She argues that Smith used her prefatory material initially to 'careful[ly] [construct] [...] herself as a mother writing for the purpose of sustaining her children.' (145, 2001) Smith laments the situation which has led her to the profession of writing novels in order to 'sustain' her children:

robb'd myself of all that Fortune gave,
Of every hope – but shelter in the grave;
Still shall the plaintive lyre essay its powers,
And dress the cave of Care with Fancy's flowers;
Maternal love, the fiend Despair withstand,
Still animate the heart and guide the Hand.
May you, dear objects of my tender care!
Escape the evils, I was born to bear. (5-12, 44, 1788)

The imagery evoked creates a sympathetic image: a poor woman desperate to raise money to support her children so that they may escape the troubles their mother presently endures. Her style would also be familiar to those readers who have read her poetry, perhaps encouraging them to follow her novelistic works, as well. This would have been beneficial for Smith as her novels would have been more profitable than her poetry.

Furthermore, the prefatory poem sets the tone for the novel, providing guidance for the reader as to what to expect and how to read the narrative. The poem presents the reader with a woman struggling alone against the 'evils' which life, and the law, had thrown their way. Emmeline, though much younger and without children, is also presented to the reader as a woman without family, alone in the world, struggling with and against life's troubles: the deaths of her parents and her guardians; her apparent illegitimacy which ostracized her from her family;

her lack of fortune which forces her to accept the 'charity' of those who reject her; the pursuit of herself by her cousin which forces her from the only home she had ever known. From the outset, we can see that Smith uses paratext to guide her readers' engagement with her novels, and the opinions and social commentary to which she directs their attentions.

Smith crafts her novels, both in form and content, to achieve her aims of guiding and directing the reader through her narratives and arguments. We know from Smith's letters to and from her publishers that she was heavily involved in the publication process of all of her works, no matter which genre. As Jacqueline Labbe argues:

A Romantic-period author for whom the work of writing, selling, publishing, and owning is keenly pursued is Charlotte Smith. Her notion of her work encompasses the entire act of production, from conception through to income. For Smith, writing is work to the point of exhaustion, but it is also her mode of self-visualisation for public consumption. Smith is consistent in writing about writing as a labour, a chore, a necessity, and even a trauma. (164, 2015)

She did not just sell her manuscript to the publishers and follow their lead regarding changes or corrections, she directed and advised at all stages of the publication process – from requesting corrections in early copies to arranging for portraits to be included in her works. She saw her books as more than the text they contained, the book as a whole was something that could be crafted to make an entire experience of it – from the frontispieces and Preface to the narrative itself. She was clearly aware of how a reader approached and experienced a text, drawing, very likely, on her own experiences as a reader. Labbe notes that:

Smith's private correspondence contains voluminous records of her interactions with her publishers, which show a consistent approach to the relationship that presents her work as 1) her work, 2) *work*, 3) to be valued as such, 4) vendible because worthy of notice, 5) reflecting honour on the vendor – in this case, the publisher. Diane Boyd suggests that Smith's "choice of publishers (working with the Cadell dynasty, for instance) shows that in an area where the author is so often stripped of agency by submitting to whatever terms of payment she could scramble for, Smith proves more of a professional business woman than was previously thought." (165, 2011)

I argue that her professionalism goes beyond managing the monetary expectations of her work, however. When first publishing *The Banished Man*, for example, Smith wrote to Cadell and Davies regarding errors in the initial publication of the text. Smith writes of the ‘numerous errors’ in the six copies of *The Banished Man* she received from them post-publication, including one that she notes ‘is imperfect from being bound wrong.’ (1794, 149) She also writes in a later letter dated December 1794 that she is ‘everyday beset with people who tell me of faults.’ (179)⁷⁶ If she was publishing her novels simply for the money she received from the publishers, perhaps she would not have been so concerned with the finished product after she had delivered it to the publishers. Smith was unhappy about errors in her carefully crafted works. As Labbe argues, the books were Smith’s ‘mode of self-visualisation for public consumption,’ her works were a portrait or reflection of how she wished to be perceived by her readers, and as such, she would not allow erroneous copies to be published without complaint.

Judith Phillips Stanton, in her edition of Smith’s collected letters, suggests that the letters raise many questions about Smith’s professional life, such as:

How [...] did Smith regard her own works? Was she engaged in her tremendous literary effort only for money, or was there an underlying seriousness about the artistic value of what she wrote? (xv, 2003)

As I have been arguing throughout this work, I believe the answer is: yes, there was an underlying seriousness about the value of her works (artistic or otherwise), beyond their monetary value. While Stanton notes that ‘the Charlotte Smith we meet in the letters is more caught up in the details of the publishing process than the creative act,’ (xvi, 2003) the ‘details’ are more than simply regarding the monetary value of what she has produced. Stanton goes on, emphasising this point:

[From the letters] we learn how she contracted for work, assessed and responded to the book market, and came up with ideas for new publications. She struggled to meet

⁷⁶ Judith Phillips Stanton, *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (2003)

deadlines, mailing out each finished volume as soon as she had a fair copy in order to meet her contractual obligations for advance payments. [...] She haggled with various booksellers over copyright, a printer's competence, or the quality of an engraving for an illustration. She would argue that the time was ripe for a second edition of a novel. (xvi)

The letters and Smith's works present us with two sides of Charlotte Smith as an author: the professional businesswoman and the artist. They also demonstrate how often these two sides of her writing career were at odds with one another. She wanted to deliver finely crafted books, from plot to cover, the book as a text and a material object, an experience; at the same time, she needed to ensure her efforts were well paid in order to sustain herself and her family. All the while, she also needed her novels to be meaningful: to deliver her social commentary and opinions on politics, education, English law, and any other subject she thought worthy of her attention.

We know from these efforts to create well-crafted works worth investing in (for both the reader and the bookseller) that Smith's use of paratext (visual, literary, commentary) are also significant because they would have been chosen carefully for their particular purpose. Her frequent quotations from, and references to famous authors and poets, both ancient and modern, in a number of languages (including Latin) demonstrate Smith's own intellectual capacity, knowledge, and wide reading. She also uses paratext to guide her readers' engagement with the book she has created (as we saw with the prefatory poem earlier in this chapter), to encourage further reading into the issues she raises (such as slavery and primogeniture), and also to demonstrate how her characters use the knowledge they themselves can gain from reading.

Via her characters, Smith also inserts lessons from her own life: older characters (usually autobiographical representations of Smith) deliver advice and anecdotes to her younger protagonists, for example. The autobiographical elements of characters such as Mrs Stafford in *Emmeline* or Charlotte Denzil in *The Banished Man* can be considered paratextual, too. Even in their time, they could be recognizably autobiographical to the contemporary reader because of Smith's 'marketing strategies,' the way in which she allowed her readers to see Smith represented

in her own works. Readers would have recognized her self-portraits. These ‘life lessons,’ therefore, would have had rung true and perhaps have been all the more potent and effective for it. For example, Mrs Stafford tells Emmeline,

“Ah! my dear girl! [...] check in its first appearance a propensity which I see you frequently betray, to anticipate displeasing or unfortunate events. When you have lived a few years longer, you will, I fear, learn that every day has evils enough of its own, and that it is well for us we know nothing of those which are yet to come. I speak from experience; for I, when not older than you now are, had a perpetual tendency to fancy future calamities, and embittered by that means many of those hours which would otherwise have been really happy. Yet have not my pre-sentiments, tho’ most of them have been happily verified, enabled me to avoid one of those thorns with which my path has been thickly strewn.” (82, 1788)

This advice on not dwelling on potential disasters is there for the benefit of both Emmeline and the reader. As Smith notes, Mrs Stafford is a form of educator for Emmeline: ‘[Emmeline was] charmed to have found in her friend, one who could supply to her all the deficiencies of her former instructors.’ (80) Like Mrs Stafford, and through Mrs Stafford, Smith hopes to deliver advice on life and living which she perhaps wishes she had been given. Many of the novels have a character through which Smith speaks to deliver advice and life lessons, which she has discovered through her own life experiences.

For Smith, knowledge from literature (whether the works of herself or others) and critical reading are tools that can be used to reflect on one’s own life, to shed light on situations or provide a perspective or lens through which to view situations, people, and places. Unlike many other progressive educationalists of the later eighteenth century, Smith does not focus on scientific learning or dismiss ‘book-learning’ as something archaic and inherently not useful. Followers of Rousseau’s educational theory, such as Edgeworth, and Wollstonecraft, though disparate in their ideas and methods, and even sometimes suspicious of the philosophy of education each other employed, agreed on the point of experiential versus book-learning. As we have seen, Edgeworth advocates the censorship of texts to the point of physically altering them and Rousseau would do away with books altogether for both male and female pupils up to a

certain age. Smith, on the other hand, while she is critical of 'book-learning' methods such as rote-learning, is more concerned with a person's ability to read well and critically, their ability to question what they read and not take it at face value. She also believes that the written experiences of others (fictional and otherwise) can be beneficial for the reader. For Smith, useful knowledge can be gained from texts like the plays of Shakespeare, the poetry of Pope and Milton, and even modern novels, so long as a person knows how to read critically. She demonstrates this with her parallels of 'good' and 'bad' readers, or quixotes, as we have seen in Chapters Three and Four. She also demonstrates this through her use of paratext.

Despite the lack of footnotes and prose preface, paratext can still be found in *Emmeline* that has been designed to educate and guide its readers. As we have seen, the prefatory poem set the tone of the novel and Smith has interspersed her own story throughout the text – in a way doubling Emmeline with the reader of the narrative as both are supposed to learn from the experiences of Mrs Stafford (Smith's own fictional double placing Smith in the role of instructor). Another form of textual reference used throughout *Emmeline* is quotations and allusions to other poets and authors, often in the speech of her characters. These quotations reflect the reading and education of the characters (not to mention Smith herself.)

Out of the eighteen quotations in *Emmeline*, seven of them come from Emmeline herself. When introducing the heroine, Smith discusses her reading, naming, in particular, Pope, Milton and *The Spectator* as some of the pertinent resources available to Emmeline. She describes them as providing 'the grounds of that elegant and useful knowledge' (48, 1788) which Emmeline uses to support her throughout her life. There are a number of ways in which Smith presents such reading as being 'useful.' As discussed earlier chapters, Vicesimus Knox describes these particular writers as useful because they represent the best of English writing in the period, they are where

one should start one's education in English literature, according to Knox.⁷⁷ Smith perhaps would agree, but she also represents them as useful not simply because they are the classics of English literature at this point in the eighteenth century but because they provide Emmeline with some insights that make her tragic early life easier to endure.

Of the quotations Emmeline uses throughout the novel, one is from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, two are from Pope's 'Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady' and *Rape of the Lock*, and three are from Shakespeare plays, *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. These quotations and allusions demonstrate to the reader the lens through which Emmeline views and assesses the scenes and people around her; her reading colours her perspective much like it does for the quixotic anti-heroines discussed previously. For Emmeline, however, the quality of her reading means that her perspective is much less skewed and the lens or colouring provided by her reading is actually beneficial. She uses her literary knowledge to interpret and respond to the actions of others.

This ability to use literature to assess and understand the behaviour and feelings of others also provides her with the ability to more coolly assess Delamere's 'madness.' Delamere attempts to use Emmeline's fondness for reading by paralleling his own situation with *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774).

When [supper] was removed, Emmeline returned again to the books, and took up one she had not before opened. - It was the second volume of the Sorrows of Werter [sic]. She laid it down again with a smile, saying - "That will not do for me tonight."

"What is it?" Cried Delamere, taking it from her. - "O, I have read it – and if *you* have, Emmeline, you might have learned the danger of trifling with violent and incurable passions. Tell me – could you ever be reconciled to yourself if you should be the causes of a catastrophe equally fatal?"

⁷⁷ Vicesimus Knox, *Liberal Education, Or, a Practical Treatise on the Methods of Acquiring Useful and Polite Learning* (1785)

Still meaning to turn the conversation, she answered gaily - "O, I fancy there is very little danger of that – you know the value of your own existence too well to throw it inconsiderately away."

"Do not be too certain of that, Emmeline. Without you, my life is no longer valuable – if indeed it be supportable; and should I ever be in the situation this melancholy tale describes, how do I know that my reason would be strong enough to preserve me from equal rashness. Beware, Miss Mowbray – beware of the consequence of finding an Albert at Woodfield." (186)

Michelle Faubert notes that in the second half of the eighteenth century that the reaction to the novel and 'the myth of the "Werther-effect" on English readers popularized the notion of textual contagion.' (2016, 391) By specifically referencing *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Smith asks the reader through Emmeline's reaction not only to question Delamere's motive to use the text against her but also to question the myth surrounding 'textual contagion' and the purpose behind perpetuating such a myth as the 'Werther-effect,' just as we see her encouraging her readers to question what we could call the 'Quixote-effect' of romance and sentimental novels as discussed in Chapters Two and Three. As Faubert notes, textual contagion is 'rooted in the eighteenth-century philosophy of literary sensibility.' (391) Given Smith's use of sentimental fiction to make a living for herself and her children, the notion of her works being misinterpreted or misconstrued as dangerous, as textually contagious, must have been a concern for her. Faubert notes in her analysis of *Werther* and J. J. Rousseau's *Julie* that,

Works from the literature of sensibility were viewed as especially infectious. The very philosophy and psychology of sympathy upon which the culture of sensibility as based focuses on the power of texts to change the reader's mind or body, an idea articulated in [Adam] Smith's seminal work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiment*. (398)

The cultural fear, instigated by John Locke's theory of the 'association of ideas,' subsequently developed by philosophers throughout the eighteenth century, such as Adam Smith, Joseph Addison, and Joseph Priestley.

All these philosophers developed the 'association of ideas' concept in different ways. Adam Smith's interpretation was that, by reading sentimental fiction, a reader's mind is open to

becoming ‘infected,’ to use Faubert’s terminology, with the ideas of an ‘Other.’ Faubert summarises Adam Smith’s theory, stating that:

Through the observer’s [or reader’s] imagination [...] Other’s feelings and experiences enter the Self and change is from within, even physically. Such is the downside to sensibility, the culture of readerly sympathy that swept Britain from the middle of the eighteenth century. (398)

This cultural fear, perpetuating the ‘moral media panic’ discussed in earlier chapters, is one of the issues Charlotte Smith asks her readers to question throughout her novels – beginning with *Emmeline* and its reference to the ‘Werther-effect’ notorious in England at the time. As Faubert points out,

Werther and *Julie* supposedly inspired so many suicides that they were deemed dangerously infectious. [...] According to the critical myth, Goethe’s novel inspired so-called “Werther-mania” across Europe when hundreds of young Europeans emulated the suicidal protagonist as the ultimate impassioned and frustrated sensibility by copying his clothing style and suicide. (407)

However, like many of the cultural myths attached to reading, the ‘effect’ was, in reality, non-existent. But, like the fears surrounding other effects on readers like neglect of domestic duties or promiscuity or quixotism, the myth continued despite lack of real proof. As Faubert notes,

the fact that there was no hard proof buttressing the notion of Werther-mania does nothing to undermine its significance. The very perpetuation of the story suggests its ideological power. (410)

This same ‘ideological power’ applied to other myths about the dangers of reading. One could argue that this ‘power’ of the myths could be considered the infection, rather than the reading matter. What Smith strives to do in her representation of Emmeline dismissing the power of *Werther* over Delamere’s mind, and, indeed, her own, is to encourage her own readers (whether they read her works for leisure or as reviewers for periodicals and magazines) to question these supposedly powerful effects that reading is imagined and purported to have in the period.

Fitz-Edward, Delamere's friend and co-conspirator, also utilises the *Werther* myth when attempting to persuade Mrs Stafford to come round the idea of Delamere's approaching Emmeline:

"Upon my soul [...] I know not what would have been the consequence, had I not consented to assist him in deceiving his family and coming hither: but I have reason to think he would have made some wild attempt to secure himself more frequent interviews with Miss Mowbray; and that a total disappointment of the project he had formed for seeing her, would have been attended with a violence of passion arising even to frenzy. – Madness or death would perhaps have been the event." (84)

Mrs Stafford is unaffected by this dramatic speech and reproaches Fitz-Edward:

"Does a modern man of fashion pretend to talk of madness and death? You certainly imagine, Sir, that you are speaking to some romantic inhabitant of a Welch provincial town, whose ideas are drawn from a circulating library, and confirmed by the conversation of the captain in quarters." (84)

Despite her reasonable response, emphasising her rationality, Fitz-Edward persists:

"I feel too certainly that madness and death would be preferable to the misery such coldness and cruelty as yours would inflict on me, was it my misfortune to love as violently as Delamere." (84)

The two men, however, perhaps do not expect they are to win over these women because they are the naïve inhabitants of a 'Welch provincial town,' but instead, because they are young women and expected to indulge in novel-reading and, therefore, likely to be susceptible to the idea of so-called 'Werther-mania.' Delamere is not the only member of his family susceptible to quixotism, his sister Augusta is introduced to the reader as a young lady with a quixotic mind, affected by novels:

[Augusta] was deeply read in novels; (almost the only reading that young women of fashion are taught to engage in;) and having from the acquired many of her ideas, she imagined that Delamere and Emmeline were born for each other. (103)

If this is the kind of young lady Fitz-Edward and Delamere expect to engage with, they could be forgiven, perhaps, in expecting Emmeline and Mrs Stafford to have quixotic expectations of romance, like Augusta and the other quixotes throughout Smith's novels.

Emmeline, instead, is unimpressed by Delamere's attempt to persuade her to misuse her knowledge of literature, being a critical reader (unlike Augusta). The way in which Delamere would have her use literature is similar to the way in which the quixotes of the first chapter use fiction and novels, by transferring whole scenes and situations from fiction and interpreting them as the events of real-life. It is not only the men who supposedly subscribe to the concept of 'Werther-mania.' Smith's many references to the novel throughout *Emmeline* emphasise again and again her mockery of the actions and behaviours of characters in novels and the idea that novels could have such an effect on readers as to 'infect' them with a form of quixotism. In the second volume, Mrs Croft's eldest daughters, for example, arrive at a gathering

the eldest, drest [sic] in the character of Charlotte in the *Sorrows of Werter* [sic]; and the youngest, as Emma, the nut brown maid. Their air and manner were adapted, they believed, to the figure of those characters as they appear in the print shops. (1788, 459-60)

The purpose of the dress is to attract a young Lord or a Lord's son, and

the girls were not without hopes, that among [the gentlemen] there might be some of that species of men of quality, whom modern novelists describe as being in the habit of carrying forcibly away, beautiful young creatures with whom perchance they become enamoured, and marrying them in despite of all opposition. They longed above all things to meet with such adventures, and to be carried off by a Lord or Baronet at least; whose letters afterwards, to some dear Charles or Harry, could not fail to edify the world. (461)

Meanwhile, Emmeline has already experienced such an adventure as they desire to have, despite not dressing as a sentimental heroine or emulating a print-shop image. The reader encouraged by Smith's sardonic description of the girls' hope and the previous events of the novel not to indulge the same fantasies.

