

contempt for the novel. A rhyme in the *Lady's Magazine* for 1771 summed up a view widely shared:

*With Pamela, by name,
No better acquainted;
For as novels I hate,
My mind is not tainted.*

Many moralists feared that novels sowed discontent in the minds especially of servants and young girls.²⁰

The Swiss physician Samuel-Auguste Tissot linked novel reading to masturbation, which he thought led to physical, mental, and moral degeneration. Tissot believed that bodies naturally tended to deteriorate and that masturbation hastened the process in both men and women. "All that I can say is that idleness, inactivity; staying in bed too long; a bed that is too soft; a rich, spicy, salty, and wine-filled diet; suspect friends; and licentious books are the causes most apt to lead to these excesses." By "licentious," Tissot did not mean frankly pornographic; in the eighteenth century, "licentious" meant anything tending to the erotic but it was distinguished from the much more objectionable "obscene." Novels about love—and the majority of eighteenth-century novels told stories about love—easily slipped into the category of the licentious. In England, girls in boarding schools seemed especially at risk because of their ability to get hold of such "immoral and repugnant" books and read them in bed.²¹

Clerics and doctors thus agreed in viewing novel reading in terms of loss—of time, vital fluids, religion, and morality. They assumed that the reader would imitate the action in the novel, to her great regret. A female reader of *Clarissa*, for example, might disregard the wishes of her family and like *Clarissa* agree

to escape with a Lovelace-like rake who would lead her, willy-nilly, to her ruin. In 1792, an anonymous English critic could still insist that "The increase of novels will help to account for the increase of prostitution and for the numerous adulteries and elopements that we hear of in the different parts of the kingdom." In this view, novels overstimulated the body, encouraged a morally suspect self-absorption, and provoked actions destructive of familial, moral, and religious authority.²²

Richardson and Rousseau claimed the role of editor rather than author so that they could sidestep the disrepute associated with novels. When Richardson published *Pamela*, he never referred to it as a novel. The full title of the first edition is a study in protesting too much: *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded. In a Series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel, to her Parents: Now first Published In order to cultivate the Principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the Youth of Both Sexes. A Narrative which has its Foundation in Truth and Nature: and at the same time that it agreeably entertains, by a Variety of curious and affecting Incidents, is intirely [sic] divested of all those Images, which, in too many Pieces calculated for Amusement only, tend to inflame the Minds they should instruct.* Richardson's preface "by the editor" justifies the publication of "the following Letters" in moral terms; they will instruct and improve the minds of the young, inculcate religion and morality, paint vice "in its proper colours," etc.²³

Although Rousseau referred to himself as editor too, he did clearly consider the work a novel. In the first sentence of the preface to *Julie*, Rousseau linked novels to his well-known criticism of the theater: "Great cities must have theaters, and corrupt peoples, Novels." As if this were not enough warning, Rousseau also provided a preface consisting of a "Conversation

about Novels between the Editor and a Man of Letters." In it, the character "R" [Rousseau] lays out all the usual charges against the novel for playing upon the imagination to create desires they cannot virtuously fulfill:

We hear it complained that Novels trouble people's minds: I can well believe it. By endlessly setting before their readers' eyes the pretended charms of an estate that is not their own, they seduce them, lead them to view their own with contempt, and trade it in their imagination for the one they are induced to love. Trying to be what we are not, we come to believe ourselves different from what we are, and that is the way to go mad.

And yet Rousseau then proceeded to offer a novel to his readers. He even threw down the gauntlet with defiance. If anyone wants to criticize me for having written it, says Rousseau, let him say so to everyone on earth except to me. For my part, I could never have any esteem for such a man. The book might scandalize almost everyone, Rousseau gladly admits, but it will at least not afford a merely tepid pleasure. Rousseau fully expected his readers to have violent reactions.²⁴

