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DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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*****

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ABSTRACT

This project considers eighteenth-century encyclopedias and novels as intimately-related genres. Focusing on the formal structure, content, and reception of representative texts, this work revises current theories of novels and encyclopedias as genres while reconstructing eighteenth-century reading practices. Many eighteenth-century encyclopedias were not designed to be consulted for isolated facts, but instead to be read from cover to cover as coherent narratives. Conversely, many eighteenth-century novels were not only designed to be read from beginning to end, but also as comprehensive works of reference organized systematically.

The initial chapter argues that while the ostensible project of such encyclopedias as Dunton's *The Ladies Dictionary* (1694), Bayle's *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (1710), the *Encyclopédie* (1751-65), and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768-71) was the open dissemination of knowledge, their compilers paradoxically assert that the encyclopedias are organized according to a secret narrative or "circle of learning" (the translation of the Greek "encyclopedia"), and are designed to be read as coherent narratives, each entry linked to every other entry in the text.

Chapters two and three argue that while women did not compile encyclopedias in great numbers, Jane Barker's *A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies* (1723) and Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752) suggest that women nonetheless participated forcefully in the
debate surrounding the encyclopedic urge. In their work, these women seek to bridge the apparent gap between encyclopedias and novels, and to challenge the ideologies that yoke together gender and genre.

Chapters four and five argue that while often separated into rival traditions of the novel, both Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding exhibit in their careers a preoccupation with the encyclopedic urge. While current critics value Richardson's novels for their psychological complexity, I suggest that his contemporaries saw *Clarissa* (1747-8) as a comprehensive moral system, not always meant to be read from beginning to end, but rather, using elaborate indexes created by Richardson, to be approached as a reference work. In the final chapter, I argue that in *Tom Jones* (1749), Fielding constructs a paradigmatically encyclopedic text in an attempt to debilitate the encyclopedic urge.
This work, like its author, is dedicated to Lance and Eli.
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INTRODUCTION

The elevation of the novel as a genre in mid-eighteenth century Britain has received considerable critical attention, and the encyclopedias of the same period have been studied extensively as both products and producers of the Enlightenment. Until now, however, the intimate connections between the two genres have gone unnoticed. In this project, I consider these two literary genres together, and argue that encyclopedias and novels spurred one another on as adversaries in a lively eighteenth-century debate about the best way to organize and contain the ever-increasing store of "all human knowledge." Focusing on the formal structure, content, and reception of encyclopedias and novels both firmly-entrenched in the canon and those whose position there is more tenuous, my work substantially revises and complicates some of the most important issues in literary and historical studies today. Specifically, the overarching goals of this project are threefold: to revise current theories of novels and encyclopedias as genres; to reconstruct eighteenth-century reading practices to which our own twentieth-century sensibilities have left us insufficiently attentive; and to illuminate the constructions of gender within the encyclopedic urge.

Aligning encyclopedias and novels may seem quite surprising to a twentieth-century consumer of books, given the enormous rift that separates the two genres in our own time, but there are many compelling reasons to consider them together. For example, novels and encyclopedias exploded onto the literary scene contemporaneously. The British novel is generally agreed to have become recognizable as a genre in the mid-eighteenth century, while
in the same period, the production of encyclopedias was undertaken with unprecedented
vigor. In the first half of the century, over thirty encyclopedias were published in Europe, a
number which exceeds all those produced in the two hundred previous years. In the second
half of the century—after the first volumes of Diderot and d'Alembert's French \textit{Encyclopédie}
were published (1751)—the number of encyclopedias published swelled to thousands. Many
of the authors we consider founders of the novel also display decidedly encyclopedic bents:
at the time of his death, Oliver Goldsmith was planning a \textit{Universal Dictionary of Arts and
Sciences} to rival the French \textit{Encyclopédie}; Daniel Defoe's “Essay Upon Projects,” Henry
Fielding's “Plan of the Universal Register Office” and Richardson's suggestions for
overhauling the Oxford University Press offer painstakingly detailed blueprints for
organizing vast stores of knowledge into efficient and comprehensive systems. Many novels,
including \textit{Tristram Shandy}, are explicitly preoccupied with the encyclopedic urge; and others,
including \textit{Clarissa}, rival encyclopedias in their commitment to massive accumulation and
comprehensiveness. Finally, my own reading of these texts suggests that encyclopedias and
novels invite very similar reading practices. Many eighteenth-century encyclopedias are
meant to be read from beginning to end as a coherent narrative, and even those that are not
prompt their readers to extract a secret logic binding together the separate entries.
Conversely, eighteenth-century novels are not always intended to be read from cover to
cover: the apparatus accompanying many of these novels, including the prefaces, elaborate
tables of contents, indexes, and footnotes, is designed to enable a certain kind of utilitarian
reading, a dipping and skimming for specific information. In short, many novels are
designed to be used as books of reference.
I begin this study with a chapter examining evidence gathered from archives in the U.S. and in Edinburgh, Scotland. I focus on four representative encyclopedias chosen for their popularity and influence as well as for their intended audience: *The Ladies Dictionary* (1694), Bayle's *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (1710), the *Encyclopédie* (1751-65), and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768-71). I argue that while the ostensible project of such encyclopedias was the open dissemination of knowledge, their various compilers paradoxically assert that the encyclopedias are organized according to secret principles, a secret narrative or “circle of learning” (the literal translation of the Greek “encyclopedia”). I reconstruct the reading practices elicited by these texts—with an emphasis on the coherent narratives these encyclopedias construct—and place them within the context of the eighteenth-century “reading revolution” identified by Rolf Engelsing, as well as recent revisions of his paradigm by Roger Chartier and Robert DeMaria.

The four following chapters concentrate on novels; I explore how their formal structure, content, and reception positions them within the encyclopedic urge. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 center on female novelists whose works have entered the canon relatively recently. In the second chapter, I examine Jane Barker’s *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies* (1723). The formal task Barker sets herself in this work, written “After a Manner entirely New,” is to juxtapose prose and poetry, as well as seemingly unrelated patches of text—ranging from “Anatomy in Verse,” “A Virgin Life,” and “The Czar's Receipt to make Punch,” to “An Ode on the Nativity of our Saviour”—and to unite them all into a coherent whole, much as “the Clashing of Atoms,” she explains, “at last united to compose this glorious Fabrick of the Universe.” Further, I suggest that by yoking together images of women’s needlework and the language of science, Barker not only prompts her readers to consider the similarities between
constructing a patchwork screen with a needle and constructing a patchwork encyclopedia with a pen, but also prompts those readers (presumed in the "Preface" to be women) to realize how well-trained they are by their needlework to understand and benefit from (if not compile) encyclopedias.

In Chapter 3, I argue that Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752) foregrounds a particular aspect of the quixote myth—the knowledge aspect—as it participates in the vigorous eighteenth-century debate about encyclopedic form, one that Chartier sees as a defining preoccupation of the period. The question is whether voluminous comprehensiveness or distilled essence can most nearly approximate the unachievable goal of cataloguing all human knowledge; the novel's heroine and hero espouse opposing views on the question, and reach only an uneasy compromise at the novel's end. As its title telegraphs, the novel also seeks to feminize the quixote, and by extension, the encyclopedic project. Arabella is a learned woman—in her "lucid" moments, so methodical and logical that her future father-in-law declares that if she were a man, she would make a fine figure in Parliament. But we must remember that Arabella's impressive ability to see the connectedness of all things and to draw and support conclusions (a skill ostensibly taught by encyclopedias) has come from reading her mother's romances. Like Barker's *Patch-Work Screen*, *The Female Quixote* ultimately seeks to bridge the apparent gap between romances, encyclopedias, and novels, and to challenge the ideologies that yoke together gender and genre.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 treat novelists whose position within the canon of eighteenth-century literature has been for a long time firmly established. Although Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding are often separated into rival traditions of the novel, I argue
that the careers of both men exhibit a preoccupation with the encyclopedic urge. In the fourth chapter, I argue that all of Richardson’s work—as a fiction writer, as a non-fiction writer, as an editor and as a printer—is motivated by the encyclopedic urge, and that while critics following in the path of Ian Watt value Richardson’s novels for their psychological complexity, texts such as Sarah Fielding’s *Observations Upon Clarissa* (1749) make it abundantly clear that Richardson’s contemporaries understood them, and especially *Clarissa* (1747-48), as comprehensive moral systems. In other words, I argue that *Clarissa* was designed to be appreciated for the detached rigor of its encyclopedic mode of organization rather than for its portrait of the unpredictable idiosyncrasies of an individual human mind. Formal elements added to successive editions of the novel, including the footnotes, the increasingly elaborate table of contents, and the alphabetic *Collection of Moral and Instructive Sentiments*, signal that the novel was designed to be approached and used as a reference work. The content of the novel also emphasizes the ties to encyclopedias: as the typographical nucleus around which the rest of the novel’s letters hover, for example, Clarissa’s “mad papers” not only reveal something about Clarissa’s disordered mind; they also (and more importantly) serve to emphasize the original disordered state of the papers that the novel’s editor has organized and shaped into a coherent whole. The papers serve to remind us that in theory, the work of assembling this epistolary novel lies in creating order out of chaos, in locating and arranging and ordering and footnoting and cross-referencing rather than in composing. Richardson casts this encyclopedic project in a decidedly feminine light: it is, after all, Clarissa who (in her will) organizes the encyclopedia that is *Clarissa*; it is Clarissa (in her constant, careful comparison of passages, her detailed response to Lovelace’s pretended
proposal of marriage, and in her keeping of a commonplace book) who models appropriate
reading practices for the reader.

A chapter on Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones* (1749) concludes my study. Like
Richardson’s, Fielding’s entire career—as an author, but also as a magistrate and social
reformer—is centrally preoccupied with the encyclopedic urge. But I argue that in *Tom Jones*,
Fielding constructs a perfect encyclopedic text in an attempt to debilitate and discredit that
urge. In its reliance on secrets (Bridgit’s, Blifil’s, Dowling’s, the narrator’s), the much-
celebrated clockwork coherence of the plot, the use of footnotes, the classical allusions, and
patchwork of styles brought into harmony with one another, *Tom Jones* appears to advance
the encyclopedic project. But Fielding’s narrator both explicitly and implicitly warns his
readers to read with “Heart,” as all other methods and systems (embodied dramatically by
Thwackum and Square) prove deceiving, if not ridiculous. One of Fielding’s key strategies
for undermining the encyclopedic urge within the novel is to dissociate it from admirable
women. Women who attempt encyclopedic knowledge—including Jenny Jones and Mrs.
Western—are punished for that learning; Sophia, on the other hand, upheld as a paragon,
specifically rejects participation in any male world of systematic learning, and instead
practices the reading from the heart insisted upon by the narrator. Fielding’s skepticism
about the ability of the encyclopedic arrangement to contain and unite all human knowledge,
as well as to teach proper reading practices to new middle-class readers, is unusual for the
mid-eighteenth century, alive as it was with optimism and faith in the project. However, this
skepticism becomes more prevalent as the century nears its end, and by the time of
Casaubon’s “Key to all Mythologies” in George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* (1871-2), encyclopedism
would be seen as entirely defunct, a pursuit doomed to failure.
In all of these chapters, I follow methods most closely associated with the history of the book, construed broadly as the creation, dissemination, and reception of script and print. I am interested not only in the literary aspect of the texts I study, but also in their social and cultural histories; not only in the texts themselves, but in the authors who produced them and the readers who consumed them. By studying encyclopedias and novels in this deep context, I seek to advance our understanding of these genres both as products of a particular literary-historical moment and as guideposts for more general theoretical study.
CHAPTER 1

THE SECRET HISTORY OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENCYCLOPEDIAS

"[N]obody sane would dream of reading through an encyclopædia from beginning to end. This stuff is for reference." Most twentieth-century readers and users of encyclopedias would no doubt agree with H.G. Wells in this passage, taken from his 1931 *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind.*¹ The twentieth-century encyclopedia is generally understood as a massive collection of facts organized according to the accidents of the alphabet.² We consult discrete units of these books when we need to check a fact, and we expect these discrete units to be organized "logically"—by which we usually mean alphabetically—so that we can locate these facts quickly. And if the facts are not to be found under the heading we originally consult, we expect at least to be directed to the page and heading where we can find the information we seek. These generic expectations have become so firmly entrenched in our thought—"the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography" (Foucault xv)—that it is very difficult to conceive of any other sort of encyclopedic arrangement. Thus when Jorge Luis Borges writes of "a certain Chinese

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¹ Despite this apparently dismissive attitude, Wells was preoccupied with encyclopedias towards the end of his career, and in his 1938 *World Brain,* discusses his ideas for a "Permanent World Encyclopædia" designed to "hold the world together mentally" (21).
encyclopædia” which classifies animals as “(a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies” (103), Michel Foucault first laughs a “laughter that shattered,” and then sits down to write The Order of Things to explain why such a taxonomy is so “impossible to think” (xv). But as Nicholas Howe points out in his introduction to The Old English Catalogue Poems, Foucault finds the potential system of thought represented by this fabulous encyclopedia so impossible only because he has not read as deeply into the history of early encyclopedias as has Borges (10-11).

In fact the history of encyclopedias is a very long one, and in terms of form, content and use, have varied greatly from the genre we assume today. In his indispensable bibliographical study, Robert Collison suggests that encyclopedias have their earliest roots in the academies of Plato and Aristotle. Around 370 B.C.E., Speusippos, Plato’s nephew and direct successor as Scholarch in his Academy, compiled the first encyclopedic work to help in his teaching; only a few fragments of this work are extant (Collison 22). The first major encyclopedic work is generally agreed to be Pliny’s Historia naturalis, comprised of 2,500 chapters in 37 books, all arranged in orderly divisions and sub-divisions and drawn from the works of about 500 authors in many countries (Collison 25). Encyclopedias compiled before the Renaissance were generally done so by religious groups or individuals, and were

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2 The newly-reorganized 15th edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica (1993), with its Propædia (an Outline of Knowledge), Macropædia (a series of long articles organized topically) and Micropædia (comprised of shorter articles organized alphabetically), is an interesting exception.
organized by systematic, rather than alphabetic, methods. These methods do not always appear entirely "systematic" to our own (or to Foucault's) sensibilities. Indeed, it would be very difficult to argue that the organizational scheme of Borges's fabulous Chinese encyclopedia is any more incomprehensible or unthinkable than the organizational schemes of some of the encyclopedias actually produced in the genre's early history. For example, Domenico Bandini's *Fons memorabilium universi* (c. 1418) is divided into five parts—Theology, Universe and Astronomy, Elements, Earth and Geography, and Man and his Conduct—in honor of Christ's five wounds (Collison 70-71). Martianus Capella's *Disciplinae* (also known as *Satiricon* or *Liber de nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, c. 410-429) is divided into nine books. The first two books comprise an elaborate allegory of the marriage of Mercury and Philology; the following seven books are devoted to the attending bridesmaids (the seven liberal arts): Grammar, Dialectic, Rhetorica, Geography and Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy, and Music and Poetry (Collison 27).

In 1620, Francis Bacon published his "Plan for The Great Instauration," a work which lays down modern principles of encyclopedia-making, and eschews the religious controversies that occupied so many of the encyclopedists and encyclopedias until this time.

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3 The first introduction of alphabetical arrangement appears in 1080 in the *Suidae or Suidae lexicon* (Collison 46), but this was a very notable exception to the general rule of systematic organization. Though I gloss over the encyclopedias produced in this period, their history is fascinating. For a good general introduction, see Collison and Howe.

4 Although never published, several manuscript copies survive. Bandini died in 1418, and this work occupied him until his death.