Emmeline, however, stands in contrast to the young, quixotic ladies of the novel – especially in her own use of literature to respond to the situations in which she finds herself. When speaking to Lord Westhaven about Delamere's supposed Werther-like madness, Emmeline retorts, using Delamere's own technique, but quoting Shakespeare (a more 'reliable' resource of insight into human behaviour),

"Your Lordship," said she, "is disposed to think thus, from the warm and vehement manner in which Lord Delamere is accustomed to express himself. If he is really unhappy, I am very sorry; but I am persuaded time, and the more fortunate alliance which he is solicited to form, will effect a cure. Don't think me unfeeling if I answer your melancholy prophecy in the words of Rosalind - 'Men have died from time to time, and worms have eaten them – but not for love.'" (380)

Throughout *Emmeline*, then, Smith demonstrates the incorrect, quixotic ways of using the knowledge provided by literature – moving scenes, situations, and characters wholesale into 'real life' and taking events at face-value – but also demonstrates the ways in which literature can be useful if used correctly. In Emmeline's case, literature is a way of assessing and understanding characters and situations, it provides her with the capacity to analyse others' actions and the ability to empathise so that she does not get swept along by her imagination as other characters in the novel do. It is also significant that *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, despite Smith's admiration of it, is placed in contrast to the authors to whom Emmeline refers in her own quotations. Emmeline's authors provide 'elegant and useful knowledge,' as discussed at the beginning of the novel, whereas the more sensational fiction *The Sorrows of Young Werther* does not unless we read it critically and move away from the 'myth.'

Smith's choice of allusion in *The Sorrows of Young Werther* alongside Emmeline's scepticism surrounding using the novel to interpret Delamere's behaviour is also a criticism of the so-called 'Werther-effect' or 'Werther-mania' which swept Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century. Not only does Smith ask her readers to examine their own thinking with relation to her novels but also to apply their critical thinking to other novels and the cultural myths attached to them. We are supposed to 'scoff' at the idea of the 'Werther-effect' and the manner in which Delamere connects himself with the tragic character of Werther, that he too might commit suicide out of unrequited love, the idea implanted by that novel.

Alongside references to fiction and poetry, Smith also utilises quotations and allusions from historical texts. These historical allusions are used to describe Godolphin, our true hero in *Emmeline*, and affect the way in which he is viewed and how he views Emmeline. In Godolphin's

introduction, the narrator states: 'Of him might be said what was the glorious praise of the immortal Bayard – that he was ‘sans peur et sans reproches.’ (271) From Godolphin's perspective, the narrator describes the scene:

Goldolphin was a silent spectator of this melancholy farewell [sic]. The softness of Emmeline's heart was to him her greatest charm, and he could hardly help repeating, in the words of Louis XIV – “she has so much sensibility that it must be an exquisite pleasure to be loved by her.” (305)

In this manner, he presents yet another contrast to Delamere. Delamere is associated with sensational fiction, madness, suicidal ideation; Godolphin, on the other hand, is associated with real-life, historical heroes, distinguished military men and kings. This also presents a contrast in their own education, Delamere refers to popular fiction while Godolphin quotes Louis XIV. These allusions demonstrate Smith's historical knowledge. Meanwhile, the reader is referred to historical events and facts, and thus encouraged to explore further and educate themselves more.

Overall, these pieces of extra-narrative information, whether they are epigraphs, footnotes, quotations, or allusions, present the reader with a guide on how to read and interpret the novel. They encourage the reader to question the actions of the various characters. Given the popularity (or notoriety) of the novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, many of Smith's readers would have been familiar with the story. By presenting her readers with a character who compares himself, hyperbolically, with the character of Werther, Smith gives them a choice: they can take it at face value, as many other characters in the novel do (or suggest they do, in the case of Fitz-Edward), and be concerned for the welfare of Delamere in case his unrequited love really does make him mad and suicidal. Or they can follow the example of Emmeline who does not allow herself to be manipulated into a false way of viewing the situation. Throughout Emmeline, the subtle layering of multiple texts (through intertextuality, allusion, paratext) builds an educational experience beyond the narrative itself. The educational experience of Emmeline is at once based in the idea of reading critically and widely to develop one's own ideas and store of knowledge, but also provides advice on life via the real experiences of Smith herself, speaking through an

autobiographical representation. The reader is encouraged to develop a reading habit that is both extensive (covering a range of genres and subjects) and also critical, as well as learning from the advice Emmeline receives.

This contrast of perspectives, one skewed by fiction and the other critical, it is also at work in *The Old Manor House*. For example, we as the readers are presented with two options of how to interpret the characters of Orlando and Monimia – whose names, Smith leaves us in no doubt, derive from *Orlando Furioso* and *The Orphan* respectively. An extract from *Orlando Furioso* opens the first volume of the novel; ‘Monimia’ is an unusual name, even in the eighteenth century, and Smith has given it to a character who is an orphan. Mocking Orlando’s romantic attachment, Warwick quotes Otway’s work, ‘Monimia – my angel! It was not kind/To leave me like a turtle here alone!’ (332) Confirming further the connection between Monimia and her namesake. The reader, as in *Emmeline*, is presented with options for the interpretations of Smith’s literary allusions: They can do as Mrs Rayland does and declare that Monimia will become carried away with romantic notions because of the origin of her name:

But her name – Monimia – was an incessant occasion of reproach [...] “the girl will have nothing, why put such romantic notions into her head, as may prevent her getting her bread honestly? [...] I must insist on having her called Mary.” (I, 25-6)

Or the reader can read more deeply and critically beyond the name of a character, come up with their own interpretations, as Smith encourages them to do. By reading critically, the reader will notice that Mrs Rayland makes a similar mistake to the quixotes, taking a situation or character wholesale from fiction and transplanting onto a real-life person. Monimia is nothing like her predecessor of Otway’s *The Orphan*. While Orlando romanticises Monimia, Monimia does not romanticise herself, thus dispelling Mrs Rayland’s prejudiced notion that Monimia’s name and her low status will affect her behaviour, simply because it alludes to a fictional tragedy.

In terms of paratext outside of the narrative, the first thing the reader might encounter is the Preface. Almost half of Smith’s novels include a Preface: *Desmond*, *The Banished Man*,

Marchmont and *The Young Philosopher*. The first sentence of *Marchmont*, in its Preface, Smith writes:

‘Few things perhaps are more difficult than to write a preface well, and it is perhaps equally true that no part of a book is so little read.’ (1796, v) Smith uses her prefaces in a variety of ways.

Diane Boyd discusses Smith’s ‘branding’ or marketing. While Smith uses her first prefatory poem in *Emmeline* to present her situation as a struggling mother and writer to her readers, Boyd argues that

Smith’s prefaces indicate that she understands the problems of characterizing herself as a mother-writer *only*; once Smith the mother-writer has gained cultural acceptance, she begins to branch out in her Prefaces. (2001, 150)

For example, the Preface of *Desmond* establishes Smith’s point of view on current events and she asserts her right to comment on current events and politics in her preface and the subsequent narrative. As Boyd argues, Smith uses her prefaces to ‘highlight not only her precarious position as a mother-writer, but issues of more pressing cultural concern.’ (152) This is seen especially in her preface to *Desmond*, in which

Smith remarks on current events and in doing so insists that the realm of women writers should not be limited solely to the domestic. By continually revising the text of her author function Smith remains one precarious step ahead of her readers and publishers who would inadvertently keep her cosseted as a mother-writer. (151)

Smith also uses her prefaces, as she used her prefatory poem, to set the tone and guide her readers, and demonstrate her intentions. The final paragraph of the Preface to *Marchmont* reads:

A few words may be allowed me on the subject of the present work. It is a fault frequently imputed to novels, that they are directed to no purpose of morality, but rather serve to inflame the imaginations and enfeeble by false notions of refinement the minds of young persons. I know not what share of those faults may be found in the present production but my purpose has been to enforce the virtue of fortitude: and if my readers could form any idea of the state of my mind while I have been writing, they would allow that I practise the doctrine I preach. (xv-xvi)

Before entering into her narrative, Smith refutes the argument of the ‘friend’ at the beginning of the Preface who argues that it seems a wasted effort to write a preface (especially given its difficulty and lack of readership) for ““a work of mere entertainment”” (v) precisely because she

is not writing ‘works of mere entertainment’ – they have a moral or educational purpose, the prefaces introduce the topic or issue to bring it to the readers’ attention so that they may have it ready in their minds before they begin the narrative. *Desmond’s* Preface, for example, highlights that the attention of the reader should be on reactions to the revolution and women’s commentary on it (Smith and Geraldine’s, in particular) rather than on the overarching romance plot upon which the novel and its commentary on the revolution is built. The romance plot, Smith argues, is simply for the sake of marketability and reader expectations.

The Banished Man is unusual in its layout as it contains two prefaces. The first in Volume I is called Preface and the second in Volume II is called ‘Avis au lecteur,’ or ‘Advice to the reader.’ The first is a standard preface for Smith, part of the ‘marketing’ strategy described by Boyd and others.⁷⁸ It discusses her hardships in relation to the ongoing legal battle for her children’s inheritance, the manner in which she must produce and sell novels in order to provide for her family, and the toll her circumstances have taken on her health. She also defends her use of autobiographical material, which she will do again in the later prefaces. The second, however, is very different.

In the ‘Avis au Lecteur’ she defends her themes and her refusal to join the vogue for the Gothic novel, and her ‘experiment’ in introducing the heroine much later in the novel than is usual for either her or the generality of courtship novels. The preface opens with a quotation from *Tristram Shandy*:

“There was, an please your honour,” said Corporal Trim, “There was a certain king of Bohemia, who had seven castles.”

A modern Novelist, who, to write “in the immediate taste,” has so great a demand for these structures, cannot but regret, that not one of the seven castles was

⁷⁸ For examples, see Diane E. Boyd, “‘Professing Drudge’: Charlotte Smith’s negotiation of a Mother-writer Author function’ *South Atlantic Review* 66 (2001) 145-66 and Sarah M. Zimmerman, ‘Charlotte Smith’s Letters and the Practice of Self-Representation’ *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 53, (1991) 50-77

sketched by the light and forcible pencil of Sterne: for if it be true that books are made, as he asserts, only as apothecaries make medicines, how much might have been obtained from the king of Bohemia's seven castles, towards the castles which frown in almost every modern novel? (iii)

She begins by discussing the castles and manors of her previous novels, and telling the reader that they

have taken so many of my materials to construct, that I have hardly a watch tower, a Gothic arch, a cedar parlour, or a long gallery, an illuminated window, or a ruined chapel, left to help myself. [...] and I have already built and burnt down one of these venerable edifices in this work, yet must seek wherewithal to raise another. (iv)

She then expresses her concerns that, because many of her 'ingenious co[n]temporaries' are writing about these 'venerable edifices,'

I had some doubts whether, to avoid plagiarism, it would not have been better to have *earthed* my hero, and have sent him for adventures to the subterraneous town on the Chatelet mountain in Champagne, or even to Herculaneum, or Pompeii, where I think no scenes have yet been laid, and where I should have been in less danger of being *again* accused of borrowing. (iv-v)

The remainder of the 'Avis au lecteur,' to use Smith's phrase, consists of a dialogue that is laid out in a similar manner to Smith's didactic children's book, *Rural Walks*, published the same year.

The format would have been familiar to anyone who had encountered these types of didactic children's works, such as Anna Barbauld's *Evenings At Home* or her series of *Lessons For Children*.⁷⁹ Smith's use of the technique of 'familiar conversation,' alongside the title given to the

⁷⁹ Familiar conversation, presented in the dialogue format was used as a way of educating children:

Tut. COME, my boys, let us sit down a while under yon shady tree. I don't know how your young legs feel, but mine are almost tired.

Geo. I am not tired, but I am very hot.

Har. And I am hot, and very dry too.

Tut. When you have cooled yourself, you may drink out of that clear brook. In the mean time we will read a little out of a book I have in my pocket.

(Anna Barbauld, *Evenings at Home*, Vol. I, 2, 1794)

second preface, ‘advice to the reader,’ one can infer that Smith is using the dialogue format to educate her readers in how to approach and read her novels. The premise of the ‘Avis au Lecteur’ is that she has asked a friend to read the first volume of *The Banished Man* and the conversation she relates are their comments on it. She introduces the conversation, stating that ‘I believe I shall be better understood if I relate our conversation in the way of dialogue.’ (v) She is offered the advice of a friend to follow the ‘maxim so universally allowed – “Que rien n’est beau que la vrai”’ (v) which is repeated as the final line of the preface.⁸⁰ This is the ‘guiding principle’ of the conversation and Smith’s novel-writing in general. Smith writes ‘le vrai,’ or ‘the truth,’ and does not succumb to the ‘fashions’ of novel-writing dictated by the reading public, according to this conversation.

Throughout, the writer’s friend encourages her to draw on her own life and experiences, and the events of real-life happening around her, rather than succumbing to the vogue for the Gothic which she has been resisting, “as you have laid much of the scene in France, and at the distance of only a few months, I think you can be at no loss for *real* horrors, if a novel must abound in horrors.” (v) The argument being that Smith’s “imagination, however fertile, can suggest nothing of individual calamity, that has not there been exceeded.” (v) Smith’s disdain for the fashionable Gothic genre stems from her belief that there are enough horrors in real life, without having to invent new ones in fiction. Her footnotes throughout *The Banished Man* continually refer to the events occurring (i.e. the Revolution and the responses to the Revolution) as she writes, or during the time in which the novel is set, asserting her own opinion and commentary alongside that in the voice of her characters. For example, in Volume IV,

⁸⁰ Translation: ‘Nothing is beautiful but the truth’ The quotation is from a poem by Nicolas Boileau-Despreaux, ‘Épître IX’ (1657) For more on Boileau-Despreaux’s poetry, see A. F. B. Clark’s *Boileau and the French Classical Critics in English* (Geneva: Slatkine Press, 1925) and Gordon Pocock’s *Boileau and the Nature of Neoclassicism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980)

D'Alonville upon returning to France, observes the effects of The Terror and the development of the Revolution, and questions,

How could *that* government be established on the voice of the people, which the people were every where rising to oppose? How could men call themselves the representatives of their country, who could retain their power only by dyeing the scaffolds with blood? (5)

Smith footnotes this with her own thoughts, speaking of current events and looking back to 1793, when this part of the novel was set, 'If this was self-evident in 1793, it is much more so now, when every day brings accounts of horrors, from which the mind attempts, in vain, to take refuge in credulity.' (5)

Her 'Friend' continues his advice to hold to 'le vrai,'

keep as nearly as you can to circumstances you have heard related, or to such as might have occurred in a country where murder stalk abroad, and calls itself patriotism; where the establishment of liberty serves as a pretence for the violation of humanity; and I am persuaded, though there may be less of the miraculous in your work; though it may be less

"A woman's story at a winter's fire
Authoriz'd by her grand dam,

Shakespeare.

yet it will have the advantage of bearing such a resemblance to the truth as may best become fiction, and that you will be in less danger of having it said,

Fancy still cruises, when poor Sense is tired.

Young. (vi)

This further develops the idea about 'le vrai,' it is not merely concerned with the unnecessary horrors in the Gothic novels of the 1790s, it also provides a reason and a basis for Smith's 'commentary' style of novel-writing in which she writes 'to the moment' about her interpretation about what is truly happening. Smith wants to educate her readers by exploring current events, or 'le vrai,' through her novels. It is both an aesthetic choice – shunning the false horrors of the Gothic – and a didactic choice, as she wants her readers to be better informed of the events. She is also demonstrating her own authority on the subject, legitimizing her opinions and arguments.

Smith was criticised for the manner in which she approached the current events of the Revolution in *Desmond*. In that Preface, too, she defended her right as a woman to engage in the discussion of those events. In *The Banished Man* she continues to legitimize her claim to the examination and recording of those events as they have developed since. Unlike in her first radical, revolution-inspired novels, *Celestina* and *Desmond*, however, as discussed in Chapter One, the circumstances have now drastically changed, and so have Smith's opinions and ideas on the progress of the revolution.⁸¹ This adherence to 'le vrai,' or the reality of the events occurring in Europe, in the novels, when Smith could easily, for the sake of making money, write to the fashion of Gothic horror, stems from her desire to educate her reader in the perspectives and events that have occurred or are still ongoing.⁸² This again continues in her footnotes.

In Volume II she discusses the events of the 'Terror' and offers the perspective, against the popular opinion in England that the common people of France were to blame, she records in a footnote that

On the melancholy 21st January, 1793, all the women of Paris were in tears – and the precautions taken at the fatal scene, prove how much it was dreaded that the real sentiments of the people should appear. (120)

In Smith's eyes, the common people were not to blame for the events, but continued to be oppressed by a new government and their 'hired banditti.' (120) Again, her discursive footnote demonstrates her own opinion of the matter as well as encouraging her reader to see the events in a different light to which the newspapers, periodicals, and even other novels, of the period wanted them to be seen.

⁸¹ Many scholars have offered reasons for this 'change of heart' over the revolution. For example, Grenby, M. O. *The Anti-Jacobin Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001) suggests that Smith's 'literary recantation was a symptom' of the events occurring in France leading up to its publication. (37)

⁸² Gothic novels were often anti-Revolution and anti-French during the 1790s, so the Gothic genre here could also represent the reactionary opinion, while Smith at this point was more liberal in her response to the Revolution.

The 'Avis au lecteur,' after its defence of speaking the truth about current events, takes a different turn as the 'Friend' asks if Smith is to make the 'experiment' of "mak[ing] a novel without love in it?" (vii) Smith, the 'Author' character in this dialogue, responds 'Certainly not.' (vii) The Friend then, concerned, states "Then I am really in greater pain for you – for I am afraid you will again incur the charge of immorality, and intend to make your hero in love with Madame D'Alberg, a married woman." (vii) Perhaps Smith wants to reassure her readers that this is not the case, aware that *Desmond* did indeed incur such charges of immorality because of Desmond's desire for Geraldine, a married woman, and his affair with Josephine, another married woman. 'I have no such design,' (vii) replies the Author. The Friend, seemingly exasperated, responds that he does not know then who the heroine could possibly be (vii) and, again, anticipating potential reader anxieties, Smith (Author) assures them that she is only trying something new – while also condemning the critical atmosphere in which novelists much write in terms of reviewer expectations versus reader expectations. She states:

Author.-Alas! my dear Sir! if you had yourself ever seen much of that part of the critical world who descant on novels, you would be aware of the extreme difficulty of the task that a Novelist has to execute:- besides that the number of strange situations which the heroes and heroines have been represented, are so numerous as to leave hardly any new means of bewildering them in difficulties, there are such objections continually made to some part or other of our fabricated stories, as have continually reminded me of the fable of the Man, his Son, and his Ass. I have been assailed with remonstrances on the evil tendency of having too much love – too much of violent attachments in my novels; and as I thought in the present instance, the situation of my hero was of itself interesting enough to enable me to carry him on for some time without making him violently in love, I was determined to try the experiment. (vii-viii)

The Friend, still concerned, as 'I do not believe that the generality of novel readers, and it is to those you must look, will agree with your sage advisers, who were, I suppose, ladies far advanced in life.' (viii) As we saw in Chapter Three, a similar criticism was levelled at the 'wise council' of ladies who attempted to control and restrict Fanny Waverley's reading in *Desmond*, and the dialogue continues the defence of novels that do focus on courtship and criticising the prejudices

and double-standards of the previous generation of women who currently censor and restrict the reading young ladies.

The purpose of this dialogue in the preface, however, not only presents Smith's own thoughts and opinions on the censoring of modern novels while advocating the reading of those of the previous generation, it also guides and educates the reader in their approach to the current novel (and Smith's novels generally). The reader is in a similar position to the Friend. They have likely read the first volume of *The Banished Man*, and may be curious about the various factors of this new novel: who is the heroine? why has the novelist not attended to the vogue for the Gothic? In this pseudo-interview with the Author, the Friend presents questions the reader might also have, the Author answers them – much in the same manner of the didactic children's works where the child characters ask questions, and the tutor or parent or governess answers, and, by proxy, educates the book's reader or listener. Instead of educating her readers about botany or history, Smith is educating her readers about novel-writing and reading processes, and about the critical world that the novelist must endure.