Despite Richardson and Rousseau's own worries about their reputations, some critics had already begun to develop a much more positive view of the workings of the novel. Already in defending Richardson, Sarah Fielding and von Haller had drawn attention to the empathy or compassion stimulated by reading *Clarissa*. In this new view, novels worked on readers to make them more sympathetic toward others, rather than just self-absorbed, and therefore more moral, not less. One of the most articulate defenders of the novel was Diderot, author of the arti-

cle on natural right for the *Encyclopédie* and himself a novelist. When Richardson died in 1761, Diderot wrote a eulogy comparing Richardson to the greatest authors among the ancients, Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles. Diderot dwelled, however, on the immersion of the reader in the world of the novel: "One takes, despite all precautions, a role in his works, you are thrown into conversation, you approve, you blame, you admire, you become irritated, you feel indignant. How many times did I not surprise myself, as it happens to children who have been taken to the theater for the first time, crying: 'Don't believe it, he is deceiving you. . . . If you go there, you will be lost.'" Richardson's narrative creates the impression that you are present, Diderot recognizes, and moreover, this is your world, not a far distant country, not an exotic locale, not a fairy tale. "His characters are taken from ordinary society . . . the passions he depicts are those I feel in myself."²⁵

Diderot does not use the terms "identification" or "empathy," but he does provide a compelling description of them. You recognize yourself in the characters, he acknowledges, you imaginatively leap into the midst of the action, you feel the same feelings that the characters are feeling. In short, you learn to empathize with someone who is not yourself and can never be directly accessible to you (unlike, say, members of your family) and yet who is in some imaginative way also yourself, that being a crucial element in identification. This process explains why Panckoucke wrote to Rousseau, "I have felt pass through my heart the purity of Julie's emotions."

Empathy depends on identification. Diderot sees that Richardson's narrative technique draws him ineluctably into this experience. It is a kind of hothouse of emotional learning: "In the space of a few hours I went through a great number of situations

which the longest life can hardly offer across its entire duration. . . . I felt that I had acquired experience." So much does Diderot identify that he feels bereft at the novel's end: "I felt the same sensation that men feel who have been closely entwined and lived together for a long time and who are now on the point of separating. At the end, it suddenly seemed to me that I was left alone."²⁶

Diderot has simultaneously lost himself in the action and regained himself in the reading. He has more of a sense of the separateness of his self than before—he now feels lonely—but he also has more of a sense that others have selves too. In other words, he has what he himself called that "interior feeling" that is necessary to human rights. Diderot grasps, moreover, that the effect of the novel is unconscious: "One feels oneself drawn to the good with an impetuosity one does not recognize. When faced with injustice you experience a disgust you do not know how to explain to yourself." The novel has worked its effect through the process of involvement in the narrative, not through explicit moralizing.²⁷

Reading fiction got its most serious philosophical treatment in Henry Home, Lord Kames's *Elements of Criticism* (1762). The Scottish jurist and philosopher did not discuss novels per se in the work, but he did argue that fiction in general creates a kind of "ideal presence" or "waking dream," in which the reader imagines himself transported to the depicted scene. Kames described this "ideal presence" as a trancelike state. The reader is "thrown into a kind of reverie," and "losing the consciousness of self, and of reading, his present occupation, he conceives every incident as passing in his presence, precisely as if he were an eye-witness." Most important for Kames, this transformation fosters morality. "Ideal presence" opens up the reader to feelings that

strengthen the bonds of society. Individuals are drawn out of their private interests and motivated to perform "acts of generosity and benevolence." "Ideal presence" was another term for Aaron Hill's "witchcraft of passion and meaning."²⁸

Thomas Jefferson apparently shared this view. When Robert Skipwith, who married the half sister of Jefferson's wife, wrote to Jefferson in 1771 asking for a list of recommended books, Jefferson suggested many of the classics, ancient and modern, in politics, religion, law, science, philosophy, and history. Kames's *Elements of Criticism* was on the list, but Jefferson began his catalogue with poetry, plays, and novels, including those of Laurence Sterne, Henry Fielding, Jean-François Marmontel, Oliver Goldsmith, Richardson, and Rousseau. In the letter that went with the reading list Jefferson waxed eloquent on "the entertainments of fiction." Like Kames, he insisted that fiction could imprint both the principles and practice of virtue. Citing Shakespeare, Marmontel, and Sterne by name, Jefferson explained that in reading such works, we experience the "strong desire in ourselves of doing charitable and grateful acts" and conversely are disgusted by evil deeds or immoral conduct. Fiction, he insisted, produces the desire for moral emulation even more effectively than reading history.²⁹