5 The word "Instauration" means a "restoration, renovation, or renewal," especially after a period of decay or dilapidation (OED), and this title reflects Bacon's feeling that the science of his day was too reliant on tradition and authority, and not reliant enough on scientific observation: "that entire human reasoning that we apply in the investigation of Nature is poorly put together and constructed, . . . like some magnificent great pile without any foundation. . . . There was thus but one course left, namely to try the whole matter afresh with better means of support, and to bring about a complete Instauration of the arts and sciences and all the learning of mankind, raised upon proper foundations" (qtd. in Urbach and Gibson 3-4).
Although the monumental volume was never completed, Bacon’s work in clarifying the practices of scientific method and the supremacy of reason over received tradition and knowledge helped to spur on an unprecedented production of encyclopedic works. In the period between 1674 and 1750 (a period leading up to the publication of the Encyclopédie, which in its “Preliminary Discourse” as well as in numerous articles expresses its debt to Bacon) over 30 encyclopedias were published, not counting supplements and new editions—a number which exceeds all those produced in the two hundred previous years (Kafker 8). If we extend that period to the long eighteenth century, from the Restoration in 1660 to the publication in 1817 of the first volumes of the Encyclopaedia Metropolitana—an encyclopedia based on a plan by Samuel Taylor Coleridge—the number increases astonishingly. My own search of WorldCat (which includes new editions and translations) reveals that in this period, over 7,200 separate works appeared whose titles contained either “Encyclopedia” or “Dictionary,” some of the more famous of which include the Encyclopédie (1751-65), Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary of the English Language (1755), and the Encyclopaedia Britannica (first edition 1768-71).

The unprecedented vigor with which encyclopedias were being produced in the eighteenth century was accompanied by two equally striking developments in the formal elements of the genre: the strategy of organizing encyclopedias alphabetically (rather than

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6 The distinction between the terms was not always fully articulated in the period, and sometimes works were considered both encyclopedias and dictionaries, as the longer titles of both the Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts, et des Métiers and the Encyclopaedia Britannica, or, a Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences, attest. My number of texts here cannot be more specific than “over 7200” because of the constraints of the WorldCat search engine, which allows only two terms separated by “or” in a single search. In other words, I cannot search for titles containing “encyclopedia or encyclopaedia or cyclopedia or cyclopaedia or dictionary,” but instead must combine a series of two-term searches, such as “encyclopedia or encyclopaedia.” My search for titles published between 1660 and 1817 yielded the following specific numbers: “encyclopedia or encyclopaedia” yields 310 matches; “cyclopedia or cyclopaedia” yields 101 matches; “dictionary” yields 7285 matches. However, I cannot simply add these totals together, since, as I have noted above, many of the titles may include both the words “encyclopedia” and “dictionary.”
systematically) became a more prominent one during the period (Collison 3); and indexes began to appear in encyclopedias for the first time (Collison 15). These two simple but important pieces of evidence suggest that encyclopedias were undergoing a significant transformation in the way they were being conceived, composed, and used. Both alphabetical organization and the presence of indexes suggest that a new emphasis was being placed on a reader's ability to locate discrete pieces of information quickly, that the encyclopedia as we think of it today was emerging.

One way to explain these formal changes is to place the eighteenth-century encyclopedia within the larger context of a major shift in reading practices which occurred in the period. In recent years, several critics, including Roger Chartier, Barbara Benedict, Rolf Engelsing and Robert DeMaria have attempted to account for the elusive history of reading. Several of these critics, including DeMaria and Engelsing, have identified a "reading revolution" that took place in the mid-eighteenth century. Engelsing suggests that before mid-century, most readers read "intensively"—in other words, they read a small number of books many times over, deeply and slowly pondering over the texts. However, after mid-century, Engelsing finds a new kind of reader emerging: one who read "extensively" rather than intensively, consuming many different books rather quickly (qtd. in DeMaria 34). While accepting Engelsing's theory in general, DeMaria attempts a more subtle account of the changes in reading habits that took place in the period. By closely examining Dr. Johnson's reading practices, and extending them as models for reading practices in general, DeMaria suggests a four-part paradigm. Based on Johnson's own descriptions of and terms for his

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7 While Collison suggests that the first really "good" indexes did not appear until the 1830s, attempts in this direction were being undertaken much earlier.
own reading practices, DeMaria's four kinds of reading include "study," "perusal," "mere reading," and "curious reading." By "study" is meant hard reading—in Johnson's case, usually done in Latin or Greek; "perusal" is directed reading, designed to find the answer to a particular problem; "curious reading" is absorbed, addicted, reading similar in effect to dreaming; and "mere reading" is negligent, casual reading. DeMaria strongly associates each of these four categories of reading with a specific genre. Study is associated with ancient Greek and Latin texts as well as the Bible; perusal with encyclopedias, dictionaries, and reference books of all kinds; curious reading with romances and novels; and mere reading with newspapers. While agreeing with Engelsing that a major shift in "the cultural emphasis in reading" took place in the mid-eighteenth century, DeMaria characterizes it a little differently, as a shift "from study and perusal to mere reading and curious reading" (18). If the shift in reading practices follow the trajectory that DeMaria and Engelsing suggest, then it is not surprising that encyclopedias would both have responded to and contributed to this shift, and that in such formal innovations as alphabetical arrangement and indexes, they would have facilitated faster and easier access to their vast stores of information for a culture of readers not prone to intensive, ponderous reading.

However, these formal transformations in genre and in reading practices were neither swift nor total. While some encyclopedists clung to the older systematic methods, and some wholeheartedly embraced the new alphabetic method of organization, many texts, ranging from Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's famous Encyclopédie to Pierre

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8 While I find DeMaria's account extremely valuable, it seems to me that the assumptions that he makes about the way genres are read are twentieth-century assumptions: a twentieth-century reader may well peruse an encyclopedia and read a novel curiously, but as I will continue to argue below, an eighteenth-century reader may not have read these genres in the same ways. For an excellent discussion of the non-universal nature of reading practices, see Roger Chartier's "Communities of Readers," the first essay in The Order of Books.
Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (1697, translated into English in 1710), and from John Dunton's little-known *The Ladies Dictionary* (1694) to William Smellie's *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, attempted to bridge the systematic and alphabetic methods, creating a sort of hybrid encyclopedic form. It is with these hybrid encyclopedias that the rest of this chapter concerns itself, not only because they include the most famous encyclopedias of the period, but also because they have ties to another genre that was in flux: the novel. Specifically, I argue that while the ostensible project of the encyclopedias of the eighteenth century was the open dissemination of knowledge, their various compilers paradoxically assert that the encyclopedias themselves are ordered according to secret principles which require their readers to develop reading practices that defy even DeMaria's more flexible paradigm. If not all designed to be read from beginning to end (though many of them were), neither are they designed for mere perusal, for being mined for discrete pieces of information. Instead, the encyclopedias of the eighteenth century are designed to be read in large coherent blocks of narrative, as "circles of learning" ordered according to secret principles that the compiler might hint at, but that ultimately the reader had to discover of his or her own accord. In these encyclopedias, the reader is taught to be continually aware of the connections that link each entry to every other entry in the text. Further, I argue that the promotion of the "secret" nature of the encyclopedias served to construct an author-function for these texts—served to ensure that readers would perceive the encyclopedias as the coherent production

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9 The Greek word "Encyclopaedia" comes from the Greek preposition ἐν (in), plus ὁ χρόνος (or χρόνος, circle) and παίδευτα (education or learning). The word "Cyclopaedia" was first used (though in Greek) in 1541 in the title of Joachimus Fortius Ringelbergh's *Lucubrationes, vel potius absolutissima, κυκλοποίησις, nempte liber de ratione studii* (Collison 78). "Encyclopaedia" was first used in Paul Scalich's 1559 *Encyclopaedia, seu Orbis disciplinarum* (Collison 80).
of a single, organizing mind, and thus merited a reading practices that assumed such coherence.

To chart the evolution of the genre of the encyclopedia is beyond the scope of this chapter; therefore, I do not examine these encyclopedias in chronological order. Instead, I explore a few of the most important examples of the genre as they contribute to my argument about the way encyclopedias were designed to be read. Because the Encyclopédie was both the most influential and the most explicit about the secret reading, practices it required of its readers, I turn first to that work.

The Encyclopédie (1751-65)

The publishing history of the Encyclopédie is long and complicated, and has been extensively investigated by others, but insofar as its history informs the arguments I am making, it bears repeating here in its barest outlines. The first prospectus was issued in May 1745 by André-François Le Breton, a Parisian printer. This proposed work, an "Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire universal," was to include four folio volumes of text and one of plates, and to be largely a translation of Ephraim Chambers's Cyclopaedia. (Although originally published in 1728, a fifth revision of this Cyclopaedia had recently been published in London.) However, Le Breton soon had disagreements with his translator, and both the publishing license and the contract were canceled.

In October 1745, Le Breton signed a new contract (and obtained a new license) to produce a ten-volume encyclopedia with three other Parisian booksellers: Claude Briasson,

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10 For a brief, general history, see Chapter IV, "Diderot and the Encyclopédistes," in Collison. For a more thorough introduction, see Lough's The "Encyclopédie." And for an account of later editions of the Encyclopédie as it illuminates the history of the book in general, see Darnton's The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie 1775-1800.
Michel-Antoine David l’aîné, and Laurent Durand. This encyclopedia was to include more than one source, although it was still to be largely a translation of works already written. In June 1746, these four associates appointed the Abbé Jean-Paul de Gua de Malves to be general editor. However, in August 1747, the Abbé resigned, having neither the will nor the aptitude to carry out the work. In October 1747, Diderot and d’Alembert were appointed as general editors. Diderot and d’Alembert had already been working under the Abbé, and showed great skill in the work, but nonetheless their appointment was a bold move: Diderot had already published (anonymously) his *Pensées philosophiques*, which was officially condemned by the French parliament. Further, Diderot’s parish priest had denounced him to the police for his authorship of this work, and had indicated that Diderot was writing another work still more dangerous to religion. The priest was probably referring to Diderot’s *Lettre sur les aveugles à l’usage de ceux qui voyent*, an essay supposedly on blindness, but really a defense of atheism. This *Letter on the Blind* was published anonymously in early 1749, and on 24 July Diderot was imprisoned in the dungeons of Vincennes until 3 November. Arguing that Diderot was “a man of letters, and of recognized merit and probity who alone possess[ed] the key” to make order out of the manuscripts for the *Encyclopédie*, in which they had invested vast sums of money, the four associates succeeded in having Diderot released from prison (qtd. in Collison 120).

Once released, Diderot published a second prospectus for the project (released October 1750, dated 1751). This second prospectus promised an *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné*. (Note that the first prospectus had promised a “universal” dictionary, while this one promised a “reasoned” one.) Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* was to be built from many existing
dictionaries, including Chambers, Harris, and Dyche, but would go far beyond them: as the prospectus pointed out, all existing encyclopedias were already out of date. Important thinkers from all over Europe would be invited to contribute articles. For a total cost of 280 livres, the Encyclopédie would consist of 8 folio volumes of text and two of plates. The first volume was promised for June 1751; the entire set was to be completed by December 1754.

Volume One came out in July 1751, and Volume Two came out early in 1752. However, these first two volumes were suppressed by order of the Council of State, partly because the Abbé Jean-Martin de Prades, who had contributed the article "Certitude" to the Encyclopédie, had had his thesis for a doctorate in theology at the Sorbonne condemned by the Jesuit faculty; and partly because Father Guillaume-François Berthier condemned the Encyclopédistes for plagiarism of the Dictionnaire de Trévoux, a Jesuit encyclopaedia first published in 1704, and in its sixth edition by this time. However, the power of the court overruled the power of the church, and the Encyclopédistes were allowed to continue their work unharrassed until the publication of the seventh volume in 1757.

This seventh volume contained Diderot's article on "Geneva," in which he ironically described the Calvinist clergy of that city as Socinians and praised them for their beliefs. Further, the article suggested that the theater could help to civilize the Genevans. This article

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11 John Harris's Lexicon Technicum, published in 1704, was the first purely English general encyclopaedia (despite its Latin title). The third edition of Thomas Dyche's A new general English dictionary ... begun by the late Rev. Mr Thomas Dyche, and now finished by William Pardon had been published in London in 1740.

12 The article, like the thesis, argues that certitude can be found in the principles established by Locke rather than in Christian revelation. Although the Jesuit faculty at the Sorbonne had accepted the thesis and granted the Abbé de Prades the Doctor of Theology, when the Jansenists read the article, they condemned both the article and the thesis as heresy. The Sorbonne faculty revoked their granting of the degree, and the Abbé de Prades was forced to leave the country (Gordon and Torrey 14-15).

13 According to Collison, the charge of plagiarism was not without merit, although the Jesuits themselves had extensively drawn from Antoine Furetèè's Dictionnaire universel, published posthumously in 1690 (Collison 115-16).
provoked something of an international incident in which those of the learned world took sides; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who had contributed several articles on music, withdrew his support and broke with the Encyclopedists because of the article. In that same year (1757), Robert-François Damiens attempted to assassinate King Louis XV—with a penknife. The Encyclopedists were blamed for inspiring him, although the Encyclopedists themselves blamed the Jesuits “almost of collusion in the conspiracy” in their eighth volume (qtd. in Collison 126). Further, Claude-Adrian Helvétius’s De l'esprit was published in 1757, and the Encyclopedists were blamed for creating the intellectual climate in which such a book could be written. Not surprisingly, then, Pope Clement XIII condemned the Encyclopédie, and in January of 1759, the Parlement too condemned the Encyclopédie, and all work on the project was ordered to a stop. In July, the Council of State ordered the Encyclopedists to pay each subscriber 72 livres as refund for the remaining volumes that would not be published. However, not one subscriber came forward to withdraw the 72 livres, and instead Le Breton was able to secure a license to print four volumes of plates as a method of repaying the subscribers.

With his immense work less than half completed and officially shut down, Diderot received offers of asylum from Russia, Switzerland, and Holland, where he would be able to continue his work in safety. (By this time, Diderot was sole editor of the work. D'Alembert had resigned as editor, although he had agreed to continue proofreading the mathematical articles.) However, feeling that to flee would be an admission of guilt, and perhaps under pressure from the associates, who did not want to share the immense projected profits of the
enterprise with other printers, Diderot decided to stay in Paris and finish the *Encyclopédie* in secret. Several strokes of good luck contributed to his ability to continue this secret work. In December 1759, a retirement in the police force led to the appointment of Antoine-Raymond de Sartine as Lieutenant-General of Police. He was a friend of Diderot's, and this meant that Diderot would have the protection he needed to continue to publish the *Encyclopédie* in secret. Further, Madame Marie-Thérèse Geoffrin contributed 100,000 écus towards the secret printing of the *Encyclopédie*, although “she would not receive [Diderot] in her salon owing to his vulgarity and ignorance of good manners” (Collison 128). And finally, in 1762, the Jesuits, who had continued to persecute Diderot and his enterprise mercilessly, were ejected from France. Ironically, the printers of the *Encyclopédie*, needing more equipment, took over the printing presses that had produced the Jesuit’s main instrument of assault: the *Journal de Trévoux* (Gordon and Torrey 22).

In 1764, when the great work was nearly completed and Diderot was at his most enthusiastic and optimistic, he discovered that Le Breton had been secretly censoring his work for at least two years. Le Breton was able to accomplish this censorship because Diderot did not send his final proofs directly to the printers. Instead, after Diderot had examined the final proofs and made his corrections, they were sent to a proofreader. This proofreader, working under secret instructions from Le Breton, would mark passages he found potentially libelous, blasphemous, or treasonous with an “Na b” (for *nota bene*) in the margins. Le Breton then read over the marked passages, and made the final decision on whether or not the passage should be excised. When Diderot discovered this censorship, he

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14 "On an initial investment of about 70,000 livres, [the publishers'] profit may have reached as much as 2,500,000 livres. Net income came to approximately 4,000,000 livres and net costs to something in the range of 1,500,000 to 2,200,000 livres, of which about 80,000 went to Diderot" (Darnton 16).
was devastated. He decided to abandon his work, as he was unable to ascertain the extent to which his work had been mutilated. (He assumed that the marked proofs had been destroyed as the manuscripts had been.) Further, he was unable to make Le Breton's censorship public for two reasons: first, because this would give his enemies proof that he had been carrying out the work of the Encyclopédie even after the order for its suppression, and would have led to his banishment from France; second, because once subscribers found out about the censorship, Diderot felt they would rebel against having paid so much money for something that now seemed to be "nothing but a hodge-podge of insipid clippings" (qtd in Gordon and Torrey 33).

Eventually, Briasson convinced Diderot to complete the work (only three volumes remained), and the final 10 volumes of text were published all at once with the false Swiss imprint of "Neufchastel" in 1765. The final volume of plates was published (with a Paris imprint) in 1772; each of these volumes contained at least two hundred plates, with a final total of 2885 plates. Diderot had spent twenty years of his life working on these seventeen volumes of text and eleven volumes of plates, for which the final cost to subscribers was 980 livres.