On the Significance of Footnotes

Footnotes begin to appear in her works in *Celestina*, and from then her novels always contain footnotes. Most of the time they are simply references to other works quoted in the narrative or translations of quotations. *Desmond*, for example, contains 98 footnotes, 95 of which are references of some kind or explanations regarding letters referred to in the narrative but which aren't included in the novel. With the publication of *The Old Manor House* and *The Wanderings of Warwick*, however, throughout the four volumes while we only find twenty in total across the two works and *The Banished Man* contains forty-eight in total, both significantly lower, these novels contain more 'discursive' footnotes. By 'discursive' I mean notes in which the author's voice comes across, where Smith contributes to the narrative with her own thoughts and opinions and arguments in her own voice rather than through a character.

Prior to writing *The Banished Man*, Smith's shortest novel, *The Wanderings of Warwick*, saw her utilising the discursive footnote to expand upon the content in her narrative as she had not before. *The Wanderings of Warwick* is her first and only foray into what we would call the unreliable first-person narrator, an experimental notion for the time. By doubling the perspective in *The Wanderings of Warwick* as she does, Smith also forces the reader to acknowledge that the narrator is not always a reliable source of information, that they must apply their own critical analysis to the text. In his introduction to the Pickering and Chatto edition of *The Wanderings of Warwick*, M. O. Grenby notes that

On occasion in *The Wanderings of Warwick*, Smith seems to use Warwick as a mouthpiece for her own views. But at other times she distances herself from her hero, her footnotes moderating or even undermining his views. Throughout, Smith plays with this relationship. (xiii)

These discursive footnotes add a layer to the narrative which is directed at the reader holding the novel, not the listeners who are hearing Warwick tell the tales of his wanderings who would not be privy to Smith's opinions and notes. Grenby emphasises the complexity of the layering in his discussion of one particular section of the novel and its accompanying footnotes: Warwick's discussion of the issues of slavery in Chapter III. Warwick's meandering discussion of how a difference of perspective and culture can affect one's reaction to events constitutes part of his 'ameliorationist' argument in the debate about slavery. As Grenby notes, '[Warwick] is against abolition of the slave trade and emancipation of existing slaves, but humane and in favour of reform.' (xiv) Part-way through this monologue on slavery from Warwick's perspective, Smith introduces a footnote which spans two pages in the original text:

Notwithstanding my apprehension that Novel-readers, in their eagerness for more narrative, will murmur at being detained by a sort of dissertation on negro slavery, I should have tempted their patience for a few pages more, if I had not, since I wrote this part, seen Mr. Edwards's History of the West Indies, where clearness of style and accuracy of description are united with knowledge of the subject, integrity of heart, and general humanity – and where the English gentleman is not for a moment lost in the Jamaican planter. (66-7)

As she would later in the Preface to *Marchmont*, Smith expresses her concern that the external prose, the author ‘butting-in’ on the narrative, may seem frustrating for the reader or may go ignored, because they are reading for the narrative. But she argues both for the necessity of her paratext – and also cuts herself short, acceding to what she notes may be the prevailing opinion of her readers. Smith uses her footnote in this instance to direct her readers to another text (*The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies of the West Indies*) which she feels removes the necessity for her to continue the exploration in her novel, to save boring her reader.⁸³ By including this footnote and reference, Smith encourages the ‘Novel-readers’ engaged with her work to read a history book, something perhaps outside of their comfort zone and more clearly educational than a novel due to the pedagogical purpose of the genre. But she moves on immediately after (the footnote comes at the end of the chapter in which Warwick dissertates on slavery) so that the reader may continue with their novel-reading. Much like the inclusion of poetry and references to works by others – in many languages and genres – the reference to this history book not only encourages Smith’s reader to engage in wider reading but it is also intended to lend Smith’s own work and opinions a sense of legitimacy and authority. Smith’s fictional monologue, or, in her words, ‘dissertation,’ on slavery is supported by a non-fictional, educational text, very recently published, by a man known for his activity in relation to the abolition debate. Smith is not only attempting to encourage her readers to engage in wider reading but also to bolster her own works and demonstrate her own knowledge and wide reading, as she does with the quotations and allusions to other works.

⁸³ Grenby argues that Smith should be considered as an ameliorationist, just like her character Warwick, as the footnote with its reference to *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1793) implies Smith’s endorsement of Edwards (and Warwick’s) views that slavery was a ‘necessary evil’ (Grenby, xv) See Grenby’s introduction for further details on Edwards and Smith’s views on slavery.

As we have seen in her concerns surrounding the mistakes in *The Banished Man*, Smith was anxious that her readers would see her in a certain way: an educated and well-read gentlewoman. Her desire to control the interpretation of her work (both via the publication process and the inclusion of guidance via paratext) is at once about how she is represented to her readers – she cannot allow mistakes because they will reflect badly on her – and about educating her readers and encouraging them to take what they have learned beyond her novels and into the texts she recommends to them. As she forms her own identity as the educated gentlewoman striving to support her family, she is also aiming to help form her readers by informing them about a range of topics, from slavery and politics to family life and parenting, as will be discussed further in the final chapters of this book.

Chapter Five: A Philosopher and a Gentleman: Masculinity, the Professional Man and the Problems of Parents

“Probably it might be much more [...] were I a French-man; but I have not been accustomed to consider married women as objects of gallantry, having had neither a foreign nor a fashionable education.” (II, 63)

The Banished Man (1794)

‘In the experimental space of the novel, Charlotte Smith and Jane West, two of the most prolific and political female novelists of the period, tested the viability of the dominant discourses of masculinity while providing insight into the real and imagined impact on women. But unlike Burke, who could reject the enlightened philosopher in favour of the traditional knight, women novelists recognized that both masculine types were theoretical, that the ideal man was as theoretical as the ideal woman.’ (77)

Megan Woodworth, *Eighteenth-Century Women and the Gentleman’s Liberation Movement* (2011)

In this chapter, I will examine Smith’s engagement with the topic of masculinity and its links to education and upbringing. In *Eighteenth-Century Women and the Gentleman’s Liberation Movement*, Megan Woodworth explores Smith’s engagement with masculinity through the lens of the French Revolution, as such she focuses her attention on Smith’s more politically-engaged novels: *Desmond*, *The Old Manor House*, *The Banished Man* and *The Young Philosopher*. In the quotation above, Woodworth argues for the importance of examining women writers’ perspectives on the debates on masculinity during the 1790s, especially as society’s constructions of masculinity impacted on women because constructions of masculinity and manhood in a patriarchal society inevitably shape constructions of femininity and womanhood.⁸⁴ Throughout the work, she argues that women writers used the novel genre – a genre which, as I have previously argued, was a space in

⁸⁴ For further explorations of masculinity in the period, see also: Karen Harvey, ‘The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain’, *Cultural and Social History*, 121 (2015) 137-138; Megan Woodworth, *Eighteenth-century Women Writers and the Gentleman’s Liberation Movement: Independence, War, Masculinity, and the Novel, 1778-1818* (London: Routledge, 2011); H. Ellis, ‘Foppish Masculinity, Generational Identity and the University Authorities in Eighteenth-Century Oxbridge’, *Cultural and Social History*, 11.3 (2014)

which Smith could experiment and ‘play’ with ideas – to reshape and theorise masculinity and ‘types’ of men. Woodworth argues that women like West and Smith used ‘the virtual space of the novel’ to ‘deconstruct [...] theoretical masculinities [...] drawing on the experience of women as subjects of the real creature man [to] form the foundations of a new model of masculinity.’ (77)

Throughout the chapters focused on Smith, Woodworth argues that Smith’s interest in eighteenth-century conceptions of masculinity was linked to her belief in the need to change societal and cultural ideals of manhood in Britain, just as Smith desires change for ideals of femininity and womanhood. In Chapter Four of *Eighteenth-Century Women and the Gentleman’s Liberation Movement*, Woodworth explores the works of Smith and Jane West side-by-sides. Of Smith’s novels, she focuses on *The Banished Man* in particular, and Smith’s engagement with the issues of ideals of masculinity in the second half of the 1790s, after the events of ‘The Terror’, a turning-point for many English radicals and liberals. Woodworth argues that, while many male writers explored the topic of masculinity and the expectations of men in the 1790s,

Smith and West [...] had been pursuing a more domestic approach to the situation [...] Feelings, domestic attachments, and reason are all central to their attempts to explore and reshape the accepted social construction of masculinity. By launching their campaign to improve “things as they are” from the family, they could challenge gender inequalities along with those of birth and wealth (103, 2011)

I will expand upon Woodworth’s arguments in this chapter to emphasise the role which Smith argues upbringing and education play in both the ‘reshaping’ of masculinity, to borrow Woodworth’s term, and society’s attachment to contemporary, as-yet-unchallenged constructions of masculinity. In Smith’s novels, those men who were educated and brought up according to traditional or chivalric notions of masculinity are often contrasted with those who present, or have been brought up to consider, more progressive constructions and theories or philosophies of masculinity, or what a late-eighteenth-century man should be. More specifically, the male characters Smith portrays in a positive light (her theoretical ideal men) are more domesticated and family-focused and see their wives or future wives as intellectual equals, worthy of support

and mutual respect. Smith, perhaps, in some ways was creating the partner she wished she had married, in place of Benjamin Smith.

According to Woodworth, the desire to reshape masculinity and 'liberate' men from archaic notions of masculinity stemmed from the desire to change expectations of women and domestic life. In theory, if one changed the conceptions of masculinity, then conceptions of femininity would also change in response, 'liberating' both men and women from traditional patriarchal constructions of their roles in society. The writers Woodworth examines (Smith, West, Jane Austen, Maria Edgeworth, and Frances Burney)

employed their creative powers to liberate men from the very institutions and ideals about power, society, and gender that promote the subjection of women. Women's role in shaping masculine identity was widely acknowledged [and often feared] during the eighteenth century. (ix, 2011)

In her concluding paragraph, Woodworth argues that these writers believed that

once men had been liberated from the constraints of inherited models of authority and social hierarchy and have achieved independence, women can begin to liberate themselves through truly equal marriages. These more perfect unions in turn provide a blueprint for a new, more equal society. (212, 2011)

This ideal of equal marriages within a more equal society, one where social hierarchy does not exist and power is more equally shared and balanced among its citizens, can be seen in a number of Smith's novels, particularly those which culminate in the creation of seemingly utopian, often cosmopolitan, societies at the end of her novels, such as those in *Desmond* and *The Young Philosopher*. These societies usually establish themselves in Smith's novels outside of England and away from its traditional constructions of masculinity and femininity, in the 'New World' of Canada/North America, or in Europe before *The Terror*. The 'equal marriages' can also be found in each of Smith's novels, which always end in the happy, balanced marriage of the hero and heroine – whom, it is established throughout the story, are matched in intellect, goodness, and personal beauty. Beyond the five authors examined by Woodworth, a number of radical and

liberal women writers, such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Anna Barbauld, also contemplated and theorised the idea that equality in education would lead to equality in marriage and, therefore, to happier domestic situations, which would contribute to the progress and productivity of the nation as a whole. Anna Barbauld's *Evenings At Home*, for example, present to the reader a perfect vision of domestic life: all ages and genders are involved in the framing narrative, and it is implied that the father is as responsible for domestic happiness and the upbringing of the children as the mother. Wollstonecraft was far more explicit in her views in *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) when she stated that equal education would lead to equal marriages and happier domestic situations, and that this progress in English civilisation would lead to future progress for the nation and the Empire.

For the majority of this work, I have focused on Smith's thoughts on the education of her female readers. Female education, as we have seen, was a topic with which Smith was particularly concerned. This is unsurprising when you consider her own domestic situation which saw her raising and educating her daughters at home, while she sent her sons away to school. She had to balance her hopes for their future prospects with the reality they were faced with: they were poor and had no dowry. Despite this awareness of their situation, Smith saw her daughters as genteel young ladies much as she once was. Smith lived much of her life between a denial of the present situation she found herself in, determined to raise her children as she was raised herself, in the hope and expectation that her father-in-law's will would be seen through, miraculously saving his grandchildren from their plight. Without Richard Smith's money, her children could not expect the same life as Smith had growing up. Smith's denial of her current situation was probably sparked by what she considered her own downward social mobility since her marriage at fifteen or sixteen years old. She fought against her situation, desiring better for her children. But her entire plan relied on their inheritance, which was being preyed upon by the Trustees even as she wrote.

Smith sent her sons to a good school, Winchester College, and they could, more so than their sisters, make their own ways in the world. The girls, however, would need to marry in order to survive – much to the chagrin of Smith who wanted them to be able to marry for love (and, not explicitly, station) rather than merely security and money – though, those would also have been very welcome, should the opportunity to secure love, riches, *and* protection, arise.

Smith's novels, and indeed her letters, demonstrate, however, that she was perhaps not as comfortable with the situation of her boys as she could have been. There were still financial considerations, especially when it came to keeping them in the public education she desired – Winchester College, as now, was not an inexpensive institution to send your boys to. Also, they still had to make their way in the world after they had finished their education, with the knowledge that there was little or no money, and few connections, to get them started in comfortable positions at home. Smith's novels reflect her concerns with male education as often as they engage with her opinions on female education. As she grappled with the life of a single mother to numerous children at various stages in their lives, her thoughts, ideas, and worries regarding them spilled over into her novels as she used the space to test her own theories, explore her situation, and engage her readers in her opinions on parenting, upbringing, and education, and the consequences certain philosophies of those topics could have.

Smith was a respected source on boys' education for her friends, it would seem. In a letter to Joseph Warton, Smith mentions that her friend, Mrs O'Neill, has consulted her on educating her two sons:

My Friend M^{rs} ONiell [sic] of Shanes Castle in Ireland is coming over in October to places her two sons at a Public School. They have been educated under Private Tutors. And she represents the eldest who is about fourteen as a very good Scholar. So good indeed that it is rather to introduce him into the World than to carry him forward in learning that M^r ONiell intends to put him to one of the great English seminaries. He is himself much dispos'd to fix on Winchester. M^{rs} ONiell rather prefers Eaton, but they have with their usual partial opinion of mu judgement referred the matter to my decision, whose wishes and best opinion must certainly be for Winton. [...] Of course the debates

where to place them are long and frequent. In her last Letter which I received the moment I had concluded this, she desires me to let her know what Young Men of rank are at Winchester and whether there are any objections made by the Masters to a private Tutor and a private boarding House? I could wish to be able to answer these questions from the best Authority. Yet do not mean to give you the trouble of writing about them. [...] as my answer to Ireland is immediately required, w^d entreat you to commission some person to furnish me by the Posts return with this information.⁸⁵ (36-37, 1791)

Smith has, throughout the novels, advocated a balanced and traditional male education. In *Emmeline*, her first novel, she introduces two young men (Delamere and Fitz-Edward) who have opposite upbringings and represent the products of two extremes of education. Fitz-Edward 'had contracted his loose morals by being thrown too early into the world' (68, 1788) while Delamere's mother, like Delmont's own, 'could never be prevailed upon to part with him. He had, therefore, a tutor in the house; and his parents accompanied him abroad.' (68) The 'boundless indulgences' (68) which Delamere became used to throughout his childhood is finally recognised too late by Lord Montreville who

felt all the force of the error he had committed in that boundless indulgence to which he had accustomed his son. In the first instance of any consequence in which their wishes differed, he saw him ready to throw off the restraint of paternal authority, and caring to avow his resolution to do as he pleased. (73-4)

One man's vices were the product of being sent from home too soon; the other's was the product of not being sent from home at all. In her description of Delamere's upbringing, Smith agrees with her future character, Mrs Crewekerne, and the numerous educationalists who feared the effects of an indulgent upbringing.

Throughout her novels, Smith engages with the subject and debates about male education: where should boys be educated? When should they be sent to school? (If at all). Should they be sent abroad? These were common concerns throughout the eighteenth century, as they were in the seventeenth and even nineteenth centuries. There were as many anxieties rife in the education of young men as there were for young women. In Michele Cohen's *Fashioning*

⁸⁵ *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* Letter 'To Joseph Warton' dated August 31st [1791] 35-37

Masculinity (1996), she explores the debates on male education in the second half of the eighteenth century. In her examination of the education of young men and the benefits and concerns regarding the Grand Tour, she looks closely at the relationship between the mother and her sons and the arguments against mothers keeping their sons at home. As she notes,

Where best to educate the young men of rank – at home or at school – was the subject of intense debate throughout the eighteenth century. [...] educators such as Gilbert Burnet, Jean Gailhard and John Locke [...] claimed that schools encouraged vice and moral corruption and narrowed boys' experience of society. At the same time, educators warned that home education was not without its dangers. (57)

One particular danger on the mind of eighteenth-century educators was the mother herself and 'the domestic and emotional comforts [she and home] provided.' (Cohen, 57) Both parents were criticised for their overindulgence with the children, but mothers especially were called out as a problem for their sons' development. Cohen elaborates,

From Jonathan Swift in the early part of the century to James Fordyce towards the end, the same picture was painted of the mother in families of rank. Overly concerned about the ill effects of study on her son's health and/or social skills, afraid that he will learn the manners of a scholar and not those of a gentleman, the mother denigrates study and claims at the same time that her "darling" is far too clever for the education a mere tutor can provide. [...] By interfering with her son's education, the mother prevents him from attaining, through learning, the virtue emblematic of a gentleman. Worst still, her appropriation of her son prevents him from becoming a man. As long as he remains under her influence and authority he cannot "improve" and, above all, achieve manliness. (58)

Similar concerns about mothers raising and educating sons at home are made by Mrs Crewkherne in *The Young Philosopher* in relation to the hero's, George Delmont's, upbringing and education. She begins by lamenting to Dr Winslow in Chapter Two of the first volume that Delmont had "kept only one term [at Oxford] since we lost the Colonel." (I, 17) After a long speech in praise of her father and late brother, she returns to the subject of Delmont's education and upbringing. By doing so, she links her praise of her brother and father's high intellectual and academic capabilities and their being great men with her past hopes for Delmont.

When she describes Delmont as a child, she states that “‘he *seemed* to have a very great capacity,’” her emphasis on ‘seemed’ suggests she was disappointed. She continues:

“There was nothing, Sir [...] that struck the child, that he did not immediately ask questions about it – questions indeed very extraordinary for his age; and he would never be content without some answer that appeared to him reasonable – I own I thought from this desire of enquiry that he would be a very learned and great man.” (I, 19)

Mrs Crewkherne’s speech leads the reader to expect that she was disappointed – they are also informed that Dr Winslow’s thoughts, which he keeps to himself, are that he ‘was not quite sure that an acute enquirer was the likeliest to make a very great man.’ (I, 19) Dr Winslow’s questioning here, as well as the pause in Crewkherne’s speech, also encourages the reader to pause and question what Crewkherne has stated about her opinions on Delmont’s education and childhood abilities thus far. After this pause, she continues to a concluding speech on her disappointments regarding Delmont’s education and the reasons she believes led to her disappointment. She states:

“for my own part, I had the highest hopes of him, till his mother, when he was about five years old, and ought to have gone to a grammar school, took it into her head to keep him at home and instruct him herself – Then I foresaw he would be ruined – for instead of the usual way of bringing up children, she had the most unaccountable notions of her own – and it was so uneasy to her to have her eldest son, now Captain Delmont, sent to school to prepare him for Eton, that the late Lord Castledanes and her husband Colonel Delmont, who neither of them ever contradicted her, suffered her to keep the boy till he was eleven years old with her.” (I, 19)

Mrs Crewkherne emphasises that Delmont’s older brother is ‘now Captain Delmont’ and she links that to his ‘usual’ and proper education at Eton. For Crewkherne, the ‘proper’ way to educate a young man is to send him away to grammar school at five years of age to prepare him for schooling at an establishment like Eton. This will create a ‘proper’ gentleman, like her nephew Captain Delmont.