Ultimately at stake in this conflict of views about the novel was nothing less than the valorization of ordinary secular life as the foundation for morality. In the eyes of the critics of novel reading, sympathy with a novelistic heroine encouraged the worst in the individual (illicit desires and excessive self-regard) and demonstrated the irrevocable degeneration of the secular world. For the adherents of the new view of empathetic moralization, in contrast, such identification showed that the arousal of passion could help transform the inner nature of the individ-

ual and produce a more moral society. They believed that the inner nature of humans provided a grounding for social and political authority.³⁰

The magical spell cast by the novel thus turned out to be far-reaching in its effects. Although the adherents of the novel did not say so explicitly, they understood that writers such as Richardson and Rousseau were effectively drawing their readers into daily life as a kind of substitute religious experience. Readers learned to appreciate the emotional intensity of the ordinary and the capacity of people like themselves to create on their own a moral world. Human rights grew out of the seedbed sowed by these feelings. Human rights could only flourish when people learned to think of others as their equals, as like them in some fundamental fashion. They learned this equality, at least in part, by experiencing identification with ordinary characters who seemed dramatically present and familiar, even if ultimately fictional.³¹

The Strange Fate of Women

In the three novels singled out here, the focus of psychological identification is a young female character created by a male author. Needless to say, identification with male characters also took place. Jefferson, for instance, avidly followed the fortunes of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759–67) and Sterne's alter ego, Yorick, in *A Sentimental Journey* (1768). Women writers, too, had their enthusiasts among both female and male readers. The French penal reformer and abolitionist Jacques-Pierre Brissot quoted Rousseau's *Julie* constantly, but his favorite English novel was Fanny Burney's *Cecilia* (1782). As the example of Burney con-

firms, however, female characters enjoyed pride of place; all three of her novels bore the names of their featured heroines.³²

Female heroines were so compelling because their quest for autonomy could never fully succeed. Women had few legal rights separate from their fathers or husbands. Readers found the heroine's search for independence especially poignant because they immediately understood the constraints such a woman inevitably faced. In a happy ending, Pamela marries Mr. B and accepts the implied limits on her freedom. In contrast, Clarissa dies, rather than marry Lovelace after he rapes her. While Julie seems to accept being forced by her father to renounce the man she loves, she too dies in the final scene.

Some modern critics have seen masochism or martyrdom in these stories, but contemporaries could see other qualities. Male and female readers alike identified with these characters because the women displayed so much will, so much personality. Readers did not just want to save the heroines; they wanted to be like them, even like Clarissa and Julie, despite their tragic deaths. Almost all of the action in the three novels turns on expressions of female will, usually a will that has to chafe against parental or societal restrictions. Pamela must resist Mr. B in order to maintain her sense of virtue and her sense of self, and her resistance eventually wins him over. Clarissa stands firm against her family and then Lovelace for much the same reasons, and by the end Lovelace wants desperately to marry Clarissa, an offer she refuses. Julie must give up Saint-Preux and learn to love her life with Wolmar; the struggle is entirely hers. In each novel, everything comes back to the heroine's desire for independence. The actions of the male characters only serve to highlight this female will. Readers empathizing with the heroines learned that all people—even women—aspired to greater

autonomy, and they imaginatively experienced the psychological effort that struggle entailed.

Eighteenth-century novels reflected a deeper cultural preoccupation with autonomy. Enlightenment philosophers firmly believed that they had effected a breakthrough in this area in the eighteenth century. When they talked of freedom, they meant individual autonomy, whether it was the freedom to express opinions or practice one's chosen religion or the independence taught to boys if one followed Rousseau's precepts in his educational guide, *Emile* (1762). The Enlightenment narrative of the conquest of autonomy reached its culmination in Immanuel Kant's 1784 essay, "What is Enlightenment?" He famously defined it as "mankind's exit from its self-incurred immaturity." Immaturity, he went on, "is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without the guidance of another." Enlightenment, for Kant, meant intellectual autonomy, the ability to think for oneself.³³