Thus the production of the Encyclopédie was shrouded in secrecy: secret publishing, secret censorship, secret authorship of articles. But these are not the only secrets the Encyclopédie contains. There is a great deal of secrecy contained within the articles themselves.

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15 In 1933, 318 of the original, marked proof sheets were discovered, carefully mounted in an extra volume in a handsomely-bound set of the Encyclopédie that had evidently been Le Breton's own. It appears that Le Breton's censorship was not as extreme as Diderot had feared, his own articles being the main focus of Le Breton's censorship. For a fascinating account of the discovery of original page proofs as well as the details of the text that was cut, see Gordon and Torrey.

16 Because of potential accusations of heresy, treason, and/or libel, most of the articles in the later volumes are unsigned.
Although the Encyclopedists, with their troubles with censorship and the threat of having the entire project shut down, could not afford to place criticisms in the most obvious places, they found secret ways to include such remarks:

Of course the remarks had to be veiled. The Encyclopedists draped the pope in Japanese robes before mocking him in SAIKO; they disguised the Eucharist as an extravagant pagan ritual in YPAINI; they dressed up the Holy Spirit as a ridiculous bird in AIGLE; and they made the Incarnation look as silly as a superstition about a magic plant in AGNUS SCYTHICUS. At the same time, they produced a parade of high-minded, law-abiding Hindus, Confucians, Hottentots, Stoics, Socinians, deists, and atheists, who usually seemed to get the better of the orthodox in arguments, although orthodoxy always triumphed in the end, as in UNITAIRES (Darnton 8).

But perhaps even more interesting than these veiled references within the text of the individual articles themselves is another kind of secrecy that was embodied in the form and arrangement of the Encyclopédie. In the “Preliminary Discourse” to the Encyclopédie, published along with the first volume in 1751, d’Alembert begins to explain this secret organization of the text. As he explains “how we have tried to reconcile the encyclopedic arrangement with the alphabetical arrangement in this Dictionary,”17 he describes the “encyclopedic arrangement” as

the chain by which one can descend without interruption from the first principles of an art or science all the way down to its remotest consequences, or ascend from its remotest consequences back up to its first principles, and which allows us to pass imperceptibly from this science or this art to another and, if we may express ourselves thus, to circumnavigate the literary world without losing our way (110-11).

Using this image of a chain, d’Alembert stresses the importance of the connectedness of “all human knowledge,” and goes on to point out the dangers of missing any one of the links: an omission “breaks the enchainment, and is harmful to both the form and substance.” In other

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17 Remember that the full title of the Encyclopédie was Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné. D’Alembert described the text as both dictionary and encyclopedia: the dictionary taking alphabetical form, and the encyclopedia taking another, secret form that I am attempting to describe here.
words, an omission in an encyclopedia is more harmful than an omission in any other kind of work, because the "circle of learning" has been broken, the chain no longer whole.

The nature of this chain, however, is complicated. If the chain does exist, it exists elsewhere, somewhere off the page, somewhere between the mind of the compilers and the mind of the reader. In explaining how readers should approach the Encyclopédie and develop a sensitivity to its encyclopedic arrangement, d'Alembert explains that readers should pay attention to three main items. First, the reader should keep in mind (and refer back to) the image of the tree of knowledge that appears at the beginning of the work, and makes the connections between all of the arts and sciences visually apparent; second, the name of the science to which each article belongs (the name of the science was generally placed after the title of each article); and third, the "precision and frequency of the [cross-] references [les renvois] to other articles" (57). However, following these instructions and paying attention to these three items was neither as easy nor as straightforward as it might seem.

For example, the first thing that d'Alembert directs the reader to do when reading any article is to determine to which science the article belongs, and then refer to the tree-of-knowledge chart to locate that science, so that "one can see what rank this science occupied and hence understand the place that the article is to have in the Encyclopedia" (57). In other words, in addition to its place in the dictionary of alphabetical order, every article also occupies a place in an encyclopedia that exists outside the Encyclopédie, one that the reader

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18 The tree of knowledge is another image, in addition to the image of the chain, that d'Alembert uses in the "Preliminary Discourse" to describe the encyclopedic arrangement. The tree of knowledge shows that the remotest branch of any science can nonetheless be traced back to the main trunk of the tree, and thus be related to every other branch of knowledge.

19 The French word also carries connotations of returning, sending back, postponement, referring, and repetition, all of which I think are relevant to the discussion.
must somehow construct in her or his own mind using only this aid of the image of the tree of knowledge.

Second, d'Alembert directs readers to determine the science to which any article belongs. In many cases, this is very easy, because the name of the science appears after the title of the article. But in other cases, this assignment of an article was not always literally present in black and white on the page. As d'Alembert puts it, if “it happens that the name of the science is omitted, a reading of the article will suffice to make clear the science to which it is related, and even if we forget to point out, for example, that the word Bomb belongs to the military art, and the name of a city or country to geography, we have enough confidence in the intelligence of our readers to hope that they will not be shocked by such an omission” (57). This may seem like a trivial point, but if so trivial, why should d'Alembert take the time to emphasize it in the “Preliminary Discourse?” In fact, I believe that here, as in the discussion of the imaginative encyclopedic order that exists in parallel with the alphabetic one, d'Alembert is emphasizing the fact that in this encyclopedia, readers are being taught to read beyond the page. They are being asked to deploy reading practices that go beyond “perusal.”

This heavy reliance upon (and development of) the reader's ability to read a secret text beyond what is written on the page is perhaps most explicit in discussion of the third of d'Alembert's instructions to the reader: the use of the “precise and frequent” cross-references, or renvois, within the encyclopedia. While merely mentioned in the “Preliminary Discourse,” the renvois are discussed at great length in the article “Encyclopédie.” In this article,
the author identifies four different kinds of renvois: of things, of words, of the man of genius, and of satire. Speaking of the renvois of things, the author says:

The renvois of things clarify the object, indicating its nearest links with those which they touch immediately, and its further-removed links with others that one thought isolated; recalling the shared ideas and analogous principles; ... interlacing the branches to the trunk, and giving to all that unity so favorable to the establishment of truth and to persuasion. But when it is necessary, [the renvois] will produce also a totally contrary effect; they oppose notions, they provide contrast for principles, they will attack, shake, will secretly reverse some ridiculous opinions that one would not dare overtly insult. If the author is impartial, they will always have the double function of confirming and of refuting, of troubling and conciliating.

There is a grand art and an infinite advantage in these last renvois. The entire work receives an internal force and a secret utility, of which the muffled effects will be necessarily perceptible with time. ... This manner of undeceiving men operates very promptly on good spirits, and it operates infallibly and without any troublesome consequences, secretly and without any stir. ... they give to an encyclopedia the character that a good dictionary must have; this character is to change the common method of thinking (Lough 58-59, my translation).

This passage tells us several very interesting things about the reading practices an eighteenth-century reader of this encyclopedia would have been expected to employ. First, we learn that while a reader may check out a cross-reference expecting to find additional supporting information about a certain topic (an “interlacing” branch of the trunk, a “unity so favorable to the establishment of truth and to persuasion”), confirmation of the idea of order that the reader has been constructing in his or her mind, instead that reader may find this tenuous coherence and order “attacked” and “shaken” by “contrasting principles.” Indeed, the reader may discover that what she or he has just read is in fact a “ridiculous opinion” that the editors have decided to insult “secretly” rather than openly. Of course, there is nothing in either of the opposing articles that suggests which is the “ridiculous” one; the reader must

25 The renvois of words, the author explains, are useful because it means that the definitions of words don’t have to be repeated over and over. The renvois of the man of genius involve the rare ability to link together different sciences to produce “new speculative truths” or to recover “ancient lost arts.” The satirical renvois involve certain ironic articles “that it is necessary to read with caution.” They are useful because one “can direct them secretly against certain absurdities.”
infer this for him- or herself. But perhaps most interestingly, we are explicitly told—four times—that there is something “secretive” about the form of the encyclopedia, something that the reader must learn to read for.

Certainly some of these secretive instructions to the reader and the formal elements of the Encyclopédie are a direct result of the conditions under which the text was published. But another, equally-important factor seems to be at play here as well. The Encyclopédistes seem to be at least as interested in teaching their readers a certain habit of mind, a way of seeing the world as connected and coherent, as they are interested in disseminating facts organized alphabetically. As the passage quoted above explicitly states, the renvois are designed to “change the common method of thinking”—and, by extension, to change the common method of reading encyclopedias. Rather than merely “perusing” the encyclopedia for facts to be received as truth, readers were asked to ferret out the Encyclopédie’s secrets, to consider the text as a whole, from the first to the final link in the chain, despite the “insanity” of such a practice from H. G. Wells’s perspective. As Darnton puts it, “having learned to look at the world of knowledge from the viewpoint of the Preliminary Discourse,” reading the Encyclopédie “became a game. . . . The Encyclopedists stimulated their readers to seek for meaning between the lines and to listen for double-entendre” (8). Above all, the Encyclopedists asked readers to see their gargantuan text, published over so many years and under such strained conditions, as a coherent, unified whole.
Bayle's Dictionnaire Historique and Critique (1697; first English edition 1710)

While today Diderot's Encyclopédie is arguably the most famous of eighteenth-century encyclopedias, Pierre Bayle's Dictionnaire Historique and Critique was at least as famous in its own day, and has been seriously neglected by modern scholars. Diderot acknowledged his debt to Bayle in several places in the Encyclopédie, including the article on "Pyrhio." 21 James Boswell, in his Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, reports an incident in which Johnson defends Bayle vigorously from a "confutation" brought up by Mr. McClean: "A confutation of Bayle, sir! What part of Bayle do you mean? The greatest part of his writings is not confutable: it is historical and critical" (197). When Thomas Jefferson compiled a list of suggested books for a friend's library, Bayle's Dictionary was by far the most expensive item on the list, suggesting the importance he attached to the work (Beller and Lee vii). The nineteenth-century critic Émile Faguet called the dictionary the "Bible of the eighteenth century" (Dix-huitième siècle, 1890; qtd in Robinson 139); another nineteenth century critic, Brunetière, wrote that "To forget Bayle or to omit him, is to mutilate and falsify the whole history of ideas in the eighteenth century" (qt. in Beller and Lee xix). One twentieth-century critic credits Bayle with no less than launching the Enlightenment (Popkin vii). And finally, Bayle's work is mentioned in several of the novels of the eighteenth century, including Fielding's Tom Jones and Amelia and Sterne's Tristram Shandy. The off-hand nature of these references suggests that Bayle's work would have been easily recognized. 22

21 In this article, Diderot includes a tribute to Bayle, arguing that "skepticism had no more redoubtable exponent than Bayle, either in ancient or in modern times" (qt. in Beller and Lee xxvii-xxviii).

22 All three of these references were found in Chadwyck-Healey's Eighteenth-century Fiction database. The reference to Bayle in Tom Jones occurs on page 96 of the edition they use, the reference in Amelia on page 227, and the reference in Tristram Shandy on page 118.
Published for the first time in France in 1697, Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique and Critique* was so popular that an extra thousand copies of this first edition were printed, meaning a total of more than two thousand copies in circulation (Burrell 98). A second edition, expanded from two to three folio volumes, was issued in 1702. By 1750, nine French editions had appeared. In fact, it may well have been the most popular book of the century in France: in a study of 500 private libraries in the eighteenth century, Daniel Mornet found the *Dictionary* in more of them than any other work. The first English edition was published in 1710, and two more English editions began to appear simultaneously in 1734.

Bayle himself was born in 1647, the son of a Huguenot minister. His father educated him at home until age 19, when Bayle was sent to an academy near Toulouse. Three years later, Bayle enrolled in the Jesuit college in Toulouse. A Jesuit school may seem an odd choice for a Protestant, except that the Jesuit's reputation for teaching made it the best choice for anyone who wanted a serious education. Bayle shocked his family when after only one month in this college he converted to Catholicism; after a year and a half, he again renounced Catholicism. However, as an official relapse, he was in even more danger than he had been as a protestant, so his father sent him to the University of Geneva to complete his studies. Bayle eventually became a private tutor in Geneva, as well as in Rouen and Paris (where he lived in disguise); and then was appointed professor of philosophy at a Protestant seminary in Sedan, France. He taught there for six years, but when the school was closed by governmental order, he fled to Holland, and obtained a professorship in history and philosophy at the *École Illustre* in Rotterdam. While in Rotterdam, Bayle composed a book.

entitled *Miscellaneous Thoughts on the Comet of 1680*. In this book, published in 1682, Bayle deployed a method that he would later use in the *Dictionary*. While ostensibly about a comet, this subject was merely a device or starting point for a larger discussion of superstitions in general, a defense of atheism, and a condemnation of the vices of religious men.

In 1684 and 85, Bayle suffered the death of his younger brother, the death of his father, and the death of his elder brother. The elder brother died in a prison dungeon, where he had been thrown in an attempt to force him to convert to Catholicism. Six days after his elder brother's death, the Edict of Nantes was revoked, bringing to an end all Huguenot freedom. These events led Bayle to publish two treatises that simultaneously attack the Roman Catholic Church and plea for toleration: *The Character of France Entirely Catholic*, and a *Philosophical Commentary* . . . wherein it is proved . . . that there is nothing more abominable than to make conversions by force. . . . These two treatises infuriated Jurieu, a fellow Huguenot minister exiled from France. Jurieu objected to Bayle’s defense of atheism and toleration; his influence with city magistrates in Rotterdam led to Bayle’s dismissal from his professorship at the *École Illustre* in 1693.

Because his salary was quite small to begin with, and because his expenses were low—his “only relaxations from scholarship were the traveling puppet shows and a weekly meeting with a few friends to discuss literary and scientific matters” (Beller and Lee xvi)—Bayle declined to search for another position, and instead devoted himself entirely to his *Dictionary*.

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24 Evidently, some years earlier Bayle had strained relations with Jurieu when declined to marry a young girl in the Jurieu family, deciding that scholarly work was more important than family life. The theme of whether or not a scholar should marry runs through the dictionary (Popkin XIII).
Bayle originally conceived his dictionary as a catalogue of errors, both large and small, in previously-published encyclopedias; he planned to concentrate especially on the errors in Louis Moréri's *Grand Dictionnaire Historique* (1674).\(^\text{25}\) Bayle published a prospectus of this project in 1692, and was soon convinced to change his plans: "I did not think it Prudent to oppose the general Taste; and since it has been universally concluded, that most Faults I mentioned in the Articles of the Project were of little Importance to the Publick, Reason requir'd I should give over my undertaking" ("Preface to the First French Edition").

Determined to produce a dictionary, Bayle outlined his new plans for the work as follows:

Observe now in what manner I have chang'd my Plan, the better to adapt my self to the publick Taste. I have divided my Composition into two Parts: One is purely Historical, and gives a succinct Account of Matters of Fact: The other is a large Commentary, a Miscellany of Proofs and Discussions, wherein I have inserted a censure of many Faults, and sometimes a train of Philosophical Reflections; in a word, there is variety enough, to presume that all sorts of Readers will find something or other that will please 'em ("Preface").

Thus Bayle moves from a relatively simply conception of his dictionary as a catalogue of errors to a far more complicated structure, pieces linked to one another in a number of ways: the historical narrative linked to its commentary, the commentary linked not only to other works of reference, but also linked within itself in a "train" of reflections.

The "purely Historical" part of Bayle's composition consists almost entirely of biographical entries,\(^\text{26}\) though they are not always the biographical entries one might expect. The famous are often omitted, and the very obscure often included. One basis on which

\(^{25}\)This first edition of Moréri's work was published in one folio volume. By the time Bayle’s dictionary appeared, Moréri's had gone through seven editions; and by 1759, when the final, twentieth edition was published, it had grown to ten folio volumes.