As Crewkherne compares the two brothers early on in the novel, it guides the reader to do so, also. Their different educations lead to different outcomes, such as their choice of profession,

as noted by Crewkherne. She is completely set against Mrs Delmont's manner of bringing up her younger son, keeping him at home and raising him with her own ideas on education.

“and so I know not by what sort of reading indeed, for I was not consulted, she made him a *Philosopher*, it seems, in baby clothes! and my little master had a set of opinions of his own, which he never was flogged out of, as he ought to have been, at Eton” (I, 19-20)

Crewkherne feels she should have been consulted and mocks the idea of this ‘philosopher in baby clothes!’ with his own opinions. She also comments Etonian education having not ‘fixed’ him as it should have, perhaps because he was not properly prepared for his time at Eton. For Crewkherne, all of this misguided education and ill-advised reading has led to the Delmont the readers are presented within the novel:

“So instead of now proceeding to make his fortune by following a profession, you see the consequence! – Here he is, at twenty one, calling himself a farmer, and determined to be nothing more. This little bit of an estate – a paltry scrap of earth of not an hundred acres, he is a Philosopher! – Grant me patience! – to think, Dr. Winslow, that a young man who might be any thing should throw himself away! – A farmer indeed! which any of our clowns can be! He! – a man of his family, of his connections, who might be any thing – but indeed my good Sir, if it were not that I well know everyone predestined to their lot, and that all is ordered for the best, I should have many an hour of concern for this family – They are sure to be very unfortunate people.” (I, 20)

He has no real profession, unlike his brother, ‘now Captain Delmont,’ as emphasised earlier.

Instead, much to Crewkherne's disgust and dismay, he drags the family name down by becoming a farmer, which ‘any of our clowns can be!’ Here we have the culmination of her disappointment: the boy who had shown such capacity has, because of his unusual and improper education, has become a farmer without even a large amount of land to oversee.

Crewkherne reaches the climax of her lengthy speech, emphasised with numerous exclamation marks: her late sister-in-law has ruined the hopes of the whole family by educating her son at home and creating a philosopher-farmer instead of a soldier, like his brother and father. Throughout this page-long diatribe and lament on the fortunes of her family, Dr Winslow does not say a word – or is not allowed to say a word. Crewkherne's lengthy speech, as well as

her declarations and exclamations on her 'poor family' and her use of Dr Winslow's name, makes him complicit in her opinions. She expects him to agree without contributing to her speech and, thus, does not need to hear him agree to know that he must and will. The reader, on the other hand, is more aware, if they have taken the clue offered them in the earlier pause in which Dr Winslow adamantly did not agree with her earlier opinions, that Winslow perhaps does not agree with her at all on any of her opinions on education, Delmont, his chosen profession, or the 'state' of the family.

This speech, occurring early in the first volume, sets up Smith's arguments about male education and the 'traditional' versus Mrs Delmont's methods of education. We are presented from the beginning with two women whose opinions on male education are very different and we have two men, brothers, who are brought up and educated very differently, despite being from the same family. Smith seems to be arguing here about what we might call 'nature versus nurture' and the effects of different types of education and upbringing on a young man. George Delmont and Captain Delmont, two men from the same parents, turn into two completely different men – we can conclude that it is their education and upbringing, not their 'nature' or innate abilities or personality which form them (just as Locke argued with his concept of the child as a *tabula rasa*). This is Mrs Delmont's philosophy, also. Mrs Crewkherne, however, differs very much from her sister-in-law in her opinion of what makes 'a learned and a great man,' to use her words from the beginning of the speech. Her argument about both young Delmont's 'inherited' intelligence from their predecessors and claims that Mrs Delmont 'ruined' her youngest son through her educational methods, whereas Mrs Delmont's philosopher son is certainly the hero of the novel. Both women subscribe to the philosophy or educational theory of the child as a *tabula rasa*, but both anticipate and desire different outcomes.

From the beginning, the reader is supposed to compare the two brothers: they are educated differently, they take different professions, one is a Man of the World and the other a

Citizen of the World (a philosopher), and both behave differently in society. For example, the way in which they both treat Medora is contrasted: George treats her with respect and kindness; Adolphus, upon meeting her in a strange situation, does not question what is happening or acknowledge her distress but simply takes advantage of the situation and begins to make sexual advances towards her, even after the mistake is revealed.

Smith is not only paralleling the different upbringings of the young men and their opposite outcomes, however, she is also paralleling two different kinds of male education. She herself, along with her friends, the O'Neills, mentioned in the letter above, kept their sons at home until sending them to a school like Eton or Winchester College at a much later date than what Crewkherne would have considered 'usual.' Smith would argue that being kept at home did their sons no harm whatsoever. The prevailing notion, from the late seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century, at least, was that boys should be sent away from home, to avoid them being coddled and turned into effeminate fops by their mothers, as Cohen has noted in her extensive research on masculinity and education in this period.⁸⁶

There was a movement, especially toward the end of the eighteenth century with the advent of the French Revolution, away from such educational traditions as the Grand Tour, which affected the prevailing opinions on education. The Grand Tour was supposed to be a way of creating independence in a young man. Many educationalists, such as Catherine Macaulay, however, denounced the Grand Tour. They

⁸⁶ See Michèle Cohen *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1996); 'The Grand Tour. Language, National Identity and Masculinity' *Changing English*, 8 (2001) 129-141; "'Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830', *Journal of British Studies*, 44.2 (2005) 312-329; 'Sexualizing and Gendering the French Tongue in Eighteenth-Century England', *French Studies Bulletin*, 31.117 (2010) 73-76

Complained that too many youths returned from the grand tour as effeminate fops “who knew no toils but those of the toilet[.]” Chivalric education [on the other hand] with its “carefully calibrated scales of perfection” and its bodily disciplines, contrasted starkly with the polite and Frenchified education that produced the effeminate gentlemen who might have been responsible for the failure of the American war. (Cohen, 2005, 324)

Like Crewkherne, Vicesimus Knox and others pushed for reform in English education. In *Liberal Education*,

he had already deployed the language of exertion for the physical as well as mental training of boys as part of promoting schooling rather than home education. While home-educated boys were coddled, he maintained, schools encouraged and developed boys’ “natural” need for exercise “which contributes equally to the strength of body and vigour of mind.” (Cohen, 2005, 324)

Cohen suggests that this stress on mental and physical exercise ‘implies that education was implicated in the construction of a “martial” masculinity’ (324), producing men like Captain Delmont, the kind of men who are prepared mentally and physically to fight in the war against France, and not like Delmont, who chooses a peaceful life in becoming a farmer. By making Delmont, the farmer-philosopher, her hero, however, Smith is placing her own stance firmly against the idea of chivalric or martial education.

Masculinity and Professional men

The men and boys of Smith’s novels are more likely to have received a traditional education than her female characters. While governesses are rarely mentioned or seen in the novels, tutors make a frequent appearance. Davenant, as seen in the previous chapter, attended university (presumably after attending a school), Orlando was Oxford-bound, the boys whom Monsieur D’Alonville tutors receive their traditional tutor-led education before setting off on their Grand Tour.

In 1799, however, Smith’s final novel *The Young Philosopher* is published and it demonstrates not only her disillusionment with the French Revolution and her desire to start again in the New World (where the American Revolution was far more successful than its

European counterpart when it occurred some decades later), this novel also demonstrates her departure from accepting traditional views on male education. For the first time, the reader is presented with a hero's education in considerable detail and the novel hinges on his education and upbringing. It is completely non-traditional – it also produces a non-traditional man.

Delmont's desire to become a farmer rather than a military man or politician, or to take on some other 'decent' and expected profession for a man of his social position, emphasises Smith's departure from her traditional heroes.⁸⁷ This could be the influence of her own experiences of what traditional education and traditional professions had led to for her own sons. By the end of the 1790s, Smith had experienced extreme anxieties on behalf of her sons as they were forced to find their fortunes and follow their chosen (traditional) professions (in the military or in diplomatic services, etc.) overseas. Military men in Smith's novels are viewed differently from those that would appear during and after the Napoleonic wars, such as in Jane Austen's novel *Persuasion* (1817), and are more like George Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813).⁸⁸ Smith seems to have a fixation on the profession – perhaps because her son was injured in war – however, her views of military men and gentlemanliness were not unusual, and many of her contemporaries acknowledged that there was a fine line to tread given the violence and brutality inherent in the military profession.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ For further reading on masculinity and military careers in the eighteenth century, see: Julia Banister, *Masculinity, Militarism and Eighteenth-Century Culture, 1689–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2018); Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, Jane Rendall, eds., *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775–1830* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), especially the chapters by Alan Forrest, Stefan Dudnik, Catriona Kennedy and Alexander Martin.

⁸⁸ See Tim Fulford's 'Sighing for a Soldier: Jane Austen and Military *Pride and Prejudice*' *Nineteenth Century Literature*, 57.2 (2002), 153-178, and Gillian Russell, *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society 1793-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995)

⁸⁹ Megan Woodworth, *Eighteenth-century Women Writers and the Gentleman's Liberation Movement: Independence, War, Masculinity, and the Novel, 1778-1818* (London: Routledge, 2011); Woodworth, 'Becoming Gentlemen: Women

Masculinity and Parents

Woodworth notes that, during the eighteenth century, and especially the 1790s,

anxieties [were] projected onto the “manly women” invading the public sphere and claiming masculine virtue, at root they are anxieties about men – if women become men, what will become of men? While various men answered the question in ways that almost always reinscribed traditional femininity, [...] women novelists set out to solve the problem of what men should become in the experimental space of the novel in a way that provides a role for men while leaving room for a female virtue independent of chastity. (Woodworth, 81, 2011)

Charlotte Smith and Mary Wollstonecraft were just two of the women prominent in the public sphere who stirred anxieties about the roles of men and women in society. It is no coincidence that these two women believed in progressive and liberal ideals and philosophies in education and that they argued for a better education for women as well as men.

Due to her very public persona, and the infamous memoir her husband wrote after her death, Wollstonecraft was also caricatured in Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda* (1801) as Harriet Freke – an androgynous, dangerous character whose personality and behaviour fly in the face of traditional feminine virtues. In other words, she behaves, and often looks, like a man of fashion. The portrayal is all the more striking as it appears quite some time after Wollstonecraft’s death, demonstrating the impact she had on the public sphere which continued to ripple and echo throughout the remainder of the century and into the next. No wonder, then, that her opponents felt anxious about her influence on future generations.

In Richard Polwhele’s poem ‘The unsex’d females: a poem, addressed to the author of the Pursuits of Literature’ (1798), Wollstonecraft is characterised as the catalyst of this

Writers, Masculinity, and War, 1778-1818’ (thesis, University of Exeter, 2008); Gillian Williamson, *British Masculinity in the Gentleman’s Magazine, 1731-1815* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) - see in particular the chapter ‘Gentlemanly Masculinity in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1790-1815’, 149-180

‘movement’ of women in the public sphere, in particular, her work *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792):⁹⁰

See Wollstonecraft, whom no decorum checks,
Arise, the intrepid champion of her sex;
O'er humbled man assert the sovereign claim,
And slight the timid blush of virgin fame.
“Go, screen your softness in sequester'd shades;
“With plaintive whispers woo the unconscious grove,
“And feebly perish, as despis'd ye love.
“What tho' the fine Romances of Rousseau
“Bid the flame flutter, and the bosom glow;
“Tho' rapt the Bard, your empire fond to own,
“Fall prostrate and adore your living throne
[...]
“To the bold heights where glory beams, aspire,
“Blend mental energy with Passion's fire,
“Surpass their rivals in powers of mind
“And vindicate the Rights of Womankind.” (63-88)

Her speech leads to the list of Polwhele's ‘unsex'd females,’ who supposedly have been corrupted by Wollstonecraft's foray into the public sphere, represented by the speech, and Smith is named as the second of those Wollstonecraft has corrupted, appearing between Anna Barbauld and Mary Robinson:

She spoke: and veteran BARBAULD caught the strain,
And deem'd her songs of Love, her lyrics vain;
And ROBINSON to Gaul her Fancy gave,
And trac'd the picture of a Deist's grave!
And charming SMITH resign'd her power to please,
Poetic feeling and poetic ease (89-94)

The use of ‘caught the strain’ suggests that Wollstonecraft's words, her speech in the poem and her written works in real life, have in some way contaminated or infected those who have come into contact with them.

⁹⁰ The edition of the poem I have consulted is from the University of Oxford Text Archive:

<https://ota.ox.ac.uk/text/3251.html>

As we saw in Chapters Two and Three, the fear of words, especially written words and books, infecting the mind of the reader was prevalent in the eighteenth century. Polwhele's anxiety about these 'masculine' women, who dare to present themselves in the public sphere and engage with political issues, presents itself in this poem as some form of infectious disease or plague which is causing respected female poets like Smith and Barbauld to engage in improper, unfeminine behaviour, like writing about politics. Masculinity is spreading like a virus through the prominent women writers of the age. Smith, according to Polwhele, turns from the proper and respectable employment of writing fanciful poetry and 'resign[s] her power to please' as she leaves poetry behind to publish a multitude of novels which sympathise with Revolutionaries and engage in a most unladylike manner with the politics, law-systems and socioeconomic issues of Britain.

As Smith's novels engage with the debate about masculinity and the role of men in society, and the impact of these constructions of masculinity on women, it is unsurprising that she also engaged with the anxieties and debates on masculinity in women and femininity in men. The larger part of the issue of young men being kept at home too long with their mothers was the fear that too much time in the company of women could feminise a man. E. J. Clery's *The Feminization Debate* deals with the topic in extensive detail and Michele Cohen notes that this fear was one of the factors which led to the popularity of the Grand Tour: a young man must be removed early from female company, in order to become masculine and to avoid feminisation. Equally, young ladies, traditionally, should be taught feminine virtues and accomplishments to highlight their femininity and make them attractive to men.

In *Ethelinde*, Smith introduces a subplot involving Sir Edward Newenden's sister, Ellen Newenden. Miss Newenden is more interested in riding and horse-flesh, and filling her stables with champion horses, than in feminine accomplishments and attracting a suitable man to marry. In her introductory paragraph, Miss Newenden is described by the narrator as entirely opposite to the accomplished and married Lady Newenden:

As no great affection had ever subsisted between her and Lady Newenden, they met without any warm expressions of pleasure. Their characters and manners were indeed wholly dissimilar. But though there was little friendship between them, there was less rivalry: the indolent apathy of Lady Newenden was not disturbed by the boisterous vivacity of her sister-in-law, who, occupied almost entirely by the stable or the kennel, considered her Ladyship as a pretty insipid doll, whose mind were a mere blank, and whose person was fitted only to exhibit to advantage those feminine fineries which she herself despised – her own dress being usually such as was distinguished from that of a man only by the petticoat. (4)

Ellen Newenden is defined in this paragraph only in opposition to Lady Newenden. As they are sisters (if only in law), they are paralleled in a similar way to George Delmont and the Captain in *The Young Philosopher* published ten years later. Lady Newenden's femininity serves to highlight Ellen's masculinity. Ellen cannot be seen as a rival because Lady Newenden does not, in fact, see her as a woman. On the journey Northwards, Davenant and Miss Newenden 'almost entirely engrossed' the conversation at dinner 'talk[ing] on subjects quite unknown to [Ethelinde] – such as racing and hunting' (9) – again this emphasises Miss Newenden's unusual interests as unfeminine, her only partner in conversation is a man and the two ladies present cannot join the conversation because, as feminine women, they do not know anything about such masculine pursuits as hunting or racing.

In Chapter Two of *Ethelinde*, Smith's narrator offers the reader an insight into Miss Newenden's upbringing and suggests that her upbringing is to blame for her masculine dress, interests and behaviour. In a lengthy passage, spanning numerous pages in the original edition, Smith provides her reader with an in-depth description of Miss Newenden, encompassing her physical description and a brief biography detailing her upbringing and present situation. Again, Miss Newenden paralleled, this time with Ethelinde. In the previous paragraph, Sir Edward muses on the potential match of Davenant and Ethelinde, if he could only encourage Davenant to apply himself to his studies instead of wasting his time with dissolute young men. Davenant, however, has his attention 'occupied entirely by Miss Newenden.' (13) Smith states that this is despite her appearance, implicitly by comparison with Ethelinde's, as

Yet neither the person nor manner of Miss Newenden were calculated to attract esteem or admiration: her person, without being tall, was hard and masculine; her features, though not large, were sharp and harsh; and from being constantly exposed to the air, her complexion had contracted an unpleasant redness, particularly about her nose and forehead, and gave it a certain coarseness, which, without adding to the general spirit of her face, certainly increased the fire or rather the fierceness of her quick, grey eyes. (13)

Ellen Newenden is 'masculine' and coarse in appearance and personality. She spends more time than a lady should outdoors which has left her with an 'unpleasant redness' unbecoming to a lady. Smith blames this unladylike behaviour and appearance on Ellen's upbringing, immediately following her description of her features with a description of Ellen's childhood:

She had lost her mother when she was not more than ten years old; and from that period had been left entirely to the care of a governess, who found it more to her own interest to gratify than to contradict her. Her father, himself a keen sportsman, was pleased with the courage and agility she shewed on horseback, and had been accustomed to indulge her in following the hounds, while yet a child. Animated by the praises that were then bestowed upon her, she had imbibed a notion that to possess a good horse was the first point requisite to human happiness; and to be able to ride well, the first of human perfections. (13)

Ellen loses the parent who should be her role model early in life and is left with a governess who would prefer an easy life to ensuring Ellen's upbringing as a genteel young lady. Ellen's father, who should, it is implied, have been in charge of ensuring the governess was teaching Ellen properly, is more interested in encouraging her to enjoy those pursuits which he also delights in – despite their unsuitability for a young woman. This unorthodox and indulgent upbringing leaves Ellen with the belief that happiness in life comes not from marriage but from good horses and hounds, and being able to ride well.

Once her father passed, when she was sixteen and she was left to the guardianship of her brother, she left a fortune of £16,000 'which would probably have procured her a respectable establishment' (13) - £16,000 would have been a very reasonable dowry for a young lady – however,

Miss Newenden, far from having any views of that sort, immediately on becoming of age, furnished her stables with valuable hunters, doubled her number of grooms, and

took a small hunting seat in Dorsetshire; where, though she sometimes prevailed on a maiden aunt to reside with her, she oftener passed whole winters alone. Sir Edward, who would have loved her extremely if he had met with any affection in return, often pressed her to take up her abode part of the year with him; but she seldom accepted his invitations, unless for a few weeks at a time, either during a hard frost, or some capital sale at Tatterall's. (13)

The reader is left with the shocking image of a young woman, unmarried and living alone at a hunting seat, surrounded by groomsmen and horses.