The Enlightenment's emphasis on individual autonomy grew out of the seventeenth-century revolution in political thinking started by Hugo Grotius and John Locke. They had argued that the autonomous male entering into a social compact with other such individuals was the only possible foundation of legitimate political authority. If authority justified by divine right, Scripture, and history was to be replaced by a contract between autonomous men, then boys had to be taught to think for themselves. Educational theory, shaped most influentially by Locke and Rousseau, therefore shifted from an emphasis on obedience enforced through punishment to the careful cultivation of reason as the chief instrument of independence. Locke explained the significance of the new practices in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693): "We must look upon

our Children, when grown up, to be like ourselves. . . . We would be thought Rational Creatures, and have our Freedom; we love not to be uneasie under constant rebukes and Browbeatings." As Locke recognized, political and intellectual autonomy depended on educating children (in his case, both boys and girls) in new dispositions; autonomy required a new relationship to the world, not just new ideas.³⁴

Thinking and deciding for oneself therefore required psychological and political changes as much as philosophical ones. In *Emile*, Rousseau called on mothers to build psychological walls between their children and all external social and political pressures. "Set up early on," he urged, "an enclosure around your child's soul." The English preacher and political pamphleteer Richard Price insisted in 1776, when writing in support of the American colonists, that one of the four general aspects of liberty was physical liberty, "that principle of *Spontaneity*, or *Self-determination*, which constitutes us *Agents*." For him, liberty was synonymous with self-direction or self-government, the political metaphor in this case suggesting a psychological one, but the two were closely related.³⁵

Enlightenment-inspired reformers wanted to go beyond shielding the body or enclosing the soul as Rousseau urged. They demanded a widening of the compass of individual decision making. French revolutionary laws on the family demonstrate the depth of concern felt about traditional limitations on independence. In March 1790, the new National Assembly abolished primogeniture, which gave special inheritance rights to the first-born male child, and the infamous *lettres de cachet*, which allowed families to incarcerate children without hearings. In August of the same year, the deputies established family councils to hear disputes between parents and children up to age

twenty rather than permitting fathers exclusive control over their children. In April 1791, the Assembly decreed that all children, both male and female, must inherit equally. Then, in August and September 1792, the deputies lowered the age of majority from twenty-five to twenty-one, declared that adults could no longer be subject to paternal authority, and instituted divorce for the first time in French history, making it available on the same legal grounds for both men and women. In short, the revolutionaries did everything they could to push out the boundaries of personal autonomy.³⁶

In Great Britain and its North American colonies, the desire for greater autonomy can be traced more easily in autobiographies and novels than in the law, at least before the American Revolution. In fact, in 1753, the Marriage Act (26 Geo II, c. 33) made marriages in England of those under twenty-one illegal unless the father or guardian consented. Despite this reaffirmation of paternal authority, the old-style patriarchal domination of husbands over wives and fathers over children declined in the eighteenth century. From Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) to Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (written between 1771 and 1788), English and American writers celebrated independence as a cardinal virtue. Defoe's novel of the shipwrecked sailor provided a primer on how a man could learn to fend for himself. It is hardly surprising, then, that Rousseau made Defoe's novel required reading for young Emile or that *Robinson Crusoe* was first printed in the American colonies in 1774, right in the midst of the burgeoning independence crisis. *Robinson Crusoe* was one of the American colonial best sellers of 1775, rivaled only by *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to His Son* and John Gregory's *A Father's Legacy to His Daughters*, popularizations of Locke's views on education for boys and girls.³⁷

Trends in the lives of real people moved in the same direction, if more haltingly. Young people increasingly expected to make their own choices in marriage, though families still exerted great pressure on them, as could be seen in any number of novels whose plots revolve around this point (e.g., *Clarissa*). Child-rearing practices also reveal subtle changes in attitude. The English abandoned the swaddling of infants before the French (Rousseau can take considerable credit for dissuading the French) but kept beating boys in school longer. By the 1750s, English aristocratic families had stopped using leading strings to guide their children's walking, weaned children sooner, and because the children were no longer swaddled, also toilet-trained them earlier, all signs of increasing emphasis on independence.³⁸

The record was sometimes more muddled, however. Divorce in England, unlike other Protestant countries, was virtually impossible in the eighteenth century; between 1700 and 1857, when the Matrimonial Causes Act set up a special court for hearing divorce cases, only 325 divorces were granted by private act of Parliament for England, Wales, and Ireland. Though the number of divorces did grow, from 14 in the first half of the eighteenth century to 117 in the second half, divorce was limited to all intents and purposes to a few aristocratic men, since the grounds required made divorce almost impossible to obtain for women. The numbers translate to only 2.34 divorces granted per year in the second half of the eighteenth century. After the French revolutionaries instituted divorce, in contrast, some 20,000 divorces were granted in France between 1792 and 1803, or 1,800 a year. The British North American colonies generally followed English practice in forbidding divorce while allowing some form of legal separation; but after independence, divorce petitions began to be accepted by the new courts in most states.