\(^{26}\)Nearly two-thirds of the more than two thousand articles are on people who lived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Burrell 89). There are also a handful of geographical entries on places, including Japan and Rotterdam.
Bayle chose these entries was whether or not they had been included in previously-published biographical dictionaries: “I resolved at first to say nothing that has already been said in other Dictionaries... whereby I deprived my self of all the Materials that were most easy to be Collected, and employ’d” (“Preface”). If biographies on particular people could be found elsewhere, Bayle did not include them in his work. Another basis on which he chose his entries was “the proportion that is to be observed betwixt the Letters of the Alphabet” (“Preface”). But perhaps the most important basis on which Bayle chose his entries was the consideration of what digressions, asides, censures and reflections each biographical entry would allow him to make in the “Commentary” portion of his text.

The fact is that this “Commentary” is clearly the focus of Bayle’s text. While the “Historical” portion of any given entry is confined to a “succinct Account of Matters of Fact,” the “Commentary” portion of the entry is delivered in an elaborate system of footnotes and footnotes to the footnotes, which are indicated by a system of capital letters, small letters, and numbers. The main footnotes appear in double columns beneath the single-column historical entry; the more brief footnotes (mainly cross-references to other articles and citations of sources) appear in very small columns on either side of the middle columns. Both in terms of the number of words devoted to each section and the overall visual balance of Bayle’s pages, the footnotes of the Commentary overwhelm the biographical entries.28

27 In particular, Bayle suggests in his “Preface” that it was “a great disadvantage” to avoid publishing what had already been published in Moréri, in a dictionary of persons mentioned in the Bible soon to come out in Lyons, in Du Pin’s dictionary of church history, and in Mr. Chappuzeau’s historical dictionary.

28 In the entry of “Remond,” for example, the main biographical entry runs some 340 words, while the entry as a whole runs some 5,300; this proportion of “History” to “Commentary” seems representative of the work. Robinson notes two of the most extreme examples in the Dictionary in both “Erasmus” and
As a concrete example of Bayle's method, I include here the Historical portion of his entry on "Remond."

**Remond** (Florimond De) counsellor in the parlement of Bourdeaux, towards the end of the XVIth century, signalized himself by some violent books against the Protestants. He had been a Huguenot in his younger days; but if we may believe him, he was rescued 'from the jaws of Heresy' by a miracle, of which he was an eyewitness in the year 1566. Moréri, who mentions it, knew not the place where that comedy was acted; he says, that a woman called Nicole Obri, a native of Vervins, was exorcised at Loudun. He is mistaken, it was at Laon: I have said in another place, that Father Labbe has committed the same fault. There is some reason to believe that Florimond de Remond studied under Peter Ramus, in the college of Presle at Paris: which I observe only to have an opportunity to mention what he said concerning the book *de Tribus Impostoribus*. Botereius places his death in the year 1602, and Moréri in the year 1600. Some will have it that he is not the author of the books that are ascribed to him, whereof the most considerable is *The History of the Birth, Progress, and Declension of the Heresy of this Age*. He was the unfittest man in the world to succeed in such an undertaking considering the hatred he had conceived against the party wherein he had been brought up, which a miracle, as he pretended, had obliged him to forsake. But that *History*, though never so bad, has been quoted by a great many writers, and it is a surprising thing to find in many books several matters of fact very considerable, and of great consequence, for which the reader is referred not to any authentic pieces, but to Florimond de Remond's testimony. Some say he did very ill discharge the duties of his office in the parlement of Bourdeaux. The Protestants taxed him with a very great partiality against them. Varillas was a little mortified when he was obliged to confess he had transcribed that author.

Bayle certainly had personal reasons for including this bibliographical entry—indeed, he took many such opportunities in his *Dictionary* to address religious intolerance. But as I have suggested above, the main biographical entries in Bayle's *Dictionary* serve as an starting point for Bayle's meditations on other, tangentially related subjects. His main motive for including "Remond" seems to be the opportunity to expound, in the footnoted commentary, on historians and writing history. "Remond," in Bayle's opinion, was a particularly bad historian (he "was the unfittest man in the world to succeed" at writing "never so bad" histories), and

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*Savonarola* the Historical portion occupies a single folio page, and the Commentary footnotes an additional fourteen folio pages.
so provided a good opportunity to teach by negative example. All of the main footnotes center on the theme of what it means to be a good historian. Footnote A accuses Remond of publishing the first edition of his *Popular Error concerning Pope Joan* anonymously because it was poorly-written; the second edition, which bears Remond's name, is, in Bayle's opinion, "well revised, and . . . longer and more serious." Bayle also goes on in this footnote to cataloguing the bibliographical errors that others have made concerning Remond's works. In footnote B (which Bayle frankly admits is the whole reason for even mentioning that Remond studied under Peter Ramus), Bayle includes a long quotation from Remond's criticism of *Of the Three Imposters*, and lambastes Remond for a mistake he makes in the date of its publication. But the real thrust of this footnote is to show that Remond's "only design" in his criticism of the *Three Imposters* "is to render Lutheranism odious by fair means or foul." In footnote C, Bayle takes up the question of whether or not Remond actually composed the works that are attributed to him. After giving a long series of quotations from other books saying that it is doubtful that he did (with no further evidence to back up such claims), Bayle concludes by leaving "it to readers to judge whether this is sufficient ground to lay down as a certain matter of fact, that all the controversial books that have been published under the name of Florimond de Remond, had been written by [another]." The first three of these footnotes (A-C) serve as a kind of background and wind-up for footnote D, the centerpiece around which all of the other footnotes for this entry seem to hover. (It is by far the longest of the footnotes for this entry.) In this footnote, Bayle takes up more generally the qualities of a good historian. "History . . . is the most difficult type of writing that an author can undertake. . . . It requires a great judgment, a noble, clear and considered style, a good conscience, a perfect probity, many excellent materials, and the art of placing them in
good order, and above all things the power of resisting the instinct of a religious zeal..."

Of course, by now we should already realize that Remond is a spectacularly bad example of a good historian—because he uses faulty materials and seems to have poor judgment (like so many historians) about when and by whom texts were written and published, because he sought to hide shoddy work behind anonymity, and because he was plagued by religious zeal. However, Bayle continues to refine his ideas concerning good historians in the footnotes that follow. In footnote E, Bayle strengthens his assertion that a good historian must be a person of good conscience and perfect probity. Bayle assaults Remond's moral character, and asserts that because he was a very bad judge—helping Roman Catholic criminals to go free, and submitting inflated requests for reimbursements—he is necessarily a very bad historian. Finally, in footnote F, Bayle recounts how Varillas, an historian who had consulted Remond as a reference, found himself virtually unable to defend himself, and unable to supply other citations in the margin to support his views. Again here, Bayle stresses the importance of good judgment and excellent materials.}

Many of the articles in Bayle's Dictionary are accompanied by a set of footnotes as coherent and unified as those centering around the role of the historian in "Remond," and from which it is relatively easy to draw conclusions about what Bayle's own conclusions are. But as a person strongly influenced by the skeptical method, Bayle was devoted to a method whose main purpose was not so much to draw conclusions, but instead to lay out the pros and cons of any argument, and to expose doubt on both sides. "I am sometimes

29 The question of how well Bayle lived up to his own standards for historians is an interesting one. While he is certainly exempt from historical impartiality in the Commentary portion of his text, it would be difficult to argue the impartiality of calling Remond's conversion experience a "pretended" "comedy" in the Historical portion of the same entry.

30 Bayle discusses the skeptical method in his article on "Pyrho."
more Positive than I should be: But at the Bottom I propose only Doubts,” he says in his “Preface.” Indeed, in many articles, his main intention seems to be to teach the reader to see how to see doubt, how sort out the probable from the improbable in any historian’s work.

In his Historical article on “Adam,” for example, after relating several “facts” that appear in the Bible (including that he consummated his marriage with Eve, became a father, and died at the age of 930 years), Bayle notes that a “great number of other things, which have been related of him, are either very false, or very uncertain; it is true, we may judge of some, that they are not contrary... to Probability. I place in this rank what is said of his prodigious knowledge.” In footnote D, Bayle tells us that “Moréri is not contented with affirming, in general, that Adam ‘had a perfect Knowledge of Science... of which he taught his Children several curious Secrets’; he adds also, that Josephus says, that ‘Adam ingraved some Observations he had made on the Course of the Stars on two different Tables.’” Bayle goes on to tell us that he has searched Josephus, and has not found the citation to which Moréri refers; and therefore, when we come upon “a Person... capable of falsifying in this Manner an Author, whom he cites, he seldom regards the Words of his Evidence so closely,” and therefore we can dismiss this assertion as impossible. Bayle suggests that it is not completely improbable that, as “common Opinion” asserts, Adam “knew more on the very first Day of his Life, than any Man besides can learn by long Experience”; but this is stretching probability to its limits, and the reader should learn to discern that any further assertions would cross the line into improbability.

“Adam’”s footnotes E, F and G continue this lesson in discerning probability. The Historical portion of the text here asserts that “What some affirm concerning the Beauty of Adam,” may be also placed in the rank of probable things; but it is altogether false that he
was created of both Sexes. In footnote F, we are given many examples of historians who have remained on this side of probable in their descriptions of Adam's beauty, and those who have stepped over the line into the improbable. The main lesson to be learned here is that the reader should beware of historians addicted to rhetorical flourishes, but should trust those who tend to stick to the facts: "If some Authors had been contented to say, that he was a fine Person, and well made, they would have said nothing but what was probable; but instead of this, they have fallen into the Gaieties of Rhetoric, and Poetry, and even into visionary Notions of this matter." In footnote F, readers learn that historians who assert that Adam was a hermaphrodite are simply not reading the scripture closely enough; and in footnote G (a continuation of the question of whether or not Adam contained both sexes) we learn that when the logical extension of any historian's claims are absurd, then the claims themselves should be dismissed as false. As illustration of this point, Bayle offers a long quotation from the Revelations of Antoinette Bourignon. Antoinette Bourignon had a vision in which it was revealed that Adam had

a Vessel in his Belly, which bred small Eggs, and another Vessel full of Liquor, which impregnated the Eggs. And when Man grew enflamed with the Love of God, the Desire that he had that there should be other Creatures, beside himself, to praise, love and adore the divine Majesty, made that Liquor, by the Fire of God's Love, to spread itself on one or more of these Eggs with unconceivable Delight; which, being impregnated, came out some time after from the Man, by the forementioned Canal, in the form of an Egg, and a little after hatch'd a perfect Man.

Bayle teaches us that the logical conclusion of this vision is that "Antoinette Bourignon ought not to have expected her own Resurrection; for, according to her Principles... the Resurrection is nothing else but the re-establishing of Man in his State of Innocency: A State wherein, according to the fine Revelations of Antoinette, there were no Women." Here we learn that in addition to times when a historian seems to unnecessarily stretch the bounds of
probability, when a historian seems to interpret primary sources too loosely, or when the historian is addicted to rhetorical flourishes, another reason for dismissing the claims of a historian is when the logical conclusion of their claims is absurd, as Bayle argues it is in this case.

"Adam" is not the only article in which Bayle attempts to teach his readers to discern when a historian's claims are warranted and when they are not. "Sarah" proved another good starting point for this lesson in probably truths, since Sarah and Abraham twice lied about Sarah being Abraham's husband. The Commentary for this article teaches the reader how to judge whether or not a claim like "Sarah retained her beauty into her 90s" is probable (it is); it also warns readers not to trust historians who rely on such devices as "prophetic spirits" "miracles," and Deux ex machina" to justify what are probably the improbable opinions of the authors themselves. With all of this emphasis on probability, it is no wonder that Dr. Johnson defended Bayle so staunchly.

While in some articles Bayle is fairly transparent in his project to teach the reader to be a good reader of histories, in other he adopts a more secretive method for advancing his views. The article "David," for example, begins in a very laudatory mode: "David, King of the Jews, was one of the greatest men in the world and a man after God's own heart." Later, in the historical portion of the article, we are told that he "is a sun of holiness in the Church; there by his works he spreads a marvelous light of consolation and piety, which we cannot admire enough." However, the thrust of the Commentary, except where Bayle is merely

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31 Bayle seems almost to be a forerunner of Johnson's own literary criticism. It is interesting to note that while Bayle maintains "that truth being the soul of History, it is an essential thing for an historical composition to be free from lies... It is not so with a poetical or rhetorical piece" ("Remond"). In the "Preface" Bayle concedes that a "Narrative abounding with the grossest Ignorance is as proper to move the Passions, as Historical Exactness."
pointing out inconsistencies and the improbable assumptions of earlier biblical scholars, is to point out David's morally outrageous behavior. This behavior includes: killing men and women without mercy [D], extorting goods from Nabal and threatening to kill everyone associated with him when he did not comply [D], contributing to the victory of the Philistines against his own brethren [E], not parenting his children properly [F], adultery and polygamy [H], gaining kingdoms by intrigues rather than by honesty [H], and breaking promises of leniency by putting death sentences in his will [I]. While Bayle peppers this litany of horrors with comments like "I leave it to nice casuists to judge whether these views were worthy of a true Israelite" and "Can it be said that these are the actions of a saint?" the reader who has become proficient at the system that Bayle has been inculcating would easily reach the conclusion that the laudatory comments with which the article begins are meant to be taken ironically.

Bayle is conscious that the method he has adopted in his Dictionary—a method of implications rather than drawing conclusions, of attempting to teach the readers to arrive at their own rational interpretations of information rather than relying on the historian to provide such interpretations explicitly, of saying one thing while really talking about another—has potential drawbacks. In "Remond," Bayle discusses what happens when a historian writes the history of "an Indian King, who died two or three hundred years ago." Bayle suggests that it "is almost impossible" for this history, as remote as it is, to be written without showing "some marks of the Historian's anger or discontent" with the present state of royalty, or without indulging in some "satirical strokes against some living persons." But Bayle acknowledges that readers may be reading at various levels of sophistication: "All readers cannot guess whom he means; but some will guess at it, and he knows very well that
some will.” It is the latter class of sophisticated reader that Bayle hopes to produce with his own *Dictionary*.

Of course, it is entirely possible that some of Bayle’s secretive rhetorical strategies—making the real substance of his work appear to be digression, discussing one thing or person under the heading of another, putting the bulk of the controversial text in footnotes, appearing completely impartial while leading readers to certain conclusions, and the extensive use of cross-references (which I have not discussed here as they are employed to very similar ends as those in the *Encyclopédie*)—may have been “designed to confuse the official censorship as much as possible” (Beller and Lee xxii). Bayle certainly had problems with censors: the first edition of the *Dictionary* was banned in France, and he was called before the Consistory of the French Reformed Church of Rotterdam to defend his work. (Again, Jurieu was behind this attack.) After this appearance, Bayle wrote a letter affirming his desire to remain a part of the church, and agreeing to modify his work in the next edition to suit the censors. (The censors had especially objected to the articles on the Manichees, Pyrrho, David, and his remarks on atheists and Epicurians (Beller and Lee xix).) Interestingly, however, the only article that Bayle actually rewrote was the article on David, and when some readers threatened not to buy the new edition without the complete article, the original was published as an appendix.)

However, avoiding the wrath of the censors was not Bayle’s only reason for composing his *Dictionary* as he did. Nor was his intention merely to remove “layer after

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32 As Popkin puts it, the “task of reading the heart and soul of Bayle has intrigued and baffled many. . . Bayle has been seen as an atheist, as the critic of traditional religion, the enlightened skeptic, the advocate of complete toleration, the fideist, the true believer, the man of faith” (XIX). However, most interpretations have tended to concentrate on Bayle’s religious beliefs, and what I am interested in here is the way that the formal structure of his work functioned for his readers.
layer of conviction and assurance . . . leav[ing] the reader thoroughly perplexed” (Popkin XXII). Instead, the form as well as the content of the *Dictionary* suggest, Bayle was principally interested in teaching his readers to develop a specific kind of reading practice—a critical, analytical and imaginative reading practice that depended not only on logical thinking but also upon imaginative leaps that would allow readers to discern the secret links that lurked beneath the surface, in seeming digressions, in the footnotes, in the cross-references, in the use of analogies. The reading practice that Bayle’s *Dictionary* seems to require casts that encyclopedia not as a simple work of reference to be consulted for discrete facts, but as a kind of “game,” as Darnton described the *Encyclopédie*. In fact, Bayle provides his readers with some direction on how to keep track of their progress in this game. In the “Advertisement Concerning the Second French Edition” (included in all of the English translations), Bayle advises the reader who “meets with anything worth remembering” to “see whether it be found in the Table; and if it be not, ‘tis but Marking it themselves in the Margin of the Table, under the word which they think most convenient, or on a Paper by it self.” As this table was extremely minimal, and referred only to the main headings of entries, it is extremely unlikely that everything worth remembering would be found there. The reader then, as in Diderot’s *Encyclopédie*, was in some sense responsible for codifying the secret organization of this encyclopedia, for compiling its index on “a Paper by it self.”