Sir Edward, though he does not outwardly pass judgement, demonstrates his concern about her appearance and the impropriety of her situation by endeavouring to persuade her to live with him and his wife for at least some of the year – though often the only thing which persuades her is the potential of a new hunter for her stables. Tattersall's, according to Ellen Moody's notes in her recent edition of *Ethelinde*, was 'a club at Hyde Park Corner, founded 1766, for sporting and hunting men' (13) – the seemingly casual mention of a particular men's club highlights further Miss Newenden's unusual, masculine, and potentially shocking, proclivities. The narrator continues, summarising Miss Newenden's development up to the present moment in the novel:

As she advanced in life (and she was now near eight-and-twenty) her passion for field sports, for the stable and the kennel, increased rather than diminished. Many who knew that her fortune would be convenient to them, had, during the first years of her being mistress of her actions, addressed her with offers of marriage; but she had without hesitation dismissed them all; and though she still suffered some of them to attend on her in her favourite amusement, and shewed frequent preference to those who best understood the merits of an horse, or who displayed the most judgement in the hunt, she never thought of marrying, and soon ceased to be considered an object of pursuit. Nothing indeed but her fortune had ever made her appear so; and the gentlemen who had with that view addressed her, were easily repulsed, and desisted, without any great pain, from addressing a young woman who had little other merit, and no other language and manners, than those of a stable boy. (13-14)

At the point at which the novel begins, Miss Newenden is a spinster (twenty-eight was old for an unmarried woman) who lives alone without a chaperone for most of the year, and who is interested only in field sports, hounds, and horses. Due to these interests, any potential suitors

find her only redeeming feature to be her fortune. They are easily put off by Miss Newenden's dismissal of their proposals, she having no interest in them personally, beyond their occasional interest in field sports, and vice versa. Over time, she ceases to be 'considered an object of pursuit,' something which could be considered a feminine trait, as opposed to the masculine trait she possesses of desiring to hunt.

This description of Miss Newenden's experience with her suitors is echoed in *The Old Manor House* in which Miss Hollybourn is repeatedly let down by suitors when they find her interests and excessive education not worth the fortune she may bring to a marriage. The difference for Miss Newenden, however, is that, unlike Miss Hollybourn, Miss Newenden is completely uninterested in marriage and is happy to live alone, so long as she has a stable full of good hunters.

Later in the novel, however, Ellen Newenden *does* marry, surprising not only the reader but, especially, the other characters in the novel. In Volume IV, we are introduced to Mr Woolaston, a friend of Davenant's and a man

well known to Miss Newenden by fame as the completest sportsman in England; and who having gloriously parted with an estate of near three thousand pounds a year, had now nothing to do but to lend his experience in dogs and horses to those who could still afford to keep them in *style*. (389)

He and Davenant appear at Miss Newenden's hunting seat, Brackwood, as guests, much to the dismay of Ethelinde, as

Though there was, in the opinion of Ethelinde, an evident impropriety in Miss Newenden's receiving such guests, yet a visitor only, she had no right to object to it. (389)

Ethelinde's fears stem from the impropriety of two single women receiving men as guests, however, 'Miss Newenden was as careless to the opinion as insensible to the feelings of others.' (389) Miss Newenden, though a single woman living alone, does not care that, in the opinion of society, she is committing an impropriety, or that she is also forcing a young woman under her

guardianship to commit the same impropriety, against her wishes. This disregard for social expectations stems from her unorthodox upbringing and resulting masculine behaviour; her father and her governess neglected to teach her about feminine virtues and the proper ways for a woman to behave.

After the ladies have gone to bed, Davenant and Woolaston discuss Ethelinde and Miss Newenden's various merits and faults, their disrespectful and familiar comments highlighting the impropriety of the situation, and the dangers inherent in flouting the rules of society. Davenant begins the conversation by asking what Woolaston thinks of "Nelly Newenden," (390) the use of 'Nelly' emphasising Davenant's familiarity and lack of respect for Miss Newenden, which her behaviour toward himself and Woolaston encourages. Woolaston responds that she is "an hard favoured, masculine, disagreeable-looking thing," though Ethelinde, he notes, "is as lovely a creature as ever I saw." (390) Davenant argues, "no, no, Jack, [Ethelinde] won't suit you, believe me. If you want money, look to the lady of the house; she has the yellow boys." (390) They begin to concoct a plan, involving both Miss Newenden and Ethelinde. Woolaston will marry Miss Newenden, despite that "she looks like a stable boy, and talks still more like one" and make Ethelinde both Woolaston's and Davenant's mistress as they assume she "would remain in the house still by way of humble companion to [Woolaston's] spouse." (391) After this conversation,

Woolaston [...] formed a plan of attack for the next morning. He was now in a situation which afforded him very uncomfortable prospects; and was much struck with the probability of changing those dreary views, and of being re-established in some degree of affluence, if he could marry Miss Newenden: profligate and unprincipled, his connection to Davenant was merely that which interest compelled him to form; and so unstable and unsafe is the friendship of the dissolute, that While Woolaston hoped by means of Davenant to be recommended to an opulent alliance, he with equal avidity considered the probability there might be of engaging Ethelinde as a mistress for his friend; in which case he thought he was secure of obtaining some degree of her favour for himself. (392)

By inviting these men into her home, Miss Newenden has put herself, her fortune and her charge in danger.

When Sir Edward, Ellen's brother and Davenant's former guardian, visits, he plans to speak to Davenant, 'to beg that he would not bring visitors to Miss Newenden's house, whose characters rendered them improper companions for two single women,' (440) not realising Woolaston and Davenant's plans for the ladies. Woolaston hopes to marry Miss Newenden so that he may recover from the unpleasant financial situation he has found himself in and hopes also to share Ethelinde as a mistress with his friend. Each man considers Ethelinde worth less than Miss Newenden; they have little respect for her because she has no dowry and no immediate family to take care of her and protect her from them. While Miss Newenden is considered a suitable match for marriage, Ethelinde is considered only as a mistress – they even suggest that she should be grateful to be considered for such a role.

Davenant, while intoxicated several chapters later, accosts Ethelinde and attempts to force himself on her. He declares,

"Look ye, Miss Chesterville [...] I have once in my life been fool enough to offer to marry you; you'll never catch me at that again; but I'll do a more sensible thing; for d---me if I don't settle six hundred a year upon you; and I think that's a devilish handsome price for a girl that has not a sixpenny piece in the world, and a little crack in her character with that story of Sir Edward. Come, come, don't affect all these violent airs; but remember 'tis not an offer you'll have every day. 'Tis not everybody has the spirit or the cash to make it." (464)

When she angrily claims the protection of the master of the house (for by this time Woolaston has already married Miss Newenden, now Mrs Woolaston), Davenant scoffs, and tells her she has been used by Mr Woolaston as a bargaining chip:

"You'll tell Woolaston, will you? To spare you the trouble, my coy shepherdess, know that Jack Woolaston is not only aware of my intentions, but encourages them; he has offered to put you wholly in my power; and faith if he had had any qualms he is so much in mine, that I should have known how to have quieted them. He owes me a pretty little

sum; but as I have put his frosty faced wife and her cash into his hands, he has sworn to pay me the principal out of the first money he touches, and I forgive him the interest in consideration of his using interest with you in my favour.” (465-6)

Ethelinde, without immediate family or fortune, has become part of the property of her guardian, Miss Newenden, and has been passed on, like Ellen’s house and fortune, to Mr Woolaston when they married.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Miss Newenden - prior to her unexpected marriage - refuses the proposals of a number of suitors, according to the brief biography delivered by the narrator, because of her indulgent childhood. As the narrator notes, Ellen ‘had long piqued herself on living and acting her own way,’ (401) usually against social and family expectations. Her marriage to Woolaston is simply an extension of this rebelliousness:

when the idea of securing to herself so valuable a master of the horse as Woolaston occurred to her, she considered that thought it would probably be very disagreeable to her brother, and make her liable to some blame among her friends, yet she should give the most certain proof of her free agency and liberality of mind. (401)

She desires to appear independent, outside of the control of a patriarchal figure, like her brother. Being the only other child of her father made her wealthy enough that she had no need of a husband for security, and being raised the manner she was, she also saw no need to marry for protection. This attitude, however, also causes her to forget that she is not actually securing Woolaston to herself but actually ‘put[ting] herself, her fortune, and her stud, into [Woolaston’s] possession.’ (401) In her desire to act as a free agent, she forgets (or, indeed, has never been warned) that English law is against her desire for independence and that, in marrying, she gives over herself and her fortune and anything she owns to her new husband. She appears, instead of independent and liberal-minded, as a naïve woman, playing at being independent and manly, forgetting the dangers of being a woman with a fortune to bestow: being at the mercy of fortune hunters and dissolutes, like Woolaston. In fact, she is so giddy with the idea of her rebellious plan that ‘Woolaston in the course of three days had secured the mistress of [Brackwood].’ (401)

Sir Edward Newenden, Miss Newenden's only remaining family, is the only character in a position to caution Miss Newenden against her choice and to make her realise that she is making an error of judgement in marrying Woolaston. Miss Newenden, however, conspires with Davenant and Woolaston to avoid the remonstrances of her brother by keeping him uninformed of the situation during his visit. Woolaston happily agrees

as he dreaded much the influence of Sir Edward, and was afraid if he suspected his intentions he would represent to this sister the imprudence of marrying a man so situated, and of putting herself entirely in his power, in so strong a light, that his hopes would too probably be blasted forever. (440)

By the end of the final volume, Mrs Woolaston has been led to regret her decision and Sir Edward has come to her aid, to meet 'with Woolaston's creditors, who had seized every thing and left Mrs. Woolaston in extreme distress.' (572) Ellen's experiment in demonstrating her 'free agency and liberality of mind' (401) has ended with her finally residing at her brother's home in Denham while he

rescue[d] some part of his sister's fortune from the talons of the vultures who had taken possession of it [...] and so settled with her husband that he was never again to molest her, (for, not content with robbing her of her fortune, he had treated her extremely ill. (572)

This subplot ongoing in the background of *Ethelinde* could be read as a warning to readers about the follies of masculine-seeming women, or even a warning to young women readers themselves about fortune hunters and listening to one's friends and family regarding appropriate choices. I argue, however, that it is a cautionary tale aimed at parents – like so many of Smith's cautionary tales. She does not blame Ellen Newenden for the series of mistakes she makes: living alone; allowing Woolaston and Davenant into her home; disregarding propriety and neglecting to protect her charge against the dangers presented by those two young men; marrying Woolaston. Smith establishes from the very beginning that this series of unfortunate events can be traced back to Miss Newenden's upbringing. With no appropriate female role model, such as a mother

or older sister, and an inadequate governess intent on an easy life, Miss Newenden is not brought up to understand feminine virtue and propriety, and the dangers inherent in flouting the rules of society for a woman. Her father actively encourages her in her pursuit of field sports and masculine activities – in and of themselves, Ellen's masculine interests are not the problem, but that they lead her to indulge in masculine virtues and behaviours is. Her father raises her as if she were a second son, bolstered by her inheritance of the large sum which would have been divided with other children, had there been others. As such, Miss Newenden behaves like a son. She pursues Woolaston with the idea that she would 'secure', or possess, him, when, in actuality, it is the other way around. This leads to the ruin of her fortune and the decimation of her independence, forcing her to retreat to the protection of her brother – the protection which she should have sought as a single woman much earlier. The moral of the tale, for the parents reading or listening: do not over-indulge your children, raise them in the awareness of how their gender is expected to behave and could be perceived, otherwise life could become far more difficult and disappointing for them in the long run.

The debate on where best to educate male children (specifically middle-class children) is something Smith explores in *The Young Philosopher*, and she demonstrates why she takes issue with traditional routes for male education. The two brothers Captain Delmont, the eldest, and George Delmont, his younger sibling, provide parallel examples of traditional versus progressive male educations, overwhelmingly in favour of progressive educational philosophies. George Delmont, the hero of the novel, is educated at home until his mother is finally persuaded to part with him at the age of eleven (very unusual in the eighteenth century, Smith suggests); his older brother, on the other hand, had a tutor from an early age and was sent away to school far earlier than his younger brother. The difference in their behaviour and personality, Smith suggests, comes from the differences in how, when, and where, they were educated, and by whom. From what we can glean from her novels, Smith feels that young men should be educated at home until a certain age and then sent to a public school in order that they gain the necessary domestic and emotional

education from their families, especially their mothers, before they are sent out into the world. We can see this happening in many of her novels: *The Old Manor House*, *The Banished Man* and *The Young Philosopher* all feature this pattern of male education, and the positive effects it can have. In *The Young Philosopher* do we also see the contrasting negative effects of making a young man independent of his family too soon in the character of Captain Delmont, who is so similar in appearance that he is once mistaken by Medora for George, though his behaviour toward her soon helps her to realise her mistake. In this manner, Smith differs from the educational methodology prescribed by Rousseau, and a number of other educators and philosophers on education in the period, despite Rousseau's influence on her own philosophy and political thought in other areas. In *Emile*, Rousseau advocates the removal of young men from society and family life for the benefit of their development and education. He suggests the best education for boys and young men is both private and governed by a tutor, to remove undue influence from society and family. Smith, however, demonstrates the value and benefits of male education at home in her novels: the young men first educated at home are kinder, more family-oriented, not misogynistic. She is an advocate of forming young men for family life and this idea is drawn upon and developed throughout her novels, and is most clearly demonstrated in *The Young Philosopher*.

Chapter Six: Acting up and playing the part: Performance, Gender and the Expense of Education

‘Give a girl an education, and introduce her properly into the world, and ten to one she has the means of settling well, without further expense to anybody...’

Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (1814)

‘Such is caprice ! but, lovely kind !
Oh ! let each mental feature
Proclaim the labour of the mind,
And leave your charms to nature.’

Mary Robinson, *Female Fashions for 1799* (1799)

In this chapter, I will explore the issues revolving around gender, station and education in Smith’s novels. During the eighteenth century, societal expectations of education were largely linked to one’s gender and station. Wealth, position in society and gender were entangled with one another, especially as concerns regarding social mobility were growing. The links between social mobility and education were multiple. Education allowed those of lower social classes to begin to ‘climb the ranks’ as their knowledge and skills broadened with the changing landscape of commerce. There was also the question of how to educate young women of different classes because their futures were far less secure than those of the men: if they were to climb, they would need skills and accomplishments suited to their new ranks; if they were to fall, they would, perhaps, need housekeeping and accounting skills that would otherwise have been unnecessary to them. There were also expectations of the kinds of work or leisure men and women were to undertake, dependent on their social class.

Charlotte Smith knew better than most the perils of social mobility for women. As Stanton notes in her edition of Smith’s collected letters,

From the beginning [of her marriage Smith] had to live in London, an uncongenial environment for her health, with both a husband and relatives who lacked social

refinement or intellectual sophistication. She had been educated to read, write, draw, and dance, but her mother-in-law chastised her for her ignorance of housekeeping. Her husband brought home rough acquaintances and abused her. (1)

As a woman who had experienced the tumble from affluence and accomplished society to what she described in a letter as ‘personal slavery,’ (c. 1768-70)⁹¹ Smith was concerned with ideas of wealth, station and status in society. She was married off to Benjamin Smith at the age of sixteen and found herself

pass[ing] almost every day with the poor sick old lady [her mother-in-law], with whom, however, I am no great favourite; somebody has told her I have not been notably brought up, (which I am afraid is true enough,) and she asks me questions which, to say the truth, I am not very well able to answer. There are no women, she says, so well qualified for mistresses of families as the ladies of Barbadoes [sic], whose knowledge of housewifery she is perpetually contrasting with my ignorance, and, very unfortunately, those subjects on which I am informed, give me little credit with her; on the contrary, are rather a disadvantage to me; yet I have not seen any of their paragons whom I am at all disposed to envy. (c.1765-6, 53)⁹²

Her affluent and somewhat privileged upbringing left Smith at a disadvantage in her new life as a married woman living in Cheapside, London. She had been educated at a girl’s school to write poetry, dance, perform music for the pleasure of company; she had not been brought up to run a household, clean or cook, much to the displeasure of her new mother-in-law. In her novels, Smith explores the experiences of the pitfalls of social mobility and the difficulties of educating a girl or young woman according to her current station in her novels, informed by her own experiences. These concerns are also something Smith would have had for her own children, especially her daughters who would have been less able than her sons to make their way in the world without marrying or working in an industry Smith felt was beneath them.

The trajectory of Smith’s heroes’ and heroines’ social mobility, however, is usually upwards, rather than downwards. They may begin life in a lower sphere of society or may have

⁹¹ ‘To an Unnamed Recipient’ in Judith Phillips Stanton, ed., *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (2003) 53

⁹² ‘To an Early Friend’ in Judith Phillips Stanton, ed., *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* (2003) 53

been brought down from an upper level by tragedy or unfortunate circumstance at the beginning of the novel, but by the end, they often find themselves raised up in wealth and status – giving them their happy ending. For most of her career, Smith’s version of ‘happily ever after’ is similar to that of fairy-tales and novels of sensibility which follow a courtship plot: a marriage of love which leads to wealth and higher stations for her protagonists. We can see this formula throughout most of her works and it is at its most autobiographical in *The Banished Man*. *The Young Philosopher*, which heralds the end of Smith’s novel-writing career, is less optimistic. Medora and Delmont do not marry happily and come into fortune and status. Instead, they find themselves, along with Medora’s parents, disillusioned with the revolutionary ideals of Europe and instead look to America, content to live off the land in the New World.

Like the cautionary tale of Ellen Newenden addressed to parents which I discussed in the previous chapter, Lady Newenden’s tale offers the parent-reader another cautionary tale: one which advises against over-indulgence, a female version of Delamere’s story in *Emmeline* published the year before. Unlike Ellen Newenden, Lady Newenden was brought up with both of her parents living, both of whom are still alive at the beginning of the novel. Lady Newenden is also an only child and, therefore, an heiress. As an heiress, she married Sir Edward and rescued his estates from financial ruin with her dowry, and in the process claimed herself a title. As we saw in Chapter Five, Lady Newenden’s tale is an unhappy one, which leads to her early demise, possibly during the birth of an illegitimate child as a result of an adulterous relationship with the notorious rake Lord Danesforte. More shocking than her affair with another man, and the resulting neglect of her own children, is that she is encouraged in this behaviour by her mother, Mrs Maltravers.

Smith gives a lot of focus to the behaviour of Lady Newenden and her relationship with her husband and parents throughout *Ethelinde*, impacting as it does on the eponymous heroine, her cousin Ethelinde. Her adulterous relationship with Danesforte, however, happens mostly ‘off

stage,' the majority of the information reaching the ears of Sir Edward via letters and gossip. By doing so, Smith makes it clear how distasteful and improper Lady Newenden's behaviour is. She is not writing some scandalous novel for the Minerva Press or some circulating library, therefore such salacious details from her adulterous relationship are obscured and happen outside of the main action. The only details revealed by Smith to her readers are the ramifications of her adultery: Ethelinde taking care of the neglected children in Lady Newenden's place; the reactions of various characters, including her husband; the effect of her death on her husband and her parents. Smith demonstrates only the consequences of such an immoral choice as abandoning one's husband and children in favour of a sexual relationship outside one's marriage.

When Lady Newenden is present alongside her husband and her cousin, there is a continual contrast between Ethelinde, the novel's heroine, and Lady Newenden, the novel's anti-heroine and Ethelinde's parallel. The comparisons are presented to the reader via the medium of Sir Edward Newenden, as noted earlier in this work. Early on in Chapter One of the first volume, Smith highlights this contrast which Sir Edward begins almost immediately to discover, referring to the enlightened nature of one woman, and the inability of the other to appreciate her surroundings:

Ethelinde had been much accustomed to travel with her father; who, having himself an elegant and enlightened understanding, had improved that turn for observation which genius had given to the mind of his daughter; and she had learned to see the face of nature with the taste of a painter, and the enthusiasm of a poet; while to Lady Newenden all was a blank, which offered nothing to gratify either her personal vanity, or the consequence she assumed from her splendid fortune. (I, 22)

The education and upbringing of each woman are given as the reasons for their perspectives as they journey away from London and toward Grasmere Abbey. The journey serves to highlight these aspects for Smith, and Sir Edward, emphasising Smith's arguments about the manner in which each woman has been educated: while the expense of Lady Newenden's education has left her vain and self-absorbed, interested only in what can highlight her own personal accomplishments and beauty (i.e. society, where she can perform and display herself to her best);

Ethelinde, on the other hand, becomes more elegant and interesting the further they move away from society. Ethelinde's education and upbringing have allowed her to feel comfortable in any situation, whereas Lady Newenden's education has left her with a desire to display and perform, in order to do so she must be in elegant society, outside of that she feels uncomfortable and unhappy.