Establishing a trend then repeated in Revolutionary France, women filed most of the petitions for divorce in the first years of independence of the new United States.³⁹

In notes written in 1771 and 1772 about a legal case for divorce, Thomas Jefferson clearly linked divorce to natural rights. Divorce would restore "to women their natural right of equality." It was, he insisted, in the nature of contracts by mutual consent that they must be dissolvable if one party broke the bargain—the same argument the French revolutionaries would use in 1792. Moreover, the possibility of legal divorce would ensure "liberty of affection," also a natural right. "The pursuit of happiness," made famous by the Declaration of Independence, would have included the right to divorce since the "end of marriage is Propagation & Happiness." The right to pursue happiness therefore required divorce. It is hardly an accident that Jefferson would make similar arguments for an American divorce from Great Britain four years later.⁴⁰

As eighteenth-century people pushed for the expansion of self-determination, they ran up against a dilemma: what would provide the source of community in this new order that highlighted the rights of the individual? It was one thing to explain how morality could be derived from human reason rather than Divine Scripture or how autonomy should be preferred to blind obedience. But it was quite another to reconcile this self-directed individual with the greater good. The Scottish philosophers of midcentury put the question of secular community at the center of their work, and they offered a philosophical answer that resonated with the practice of empathy taught by the novel. The philosophers, like eighteenth-century people more generally, called their answer "sympathy." I have used the term "empathy" because though it entered English only in the twentieth

century, it better captures the active will to identify with others. Sympathy now often signifies pity, which can imply condescension, a feeling incompatible with a true feeling of equality.⁴¹

"Sympathy" had a very broad meaning in the eighteenth century. For Francis Hutcheson, sympathy was a kind of sense, a moral faculty. More noble than sight or hearing, senses shared with animals, but less noble than conscience, sympathy or fellow feeling made social life possible. By the power of human nature, prior to any reasoning, sympathy acted like a kind of social gravitational force to bring people outside of themselves. Sympathy ensured that happiness could not be defined by self-satisfaction alone. "By a sort of contagion or infection," Hutcheson concluded, "all our pleasures, even those of the lowest kind, are strangely increased by their being shared with others."⁴²

Adam Smith, author of the *Wealth of Nations* (1776) and a student of Hutcheson, devoted one of his earlier works to the question of sympathy. In the opening chapter of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), he uses the example of torture to get at its operation. What makes us sympathize with the suffering of someone on the rack? Even if the sufferer is a brother, we can never directly experience what he feels. We can only identify with his suffering by virtue of our imagination, which lets us place ourselves in his situation and endure the same torments; "we enter as it were into his body and become in some measure him." This process of imaginative identification—sympathy—permits the observer to feel what the torture victim feels. The observer is able to become a truly moral being, however, only when he takes the next step and understands that he too is the subject of such imaginative identification. When he can see himself as the object of others' feelings, he is able to develop within himself an "impartial spectator," which serves as his moral

compass. Autonomy and sympathy therefore go together for Smith. Only an autonomous person can develop an "impartial spectator" within himself; yet he can only do so, Smith explains, if he first identifies with others.⁴³

Sympathy or sensibility—the latter term was much more common in French—had a broad cultural resonance on both sides of the Atlantic in the last half of the eighteenth century. Thomas Jefferson read Hutcheson and Smith, though he specifically cited the novelist Laurence Sterne as offering "the best course of morality." Given the ubiquity of reference to sympathy and sensibility in the Atlantic world, it hardly seems accidental that the first novel written by an American, published in 1789, carried as its title *The Power of Sympathy*. Sympathy and sensibility so permeated literature, painting, and even medicine that some physicians began to worry about an excess of them, which they feared might lead to melancholia, hypochondria, or "the vapors." Physicians thought that ladies of leisure (women readers) were especially susceptible.⁴⁴