While Diderot’s and Bayle’s works require very similar reading practices of their readers, there are differences. Diderot frankly admitted the use of cross-references for devious purposes, while Bayle did so only surreptitiously; on the other hand, Diderot was less explicit than Bayle when it came to modeling exactly how an accomplished reader would
approach the secrets of the text. Still, the desire to teach the reader to discover these secrets seems to me to be the driving principle behind the form of both of these texts.

**Dunton's The Ladies Dictionary (1694)**

John Dunton was born in Huntingdonshire in 1659. His father was a third-generation orthodox clergyman who expected his son to follow in his footsteps. However, Dunton did not prove a very apt student: in his autobiography, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton*, he says: “My father tried all the methods with me that could be thought of, in order to reconcile my mind to the love of Learning, but all of them proved useless and ineffectual” (*L&E* 16). Instead, at age 15 Dunton was apprenticed to Thomas Parkhurst, a Presbyterian bookseller. Things did not start off well for this venture either: Dunton returned home without his father’s permission. His father quickly sent him back to Parkhurst with a letter asking his friend to take in his son again; and although Dunton had to wait a month until an apprenticeship with Parkhurst was again available (another apprentice having been taken during Dunton’s absence), Parkhurst eventually accepted him back, and Dunton went on to complete his apprenticeship in 1681 when he was 21. Dunton celebrated this completion with the flair (or eccentricity) that he would carry into his publications: he “invited a hundred Apprentices to celebrate a *Funeral* for it” (*L&E* 50).

Dunton set up shop in the market quarter of London; the first book he published was *The Lord’s Last Sufferings*, by the dissenting Reverend Thomas Doolittle (1682). He used this book to barter with other booksellers, and soon had a shop filled with various books to sell. In the same year, he fell in love with Elizabeth Annesley, the daughter of a dissenting minister. The two exchanged love letters signed “Philaret” (Dunton) and “Iris” (Elizabeth),
and in August they were married. Dunton's main publications at this time were pieces of devotional literature written by nonconformists.

In 1685, Dunton left Iris (to whose calm stability and business sense Dunton attributed his success) to mind the shop, while he went to New England. In *The Life and Errors*, Dunton suggests that he undertook this trip in an attempt to recover 500 pounds that was owed him by New England customers, and because he needed to hide from creditors as a result of having signed as surety "at several times, for about 1200 £" for one of Elizabeth's sister's debts (*LeE* 104). However, McEwen suggests that the real reasons for Dunton's "rambles" (as Dunton called them) may have been religious and political, for he was a well-known sympathizer with Dissenters, and there is some evidence that he supported Monmouth (9).33

In 1686 Dunton returned home to London, but his troubles forced him to stay at home or else go out in disguise as a woman: "this Contrivance was started in my Head, that dear Iris should dress me in Womens Clothes... I got my self shaved, and put on as effeminate a look at my countenance would let me; and being well fitted out with a large scarf, I set forward" (*LeE* 197-8). After ten months of this house arrest, Dunton managed to escape to the continent, where he remained until the Glorious Revolution and the reign of William and Mary.

Between 1688 and 1698, Dunton's career flourished; he was publishing at a pace that puts him in league with two leading publishers of his day, Edmund Curll and Robert

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33 In July 1683, Dunton had been arrested for allegedly publishing a sermon in support of the Rye House Plot (a plot to allow the duke of Monmouth, a Protestant bastard son of Charles II, to succeed the throne). Dunton denied the charges before Charles II and was released (Geoglein 103).
Dodsley. Books that he published in this period included several books of "dying speeches" of Protestant radicals, other miscellanies, political biographies, and news sheets or newsletters. In 1691, he published two pseudonymous works: Religio Bibliopolae, the supposed memoirs of a Benjamin Bridgewater, and meant to be associated with Sir Thomas Browne's Religio Medici (1642); and A Voyage Round the World, the supposed autobiography of a Don Kainophilus, which begins with a first chapter entitled, "Of my Rambles before I came into my Mother's Belly, and while I was there" (qtd. in Goeglein, 105).

In 1691, Dunton also began publishing The Athenian Mercury. The idea for the periodical was all his own, as Dunton reports:

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34 Dunton was certainly a prolific publisher. "The Term Catalogues list 37 publications by Dunton between June, 1693 and June, 1694. However, the advertisement bound in with The Compleat Library for July - November, 1693, lists 62 books as 'lately printed for John Dunton' and 9 more in press" (Noyes, fn 8, 131). In all, Dunton claimed to have printed six hundred books, and of those, he knew "but of seven I am angry at" (Life 222): "The second Spira——The Post Boy Rob'd of his Mail——The Voyage round the World——The New Quevedo——The Pastor's Legacy——Heavenly Pastime——The Hue and cry after Conscience" (Life 223). Dunton advised everyone who owned these seven books "to burn 'em" (Life 223). Parks believes that even given Dunton's proclivity towards exaggeration, the total number of books published may well have approached 600. However, only a fraction of these texts are extant. Parks's checklist names 185 "publications originated by Dunton" in the 1690s, in addition to 29 "new editions of older works" (43-44). These publication figures place Dunton in league with Edmund Curll and Robert Dodsley, two leading booksellers of the eighteenth century. "In forty years in the book trade, 1706-1746, Curll published over 1,000 items; Dodsley, in 35 years, 1729-1764, issued over 900. . . . Curll and Dodsley, it must be remembered, profited from a rapidly growing reading public, in the country as well as in London, which had only begun to develop in the 1690s when Dunton flourished, his activities confined almost entirely to the metropolis of London" (44-45; Parks takes his figures from Marjorie Plant's The English Book Trade (London, 1939), p. 90).

35 See McEwen 13-14 for an account of the kinds of newsletters Dunton published. McEwen argues that Dunton did not just spontaneously launch into The Athenian Mercury, but instead "was drawn gradually into the publication of news and periodicals. . . . [The founding of The Athenian Mercury] was preceded by several years of experience in testing the wants of the reading public in seventeenth-century London" (13).

36 Sterne acknowledged taking many of his ideas for Tristram Shandy from Dunton's A Voyage Round the World, and when republished in 1762, Dunton's Voyage was rebilled as The Life, Travels and Adventures, of Christopher Wagstaff, Gentleman, Grandfather to Tristram Shandy (Parks 50).

37 The periodical was first published as The Athenian Gazette: Or Casuistical Mercury, Resolving all the most Nice and Curious Questions proposed by the Ingenious. It changed its name to The Athenian Mercury after the two numbers, however: "The London Gazette, published weekly by the office of the Secretaries of State, had objected to Dunton's appropriation of the 'official' part of its title" (McEwen 28).
the Athenian Society had their first meeting in my Brain—so it has been kept ever since religiously SECRET: But now I'll oblige the Reader with a true Discovery of the Question-Project. . . I had receiv'd a very flaming Injury, which was so loaded with Aggravations, that I cou'd scarce get over it. . . sometimes I thought to make Application to some Divine [to resolve the issue], but how to conceal my self and the ungrateful Wretch, was the Difficulty. Whilst this perplexity remain'd upon me, I was one Day walking. . . and Mr. Larkin, and Mr. Harris were along with me, and on a sudden I made a Stop, and said, Well Sirs, I have a Thought I'll not exchange for Fifty Guineas; they smil'd, and were very urgent with me to DISCOVER it, but they cou'd not get it from me. The first rude Hint of it, was no more than a confus'd Idea of concealing the Querist and answering his Question (L&É 248-49).

Dunton's was a secret well-worth hiding: The Athenian Mercury proved "the best-known and longest-lived of all seventeenth-century periodicals" (McEwen 3); it laid the groundwork for eighteenth-century periodicals including the Tatler and the Spectator, and was the first use of the club framework in such a periodical. J. Paul Hunter even suggests that The Athenian Mercury "may have contributed to the beginnings of the English novel in a variety of ways" (14). The twice-weekly periodical solicited questions from readers, which an anonymous team of writers answered. This team included Dunton, his brother-in-law, Richard Sault, and Samuel Wesley, an ordained priest of the Church of England. While Sault handled the questions on mathematics, surveying, history and astronomy, and Wesley handled those on religion, history, and literature, they divided between them questions on courtship, marriage, social behavior, apparitions, witchcraft and the marvelous. In the second number of the Mercury, the editors emphasized the propriety of their enterprise, undertaking to "answer

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38 The Athenian Mercury ran from 17 March 1690/91 until June 1697.

39 This club framework did not exist at the outset of publication. Two months into the publication, Dunton began to hint that a form group was responsible for the answers to questions, and a year later he announced that this learned society was called "The Athenian Society" (Hunter 13). Jonathan Swift was evidently taken in by the pretence: his Ode to the Athenian Society—Swift's first poem to be published in England—was included in the Fifth Supplement (1692). When he learned that Dunton was behind the enterprise, Swift seriously regretted this laudatory Ode. Dunton had earlier backed out of an agreement to print a history of England that Swift was to write (it had been planned by his patron, Sir William Temple).
only what is a fitting Entertainment for the Ingenious, or what does consist with Faith and Good Manners” (qtd in McEwen 26). While occasionally a number contained questions all relating to a specific topic, the majority of them contained a variety of questions, mainly casuistical questions about unusual situations. Number One contained the answers to seven questions: “three about the soul, and one each about good and bad angels, wife-beating, and the origin of spots on the moon” (McEwen 29). Some questions were entirely facetious, and the answers were intended merely to entertain the readers.

In 1692, Dunton published the first issue of *The Young Students’ Library*. Designed as a series of supplements the *Athenian Mercury*, the Library “would compile translations from Continental journals and extracts from books published since 1665” (Goeglein 108). Dunton again used the strategy of compiling extracts into a single volume in *The Ladies Dictionary* (1694). Although published under the pseudonym of “N.H.,” *The Ladies Dictionary* has been attributed to Dunton based largely on internal evidence, including its mixture of the useful with the entertaining, its breezy style, eccentric organization, and appeal to a wide audience (Noyes 130-31).

Although frequently mentioned, *The Ladies Dictionary* has been very little studied. Critics have variously dismissed the text as a “mediocre” product of a “literary assembly line” that suffers from a “lack of system” and a “lack of taste.” From one perspective, these

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40 Critics who have mentioned *The Ladies Dictionary* include Nancy Armstrong and Barbara Benedict. In *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, for example, Armstrong cites Dunton’s text as an example of the increase in number and variety of ladies’ conduct books in the late 17th century (62); and in *Making the Modern Reader*, Benedict characterizes *The Ladies Dictionary* as a kind of double-edged sword, mobilizing the “trope of a linguistic guide for a concealed, female discourse.” In other words, Benedict reads the Dictionary both as a satire against the “fair sex” to whom it is dedicated, and as an “escape from the meanings attached to the dominant discourse, be this political, masculine, or moral” (57). Others have found very little to praise in Dunton’s text itself. Collison, for example, dismisses both the text and its author with a single sentence: “the eccentric English bookseller John Dunton (1659-1733) issued in 1694 his *Ladies’ dictionary* which, apart from its being addressed to a section of the public that had been overlooked since the days of the Abbess Herrad, had no other merit” (96). Tamara A. Goeglein calls Dunton’s text “a mediocre collection of pieces pitched for a
criticisms are certainly well-deserved. Although The Ladies Dictionary defines "DICTIONARY" as a "storehouse of words orderly digested and explained" (169), the text is riddled with irregularities, and seems anything but "orderly" and "digested." The text contains many examples of what appears to be inattention or sloppiness: the pagination is extremely erratic, and information is often repeated. For example, an entry entitled "CHAMBER MAIDS, to Persons of Quality" is immediately followed by one entitled "CHAMBER-MAIDS to Persons of Honour or Quality, or Gentlewomen, either in City or Country," which (as even the headings suggest) is a slightly more extended but substantially identical entry, employing many of the exact phrases and recommendations of its antecedent (91). Further, information presented in one entry often directly conflicts with information presented in another. For example, a seven-and-a-half-column entry entitled "HAIR, Red, its Vindication from the Censure and Reproach it undergoes, proving it as Beautiful and Ornamental as any other Colour" lists beauties of former ages admired for their red tresses, suggests that the hair and beard of Jesus Christ were red, and that red hair most closely resembles the "Excellencies of the Creation," including fire, the Sun, and precious minerals (214). The article suggests that those who pretend to despise red hair are certainly guilty of "a Grand Affront upon the female audience" (109), and Stephen Parks calls it "yet another project of Dunton's literary assembly-line" (61).

John E. Mason seems to find fault with the content of the text—"although the importance of religion and learning is recognized, not much space is devoted to these subjects"—as well as with the fact that much of the text has been borrowed from other sources: "the author admits that he has consulted well-known authorities, and his indebtedness to Haberdash and The Lady's Calling is particularly obvious" (my emphasis, 208). Gertrude E. Noyes calls the text "a literary mosaic in which are pieced together, often maladroitly, information on and sentiments about women from practically every work of the century which specifically discussed that subject" (131), a mosaic that suffers from both a "lack of system" and a "lack of taste" (129).

41 And as Noyes notes, Dunton's dictionary does not even very well fulfill its own definition of a dictionary: it "deals with topics and ideas rather than with words. Instead of definitions, one finds discussions, debates, essays, letters, characters, and anecdotes" (129). In other words, it more closely resembles our idea of an encyclopedia than it does a dictionary.

42 Although the last page in the text is numbered 528, with several large chunks of page numbers being repeated twice, the actual number of pages is some 730.
Supream Creatour" (214), and are most probably jealous of the "fair, Soft and Clear Skins...as also a perpetual Spring... of Roses and Lillies blooming in [the] Cheeks" of those with red hair (216). "[W]e declare, Ladies," the article concludes, "we highly approve of this Colour" (216). However positive this conclusion, the sentiments expressed in a later entry entitled "PERFECT BEAUTY" are of an entirely different conviction. Of the color of a woman’s hair, the speaker here says

‘tis indifferent to me which of the three [fair, brown, or in between] they be, provided the Hair be very long, and thick, loose, cleanly kept, and a very little frizz’d or curled in rings; but above all that it be not red, nor come near that tincture. For it were disadvantageous to them to have all the other species of Beauty, if they are of that colour. I have a natural antipathy against it, insomuch, that I oftentimes betake myself to my heels, when I spy it: not but they are usually accompanied with a pure skin, for which I have great inclination; but the aversion I have for the one, makes me abandon the other (365).

In addition to these examples of what seem to be editorial errors, the text also has an extremely unusual organizational system. The alphabetization is informal: although words beginning with the same letter are grouped together (in other words, all words beginning with A are found at the beginning of the text), their second and subsequent letters are not taken into account in the order of their presentation (in other words, "Attire of Men" can easily precede "Anger in Ladies"). Further, information is not always listed under the most obvious heading. For instance, "EXAMPLES of Female Courage, Constancy, and many other singular Virtues"—a roster of fifteen women and their virtuous acts—is found under E, rather than under C for "courage" or "constancy," or V for "virtue." "QUERY OF sundry Kinds, relating to the Fair Sex"—a hodgepodge of questions and answers ranging from "Why women are smoother and fairer than men?" (because they are of a colder and moister constitution) to "Why is women
wit upon a sudden, a start, or turn, pregnant, and exceeding mens; but in weightier matters, upon mature deliberation, not so solid or substantial?" (because women are encumbered with fewer cares)—appears under Q (423-26). However, one cannot always rely on finding similar or related information in such close proximity. For example, one can find information about Cook Maids and Chamber Maids—logically enough, perhaps—under the Cs. Information about laundry maids, house maids, and scullery maids, on the other hand, can be found not in the Ls, Hs, and Ss, but all together in the Ms, under “MAIDS, (Laundry) in Great Houses,” “MAIDS, (House) in Great Houses,” and “MAIDS, (Scullery) in Great Houses” (326-27). Instructions for “DAIRY MAIDS” can be found (somewhat inexplicably) in the Us, following “UNDER COOK MAIDS,” although readers are directed to this particular entry in the entry on “DAIRIES” (153-54). Additional information on maids can be found in entries such as “SERVANTS FEMALE” (473-78) and “TABLE BEHAVIOUR” (420). Given such irregularities as I have listed here, it is easy to understand why so many critics have dismissed this text out of hand.