Alongside the issues of her 'expensive education,' there are other issues with Lady Newenden's upbringing: over-indulgent parenting; her mother's active encouragement in her misbehaviour; lack of a female role model (her mother indulges in the same bad behaviour as her daughter). Her father is similarly to blame for not discouraging his wife or his daughter's behaviour.

After Lady Newenden's death, in the final volume of the novel, Mr Maltravers acknowledges his regret:

The unhappy father of Lady Newenden, who was now taught so severely to repent of his fatal indulgence to her, had not yet recovered the tidings of her death. Without resources but from present objects, he had lost the idol to which he had been so many years offering incense, and knew not how to submit to the blow. His wife, to whom he imputed much of the ill conduct of his daughter, was become hateful to him: and he shut himself up in his own apartment, where disappointment and grief incessantly preyed upon his soul. (566)

Here Smith emphasises the reasons behind Lady Newenden's wayward behaviour: over-indulgence on the part of Mr Maltravers; that Maltravers idolised his daughter, raised her up on a pedestal, instead of acknowledging that she was an ordinary child who required parental boundaries, not worship; his wife's encouragement and demonstration of 'ill conduct' which led to his daughter's own misbehaviour. In a final letter, Maltravers writes to Sir Edward and

acknowledge all his kindness to the lost Maria [Lady Newenden], and recommended her children to his care. – "in the will, a copy of which I enclose to you," said he, "You will see that I have amply provided for each of your children – Take care of your girl; she will be as lovely as her unhappy mother. – Give her a better education. They will all be independent of you. – I hope you will bring them up as that their independence will not

make them less worthy. For yourself, Sir Edward, feeling as I do your worth, I have given you what I once intended should be at the disposal of my daughter. Mrs Maltravers is sufficiently provided for; never suffer your children to be with her. (566-7)

It is clear by his advice to Sir Edward about his own daughter that Mr Maltravers regrets the manner in which he and his wife brought up and educated their daughter. He also regrets the influence his wife's behaviour had on Lady Newenden and fears her effect on his grandchildren.

The final part of this cautionary tale ends with the parallel of the two parents' reactions to the death of their daughter. Mr Maltravers, as shown above, re-writes his will and reconciles with his son-in-law. The loss of his daughter, however, is too much for him, Smith writes that 'Mr Maltravers survived only a fortnight after having disposed of his affairs in the manner he had mentioned to Sir Edward.' (568) Maltravers final punishment for his wife is left in his will: the grandchildren, who Sir Edward is to keep from her, are given almost all Maltraver's money. After his passing,

He gave his two grandsons their thirty thousand pounds each in money, and to his granddaughter twenty; and, leaving to the eldest of the boys the reversion of half his estates in land, he gave the rest, (with the exception only, of a thousand pounds to Ethelinde and a few inconsiderable legacies,) to Sir Edward Newenden; bequeathing to his wife only the seven hundred a year which he had settled on her at her marriage and a legacy of five hundred pounds for mourning. (568)

Mr Maltravers is truly repentant, realising their mistakes in their parenting had led to Lady Newenden's ruin and subsequent death. He attempts to atone for his behaviour, for encouraging and indulging Lady Newenden, and for his behaviour toward her husband and cousin, by adjusting his will before his death. His sincere repentance can also be seen in his following his daughter to the grave, a form of poetic justice that he is part of the cause of her demise, therefore, her demise should cause his. He is, in the end, like Sir Edward, a man of feeling, of sensibility – able to empathise and sincerely repent of his behaviour and the damage it has caused to his family.

His wife, however, provides a contrasting reaction to their daughter's death. Mrs Maltravers learns nothing from the consequences of raising a child in an indulgent manner and encouraging her to emulate your own improper behaviour and 'ill conduct.' With her £500 mourning legacy and the £700 a year,

though full of bitterness and resentment, [...] went to Bath, where she lived at the card table, and got a set of friends in whose society she soon recovered the loss of her husband and her daughter; and in a very few weeks was as gay and as much at ease as if no such misfortune had befallen her. She had no trouble about her grandchildren, whose very existence she would not have been sorry to have forgotten; and in her dress was so young and fashionable, that nobody, unless they very narrowly examined her face, would have believed that she owned the venerable title of grandmother. (569)

Mrs Maltravers, instead of repenting her behaviour and mourning her daughter's death, she uses her late husband's money and transfigures herself into a younger woman. She dresses in new, young fashions, and continues as she had before in society. It is implied that the money she uses for these fashionable new clothes and younger look is the money which her husband has given her for mourning clothes as nowhere does it suggest she actually went into mourning and was 'in a very few weeks [...] as gay and as much at ease as if no [...] misfortune had befallen her.' (569) While Mr Maltravers offers what financial support he can to those he feels he has wronged, the family he would in a short time leave behind forever, Mrs Maltravers 'had no trouble about her grandchildren' and the mourning of her husband and daughter lasts no more than a few weeks before social dissipation and the card table allows her to 'recover' and move on. She carries on with this behaviour, despite that these are the very things which had cost her her daughter. It was this dissipated behaviour, social high life, and gambling, which Lady Newenden had emulated – leading to an escalation of improper conduct, ending in adultery and death, implicitly while giving birth to the illegitimate child of her lover. Unlike her husband, who the readers can see sincerely repents of his behaviour and the indulgence of his wife and daughter, Mrs Maltravers does not regret her behaviour or learn from the consequences, and simply begins a new life, playing at being a much younger woman and happily leaving the remainder of her family behind.

She seems equally cold and insensible, self-absorbed and uncaring. The reader is offered an insight into Lady Newenden's attitude toward her own children, whom she happily leaves and ultimately neglects in favour of her dissipated lifestyle and her lover, Danesforte. Lady Newenden had inherited her disinterest in her family from her mother – their social lives and happiness came first, their families second.

In *The Old Manor House*, Smith continues her readers' education with further guidance by comparing another self-educated heroine with a counterpart. Smith utilises a favoured technique of paralleling her heroine with an anti-heroine to contrast how different types of education and reading can impact on a person's character and behaviour and insinuating that this makes her heroine a more attractive, and suitable, partner for her hero than the anti-heroine. Monimia, the heroine and orphan of the novel, is self-educated against the wishes of her aunt, Mrs Lennard, and their mistress, Mrs Rayland.

[Monimia] was friendless, and harshly treated; and, with a form and face that he thought would do honour to the highest rank of society, she seemed to be condemned to perpetual servitude, and he feared to perpetual ignorance; for he knew that Mrs Rayland had, with the absurd prejudice of narrow minds, declared against her being taught any thing but the plainest domestic duties, and the plainest work. She had however taught herself, with very little aid from her aunt, to read; and lately, since she had been so much alone, she had tried to write; but she had not always materials, and was frequently compelled to hide those she contrived to obtain: so that her progress in his was slow, and made only by snatches, as the ill humour of her aunt allowed or forbade her to make these laudable attempts at improvement. (59, 1793)

She is later guided in her reading and writing by the hero. While he is away at school, she continues her own education in secret. She tells Orlando:

“A few I got by the assistance of Betty Richards, who has the key of this room to clean it when you are absent, Orlando; but if my aunt had found out, she would never have forgiven either of us. I was forced therefore to hide the books she took out for me with the greatest care, and to read only by snatches.” (73-4)

Orlando begins teaching Monimia because, he tells her, “you may one day have occasion for more knowledge than you can acquire in the way in which you now live”.’ (65) Over time, ‘the

reading Orlando had directed her to pursue, had assisted in teaching her some degree of self-value.’ (81) Monimia grows out of the ignorance which her aunt had endeavoured to keep her in due to her reading, just as Orlando had hoped. Mrs Rayland and her acquaintances had, however, another young lady in mind, better matched in terms of status, Miss Hollybourn.

Miss Hollybourn is introduced to the reader in the second half of the novel. She is an only child, wealthy and educated in more subjects than the average young lady. Miss Hollybourn ‘was considered by [her parents] a model of loveliness; and her mind was adorned with all that money could purchase.’ From the perspective of Miss Hollybourn’s parents, Smith writes in suitably hyperbolic praise:

To dignify with mental acquirements this epitome of human loveliness, all that education could do had been lavished; masters for drawing, painting, music, French, and dancing, had been assembled around her as soon as she could speak; she learned Latin from her father at a very early period, and could read an easy sentence in Greek; was learned in astronomy, knew something of mathematics, and, in relief of these more abstruse studies, read Italian and Spanish. Having never heard any thing but her own praises, she really believed herself a miracle of knowledge and accomplishments. (205)

Their aim was to make ‘Their daughter [...] the most accomplished woman of her age’ in order to attract suitable suitors, however,

The gentlemen [...] whom all these elegancies were probably designed to attract, seemed by no means struck with them, those who had approached her on the suggestion of her being an heiress, had declared that her fortune made no amends for her want of beauty; and others who had been alarmed by the acquisitions which went so much beyond those they had themselves. (206)

Orlando, wanting neither an heiress’s money and having already begun endeavours to educate his chosen bride to suit her station, is unimpressed by this boastful young woman who bores the group with her rote descriptions of the paintings in Rayland’s gallery. The reader, having been introduced to Miss Hollybourn via the perspectives of her parents and past suitors, is now offered the perspective of Orlando, who shows neither admiration nor intimidation in the face of Miss Hollybourn’s intellectual prowess – he merely sees her as showing off. Smith states:

Nothing but her passion to display her universal knowledge, could have induced her to attempt clearing up the obscurity in which the wavering and unequal light involved a story not very clearly told by the painter. At length the dissertation finished. (210)

Thankfully, Smith does not offer the ‘dissertation’ in full. In her depiction of Miss Hollybourn, Smith demonstrates how critical she is of education for the sake of attaining a suitor as well as rote learning rather than critical thinking. Miss Hollybourn, unlike Monimia, does not intend to do anything useful with the vast knowledge she has attained throughout her life, she does not use it critically, she simply uses her mechanical and rote learning in an attempt to impress and acquire a suitor. Her parents’ misguided education created a boastful young woman who uses her mental acquirements in husband-hunting, from her knowledge of art to her knowledge of dance, she shows off for Orlando. As noted, when Miss Hollybourn and Orlando dance,

His partner, who had learned for many years of the most celebrated master, exerted all her knowledge of the art, and displayed all her graces to attract him. (212)

She is unsuccessful, yet again, in gaining a suitor, this time because Orlando prefers Monimia’s modesty to Hollybourn’s boasting. The stark contrast of Monimia’s careful and determined self-education, and use of critical thinking about what she reads, to Miss Hollybourn’s jack-of-all-trades acquisition of knowledge, demonstrates Smith’s concern that young women are educated properly and taught how to make use of their knowledge – whether their accomplishments are few or varied – rather than showing off by simply regurgitating what they have learned.

Both of Smith’s first two novels, *Emmeline* and *Ethelinde*, present the reader with examples of expensive educations gone awry. In *Emmeline*, as discussed earlier in this work, we have Delamere, paralleled with the ‘true hero’ of the novel, Godolphin, a soldier. Smith plays on her reader’s expectations: Delamere is, for most of the book, the only suitor Emmeline has – so he *must*, inevitably, be the hero. Perhaps, he reforms and transforms into the hero? Or, perhaps, as he and Fitz-Edward suggest, he really does follow the example of Werther? When Godolphin, a chivalrous and respectful poet-soldier, appears, it is clear that Smith intends for Godolphin and Emmeline to fall in love and marry. This makes Delamere’s continued pursuit even more of an

issue, especially for the reader who is, most likely, expecting the ‘boy-meets-girl-boy-marries-girl-after-adventures’ plot formula favoured by late-eighteenth-century novelists. If Delamere is not the hero, tragic or otherwise, who is he? Delamere’s actions, stemming from issues from his over-indulgent upbringing, complicate the traditional plot, highlighting and hyperbolising the problems caused by the manner in which he has been taught to behave. He is an example that Smith wants her readers to pay careful attention to. Not only is he an example for the young, privileged men reading the novel, or listening to it being read, but Delamere and his parents are also a warning to the parents of those privileged young men.

In parallel, *Ethelinde* provides us with an example of a young, privileged woman, who, like Delamere, misuses or disregards all the benefits of her expensive education – this time in pursuit of pleasure, rather than the heroine. She gambles, she stays up later with disreputable society at parties, she even, it is implied, commits adultery and dies giving birth to an illegitimate child as a result.⁹³ Her parents, like Delamere’s, regret their overindulgence and realise too late that they should have guided her more carefully.

In her novel *Northanger Abbey*, Jane Austen mocks the idea, perpetuated in earlier novels by women like those of Smith, of the innate abilities of the heroine. Catherine Morland has none of the exceptional qualities one might expect from a novelistic heroine: she cannot draw very well, plays no musical instruments, and does not read in several foreign languages. She neglects her education in favour of playing outdoors. Austen is mocking one earlier novel in particular as she describes Catherine: Emmeline, of Smith’s eponymous novel.

Despite her lack of instruction, Emmeline’s innate qualities allow her to overcome her educators’ deficiencies and she is able to play the harp and sing beautifully, draw with an artistic

⁹³ See Ellen Moody’s ‘Introduction’ to her new edition *Ethelinde*, published in 2017, for further analysis of Lady Newenden’s adultery and subsequent death.

eye, and she is very well-read. Much like her library, through which she expands her knowledge and learning, these ‘innate’ skills are suggested by Smith to be hereditary, passed onto her by her father and her father’s ancestors. Her drawing skills, in particular, come from her late father. And what legitimate Lord’s daughter would not naturally be able to play and sing beautifully? Emmeline’s abilities and accomplishments are outward signs of her legitimacy and her right to inherit from her father – clues laid out for the reader.

In *The Banished Man*, Smith begins to address the issue of tutors for boys – an opportunity not presented with Orlando, though he could be considered a tutor himself to Monimia. Around this time, Smith had also begun to write and publish her works for children, beginning with *Rural Walks* (1794), which featured ‘dialogues’ in a similar mode to that of Anna Barbauld and other children’s authors. More so than for girls’ education, Smith is concerned with the who, where, and how of boys’ education: Should sons be raised at home then sent to school later? What are the issues inherent in relying on a tutor? How much involvement should parents have in the academic education of their sons? Who is responsible for their emotional education? These and more are the kinds of questions Smith strives to explore and answer in her novels, particularly in *The Banished Man* and *The Young Philosopher*.

Tutors do not feature prominently in many of Smith’s novels. Orlando, our first male protagonist of school age, attends an unnamed local school and has no tutor at home. Many of the other heroes encountered in Smith’s novels are beyond the age when they have required formal schooling or tutors. The two novels in which tutors do feature prominently are *The Banished Man* and *The Young Philosophy*. The question of who should educate boys and young men, and whether or when they should attend public schools, was a controversial topic throughout the eighteenth century, and on which Smith had explored herself in both real life and her novels.

Smith’s first engagement with the topic is the fourth volume of *The Banished Man*. Armand D’Alonville, the French aristocratic émigré and hero of the novel, having fled to

England amidst the chaos of the French Revolution and met the lovely Angelina Denzil, is recommended as a tutor by an acquaintance whose relation requires a tutor for her husband's children, in particular, his older sons. His acquaintance, Miss Milsington, writes to him that

“The earl of Aberdore whose present lady is a relation of my late father's, General Milsington, has by a first wife three sons and two daughters. – These young people are from sixteen to seven years of age. My relation, the present Lady Aberdore, is a very young woman, and beautiful as the fabled Houri – of course fond of admiration, and the gaieties of a court, where from her rank and loveliness she is most noticed. With the best of dispositions in the world, it is not in *her* power to attend to the education of her husband's children. The young ladies are growing up; the eldest is near twelve years old; the boys are two of them older.” (IV, 133)

The description of Lady Aberdore – young, titled, much admired and fond of gaiety and attention – puts one in mind of Lady Newenden in *Ethelinde*. Especially as Miss Milsington suggests that Lady Aberdore's enjoyment of court and admiration means that she does not have the time or desire to be a mother, to take care of the education of another woman's children. Miss Milsington continues with a description of their education thus far, and the change of circumstances the children are experiencing:

“they have all been educated hitherto at the town or country houses where Lord A. has happened to reside, under the care of tutors, governesses, and masters; but some objections have lately arisen to their residing in London, where they are unavoidably introduced into some degree of dissipation inimical to their studies; and Lord A. has determined that they shall reside altogether at one of his distant seats. (IV, 133-4)

Lord Aberdore has determined to remove his children from the dangers of London society. That it has not previously been an issue suggests that Lady Aberdore's proclivities for gaiety and social life may be a factor in the removal of the children from the house he resides in. D'Alonville's friend Ellesmere also notes, though rather more sardonically than Miss Milsington, That D'Alonville is to

“superintend the education of two young graces ‘who are *growing up*,’ and who, I apprehend, approach too nearly in appearance and charms to this rival of Mahomet's nymphs to be suffered to remain longer near their *Belle Mere*, amid ‘the dissipations of London.’” (136)

In Ellesmere's interpretation of the situation, Lady Aberdore begins to resemble Smith's own step-mother, who regarded Smith as a rival and encouraged Nicholas Turner, Smith's father, to marry her off to remove her from the household. Finally, after a brief note regarding the 'gentleman from Oxford' (134) who is to replace the boys' previous tutor, Miss Milsington explains that

as this plan of necessity excludes [the young ladies] masters in many branches of education, which the metropolis alone possesses, Lord Aberdore has been prevailed upon to think of engaging some foreigner of merit and talents, who may be qualified to supply this deficiency, and instruct Lord Aurevalle, and his brothers, in the French and Italian languages; in fencing, drawing, and tactics; who has some knowledge of music, and has an elegant taste for poetry and the fine arts. – I have named you, Sir, as a gentleman, in whom this assemblage of accomplishments is united with infinite suavity of manners, and an excellent disposition. (134)

Miss Milsington hopes that D'Alonville will supply the place of a number of masters of ornamental accomplishments for the two young ladies, and also to provide tuition for the young men, including the titled eldest son. Lord Aberdore has already agreed to Miss Milsington's recommendation and awaits only D'Alonville's acquiescence. With Ellesmere's encouragement and approbation, and some planning, D'Alonville marries Angelina Denzil and relocates to Lord Aberdore's Welsh seat, Rock-March, with the plan of settling his new wife and her family, including Mrs Denvil, nearby.