Sympathy and sensibility worked in favor of many disenfranchised groups, but not women. Capitalizing on the success of the novel in calling forth new forms of psychological identification, early abolitionists encouraged freed slaves to write their own novelistic autobiographies, sometimes partially fictionalized, to gain adherents to the budding movement. The evils of slavery came to life when described firsthand by men such as Olaudah Equiano, whose book *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, Or Gustavus Vassa, The African. Written by Himself*, was first published in London in 1789. Yet most of the abolitionists failed to make a connection to women's rights. After 1789, many French revolutionaries would take public and vociferous stands in favor of rights for Protestants, Jews,

free blacks, and even slaves, and at the same time actively oppose granting rights to women. In the new United States, though slavery came up immediately for heated debate, women's rights elicited even less public commentary than in France. Women did not get equal political rights anywhere before the twentieth century.⁴⁵

Eighteenth-century people, like almost everyone in human history before them, viewed women as dependents defined by their family status and thus by definition not fully capable of political autonomy. They could stand for self-determination as a private, moral virtue without establishing a link to political rights. They had rights, but not political ones. This view became explicit when the French revolutionaries drew up a new constitution in 1789. Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, a leading interpreter of constitutional theory, explained the emerging distinction between natural and civil rights on the one hand and political rights on the other. All the inhabitants of a country, including women, enjoyed the rights of a passive citizen: the right to the protection of their person, property, and liberty. But all are not active citizens, he maintained, with the right to directly participate in public affairs. "Women, at least in the present state, children, foreigners, those who contribute nothing to maintaining the public establishment" were defined as the passive citizens. Sieyès's qualifier "at least in the present state" left a slight opening for future changes in the rights of women. Others would try to exploit that opening, but without success in the short term.⁴⁶

The few who did advocate women's rights in the eighteenth century expressed ambivalence about novels. Traditional opponents of novels believed that women were especially susceptible to the enchantment of reading about love, and even defenders of

novels, such as Jefferson, worried about their effects on young girls. In 1818, a much older Jefferson than the one who had enthused about his favorite novelists in 1771 warned about "the inordinate passion" for novels among girls. "The result is a bloated imagination" and "sickly judgment." It is not surprising then that ardent defenders of women's rights took these suspicions to heart. Like Jefferson, Mary Wollstonecraft, the mother of modern feminism, explicitly contrasted novel reading—"the only kind of reading calculated to interest an innocent frivolous mind"—to reading history and to active rational understanding more generally. Yet Wollstonecraft herself wrote two novels centered on female heroines, reviewed many novels in print, and constantly referred to them in her correspondence. Despite her objections to Rousseau's prescriptions for female education in *Emile*, she avidly read *Julie*, and she used remembered phrases from *Clarissa* and Sterne's novels to convey her own emotions in her letters.⁴⁷

Learning to empathize opened the path to human rights, but it did not ensure that everyone would be able to take that path right away. No one understood this better or agonized over it more than the author of the Declaration of Independence. In a letter of 1802 to the English clergyman, scientist, and reformer Joseph Priestley, Jefferson held up the American example for the whole world: "It is impossible not to be sensible that we are acting for all mankind; that circumstances denied to others but indulged to us have imposed on us the duty of proving what is the degree of freedom and self-government in which a society may venture to leave its individual members." Jefferson pushed for the highest imaginable "degree of freedom," which for him meant opening political participation to as many white men as possible and perhaps eventually even to Native American men,

if they could be turned into farmers. Although he recognized the humanity of African-Americans and even the rights of slaves as human beings, he did not envision a polity in which they or women of any color took an active part. But that was the highest imaginable degree of freedom for the vast majority of Americans and Europeans, even twenty-four years later on the day of Jefferson's death.⁴⁸

15. I traced "torture" in ARTFL. Marivaux's phrase comes from *Le Spectateur français* (1724) in Frédéric Deloffre and Michel Gilet, eds., *Journaux et œuvres diverses* (Paris: Garnier, 1969), p. 114. Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, trans. and ed. Anne M. Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 92-93.
16. My view is clearly a much rosier one than that elaborated by Michel Foucault, who emphasizes psychological surfaces rather than depth and connects new views of the body to the rise of discipline rather than freedom. See, e.g., Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979).
17. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), esp. pp. 25-36.
18. Leslie Brothers, *Friday's Footprint: How Society Shapes the Human Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). Kai Voigeley, Martin Kurthen, Peter Falkai, and Wolfgang Maier, "Essential Functions of the Human Self Model Are Implemented in the Prefrontal Cortex," *Consciousness and Cognition*, 8 (1999): 343-63.