One critic, however, has attempted to make some sense of the text’s structure. In the only study of The Ladies Dictionary that runs to more than seven sentences, Gertrude Noyes has plausibly accounted for these inconsistencies by suggesting that the dictionary is “the product of a group” (131). Noyes posits a system in which first Dunton identified

41 This is not the only instance of such conflicting sentiments. Another example involves face-painting. While in some entries (including “ARTIFICIAL BEAUTY” (38-39), PAINTING THE FACE” (360-64) and “LOVE SPOTS” (260)) the practice is condemned, in others (such as in “PAINTING” (409-415)) it is defended.

44 A nearly identical entry for Scullery Maids may be found in the “S”s (453).

45 Such cross-references, I should note, are few and far between—this is one of only a handful that I noticed while reading through the text, and some of these are more helpful than others. While an entry on “SUCCUBUS” might direct you to “INCUBUS,” or an entry on “VICTORIA” might tell you to turn to page 404 for another entry (457), a short entry on “SAPPHO” might run thus: “SAPPHO, stil’d for her curious Verse, the tenth Muse, but her wanton way of Writing hindered much of the Merit of them. Of her see more” (444). Of course, we don’t know where to turn for more on Sappho, and we have to leaf through another forty pages before we come across “SAPPHO, Sappho, a Poetess of Mytilene” (482).
"practically every work of the century which specifically discussed" women, and then assigned each of these works to one of several compilers. Each compiler then extracted and distilled this information, submitting copy to be culled into the final work (131). These individual entries are arranged, letter by letter, according to the same basic system. Each letter opens with a series of short biographies of women, probably based on such biographical dictionaries as Estienne, Moréri and Heywood. For example, "F" begins with "FABIA, a Beam" and "FAITH, a Name commonly used" (190), and continues with several slightly longer entries such as

**FAULTA**, the Wife of **Constantine** the Great, falling in Love with **Crispus** her Husband's Son by another Wife, and he refusing to comply with her Lustful desires she accus'd him of attempting her Chastity, whereupon without Examination he was put to death; but the Wickedness coming afterwards to light, the Emperor caus'd her to be stifled in a hot Bath (191).

The Fs contain in total seventeen such short biographies, and this is approximately the same number included for each letter. After these short biographies "follow miscellaneous topics discussed at some length and borrowed from various sources" (Noyes 144). This "miscellaneous" mid-section comprises the bulk of each letter's entries. Finally, Noyes argues, each letter concludes with a series of items "derived verbatim" from Blount's *Glossographia* and inserted in block form, followed by a block of entries from Coles's *English Dictionary* (132). At the end of the As, for example, entries from "AFFINITY" to "ANCHORESS" are taken from Blount, and this block is followed by entries from "ABEA" to

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46 The majority of Noyes's article is devoted to enumerating the Dunton's chief sources for his dictionary. They include: Steven Blankart's *Lecicon medicum*, translated into English in 1683 as *A Physical Dictionary*; Thomas Blount's *Glossographia* (1656); Elisha Coles's *English Dictionary* (1676); Charles Estienne's *Dictionarium Historicum, Geographicum, Poeticum, etc.* (1553, revised in 1686 by Nicholas Lloyd); Louis Moréri's *Grand Dictionnaire Historique* (1674); Thomas Heywood's *Generall History of Women* (1624); Mary Evelyn's *Mundus Multiceps; Or, The Ladies' Dressing Room Unlock'd* (1690); Thomas Fuller's *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642); *The Ladies Calling* (Anonymous, 1667); George Savile, First Marquis of Halifax's *A Lady's New Year's Gift* (1688); as well as a great deal of material from *The Athenian Mercury*. 48
“AUTONOC” from Coles (132, fn. 10 and 12). Following the entries from Blount and Coles, the “compiler then deals summarily with a few additional names of classical women and goes on to B” (144). Noyes concludes that Dunton’s erratic alphabetization results from the fact that the entries from each source have been inserted intact into the text, retaining their original alphabetization without regard to preceding or subsequent blocks of entries.

Noyes’s explanation seems to work especially well for the final entries for a letter of the alphabet, those entries transferred directly from Blount and Coles. However, Noyes’s account is a much more vague about the “miscellaneous” mid-sections of each alphabet, the sections that comprise the bulk of the entries for each letter. And it is these mid-sections of the alphabets that I find most curious and interesting. These mid-sections, I will argue, are miscellaneous only when looked at through a certain kind of logic—the kind of overt logic that Noyes seems to expect. In fact, I believe that these mid-sections of each letter of the alphabet in Dunton’s dictionary are guided by a secret logic, and are meant to be read using practices similar to those for the *Encyclopédie* and for Bayle’s *Dictionary* that I have attempted to articulate above.

*The Ladies Dictionary’s* dedicatory letter supports this theory, emphasizing the fact that the *Dictionary* is held together by secret principles. In this preface—in fact in the first sentence of the preface, a position which serves to emphasize the importance of the characterization—*The Ladies Dictionary* is characterized “as a *SECRET ORACLE*, to Consult in all difficult Cases” ([ii]). In other words, this dictionary was not meant to be perused hastily for information on specific topics. As I have shown already, the form and organization of

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47 Later in this dedicatory letter, Dunton further emphasizes the secret nature of the information contained within the dictionary: the material comes “from the PRIVATE MEMOIRS of Madam——–, a Person well known to all the World, for being both Exact and Curious in those Matters, of which my DICTIONARY Treats,” as well as other “SECRETS received from Ladies of the best Quality.”
the text specifically precludes its use in such a manner. Instead, the form and organization—and I think I am right to insist on trying to see the apparent disorganization and chaos as form and organization—are specifically suited for use as a “Secret Oracle.” An “Oracle,” according to the *OED*, is generally defined as a “response, decision, or message,” usually divine in origin, “for the most part obscure or ambiguous.” Noyes and other critics are wrong when they find it “inexcusable” that “Dunton did not reduce . . . the whole to better form” (131). There is form here—it is simply not what we have come to expect. The apparent disorganization can thus be read as a deliberate choice, the chaos of form serving to invite the reader to impose some form or order, and indeed to emphasize the desperate need for such an idea of order. Just as an oracle’s message is a sort of secret which requires pondering, sensitivity, and intuition to understand, so too does Dunton’s text: readers were meant to consult the *Ladies Dictionary* as they would an oracle, and to make their own meaning of the strange juxtapositions they found there. Readers were expected to learn a lesson about creating form and meaning from “secret” chaos, a lesson in etching out a circle of learning.

A variety of examples will help to illustrate my point. The connections between some entries are fairly obvious. “CONCEPTION, The Signs to know it, and whether Male or Female; and of false Conception” for example, immediately precedes “CHASTITY, art thou fled from Christians, to Pagans?”—an entry in which even sex between partners in marriage seems to be suspect: “The Ancients….thought the same difference to be between Matrimony, and Virginity, that is betwixt to Sin and not to Sin, good and better” (126-32). An entry phrased almost as a
question directed to an oracle,48 "FRIENDSHIP, between two Persons of a different Sex cannot be innocent?"—an entry that responds with the answer is that yes, it can be innocent—immediately precedes an entry on "FORNICATION" (193).

Such examples of pairs of entries such as these, pairs that seem to operate on a point-counterpoint logic, are easy to locate in the mid-letter sections of The Ladies Dictionary, as are sequences of entries that operate upon more complex and subtle terms. For example, a series that ultimately lends further evidence to Catherine Gallagher's fascinating argument that Aphra Behn, at least in the first part of her career, successfully exploited a link in the public's mind between poetesses and prostitution,49 runs from PAINTING, or colouring a Lady's face, to repair by Art the Defects of Nature, defended; ... (409-15); to PATCHES defended... (415-16);50 to POETESSES (416-20); to PROSTITUTES (420-21). I argue that this sequence of entries, like many others contained in the mid-sections of Dunton's alphabet, is held together by secret connections that the reader was meant to discover for him- or herself. On the surface, this sequence of four entries on Painting, Patching, Poetesses, and Prostitutes appears to be tied together by an interest in performance or self-presentation, in a sort of distancing between the "real" self and the self one presents to the world. On a deeper lever, though, I believe that these entries are connected by a shared interest in secret kinds of communication. In other words, these entries thematize and emphasize the very kinds of reading strategies that I

48 The question-and-answer format of this entry suggests that Dunton may have lifted it directly from his Athenian Mercury.

49 See Nobody's Story, Chapters 1 and 2.

50 Patches were a beauty fashion that began in the sixteenth century. These black shapes, cut from silk, velvet, or paper, were applied to the face. Originally small spots meant to imitate Venus's beauty spot, the practice of patching gradually grew more elaborate. A prominent marquise is reported to have appeared at a party wearing sixteen patches on her face, one in the shape of a tree in which two love birds were perched. For more on this fashion, see Corson's Fashions in Makeup.
am arguing are required by the dictionary as a whole. When read together, these entries add up to a sum that goes beyond what could be discerned from reading them separately.

The article defending face-painting begins by suggesting that to improve upon nature by painting one's face is no different from a physician improving sickness and pain: "Physicians, and even Midwives...must give over their Professions," its author argues, "if to assist Nature, or help her Imperfections by Art" is an unpardonable crime (410). The article thus defends the application of makeup by likening it to a profession on par with midwifery or medicine. However, what is quite surprising is that after thus introducing face painting as a profession, one presumably learned through practice and study, the entry abruptly shifts to a discussion of divine inspiration, recalling the invocation of the "secret oracle" in the preface. The article explains that God speaks to us in two ways: the "Voice of God" speaks to us from within, counseling us to preserve ourselves from "Evils either falling or resting upon us"; and God also sends us outward signs—"those silent Intimations, or blinder Characters we read in Providential Events; which may admit of various Interpretations or Readings" (410). Face painting, the article thus directly implies, is a way of communicating with God, a "serving and obeying" of the inward voices and outward signs that He sends us. Those who do not change their surface appearance with cosmetics exhibit how untuned they are to deeper, oracular communication with God. (And I think that an implicit link is being drawn here between those who do not paint and those who do not know how to "read"—either providential events or Dunton's text—properly.)

The next entry on Patching takes the woman's-face-as-oracle conceit a step further. The article suggests that a woman might cut her Patches into Stars, [that] they may improve her serious thoughts by minding her as often as she looks on them, of the place to which she is desirous to go. If into
Flys, they Emblem to her the Lightness, Vanity, and short duration of things in this World. Or suppose they be cut into the Form of little Worms, then they may put her upon Meditations of Death and the Grave, where those Insects are to be her Companions (415).

Thus the woman’s face becomes very literally a vehicle for that contemplation and secret, oracular communication conceived in the preceding entry.

These two entries on Painting and Patching seem to be surprisingly supportive of a woman’s right to adorn her face—a practice which was otherwise being condemned from the pulpit and in periodical essays. Further, these two entries seem to suggest that because women engage in a kind of secret communication on a daily basis when they paint and patch, they may be particularly adept at the kind of communication and reading practices engaged and encouraged by encyclopedias like Dunton’s. However, if you read only these two entries, you would be missing half of the story, for the subsequent entries on Poetesses and Prostitutes continue to refine this theme of secret communication. The entry on Poetesses cites Plato and Aristotle to defend its claim that poetry proceeds “not immediately from the Effects of Learning, nor a large understanding,” but instead from “Imagination” and “Inspiration,” as a “Divine Revelation” from God (416). We are reminded that the “Heathen Oracles gave all, or most of their Answers in Verse” (417). So rather than as a process of hard work, intellect, revision, and learning, this entry casts poetry as an oracular mode of communication, and the poet as an unlearned channeling agent. This characterization of poetry as an art fit for those of limited learning and understanding paves the way for such sentiments as: “in this Art, that has foiled and puzzled a number of Wise and Learned men, the Fair Sex has been very famous” (417). As readers, we are unsure how to take this comment: given the seemingly supportive entries on painting and patching, it is possible to read this comment as a compliment to women and their poetic abilities.
However, it may just as easily be read as an insult: women are neither wise nor learned, and so fit only for composing poetry, and then only when divinely inspired.

The final entry in this sequence—the entry on “Prostitutes”—colors the three entries that preceded it, making perfectly clear what had been relatively ambiguous. This entry very clearly states that prostitutes are extremely dangerous precisely because they are masters of the secretive kinds of communication that have been described earlier. Prostitutes are expert in manipulating both verbal and non-verbal communication. In describing the relationship between a prostitute and her “gull,” we learn that when “he speaks of love, she looks so strangely as if she heard a miracle” (420); and when he “presents her with rich gifts... she (with a pitiful look) condescends to exclaiming against Fortune for subduing her to man; when, God knows, she hath been as common as the Highway” (420-21). Here, the strong denunciation of a prostitute’s ability not only to tell but to look a lie certainly undermines the support of painting and patching in the preceding entries. The entry on prostitutes concludes with warnings from scripture, all centering on the dangers that can drip from a harlot’s mouth: we are warned that “The mouth of a strange woman, or an harlot, is as a deep pit”; and that “Albeit the lips of an harlot drop as an bony comb; and the roof of her mouth be softer then oyl; yet her latter end is bitter as wormwood, and as sharp as a two-edged sword” (421).

Indeed, this sequence of four entries works as a two-edged sword: while it begins in support of painting and patching, it ultimately condemns not only what drops from the lips of harlots but also from the lips of poetesses and from the faces of women who paint and patch. Paradoxically, while the sequence calls attention to the secret reading practices required of its readers, it also serves to condemn those reading and communication practices, at least when they are practiced by women.
This last entry on prostitutes, then, acts much as the cross-references that d’Alembert describes in the French Encyclopédie. While the first three entries draw us along, making us think that we understand the relationships that exist between entries, this final entry “attacks, shakes and secretly reverses” what we originally thought. But the really important thing is that all of the entries are indisputably related to one another, and reading this sequence carefully has helped to reinforce this in our minds. This sequence of entries has forced us to work hard to connect entries, to come a step closer to tracing our own circle of learning.

Further, I believe that this sequence of entries reveals a certain anxiety on the part of Dunton, a wish to keep encyclopedia-writing, if not encyclopedia-reading, within the male zone of authority. In other words, if women might by their very nature or such daily habits of painting and patching be better prepared for the kind of secret reading practices required by these encyclopedias, then they might also be better prepared for writing such texts. By associating painting, patching and poetesses with prostitutes, Dunton launches a searing, if somewhat secretive, attack on any woman who might consider writing her own encyclopedia.

Another amazing (and much longer) sequence that seems to encourage readers to discern the secret logic by which it is governed occurs in the midst of the Ns. This sequence begins with “NIGHT-WALKERS AND DIVERS” (303-05). After a few tips on recognizing street-walkers, the text goes on to relate an incident in which a man and his associates enter a “House of Goodfellowship”(303); each procures a withdrawing room and a mistress. The man, however, discovers that the prostitute to whom he has been assigned is his own wife. After much mutual embarrassment, the wife delivers a long, moral speech designed to bring the
man back home to enjoy natural and lawful love. However, the hardened man merely answers her “with a disgraceful and uncivil kick” (305). This entry is followed by one on “NATURAL MODESTY and affection” (305-07). The heading alone of this entry is enough to make the reader feel that uncivil kick of the unnatural husband all the more strongly, and the theme of nakedness, or at least over-exposure of the female body, completes the link of this entry to the previous one. “NATURAL MODESTY and affection” turns out to be a long list of women both extremely modest and extremely affectionate of their husbands. King Candaules, for example, vainly arranged to expose his naked queen to a favorite courtier so that the courtier might see and envy the glories that the king possessed. When the queen discovered the trick, she asked her husband to kill the courtier. When he refused, she asked the courtier to kill the king she loved deeply, being unwilling to have two living witnesses of her nakedness. In another of the stories contained in this entry, an Indian serving girl sees fit to kill herself after bending over to pick up something she had dropped and immodestly exposing herself to those she was serving. Another wife secured herself to her husband with her girdle, and then leapt with him off a cliff because he suffered from incurable pain. I think that these first two entries in the sequence are linked together in at least two kinds of ways: one titillating (the undercurrent of nakedness running throughout) and one moral (surely diving off a cliff with a husband seems to be the moral cousin of diving into a brothel in an attempt to rescue one’s husband).