Prefacing D'Alonville's arrival at Rock-March is a brief description of the dynamics, and dysfunction, of the family he was to tutor for. Smith states that 'the magnificence of the family [...] was far from bestowing happiness, or even content on the members of it.' (158) Lord Aberdore is described as

one of those ambitious men, without talents, aspire to the first places of power and patronage; and who, scrupling not to acquire that power by *any* means, are as meanly humble to their superiors, as insolent and overbearing towards whoever they considered as their inferiors. His character was a common one, and had little to distinguish it from the numberless others in public life. In domestic life he was now governed by his wife, to whom he was said to have shewn too much attachment, long before there was a probability of his having it in his power to raise her to the rank she now enjoyed. (158-9)

This description of Lord Aberdore's character echoes the sentiments of Alexina's father speaking to Ellesmere earlier in the volume regarding "'weak men [...] liable to be governed'" (IV, 72) by their wives or mistresses – and, as the reference to Lord Aberdore's 'attachment' to her 'before there was a probability' of his being able to marry her, it would seem that Lady Aberdore has been both, representing Lord Aberdore as immoral and an adulterer, as well as weak. He is also lacking in fatherly characteristics beyond a selfish pride that they may reflect well on him. Smith notes this attitude towards his children as she continues her description of Aberdore, stating that

he considered his children no otherwise, than as beings who were to perpetuate or aggrandize his family, but that the boys might be qualified to shine in political life, and the girls accomplished enough to aspire to the most illustrious alliances, his spared nothing that could contribute to complete their education, and was persuaded to believe, that this could be carried on better in the arrangement made at Rock-March, than it could be in London. Cold and stately towards his children, they had little pleasure in his company. (159)

Lord Aberdore is happy for his children to be sent away to Wales, away from London and his residence, on the command of his new wife – not least because he has been led to believe it furthers his plans regarding their futures, for his benefit more than for their own. Due to his 'cold and stately' attitude toward his children,

the young men were not sorry to enjoy that degree of liberty at a distance, on which his presence always seemed a restraint – while the ladies Tryphena and Louisa, who had been taught by old servants about them to detest their mother-in-law [Lady Aberdore], were very glad to have a sort of establishment of their own at a distance from her; though they were old enough to understand the motives that made Lady Aberdore desire their absence, and failed not to say they did, to every one they were allowed to see; some of whom repeated their remarks, which served only to determine her to hasten their departure. (159-60)

The children have evidently spent most of their lives being raised by servants, governesses, and tutors. The young ladies put more trust in the 'old servants' than either their father or his new wife, and the boys look forward to their freedom, away from their father. Rock-March is considered as a place of 'liberty,' their own 'establishment' away from their remaining parent and

his young wife. They show no love for either of them, and there is no sign that they will miss their father – clearly used to his cold attitude and responding in kind.

The next significant character to be introduced is the tutor with who D'Alonville will be working, Reverend Lemuel Paunceford. His arrogant and haughty attitude is displayed via free indirect discourse the first time Paunceford sees D'Alonville, in which he describes D'Alonville using rather pretentious vocabulary as 'his coadjutor in the important task of educating future legislators of the British empire.' (164) He is self-important, vain, and prideful – not attractive traits in a reverend. After being introduced to their young charges (Lord Aureville, Henry August Vipont, and Frederick Charles Vipont) as “‘Monsieur Dalunvil’” (164), D'Alonville observed as Paunceford

Strutted for a moment about the room as if to exhibit himself to the best advantage. He was a punch figure of five feet, whose tight black clothes, knowing boots, and splendid leather breeches, served only to make his redundancy of flesh more remarkable. He wore his hair high behind his round head, so that a collop of fat that was thrust from his short poll by a neck cloth, seemed to support the spruce row of yellow curls that marked him, (somewhat to his displeasure) as being in orders. (164)

The reader can now see that his name, *Paunceford*, sounding remarkably similar to 'paunch,' is a play on words and more of a description of his appearance. As well as being vain of his person, Paunceford is also overweight, suggesting he is gluttonous as well as prideful. From the outset, the reader is led to dislike this tutor, especially compared to our humble hero – fallen from the great heights of aristocracy, exiled from his own country on pain of death, yet happy to take a job as a tutor to provide for his poverty-stricken new family, the Denzils.

As the description continues, Paunceford's character does not improve: his obsequiousness in the face of reward, despite his pride, meant 'there was no doubt of his dying a dignitary of the church' (165) and that 'till that happy epocha [of his death] arrived, he was not unwilling to shew the way that was to lead to it, with every flower he could gather, without hazarding his character.' (165-6) As the reader may have elicited from his paunch, Paunceford

‘loved a good dinner [...] and found Lord Aberdore’s table very suitable to his taste,’ (166) and, moving from gluttony to sloth, the reader is also told ‘he loved his ease, and found it was more in appearance than in reality that he should have any thing to do.’ (166) Adding to his list of ‘sinful’ behaviour, Smith notes his lustful hopes for a ‘seraglio’ (166) of women formed of the governesses and the ladies’ maids, with whom he will be ensconced at Rock-March, ‘for the indulgence of sentimental affections *at least.*’⁹⁴ (166) D’Alonville’s handsome appearance, lithe figure, and tall frame, a stark contrast to the appearance of Paunceford, dashes Paunceford’s hopes and causes envy to rear its head. Avarice and wrath follow close on its heels as Paunceford contemplates how to ‘prejudic[e] his pupils against [D’Alonville], and find some means of getting him dismissed,’ (168) as he would rather have the run of Rock-March as the only adult male. There is a continual comparison between the two tutors, our hero and Paunceford, creating a sense of parallelism: Paunceford stands the complete opposite, in personality and appearance, to D’Alonville. The parallelism guides the reader to compare the two different types of tutor presented to them.

There is a sense of irony created by Smith’s caricature of the Doctor of Divinity from Oxford, with all his ‘sinful’ behaviour and Paunceford’s prejudices regarding D’Alonville.

Paunceford

had imagined to himself that [D’Alonville] resembled one of those figures as are usually exhibited in print shops in ridicule of his country, and that he should only find him a contrast to his own agreeable person: but his eyes refused to accede to this caricature of his imagination. (167)

Paunceford finds his prejudices of the French character and person dashed as D’Alonville does not resemble the print shop caricatures. D’Alonville, however, had no preconceptions about Paunceford, is presented with a print shop caricature of a clergyman: a man whose physical appearance and personality present him as the stereotypical ‘man of God’ who abuses his

⁹⁴ My own italics for emphasis.

position and power to get what he desires. Smith makes it clear how she feels about English tutors, and which of the two tutors in *The Banished Man* the reader should find the most agreeable.

Further to this is the reaction of the young men to Paunceford in comparison to D'Alonville. When Paunceford announces which chaise everyone is to be seated in (mispronouncing D'Alonville's name once more, "Dallumvil" (170)), the younger boys, watching their older brother Lord Aurevalle get into the chaise with Paunceford, hold the following conversation:

"How dull Aurevalle will be," cried the eldest, "shut up with our little Parson Punch."
"I hope," Answered his brother, "Bob Jerom will preach to him all the way – I like to have Aurevalle teized with that quiz – because he so often sets him upon me."
(170)

It is clear that the young men do not respect Paunceford – a poor thing for a tutor, who must be respected if he is to be listened to. D'Alonville takes the time to converse with the boys at the inn at which they rest, it is clear that the boys have a preference between the "Little Doctor," (180) as Frederick mockingly calls him, and D'Alonville. Aurevalle and his brother invite D'Alonville on a horse-ride and tour of the grounds and are pleased when he accepts, and Aurevalle announces "I'll go down myself and chuse [sic] an horse for you," [...] [he] seemed much more pleased with his foreign than his domestic tutor." (182) Paunceford spends more time and energy trying to catch his rival out, in order to have him dismissed, then in working with his pupils. While D'Alonville spends time with his pupils, building a relationship with them and earning their respect, Paunceford prefers to spend time by himself, making the minimum effort.

This contrast of the two tutors, one 'foreign' and the other 'domestic' as Smith describes them, argues against the prevailing notions of foreign tutors and masters. There were fears surrounding tutors, as well as arguments for their necessity. Inviting a stranger to live in one's

home and educate one's children could be considered dangerous. Rousseau questions the influence and motives of dancing masters, for example. He suggests they could be a bad influence on their students:

from the strangeness of their jargon, from their tone of voice, and ridiculous airs, their female scholars imbibe that turn, so important to their masters, which, taught by their example, the young misses will soon learn to make their same employment. (46)

Rousseau even goes so far as to suggest a sexual element to the dancing masters' motivations for wanting to teach young ladies. They were usually male, and Rousseau questions 'whether it be necessary, for a dancing-master to take this pretty young scholar by her delicate hand, to make her stretch out her arms, and project her panting breast.' (*Émile*, 1762, 46) There were a number of scandals involving dancing and music masters throughout the eighteenth century, enough to form a stereotype.⁹⁵ Smith's parallel of the two tutors, however, turns this on its head: the French tutor-cum-master (for he was to train the ladies, as well as the young men, in various accomplishments) is respectful, punctual, and professional, whereas the English tutor is the one who fits a stereotype, and whose students do not respect him.

Smith continues her exploration of English tutors in *The Young Philosopher*. After Mrs Crewkherne's diatribe against the early education of her youngest nephew and his chosen profession, Smith spends two full chapters on George Delmont's education from the time he began at Eton till the death of his mother and the marriage of his uncle – two unprecedented events which led to the 'dispersion of the family.' (32)

Throughout these two chapters, we see the continuation of the comparison between the two brothers whose early education and upbringing had been so different. This time, however,

⁹⁵ For example, Hester Thrale had an affair with and married her daughter's Italian music master, becoming Hester Piozzi – much to the chagrin of her friends and society at large. See Felicity Nussbaum 'Hester Thrale: "What trace of wit?"' in Elizabeth Eger, ed., *Bluestockings Displayed: Portraiture, Performance and Patronage, 1730-1830*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013) 187-210

Smith does not 'leave the picture to be finished by the hard and cold pencil of Mrs Crewkherne,' (19) though she continues from where Crewkherne left off, with both of the boys now at Eton, placed there by their uncle, Lord Castledanes. The contrast between George Delmont and his brother, at this early point known as Adolphus Delmont, begins with each boys' attitude to those around them and the tutor hired for them, Mr Jeans. George and Adolphus are considered at this age as Lord Castledanes's future heirs, having no children himself, and so,

always taught from first recollection to consider himself as such, Adolphus, the eldest of these boys, had never felt a wish that he did not imagine he had a right to gratify. During the early part of his life, the excellent sense of his mother had not been able to counteract the impressions given him, as well by his uncle, who was extremely fond of him, as by his tutor, who attended him at Eton, and the servants and dependants, who seldom fail to make their court to the heir of a noble house. (19)

In stark contrast to the fears surrounding the over-indulgence of the parents, in particular, the mother, it is his uncle, the servants, and his tutor, who are in danger of turning the boy's head – and it seems, even at this early age, toward his schoolmasters and the other children. In fact, his tutor continues to exacerbate the problem at Eton, not helped by his being

placed with only his brother, in a private house, attended by a servant, and under the immediate direction of a tutor, [...] he by no means liked to be confounded in the mass of those so well described by Gray, "as dirty boys playing at cricket" – He was mortified at the little consideration shown him by his inferiors; the continual consciousness of his rank, to which they paid no manner of respect, kept him aloof from them [...] Thus driven to the society of his tutor, whose favourite he was, he obtained the character of a sullen, cold-blooded fellow, and a sap, though his passing his time out of school, with Mr Jeans, his preceptor, had in reality nothing to do with books, with which he fatigued himself as little as possible. (19)

Adolphus's pride isolates him, so he spends time only with Mr Jeans who he believes is the only one who respects his rank. In reality, he is only a 'favourite' with Jeans *because* of his rank and being the eldest – it has nothing to do with respect, though Adolphus does not realise this, though the reader is encouraged to notice via the comparisons. Despite Adolphus's reputation as a 'sap,' or studious bookworm, he has very little to do with books and is not, it would seem, encouraged, or instructed, to be by Jeans.

George Delmont's treatment by Jeans is quite the opposite. George seems to be partly based on Smith's son, Lionel. Lionel Smith was a headstrong young man at school and probably experienced a similar upbringing to Delmont, considering how much his own mother advocated for the mother's role in forming character and domestic education during early age.⁹⁶ George's 'mother [...] carefully guarded against his falling into the same error as his brother, and had taught him that the feelings of others were to be consulted as well as his own.' (19-20) His mother had also taught him to use his own mind, to think and read critically, and not to take anything at face value – to question, to be curious. Smith advocates all of these traits – both in the dialogues in her children's works, which encourage interaction with a topic and curious questioning to find out more and in the novels which encourage her readers to think for themselves, to question and read critically. This strength of mind, however, does not sit well with the schoolmasters of Eton. Smith notes how George was

frequently involved in scrapes for harmless frolics and trespasses out of bounds; but from the wildest excesses which the indulgence of these animal spirits led him into, he was recalled by a single word from any one he loved, though the harsh voice of authority wantonly exerted never failed to give something like obstinacy to his resistance. (20)

He disliked the rules of school study so 'he fell into continual disgrace with the masters' (20) but 'punishment had no effect to reclaim him.' (20) Smith defends his open rebelliousness as harmless compared to other boys whose transgressions included 'parties on horseback to dine at a tavern, or sailing schemes on the water.' (20) Instead, George got into trouble for going on

⁹⁶ Lionel was headstrong and loyal. Judith Stanton notes in *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, 'Lionel [...] [voluntarily] left Winchester in Apr. 1793 because of his role in what became known as "the rebellion of 1793".' The 'rebellion' was 'in protest [against] the punishment of the whole school for the misdeeds of one boy, a punishment they had been assured would not be exacted.' (37) His voluntary resignation – rather than 'surrendering' the siege – was in support of a fellow student. Stanton goes on to note that this story was embellished over time to make Lionel the leader of the rebellion, as it is written in Hilbish's biography (a story based on an account by Lionel's great-grandson).

long rambles, settling with a 'favourite book' (20) and letting time get away from him. For this, he was often in trouble with Jeans, who, it seems, was more determined to force George to attend to his lessons than he was with Adolphus. Smith notes that

[George] not unfrequently [sic] delighted to conceal himself from the mirth of his comrades, that gave him no pleasure, and from that needless rigour of enquiry which he felt to be an intolerable persecution. He could never understand that half the restraints imposed upon him did not originate rather in the wantonness of tyranny, that induces men to exercise power merely because they have it, than because it was really their duty to check the eccentricities of the boys, whose education they undertook; and therefore when Mr Jeans, his private tutor, hunted him with acrimonious reproach from his beloved solitudes, and attempted to compel him to pass hours, which he considered as his own, in listening to uninteresting lectures, or parading details of his learning, George seldom attended with patience and obedience. (20)

Smith, defending George's character, reminds the reader that he is only a child – referring to his 'school friends' and 'rambles' – and needs to be guided by the adults around him. Boys of his age are rambunctious and restless, unaware of the necessities of their schooling and the rules and boundaries held over them. While Adolphus, being Mr Jeans' 'favourite,' gets away with being a little lazy with his education, George's willfulness is not tolerated, and he is even reprimanded.

This unfair treatment by the boys' tutor stretches beyond their extra tuition. When George wishes to give money to a poor lady to feed her children, Smith notes that 'Mr Jeans never wanted an excuse for denial, and instead of assisting the benevolent purpose of his pupil, teased him with remonstrance, or drove him away with reproof.' (21) His attitude, rather than discouraging George from his philanthropic endeavours, only sets George more firmly against him, and

his unfeeling apathy and systematic callousness on this point gradually gave to his younger pupil such a distaste to his society, and scorn of his doctrine, that in proportion as he thought more of the duties of mankind towards each other, and read more of those books, whose first recommendation had been Jeans's endeavours to prevent his reading them, he held his tutor more and more in abhorrence. (22)

Jeans attempts to force his own beliefs and philosophies onto his pupil, regardless of George's own feelings and the manner in which he was bought up by his mother. George has been taught

by his mother to think for himself and read critically, therefore, Jeans' attempts to force his will onto his pupil, in order to control George's mind and behaviour, inevitably fail. Instead of engaging with George, he 'lectures' and 'reprimands' him, and Jeans 'parades his own learning' and attempts to censor George's reading, rather than encouraging him to explore and learn to develop his own mind. George, aware of Jeans's behaviour due to his unusual strength of mind, is not cowed, he questions Jeans's motives and attitudes, and George continues his own explorations despite his tutor. When his own

censorship and remonstrance did not work, Jeans took every occasion to insinuate to Lord Castledanes and Mrs Delmont the eccentric, and, as he feared, unfortunate disposition of the young man. Lord Castledane's, who really loved George better than any of his brother's children, gave very little attention to the malevolent hints of Jeans, whom he considered a pedant without any but college ideas; while Mrs Delmont, though she heard him with patience, found nothing in his complaints, when they were investigated, but a confirmation of those excellent qualities which had endeared this boy to her even more than his brother. (22)

Given their opinions of Jeans, one cannot help but wonder why Lord Castledanes and Mrs Delmont entrust him with the education and upbringing of the two boys while they live away from home. Even George notes Jeans's defects, that he 'was given to sensual indulgences [...] and particularly inconsistent with his pretended sanctity.' (22) This description of Jeans echoes the descriptions of Lemuel Paunceford in *The Banished Man*. Despite George's opinion of Jeans, however,

such was the generosity of [George's] nature, that he disdained to retaliate against the Tartuffe he despised, and was eager to join with his brother in petitioning their uncle to bestow on Jeans a piece of preferment in his gift, though it did not remove him from his tutorship, but, as George had foreseen, made him more dogmatical, overbearing and insufferable. (22)

George did not have to put up with this heightened arrogance for long, however, as Jeans was to accompany Adolphus on the Grand Tour a few months later. Mrs Delmont and Lord Castledanes were 'neither of them [...] very partial to Mr Jeans, but they considered that he had, from long habit, acquired great influence over the mind of his pupil.' (22) Though, considering the man

Adolphus grows up to be (proud, misogynistic, cold), one questions whether Jeans's influence over his young mind was necessarily a positive point. When one compares the two men, though their tutor is arguably but one factor in the outcome of their upbringing, Mr Jeans's influence can be seen as encouraging, if not inculcating, Adolphus's negative characteristics. Smith, it would seem, suggests that private tutors have, perhaps, too much influence over the minds of vulnerable young boys, susceptible to learning bad habits and bad thinking from their self-indulgent and lazy tutors.

George, in fact, acquired more knowledge than all his former studies pursued under the immediate direction of Mr Jeans' (22) once his tutor had left to travel abroad with Adolphus. Without the negative attitude of his tutor, which he rebelled against, 'he now understood perfectly what had before been so indistinctly communicated, or so distastefully enforced, that his attention involuntarily recoiled.' (23) From being at the bottom of the school during Jeans's reign,

He was [now] at the head of the school, and by his example imparted to such of his associates as had a turn for literature an ardent delight in its pursuits; he no longer wanted friends to whom he could communicate his pleasures, and who animated his enthusiasm by participation. – At liberty to choose his own reading at his hours of private study, he had made a collection of his favourite poets and essayists. Some modern works, which Mr Jeans had forbidden him to ever open at all, were purchased and read with attention, greater perhaps than he would have given them had they never been prohibited. (23)

In this passage, Smith seems to refer to the Rousseauian line on educating young people: 'let us not offer to teach them, it is they should desire of us to be instructed.' (*Émile*, 46) George, when not forced or reprimanded, when no one is attempting to control his mind in any way, blossoms as a scholar. Free from the tyranny of his close-minded and controlling tutor, from his censorship of books and thought, George makes dramatic progress, both in his understanding and his character. He is more well-behaved for the schoolmasters and understands the need to follow the school rules, and he voluntarily spends what he previously considered his own time in private study, exploring his passion for literature and philosophy. The contrast of George's attitude towards his education and the institution which he attends before and after his tutor's removal demonstrates Smith's notion that tutors of this kind, like Lemuel Paunceford and Mr Jeans, can

have a negative and even damaging effect on a boys' education. Only when free to explore and pursue the enjoyment of learning, under the guidance of his schoolmasters and his own mind as developed early on by his mother, does George make the progress expected of him.