Chapter 1

1. François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire to Marie de Vichy de Chamrond, marquise du Deffand, March 6, 1761, in *Correspondance complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, ed. R. A. Leigh, 52 vols. (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1965-98), vol. 8 (1969), p. 222. Jean Le Rond d'Alembert to Rousseau, Paris, February 10, 1761, in *Correspondance complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, vol. 8, p. 76. For the reader responses cited in this and the following paragraph, see Daniel Mornet, *J.-J. Rousseau: La Nouvelle Héloïse*, 4 vols. (Paris: Hachette, 1925), vol. 1, pp. 246-49.
2. On the English translations, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, trans. Judith H. McDowell (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), p. 2. On the French editions, see Jo-Ann E. McEachern, *Bibliography of the Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau to 1800*, vol. 1: *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, Taylor Institution, 1993), pp. 769-75.
3. Alexis de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime*, ed. J. P. Mayer (1856; Paris: Calimard, 1964), p. 286. Olivier Zunz was kind enough to give me this reference.
4. Jean Decety and Philip L. Jackson, "The Functional Architecture of Human Empathy," *Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews*, 3 (2004): 71-100; see esp. p. 91.
5. On the general evolution of the French novel, see Jacques Rustin, *Le Vice à la mode: Etude sur le roman français du XVIIIe siècle de Manon*

- Lescaut à l'apparition de La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1731-1761) (Paris: Ophrys, 1979), p. 20. I compiled figures on the publication of new French novels from Angus Martin, Vivienne G. Mylne, and Richard Frautschi, *Bibliographie du genre romanesque français, 1751-1800* (London: Mansell, 1977). On the English novel, see James Raven, *British Fiction 1750-1770* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1987), pp. 8-9, and James Raven, "Historical Introduction: The Novel Comes of Age," in Peter Garside, James Raven, and Rainer Schöwerling, eds., *The English Novel, 1770-1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 15-121, esp. pp. 26-32. Raven shows that the percentage of epistolary novels dropped from 44 percent of all novels in the 1770s to 18 percent in the 1790s.
6. This is not the place for an exhaustive list of works. Most influential for me has been Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
 7. [abbé Marquet] *Lettre sur Pamela* (London, 1742), pp. 3, 4.
 8. I have kept the original punctuation. *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded. In a Series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents: In four volumes. The sixth edition; corrected. By the late Mr. Sam. Richardson* (London: William Otridge, 1772), vol. 1, pp. 22-23.
 9. Aaron Hill to Samuel Richardson, December 17, 1740. Hill begs Richardson to reveal the author's name, no doubt suspecting it is Richardson himself—Anna Laetitia Barbauld, ed., *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, Author of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison. Selected from the Original Manuscripts . . .*, 6 vols. (London: Richard Phillips, 1804), vol. I, pp. 54-55.
 10. T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 124-41.
 11. Bradshaigh letter dated January 11, 1749, quoted in Eaves and Kimpel, *Samuel Richardson*, p. 224. Edwards letter of January 26, 1749, in Barbauld, ed., *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*, vol. III, p. 1.
 12. On French personal libraries, see François Jost, "Le Roman épistolaire et la technique narrative au XVIIIe siècle," in *Comparative Literature Studies*, 3 (1966): 397-427, esp. pp. 401-02. This is based on a study by Daniel Mornet from 1910. On newsletter reactions (newsletters written by intellectuals in France for foreign rulers who wanted to follow the latest developments in French culture), see *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister, etc., revue sur les textes originaux, comprenant outre ce qui a été publié à diverses époques les fragments supprimés en 1813 par la censure, les parties inédites conservées à la Bibliothèque ducale de Gotha et à l' Arsenal à Paris*, 16 vols. (Paris: Garnier,