This sequence of entries continues with one entitled “NAKED BREASTS” (307-10), again turning upon titillating nakedness. This entry turns out to be mainly a tirade against women who expose their breasts too much, especially in church. Entries on “NUNS, their Institutions” (310) and “NUNNERY, a College of NUNS” (310-11) follow this diatribe, and a
reader at first glance might surmise that the sequence is once again working on the familiar point-counterpoint model. However, both entries on nuns stress the fact that while nunneries were commenced out of "something extraordinary of Devotion... at length [the institution] has degenerated and corrupted, for no Cloyster or Stone-wall can keep out Laciveous thoughts where the mind is impure, for Love and Lust will find a way to be satisfied, even in these retirements" (311). Coming as it does in about the middle of the sequence, this proves a good opportunity to link back to the entry that began the sequence: both nightwalkers and nuns, we have learned, are connected by their lasciviousness.

This amazing sequence of entries continues with an entry on "NOSE, Remedies for such Vices as are Incident to it" follows (311-12), providing various recipes designed to heal unseemliness in noses, since beauty "loves to have the Nose ('tho but the sink of the brain to convey from it what is noxious) kept clean and handsome, as well as the other parts, which are designed for more Honorable uses" (311). In the foregoing context, one cannot really be sure if one is reading about keeping noses or something else clean and free from vice. (What modern reader does not think of *Tristram Shandy*?) The following three articles, "NIPPLES, their Caps and Soreness, how to remedy" (312), "NAILS, to Remedy the Vices incident to them" (312-13), and "NECK, How to Beautify, &c."(313-14) offer more recipes and remedies, with the naked body of the previous entries in the sequence, of course, lurking just below the surface. These entries are then followed by "NAKEDNESS, an ornament to women, or a persuasion by way of Paradox, to renew the first fashion in going naked" (314-18). This entry, purportedly written by a woman upset with her tailor for ruining her mantua, suggests as a "paradox...not unpleasant in the perusal" that women would be more beautiful if they went naked all of the time, and didn't bother with the nuisance of clothing. This entry colors in
retrospect the tone of all that has gone before, makes it all seem pleasant, a game for
developing reading skill. This secret logic of this sequence reaches its mark, however, with an
entry entitled “NATURE considered in her wonderful Operations in the producing of mankind, and
other things” (318-23). This entry, which begins in praise of the “Order and Harmony” of the
universe, quickly turns to a discussion of a doubtful instance of this order and harmony: a
hermaphrodite. This article brings the series of discussions about female nakedness to its
pinnacle, for in it a woman who is troubled by a “puzzlement that happened in her person,
which made her be taken for a man” is submitted to two complete examinations by
physicians to determine her “real” sex, and she is petitioning to avoid a third, and to be
allowed to return to wearing female clothing.

Although I am arguing here that, at least in large chunks of entries located in what
Noyes called the “miscellaneous” mid-sections of each letter, Dunton’s text is governed by a
secret logic that it is left up to the reader to construct—much as in Diderot’s Encyclopédie and
in Bayle’s Dictionary. However, Dunton shows even more reluctance than Diderot to teach
and model for his readers the necessary reading practices to make sense of his text. Indeed,
in both of the longer sequences I have highlighted here, Dunton seems to be deliberately
trying to trip the reader up, leading the reader in one direction, and then taking the entry in
an entirely different one. In some sense, the “game” here was for readers to test their wits
against the wits of “N.H.,” to see if they could follow his train of thought, in some sense
reconstruct his personality.¹¹ While Bayle’s dictionary leaves the reader with the impression

¹¹ Many other critics have noted that in all of Dunton’s work, his personality seems to leap off the
page and seems to be a primary motive for writing. Day has gone so far as to suggest that Dunton embodies
“the arrival on the scene of a new kind of writer—Typographic Man” (126). And Dunton’s text is only one of
many of the eighteenth century in which a chaos of form simultaneously reveals and invites the reader to
construct a personality. Consider Tristram Shandy, for example, or An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber (and note
that Dunton’s Life and Errors has been called a forerunner of Cibber’s autobiography (Parks 4)).
that he or she can, with practice, and with the help of the compiler, fathom the secrets his text contains, Dunton's text leaves the reader with the impression that while there is a secret logic binding entries together, the reader who attempts to anticipate this logic will be thwarted at every turn by the eccentric personality responsible for it.

**Smellie's *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1768-71)**

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* provides an interesting counterpoint to the other texts I have examined here, and so is a good text with which to end this examination of the secrets of eighteenth-century encyclopedias. While this encyclopedia explicitly adheres to the idea of a unified whole, its investment in this principle seems far less focussed than that of the other encyclopedias I have discussed. This may be partly due to the personality and circumstances of its compiler; but I suspect that it also may have to do with a waning optimism about the encyclopedic project as a whole.

Inspired by desires to capitalize on the success of the French *Encyclopédie*, to improve upon what they saw as its errors, and to construct a volume of national pride to equal that of the French and of the Italians, a "Society of Gentlemen of Scotland" undertook the project of a British encyclopedia. This society included Andrew Bell, an engraver whose forte until this point was engraving dog collars, who always rode the largest horse he could find despite his small stature (he was only four and a half feet tall, and mounted these horses with a ladder), and who would respond to people making fun of his large nose by donning an even larger paper mâché one (Kogan 8). His partner was Colin Macfarquhar, a sober,

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52 The *Nuovo dizionario, scientifico e curioso, sacro e profano* had been issued in twelve volumes between 1746-51.
scholarly printer who kept a keen eye out for profitable business ventures. These two businessmen chose for their editor the twenty-eight-year-old printer William Smellie, a man "as devoted to whiskey as to scholarship" (Kogan 9).

Smellie was born circa 1740, and had very nearly been apprenticed to an Edinburgh corset-maker at the age of twelve. However, because terms could not be agreed upon, Smellie was "preserved from the mortifying drudgery of scraping whalebone, and stitching coats of armour to force the female form into every shape save that of natural elegance" (Kerr I:20). Instead, he was apprenticed to Hamilton, Balfour and Neil, "then the foremost scholarly publishing house in Edinburgh, and . . . official printers for Edinburgh University" (Sher x). One unusual condition of his apprenticeship was that Smellie was allowed to attend college classes at the University of Edinburgh for three hours a day: the continuation of Smellie's formal education was evidently useful to Hamilton, Balfour and Neil as publishers of learned books (Kafker 147). In 1756 or 1757, based on his superior intelligence and eye for accuracy, these partners appointed Smellie corrector for the printing house, and raised his salary to ten shillings a week (in comparison to the three they were bound to pay according to the terms of the indenture, Kerr I:26). In 1757, Smellie set up and corrected himself a duodecimo edition of Terence, which won a prize offered by the Edinburgh Philosophical Society for the most accurate edition of a Latin classic (Kerr I:28-30).

In 1759, at the conclusion of his apprenticeship, Smellie took a position as corrector and editor of the *Scots Magazine* with the printing firm of Murray and Cochrane. In this position, as in his apprenticeship, Smellie was allowed to continue taking classes at the University of Edinburgh for three hours a day. During the course of apprenticeship and this first job, Smellie seems to have been able to take a full regular course at university, with
advanced classes in natural science and medicine. In 1760, Smellie founded the Newtonian Society, comprised mostly of young men with whom Smellie had taken university classes. Their principle interest was Natural Philosophy, and at each meeting a discourse was read by one of the members (Kerr I:65-67). Smellie read papers “on the telescope and microscope, on bees, on whether all animate and inanimate bodies are made for mankind, and on whether oratory is more useful than harmful” (Kafker 147). At about this time, Smellie also wrote and published several papers on the sexes of plants, in which he disagreed with some of the basic theories of Linneaus (Kogan 9). In 1763, Smellie married Jean Robertson. The two would eventually have thirteen children, ten of whom survived infancy.

These family responsibilities led Smellie to abandon his plan to become a physician or a clergyman, and instead he decided to set up as a master printer. In 1765, he left Murray and Cochrane, and formed a partnership with Robert and William Auld. Because of his scholarly background and his facility with languages, he was appointed one of two printers to the University of Edinburgh, responsible for printing, among other things, the medical dissertations, which were at that time written in Latin. At about the same time, Bell and Macfarquhar approached Smellie and asked him to compile the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Smellie agreed to prepare the entire encyclopedia on his own, including fifteen long articles or treatises on various sciences. For this, he was paid the sum of 200 pounds. Although the

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53 As Kafker points out, in Smellie's treatise on “Botany” in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, he accuses Linneaus almost of obscenity, because the “names of his classes, orders, etc. convey often the vilest and most unnatural ideas... Smellie objected to such statements as that, in the second class, one female is married to two males; in the thirteenth class, one female is married to as many as 20 to 1000 males; and in the thirteenth class, ‘the males have made a covenant with their testes’” (Kafker 160). Smellie preferred the theories of the French naturalist the Count de Buffon, whose *Histoire naturelle* he later (1781-93) translated into English (Kerr 117-74).

54 Although Smellie originally undertook to complete only fifteen of these longer treatises (Kerr I: 362), the first edition in fact contains many more than this.
title page of the first edition speaks of the author as a “Society of Gentlemen in Scotland,”
the Preface in the first volume speaks of “Editors” and “Compilers,” and the last page of the
set speaks of the “Editors,” there is no evidence that any one other than Smellie compiled or
composed this first edition (Kafker 149). Smellie wrote the long articles and shorter entries
himself, or else copied and abridged articles from a variety of printed sources in French,
English and Latin. Over 100 of these sources are listed at the end of the “Preface” in the
first volume, and they include the Encyclopédie and Bayle’s Dictionnaire. However, as Kafker
notes, there is very little evidence that Smellie actually consulted many of these sources
listed. They may have been listed largely for the sake of impression and credibility: “except
for the title ‘encyclopedia,’ we detect little influence of the Encyclopédie on the format or
content of the Britannica” (Kafker 150).

The Britannica has very few secrets for its readers to discover. The “Preface” is by far
the shortest of the four encyclopedias I have looked at in detail here: it consists of a mere
eight paragraphs on two pages. In it, Smellie describes one of these few secrets: the “new
plan” upon which the encyclopedia is constructed, which “differs from that of all the
Dictionaries of Arts and Sciences hitherto published, [which] . . . gives it a superiority over
the common method.” The plan is that rather than “dismembering the Sciences, by
attempting to treat them intelligibly under a multitude of technical terms, [the ‘compilers’]
have digested the principles of every science in the form of systems or distinct treatises, and
explained the terms as they occur in the order of the alphabet, with references to the
sciences to which they belong.” In other words, about one third of the pages in the set are

55 Kafker suggests that this pay “was neither generous nor paltry.” For at least three years of
compiling, Smellie received more than Diderot received for two years, although Diderot had a team of writers
and Smellie did not (Kafker 147-8).
comprised of long articles on the main sciences, set apart from the shorter entries by the fact that the title of these treatises runs the entire width of the page, across both columns.

Eighteen of these treatises consist of more than twenty five pages. The majority of the other articles, on the other hand, are very short, consisting of fewer than 15 lines.

Generally, the articles are written in a matter-of-fact, straightforward manner. As Kafker puts it, the discussion of various topics “is factual and technical, designed to inform rather than reform” (Kafker 157). Far from the political agenda of Diderot’s Encyclopédie, Smellie seems to avoid such political controversy at every turn, even when the opportunity seems especially ripe. “Bagpipe,” for example, seems a particularly complex topic for a Scotsman to be writing about in a British encyclopaedia. Yet despite the fact that the bagpipe had been banned, along with the tartan, after the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, in Smellie’s encyclopedia it is defined merely as “a musical instrument of the wind kind, chiefly used in country-places, especially in the North. It consists of two principal parts: the first a leathern bag... the other part consists of three pipes of flutes” (1:513).

And far from the religious bias evident in Bayle’s dictionary, a footnote to “Anabaptists” makes Smellie’s attempt to refrain from bias perfectly clear:

As we chuse to avoid every kind of misrepresentation especially in matters of religious opinion; and as the most genuine and satisfactory account of the origin and principles of any sect is to be expected themselves; we applied to the preachers of the Anabaptist congregation at Edinburgh, from whom we had the above account. — The same conduct will be observed with regard to every other sect of any note” (1:140).

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While it is certainly true that there are "literally hundreds of impartial articles on the Church," there are a few that disparage Catholicism, including "Host," "Purgatory," "Water," and "Inquisition." As Kafker notes, there is no evidence that Smellie actually consulted any other religious leaders for contributions to the encyclopedia (172).

In fact, there is very little evidence that Smellie consulted anyone else. Although Edinburgh was becoming the center of the Scottish Enlightenment, and was overflowing with able scholarly and scientific minds, Smellie does not seem to have followed Diderot's policy of recruiting others to contribute articles. Instead, while Smellie composed a fair number of the treatises and entries himself, he copied and abridged from other texts far more than he composed. Smellie's biographer and friend, Robert Kerr, claims that Smellie "used to say jocularly, that he had made a Dictionary of Arts and Sciences with a pair of scissors, clipping out from various books a quantum sufficit of matter for the printer" (Kerr I:362-3). Many scholars have traced the original text from which Smellie's identical or nearly identical abridgements have been taken. It is clear from Smellie's article "Abridgement" that he felt that abridgement of others' work was perfectly respectable, and much to be preferred over composing via digression and illustration of points:

The art of conveying much sentiment in a few words, is the happiest talent an author can be possessed of. This talent is peculiarly necessary in the present state of literature. . . . When an author hits upon a thought that pleases him, he is apt to dwell

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57 Kafker posits that this may have been because at only 30 years old, Smellie did not command the respect necessary to recruit such contributors. However, I believe that this theory is somewhat undercut by the fact that during or soon after the completion of the Britannica, Smellie was the member of many learned societies, including the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and the Crochallan Fencibles (which Smellie invited the poet Robert Burns to join in 1787), and would thus have had many opportunities to invite other to contribute. Kafker also suggests that the failure to recruit others may have been because Bell and Macfarquhar did not possess the capital to entice such contributors (180).

58 "Moral Philosophy" was taken from David Fordyce's Elements of Moral Philosophy (1754); "Foundery" from Crocker's Complete Dictionary of Arts and Sciences (1764-66); "Consul," "Cynic," "Czar," "Tragedy," and "War" from Chambers's Cyclopaedia (1746); and "Beauty," "Criticism," "Comparison," "Congnity" and "Wit" from Henry Home, Lord Kames's Elements of Criticism (1762) (Kafker 177, 165, 166).
upon it. . . . Though this may be pleasant to the writer, it tires and vexes the reader. There is another great source of diffusion in composition. It is a capital object with an author, whatever be the subject, to give vent to all his best thoughts. When he finds a proper place for any of them, he is peculiarly happy. But, rather than sacrifice a thought he is fond of, he forces it in by way of digression, or superfluous illustration. If none of these expedients answer his purpose, he has recourse to the margin, a very convenient apartment for all manner of pedantry and impertinence. . . . An abridger, however, is not subject to these temptations. The thoughts are not his own; he views them in a cooler and less affectionate manner. . . . His business, therefore, is to retrench superfluities, digressions, quotations, pedantry, et al. and to lay before the public only what is really useful (I:6).

Obviously, Smellie had no great appreciation of the techniques used by Diderot, Bayle, and Dunton.

Rather than infusing his text with a secret undercurrent, capable of teaching his readers how to read, how to make connections between seemingly distinct entries, Smellie instead attempts to keep everything on the surface, attempts to make these connections for the reader. This is what he felt might be truly useful, and as the first line of his “Preface” states, “Utility ought to be the principal intention of every publication.”