Unconventional Tutors

There are many unconventional tutors throughout Smith's novels. She frequently flouts prevailing notions about who should guide a child's education and how. In her first novel, *Emmeline*, her heroine, receives her tuition from two servants and a dilapidated and ancient castle library. Initially, she is left to the education provided by a steward and a caretaker – rather than a parent or, more preferably, a governess. Then Emmeline conducts her own, seemingly self-guided, education via the castle's ruined library. One could argue, however, that Emmeline does not necessarily choose the texts she reads for herself and that she is instead guided by the store of knowledge left behind by her ancestors in her late father's castle. The more modern knowledge which survives in the neglected castle (the older texts are ruined and beyond salvaging) is Emmeline's only resource until after the death of the caretaker, Mrs Carey, when she is sixteen. At this point, more texts from outside the castle find their way to her (via Mrs Garnet, the new caretaker, or via her uncle, Lord Montreville, when she has removed to Swansea). Like much of the castle and Emmeline herself, the library has been neglected and forgotten, left to rot by the current owner, Lord Montreville.

Neglected libraries, like neglected orphans, are a theme in Smith's novels and are often paired together. Another such orphan and library pairing can be found in *The Old Manor House*. Like Emmeline, Monimia begins her education with an unconventional tutor: Orlando, a young visitor to Rayland Hall and the nephew of her mistress. After his departure, however, Monimia is left somewhat to her own devices, with some suggestions of texts from Orlando. She uncovers knowledge using her new-found reading skills (she has become, under Orlando's tuition, both

literate and a critical reader) and the library which had remained unused until Orlando's arrival, though in better condition than the library of Mowbray Castle as Rayland Hall remained the seat of its owner.

The education of Smith's heroines is domestic and often haphazard. Emmeline is taught at first by her carers, the housekeeper and steward of Mowbray Castle, then by the library, the tomes accumulated over the centuries by her ancestors. Monimia hides her education from her Aunt, stashing paper and books and ink so that she can practice in secret. Celestina and Ethelinde appear to have had a more formal education, though no particular schools are mentioned, and theirs may have been similar to Smith's own experience. According to Lorraine Fletcher's *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography*, Smith started school in Chichester at age six. A relocation from Bignor Park in Sussex to London when she was eight meant she and her sister, Catherine, moved to a 'fashionable' school in Kensington for the remainder of their education, 'giving them the advantage of the best masters in preparation for their eventual introductions into London society.' (13, 1998) Smith was removed from the Kensington school at the age of twelve and spent the final years before her marriage roaming the Bignor Park estate. (14-16, 1998)⁹⁷ This removal from the fashionable Kensington school was most likely for financial reasons – by this time, her father was in debt due to his unfortunate fondness for 'deep play' or gambling.

Despite their father's initial efforts in attempting to give them a fashionable education, as expected for girls of their station, both Charlotte and Catherine were later disparaging of their time in school. Fletcher notes that,

⁹⁷ Nicholas Turner, Smith's father, had a gambling problem which drained the family fortune (much like Smith's husband, Benjamin, later would) which Turner attempted to fix by re-marrying for wealth when Smith was around fifteen. It is no wonder that Smith takes issue with gambling and cards throughout her novels, demonstrating the pitfalls of such behaviour in the characters of Lady Newenden and Ethelinde's father, Colonel Chesterville.

Both Charlotte and her sister Catherine became writers of children's works and experts on girls' education. Both were critical, later, of the education they received. Trends in teaching change so fast that each generation is scathing about the superficiality of a few years back, and convinced of its own recent enlightenment. (18, 1998)

This criticism of her own upbringing and education is one reason for Smith's own desire to challenge and change educational norms during her time as a writer. Her criticism of 'fashionable' education is demonstrated through characters in her novels, like Lady Newenden and Miss Hollybourn. Both receive an expensive education, yet Lady Newenden cannot hold an intelligent conversation on books or nature, and Miss Hollybourn can only mechanically perform or parrot what she has learned. They received only surface or ornamental educations as young ladies – nothing of real substance to develop their thinking, nothing which builds character or which encourages an equal partnership with the opposite sex. Smith explored her ideas and arguments in the 'virtual' worlds of her novels as she educated and brought up her own children. She learned from teaching her daughters and sons, then reproduced her 'results' and opinions in novel form, much as Anna Barbauld had also done during the education of her nephew with the series of *Lessons for Children* she produced during her time acting as his mother and educator.

The heroine's parallels are often introduced with a description of their education – often expensive, excessive, and not very useful. Lady Newenden's expensive education leaves her with a taste for society, drama, and 'deep play' at the card table, and Miss Hollybourn's education and her performances of parroted information puts off any suitors who might be interested in her dowry. This lack of interest could be attributed to her unfeminine education or her lack of conversational skills. Miss Hollybourn seems only able to communicate via what she has been taught (i.e. a display of her store of knowledge, usually in a monologue), there is no room for casual, social conversation or dialogue, cutting her off from any connections she might otherwise have made. Unlike the male characters, no girls' schools are mentioned, hinting at the prestige of boys' schools, such as Eton and Winchester College, compared to the nonentity of girls' schools – one school for young ladies was the same as the next. Boys' schools would have been valued

far more than those for girls during the eighteenth century. Given Smith's own school experience and the disparaging of her education as she grew older and developed her own ideas, perhaps some of Smith's heroines did not attend school and were instead tutored at home, like her daughters. As it is not explicitly stated, except in exceptional cases like that of Emmeline and Medora when the paths of the education were significant to the development of their stories, we can only guess.

The educations of men in Smith's novels are presented to the reader in a different manner to that of the women. The expense of their education is rarely mentioned, and it is made implicitly clear that they attended school by their status, though particular schools are sometimes mentioned for younger male characters or when the schooling or childhood is relevant to their narrative. Sir Edward Newenden, for example, is never described in terms of his education – we do not know where he attended school or whether he attended Oxford, for example. The fact that he is 'Sir' Edward, however, indicates to the reader that he was very likely to have had a good education, suited to a man of his station, and he displays this in his conversations with Emmeline, his intellectual equal, on the road to Grasmere Abbey.

Davenant, his ward, on the other hand, is almost immediately described in terms of his education – Smith makes a point of informing her readers that, despite his lack of intelligence and self or personality, Davenant attends Oxford. He is not the only male character to have attended Oxford but Davenant can be read as a critique, perhaps, of some of the culture of male education, and the constructions of masculinity and male identity which Smith believes certain types of education or educational philosophies can create. While her hero, Orlando, in *The Old Manor House*, is expected to attend Oxford for his education and it is implied that he finds his education useful and is not drawn into any of the negative aspects of life at Oxford for a young man. Davenant, on the other hand, with his chameleonic approach to social life, is represented to the reader in terms of the negative aspects of Oxford life: drinking and gambling culture, in

particular. Despite Davenant's education and his attendance at Oxford, not only is he an unsuitable match for Emmeline (in the eyes of Sir Edward, the narrator, and the reader), he is also an example of what can happen to young men brought up in an indulgent manner. Smith was not the only writer on education to note the issues of university life or male education (especially the Grand Tour). Male education was often as much a point of concern as female education. What could the effects of going on the Grand Tour be? Were young men wasting their time rather than making the best use of their environment when they attended the great universities, such as Oxford?⁹⁸ In *Fashioning Masculinity*, Michele Cohen discusses at length the debate ongoing in the period about the age suitable for going abroad, the detriments of acquiring potentially effeminate traits, and more. The debate surrounding the pros and cons of the Grand Tour was also entwined in another debate in which Smith involved herself through her novels:

Where best to educate the young men of rank – at home or at school – was the subject of intense debate throughout the eighteenth century. (Cohen, 57, 1996)

As we saw in the previous chapter, Smith was an advocate of public schooling for boys, both in her novels and in her own life (her own sons were sent away to school and she was consulted by friends on their own options) – but only once they had spent time at home being tutored by parents and, perhaps, hired tutors. Smith stressed the importance of domestic education for boys as well as girls. Further to the debate on masculinity and the benefits Smith argued were derived from this domestic education equality and respect for wives and women in general; sensibility

⁹⁸ For more on the concerns relating to university attendance by young men during the final decades of the eighteenth century, see H. Ellis, 'Foppish Masculinity, Generational Identity and the University Authorities in Eighteenth-Century Oxbridge,' *Cultural and Social History*, 11.3 (2014) 367-384; Henry French and Mark Rothery, 'Upon Your Entry into the World': Masculine Values and the Threshold of Adulthood Among Landed Elites in England 1680–1800', *Social History* 33.4 (2008) 409-410; Heather Ellis, *Generational Conflict and University Reform: Oxford in the Age of Revolution* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012)

and compassion – many theorists were concerned with the feminising effects of ‘too much’ female company. Most writers, however, agreed that female conversation was necessary for men.

Conversation

In her book, *Family Authorship and Romantic Print Culture*, Michelle Levy discusses the technique of education by conversation as used in Barbauld’s *Lessons for Children*, demonstrating how Barbauld transferred the technique from real life by reproducing conversations with her adopted son and nephew, Charles, book form. As Levy states,

The setting of the *Lessons* was domestic, not formal, and the mode conversational, not pedantic: what contemporaries called “chit-chat” and “familiar conversation,” as the mother converses with her child, instructing him about the gradually expanding world around him. (2008, 32)

Education by conversation in a domestic setting was a trope frequently reiterated throughout these new works for children. Between 1794 and 1804, Smith wrote and published a number of educational books for children, *Rural Walks*, *Rambles Farther*, *Minor Morals*, and *Conversations Introducing Poetry*. Just like those of Barbauld and her brother, John Aikin, and many other children’s writers of the late eighteenth century, these books were based on the idea of ‘familiar conversation.’

From the very beginning of *Ethelinde*, conversation between the sexes is an important signifier for the reader demonstrating the intellectual capacity of characters and their compatibility with one another – especially between a man and a woman. It demonstrates their intellectual abilities, education and knowledge, their desire for self-improvement or the desire to improve others, it also demonstrates their ability to communicate with other characters. In the carriage on the way to Grasmere Abbey, the reader is presented with the contrasting images of the two cousins, Ethelinde and Lady Newenden. Ethelinde demonstrates her capacity for knowledge and self-improvement through her conversations with Sir Edward Newenden about the theories of the sublime and the beautiful, exploring the scenery around them. She is excited

and curious. Lady Newenden, however, is fashionably disinterested. Despite her 'expensive education,' Lady Newenden has no capacity for the educated and improving conversation happening within the carriage as she feels more at home with the fashionable and frivolous conversation and gossips that can be found at the card table. She merely wishes she were back in London and continually on the road needs to stop to rest, becoming more disgruntled and agitated the closer they get to Grasmere (or, from a different perspective, the further they get from fashionable London life).

Also in the carriage is Davenant. Initially, the reader might be forgiven for considering this unmarried young man as our dashing young hero. Sir Edward certainly thinks so at first. With his Oxford education, surely Davenant should be as intrigued and involved in the conversation as our heroine, with love blossoming between them fired by their shared capacity to appreciate the romantic nature of the landscape as they travel through it. Sir Edward, and the reader, soon discover, however, that Davenant is not indeed the one for Ethelinde. He shows very little capacity for the improving conversation and Sir Edward soon dismisses the idea that Davenant would be a suitable candidate for Ethelinde's husband. Ethelinde is far too intelligent for the chameleon-like Davenant who has no personality or wit of his own.

As we can see, it is not just the female quixotes who perform in Smith's novels, throughout the novels we find men 'playing parts,' also. None more so than the 'chameleon-like' Davenant of *Ethelinde*. Often we use the term 'chameleon' to suggest that someone is particularly adaptable and can change themselves to suit their environment. Smith's Davenant, on the other hand, is mindlessly chameleonic. He performs to the people he finds himself in the company of, reflecting their behaviour and ideas back at them, whether the person is Miss Newenden or her future husband, Woolaston. The only people he struggles to emulate are the enlightened and intelligent characters of the novel, such as Sir Edward Newenden and Ethelinde herself. He finds himself intimidated by his guardian, Sir Edward, and fascinated by Ethelinde because it is

difficult to fake intelligent conversation – in order to discuss literature or the sublime in nature, for example, one must actually understand and have a store of knowledge on the topic to draw upon. The message for the reader here, perhaps, is different from those examined so far in this work. Many of the messages and comments on education throughout Smith's works are aimed at young ladies, especially those titled in the traditional sentimental manner after the heroines (*Emmeline*, *Ethelinde*, *Celestina*). Smith is very concerned about female education, as many writers were during the period. Davenant, however, is an example for the young men who may encounter the novel – either by reading it themselves or by hearing it read aloud in a domestic setting. Davenant is present throughout the novel, and from the very beginning, much like the novel's heroine, *Ethelinde*, and as readers, we witness his development, such as it is.

Conclusion

Charlotte Smith's novels offer us a unique perspective on the education debates: one from the point of view of a single mother of several children, who focuses on the *outcomes* of education rather than just the processes and methods. During a time in which a multitude of theorists, parents, novelists, and more, were contributing to the debates on education, Smith's contribution stands out from other voices because of her concern with the *results* of the various philosophies and methods of education and upbringing. She was part of a movement, engaged with by writers within her circle, such as William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, which saw the adult as an ever-developing result of childhood education and upbringing. Due to her focus on adults (or the 'products' of education and upbringing) and adult self-improvement – something which would later develop and become a focus for the Victorian middle-classes and working classes – Smith has largely been neglected in the study of eighteenth-century writings about education. This work has begun to address this gap in the scholarship but, I feel, only scratches the surface of the multiple facets which Barnita Bagchi and Alan Richardson argue make up the eighteenth-century education debates, of which Smith's novels form a part.

At first glance, one might assume that Smith – like many other popular female novelists of the period – focused more exclusively on female characters (the hero, of course, being required simply for a marriage to end the novel 'appropriately'). Smith, however, often broke the rules, much to the chagrin of reviewers and readers, and produced ten novels with a healthy balance of male and female heroes (as well as a number of unconventional – sometimes 'inappropriate' – endings.) What this balance means is that, despite her first three novels' focus on female protagonists, Smith does not concern herself simply with female education – as often was the focus of contemporary female writers like Maria Edgeworth – but that of male education, too, especially in those novels which have a male protagonist at the forefront of the narrative. In fact, so concerned was Smith with the education and upbringing of both genders

that both male and female characters are equally represented across her novels in her explorations of upbringing and education. This equal share of concern was perhaps prompted by the fact that Smith's own children were a fairly even mix of boys and girls – had she been in the same situation as Mrs Bennett of Austen's 1818 novel, Smith's books may have had a different focus. Helping eighteenth-century girls find a place in society was, after all, a different thing entirely to helping boys establish themselves. Whatever the reason for this even distribution of gender, Smith's ultimate focus was on the individual – the adult – produced.

By examining adulthood as the *product* of childhood education and upbringing, Smith also engages with the full spectrum of ages in which children are educated. As she grappled with the life of a single mother to her children at various stages in their lives, her thoughts, ideas, and worries regarding them spilled over into her novels as she used the space to test and examine her own theories regarding education and upbringing and explore her situation as a mother and a product of her own education and upbringing. At the same time, she engaged her readers in this exploration and examination by using her novels to share her opinions on parenting, upbringing, and education, and the negative consequences she felt certain philosophies or methods could have on individuals. These novels provided instruction to a range of readers, from young adolescents through to parents themselves.

Further to this, Smith also used her novels not only to discuss and examine educational methods and philosophies but also engaged with the idea of adults as learners. During the 1800s, huge advances in education were made thanks to the innovations and developments of the eighteenth century. One of these advances was the development of education and self-improvement specifically for adults. As a precursor to this particular educational movement, Smith, like Godwin and Wollstonecraft, encouraged her adult readers to engage critically with ideas around politics, reading, social ideals of gender, the upbringing and education of children, and much more. For Smith, parents were a focal point for some of these ideas – both for their

own development and that of their children. Her characters – and Smith herself – demonstrate the benefits of self-improvement, life-long learning, and critical thinking, especially through the use of wide and critical reading. She asks her readers to question what they might otherwise accept at face-value: political viewpoints; the censorship of reading; the ideals of upbringing and masculinity; social acceptability on a variety of subjects, from behaviour to professions. Despite the advances made in the next century – leading to the creation of libraries and educational institutions for working-class people, and the Romantic and Victorian ideals attached to the idea of the individual and life-long self-improvement – Smith was unusual in her focus on the adult. While many educator-writers, philosophers and theorists focused on the ‘blank slate’ of the child, Smith did not believe that the adult was the ‘finished product’ of education and upbringing. Her novels suggest to their readers that while certain methods of childhood education and upbringing do ‘produce’ a particular type of adult individual, that individual is not necessarily ‘fixed’ and can continue to learn and to improve. But only if they are taught to *question*, to engage critically with culture and its products (such as novels and philosophy), and have developed the self-awareness required to reflect in this way.

As noted in the introduction, the field of Smith scholarship is growing and there is much yet to discover about her work, especially her prose works, which remains unexplored or under-researched. There is far more to uncover about her ideas on education and upbringing, especially when one considers Smith’s writings for children, as well as her poetry and dramatic works. Therefore I would like to conclude by suggesting further potential areas for research and identifying questions raised by the examination of Smith’s novels in relation to the education debates.

This area of Smith scholarship would benefit from an examination of the novels alongside the works for children. Sarah Trimmer, as noted in Chapter One, equated the one with the other. Smith herself expected as much financial reward per volume of her children’s works as

she would receive for her novels for adults – yet another unique point about Smith, linked to her identity as ‘an Author by Profession,’ that she expected the same amount of pay for her children’s works when, at the time, many children’s authors did not receive so much. She believed them of equal worth. What could a comparison of these two areas of her work add to the understanding of Smith’s contribution to the education debates?

A more thorough examination of Smith’s concerns about the impact of wealth and status, for example, would also be beneficial to our understanding, due to Smith’s situation as a woman whose experience with social mobility impacted how she approached the upbringing of all her children, regardless of gender. There are also several characters, such as Celestina’s friend Jessy, who offer yet more perspectives on Smith’s beliefs surrounding the links between wealth or social status and the adults produced by the education on offer to those of a lower class. In the Introduction to the Broadview Press edition of *Celestina*, Loraine Fletcher notes the significance of these (usually) minor characters in her brief exploration of the character of Jessy. Smith’s interest in social justice has been explored previously by Smith scholars, but how does it link with her responses to the education debates?⁹⁹ What does her exploration of lower-class characters tell us about what Smith believes is the impact of their education?

Smith’s many novels and prose works are full of details – minor characters, textual references and allusions, social commentary – which could help to expand our understanding not only of her works but also our understanding of the decade in which she was writing, as they have already begun to do so. Her unique perspective, her often journalistic style, and her active and outspoken interest in current events make her a fascinating and informative subject for

⁹⁹ For more on Smith’s interest in social justice, see Kari Lokke, ‘Charlotte Smith’s *Desmond*: The Historical Novel as Social Protest’, *Women’s Writing*, 16.1, (2009) 60-77; also, see Loraine Fletcher’s critical biography, in which she states that ‘it was typical of Charlotte’s generosity’ to give all the profits from the subscription sale of *A Narrative of the loss of the Catherine, Venus and Piedmont Transports* (1796) to the survivor and their child. (248, 1998)

scholars of her works and the period. This work has begun to use these to develop our understanding of her engagement with the education debates before and during the 1790s, as well as to explicitly place Smith's voice alongside those of other writers contributing to those debates. Smith's novels provide us with an insight into how her thoughts, theories, and ideas, on education developed over the decade in which she was writing. Spanning the entire decade between 1788 and 1799, the novels are significant for the study of her opinions on the debates because her novels can provide us with a consistent timeline of development due to the frequency with which they were written and published, compared to her other works.

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