- nia Press, 1996), pp. 58-64, quote p. 58. The chronology of autonomy is not easy to pin down. Most historians agree that the scope of individual decision making generally increased between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries in the Western world, even if they disagree about how and why it did so. Countless books and articles have been written about the history of individualism as a philosophical and social doctrine and its associations with Christianity, Protestant conscience, capitalism, modernity, and Western values more generally—See Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes, eds., *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). A brief review of the literature can be found in Michael Mascuch, *Origins of the Individualist Self: Autobiography and Self-Identity in England, 1591-1791* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 13-24. One of the few to relate these developments to human rights is Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).
34. Quoted in Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution Against Patriarchal Authority, 1750-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 15.
 35. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, ou l'Éducation*, 4 vols. (The Hague: Jean Néaume, 1762), vol. I, pp. 2-4. Richard Price, *Observations on The Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America to which is added, An Appendix and Postscript, containing, A State of the National Debt, An Estimate of the Money drawn from the Public by the Taxes, and An Account of the National Income and Expenditure since the last War*, 9th edn. (London: Edward & Charles Dilly and Thomas Cadell, 1776), pp. 5-6.
 36. Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 40-41.
 37. Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims*, pp. 39, 67.
 38. Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977). On swaddling, weaning, and toilet training, see Randolph Trumbach, *The Rise of the Egalitarian Family: Aristocratic Kinship and Domestic Relations in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 197-229.
 39. Sybil Wolfram, "Divorce in England 1700-1857," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 5 (Summer 1985):155-86. Roderick Phillips, *Putting Asunder: A History of Divorce in Western Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 257. Nancy F. Cott, "Divorce and the Changing Status of Women in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 33, no. 4 (October 1976): 586-614.
 40. Frank L. Dewey, "Thomas Jefferson's Notes on Divorce," *William and*

- Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 39, no. 1, *The Family in Early American History and Culture* (January 1982): 212-23, quotes pp. 219, 217, 216.
41. "Empathy" entered English only in the early twentieth century as a term in aesthetics and psychology. A translation of the German word *Einführung*, it was defined as "the power of projecting one's personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation"—<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00074155?>
 42. Francis Hutcheson, *A Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy, in Three Books; Containing the Elements of Ethicks and the Law of Nature*, 1747; 2nd edn. (Glasgow: Robert & Andrew Foulis, 1753), pp. 12-16.
 43. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 3rd edn. (London, 1767), p. 2.
 44. Burstein, *The Inner Jefferson*, p. 54; *The Power of Sympathy* was written by William Hill Brown. Anne C. Vila, "Beyond Sympathy: Vapors, Melancholia, and the Pathologies of Sensibility in Tissot and Rousseau," *Yale French Studies*, No. 92, *Exploring the Conversible World: Text and Sociability from the Classical Age to the Enlightenment* (1997): 88-101.
 45. There has been much debate about Equiano's background (whether he was born in Africa, as he claimed, or in the United States), but this is not relevant to my point here. For the most recent discussion, see Vincent Carretta, *Equiano, the African: Biography of a Self-Made Man* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005).
 46. Abbé Sieyès, *Préliminaire de la constitution française* (Paris: Baudoin, 1789).
 47. H. A. Washington, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 9 vols. (New York: John C. Riker, 1853-57), vol. 7 (1857), pp. 101-03. On Wollstonecraft, see Phillips, *Society and Sentiment*, p. 114, and especially Janet Todd, ed., *The Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (London: Allen Lane, 2003), pp. 34, 114, 121, 228, 253, 313, 342, 359, 364, 402, 404.
 48. *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh, 20 vols. (Washington, DC: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association of the United States, 1903-04), vol. 10, p. 324.

Chapter 2

1. The best general account is still David D. Bien, *The Calas Affair: Persecution, Toleration, and Heresy in Eighteenth-Century Toulouse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960). The tortures of Calas are described in Charles Berriat-Saint-Prix, *Des Tribunaux et de la procédure du grand criminel au XVIIIe siècle jusqu'en 1789 avec des recherches sur la question ou torture* (Paris: Auguste Aubry, 1859), pp. 93-96. I base my description of breaking on the wheel on the report of an eyewitness to breaking on the wheel in Paris—James St. John, Esq., *Letters from France*