It is important to note that Smellie was certainly capable of writing indirectly, secretly, or ironically—in the manner adopted by other encyclopedists for their texts. For example, a letter written to Smellie’s friend, William Nichol, a Latin scholar who helped medical students translate their theses into Latin, runs thus: “Dear Sir/ Our very old Friends, the Medical Theses, have long remained in a concentrated state. Like the gases and oxygens in this more enlightened period, they are now split into three or four component parts. But, if you shall choose to exert your chemical talents in my favour, you will soon reduce them to their former cumulative mass. /I am Dr. Sir your most obt. / Servant W. S.” (“The William Smellie Papers” 20 August 1790). Here, Smellie wanted Nichol to understand that the medical students were going to other printers have their theses printed, and Smellie was
asking Nichol to direct these students back to Smellie as their primary printer. In another instance, “a person” who wrote a book on Falconry found himself unable to write the preface, and asked Smellie to do the honors. Smellie obliged, but in this preface turned the “whole work into complete ridicule. The poor Falconer thought the preface a perfect masterpiece, and prefixed it to his work exactly as written by Mr Smellie” (Kerr I:417). The publication was then reviewed in Smellie’s own *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, “in the most whimsical and ridiculous style,” with particular notice taken of the preface. These two brief examples suggest that while Smellie was certainly capable of producing an encyclopedia in the style of Diderot, Bayle or Dunton, he deliberately chose not to.

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* comes as close to being a text fit for DeMaria’s “perusal” as any of the four encyclopedias I have looked at in detail here. However, the description does not fit very well for even for this text, as detached and matter-of-fact as it is. Even the readers of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* were expected to be “capable of comprehending the principles and relations of the different parts of science, when laid before him in one uninterrupted chain” (“Preface”). By laying the treatises on various sciences before his readers whole, rather than “attempting to communicate science under the various technical terms arranged in alphabetical order... an attempt repugnant to the very idea of science, which is a connected series of conclusions” (“Preface”), Smellie may have made it easier for his readers than Diderot or Bayle or Dunton (and consequently he may have been teaching them less). Still, his text expected readers to practice reading strategies that would allow them to grasp the connections and relations between sciences—practices that go beyond perusal for discrete pieces of information.
What may have prompted these eighteenth-century encyclopedists (Smellie possibly excepted) to put so much pressure on the secrets contained in their texts, especially when the ostensible project of the encyclopedias was to diffuse knowledge, to make it readily accessible in one place? In addition to the didactic motive I have already argued here—the desire to teach readers a certain habit of mind, to teach the ability to discern a secret comprehensiveness in their texts—the emphasis that these compilers place on the secret nature of their texts serves, I think, at least two additional functions. For readers, the emphasis on secrets provides another source of delight and entertainment, a reason to keep reading what might otherwise be perceived as a dull and boring text. Bayle freely admits this motive in the “Preface” to his Dictionary. In order to “adapt” himself to the “publick Taste,” he says, he has included some citations which “Men of a Grave and Severe Character will Particularly blame” as containing Actions and Reflections of too much Gallantry. I must say a word or two to this. Some Persons of Merit, who were concern’d for the Interests of the Bookseller, concluded, that so large a Book as this, stuff’d with Greek and Latin Quotations in several Places, and full of Discussions little Diverting, would discourage Readers that are not Men of Letters, and weary the Learned; and that therefore it was to be fear’d the Sale would quickly fall, if the Curiosity of those who don’t understand Latin was not excited by some other things.

In addition to these passages containing “too much Gallantry,” then, another way to entice readers would have been to suggest that the form as well as the content of these encyclopedias contained secrets to discover. Encyclopedias capitalized on readers’ willingness to pay to discover secrets—a willingness that the scandal sheets and romans à cléf of the period had already primed.

For authors, perhaps the key attraction of this emphasis on the secret order binding their texts together is that it constructs an author-function in a text that otherwise might
seem a mere random compilation of other people’s work. Chartier suggests that one of the “major expressions” of the author-function is “the possibility of deciphering in the forms of the book the intention that lay behind the creation of the text” (55). In other words, a text in which an author-function has been constructed is one in which the form of the work must be considered as connected to the intentions of the person who produced it—although this producer is not “the superb and solitary romantic figure of the sovereign author whose primary or final intention contains the meaning of the work” (Chartier 28). Instead, the intentions of this author are “both dependent and constrained”: the intentions are dependent on the booksellers, publishers and print workers who turn the text into a book, as well as upon the readers who appropriate the text for their own purposes; the intentions are constrained by cultural conditions, the “multiple determinations that organize the social space of literary production and that, in a more general sense, determine the categories and experiences that are the very matrices of writing (Chartier 28-9).

A concern for asserting this author-function within their texts concerns all of the encyclopedists I have discussed here except for William Smellie, which may help to account for why his encyclopedia lacks the emphasis on secrets so prominent in the others. Diderot, for example, seems to have taken for granted that references to secret ordering principles in

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59 In his essay “What is an Author?” Foucault examines the way an author functions upon a text. For the purposes of this argument, the most important of these ways that an author functions is that it characterizes the “mode of existence” of a text, ensuring a certain reception and use of that text. In other words, while texts without authors are likely to be consumed and forgotten, texts attached to authors are more likely to be carefully considered. Foucault also notes that this author-function is not a constant or universal in all discourse, but is context-specific. For example, Foucault suggests that before the 17th century, text we think of as “literary” did not require an author to assert their credibility, but texts we now think of as “scientific” did require an author to be credible. However, sometime in the 17th and 18th centuries, Foucault finds that this system did a complete flip, literary texts now needing authors, and scientific ones cast as anonymously true and positioned within a coherent system of truths and methods. See Roger Chartier’s “Figures of the Author” (in The Order of Books) for important refinements of and challenges to Foucault’s author-function. In particular, Chartier finds Foucault’s hypothesis that authorship does not function similarly for scientific and literary texts “fragile.”
the “Preliminary Discourse” and in articles like “Encyclopédie” had firmly constructed an author-function for this text. Indeed, the four associate printer-booksellers had probably contributed to Diderot’s confidence on this score when they argued (in a successful attempt to release him from prison) that Diderot, and Diderot “alone possess[ed] the key” that could make order of the manuscripts for the Encyclopédie (qtd. in Collison 120). Otherwise, he may not have been so trusting or careless about his manuscripts after they left his hands, nor would he have been so upset, once he discovered that Le Breton had been secretly censoring his text for years, that he considered abandoning the encyclopedia project altogether. If Diderot had not considered himself established as the real “author” of this text, but instead saw his work as a compilation of articles written by a variety of people, one would think that he would have taken the discovery less hard and less personally.

In Bayle’s Dictionary, too, the author-function has been elaborately constructed in ways in addition to the emphasis on the secrets I have described above. In the “Preface” to the Dictionary, Bayle on one hand appears to downplay the author-function. He claims that his name only appears on the title page “in Obedience to the Supreme Authority”—in this case, the government. The Estates of Holland, responding to a petition from the Dutch publishers of Moréri’s dictionary, who had a privilege protecting them from competition, forced Bayle to formally acknowledge his work on the title page (Burrell 88). “I have ever had a secret Antipathy” against “those who put their Names to their Works,” claims Bayle (“Preface”). Further, Bayle stresses that he had left the Bookseller a full Authority to insert, even without consulting me, the Memoirs his Correspondents and Friends should send him; and that I could wish they would do with respect to the whole Book what they seem’d to be willing to do in some Places, that is, make such Additions, leave out such things, and dispose of my Compilations as they should think fit. . . . I should have been glad if others would
have taken the Pains to give a Form to the Materials, and to enlarge and shorten them ("Preface").

On the surface, these certainly seem to be the claims of someone who cares little whether or not he is associated with the text as its author. However, even embedded within this longer quotations Bayle reveals the firm grasp that he wishes to establish on his text. For example, while suggesting that he had invited the Bookseller to make whatever additions and deletions he thought were necessary, Bayle subtly implies that the Bookseller did not take advantage of such authority; that he "seemed" willing to make such corrections, but never in fact did so; that Bayle would have been glad if others would have enlarged and shortened materials, but that no one else was involved in the compilation of the text. Other claims in the "Preface" reveal how tenuous are Bayle’s moves to distance himself from the text. When he claims that his encyclopedia repeats nothing available in other encyclopedias, he automatically makes the text all the more the production of his own mind: other encyclopedists freely admit having relied on other texts in the production of their own. And in addition to this emphasis on the unique content of his text, Bayle calls attention to the style that distinguishes him from other encyclopedists: "The Style is another cause of my Slowness: I am scrupulous about it, even to Superstition: I take great care to avoid Ambiguities, and the use of any Particles that may occasion Obscurity. The greatest Masters, the most illustrious Members of the French Academy, dispense themselves with these Scruples, and we have but three or four Writers, that are not cured of them" ("Preface"). To stress so heavily, both implicitly and explicitly, his intentions and attachment to the work is clearly not consistent with someone who has a "secret Antipathy" to call it his own.

Dunton, too, goes to great lengths to construct the author-function in his Ladies Dictionary. Although he constructs a pseudonymous author, "N.H.," for his text, this author
seems to leap off the page in the dedicatory letter to the text. Beginning with the dedication itself—"To the Ladies, Gentlewomen, and Others, of the Fair Sex, The Author Humbly Dedicates this following Work" (emphasis mine)—the presence of an author is firmly established. As the letter continues, N.H. uses the pronouns "I," "me" and "my" no less than thirty four times in a dedication only six pages long, and those in rather large type. Further, while conceding that he consulted both other texts and other people in the compilation of his text, three different times N.H. emphasizes that he could have constructed the dictionary based solely upon his own experiences: he refers to "MY OWN EXPERIENCE IN LOVE AFFAIRS" (emphasis in original), "my own Observations on Love and Marriage" and "my own EXPERIENCES" in these same six short pages. Clearly, this is a text in which the presence of an author figure performs an important function; as Hunter argues, Dunton does not even appear to have considered the possibility that the reading public would not have been "ravenous for individual subjectivity and private lives" (332), even in an encyclopedia.

Diderot and d'Alembert, Bayle, and Dunton, then, appear to be heavily invested in constructing an author-function for their work, an author-function relying heavily on the idea of secrets in order to encourage readers to see the text as the coherent production of a single, organizing presence. Smellie, on the other hand, the one encyclopedist whose text does not rely heavily on an underlying secret order, is also the one encyclopedist who appears to have had no great interested in constructing such an author-function. Kerr suggests that Smellie "held Dictionary making in great contempt" (I:362), and from the evidence that exists (or does not exist), this certainly appears to be the case. In the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland's collection of "The William Smellie Papers," now housed in the
Royal Museums of Scotland, not one paper concerning the production of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has been preserved—not even the letter engaging Smellie to produce the encyclopedia signed by Andrew Bell, and quoted in Kerr’s *Memoirs*. Nor can any papers relating to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, such as drafts of articles or correspondence, be found in the National Library of Scotland, the Edinburgh University Library, or the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* headquarters, now located in Chicago. This seems to be quite surprising, especially since even Le Breton, having secretly edited Diderot’s articles, carefully preserved the edited manuscripts, as damaging as they might have been to him. It would seem that Smellie just didn’t care enough about the project to attempt to preserve any of the documents relating to its production.

Smellie did, after all, decline to edit the second edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, although Bell offered him the job. Kerr suggests that Smellie refused because he objected to including biographies—a step insisted upon by the Bell and Macfarquhar—(I:363), but offers no proof for the assertion. I find it hard to believe that Smellie, constantly short of money, would have refused such a potentially lucrative offer (Bell had offered him one third of the profits) over an objection to including a genre that Smellie in fact seems to have esteemed. The entry “Biography” in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* calls biography “at once the most entertaining and instructive kind of history,” and finds it “much to be regretted that

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60 Most of the papers contained in this collection are reprinted (heavily abridged and edited) in Kerr’s 1811 *Memoirs of William Smellie*. Kerr received these papers from Smellie’s son, Alexander Smellie. After completing his work, Kerr arranged these documents in an album and presented the letters to the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, but not without first having “carefully destroyed” anything he deemed “improper for insertion . . . because the son and the biographer of Mr. Smellie are quite unambitious of gratifying the cravings of improper curiosity by the sacrifice of private feelings” (10-11). It is certainly possible that Kerr destroyed papers having to do with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, but it seems unlikely that this text would have contained anything would have deemed “improper.” Kerr was concerned with suppressing evidence such as the fact that Smellie frequently requested financial support from friends, including Kerr himself. He also burned nearly all of the correspondence between Smellie and Robert Burns, as these letters contained “severe reflections on many respectable people still in life” (II:350).
this kind of history is so much neglected.” Further, Smellie contributed at least one biography to the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, on his friend Henry Homes, Lord Kames. And when Smellie died, he was at work on his a text that was published posthumously as *Literary and Characteristic Lives* (which included biographies of John Gregory, David Hume, Lord Kames, and Adam Smith), but which Smellie envisioned as a much larger *Biographica Scotica*.61 We must, then, consider other reasons why Smellie may have turned down this position.

Finally, if Smellie had been interested in constructing himself as author of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, one would think that he would have mentioned it as one of the important achievements in his life. However, in a letter Smellie wrote to William Strahan, in response to the latter’s offer to have Smellie come to London to manage his large printing concern (an offer Smellie never accepted), Smellie gives an account of his life and works. Although he mentions his translation of Buffon, and his *Philosophy of Natural History* (2 volumes, 1790-99), he never mentions the monumental *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which took up at least three years of his life. Further, the “Death Announcement” for Smellie, printed by his son, and reprinted in all of the Edinburgh newspapers, remembers Smellie as “Printer, Secretary to the Society of British Antiquaries, Author of the Philosophy of Natural History, Translator of the Celebrated M. Buffon, &c. &c.” but again does not mention Smellie’s involvement with the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (“William Smellie Papers” 24 July 1795).

All of this evidence suggests that Smellie was simply not as invested in constructing an author-function in his work as were the other three authors I have discussed here. While

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61 Smellie planned for this larger work biographies on at least twenty five Scots, a list of which can be found in Kerr II:417-22.

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Smellie certainly expected his readers to be able to comprehend the connections between the different parts of science “when laid before him in one uninterrupted chain,” he is far less emphatic about thematizing this coherence than his contemporaries. He does not make a game of teaching his readers to perceive an underlying order, he does not use footnotes and cross-references subversively or to create additional layers of meaning within the text, he does not emphasize the text’s coherence by making it appear, on the surface, spectacularly jumbled. Smellie’s encyclopedia is simply less fervent than the others I have examined. This may be in part because Smellie’s motives in compiling it were largely mercenary. But it may also be the case that by the time of Smellie’s encyclopedia, the last of the encyclopedias I examine here, the encyclopedic urge had begun to wane. Smellie’s work may show traces of a more general decline in optimism about the ability of the encyclopedic project not only to tame the profusion of the rapidly-accumulating store of all human knowledge within comprehensive circles of learning, but also about the ability of encyclopedias to create ideal readers, teaching those readers to internalize comprehensive systems, and to project those learned systems not only onto the texts they read but onto their lives as well. This is a skepticism to which I will return in my discussion of Henry Fielding and *Tom Jones.*
What can be said of women's participation in the encyclopedic urge? All of the encyclopedias I have examined in the previous chapter were compiled by men, and it is extraordinarily difficult to locate any texts written by women labeled either "encyclopedia" or "dictionary." Hester Lynch Piozzi's *British Synonymy* (1794) is the only example of which I am aware, and in it, according to Lisa Berglund, Piozzi "disclaims any pretension to introducing a comprehensive or scholarly text."

There is some evidence that women authored at least two of the articles of the *Encyclopédie*; and there is a famous portrait, painted by Maurice Quentin de Latour (1704-1788), of Madame de Pompadour sitting in front of a volume of that monumental work.

The apparent absence of women compiling encyclopedias does not, however, mean that women did not find ways to engage themselves in the discourse surrounding the

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1 In an unpublished essay ("Throwing up a Straw": Chance and Order in Hester Lynch Piozzi's *British Synonymy*), Lisa Berglund argues that "Piozzi justifies her entry into the masculine field of philology by arguing that as a thesaurus is necessarily illogical, mundane and frivolous, it therefore is best compiled by a woman." Although I have not yet had access to the text and cannot comment on it here, I am sure that we should take such claims to irrationality with a very large grain of salt.

2 This fact was mentioned in an unpublished essay by Janie Vanpee, "Reading Woman in Diderot's *Encyclopédie,*" presented at the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies Conference in Milwaukee, March 1999.
encyclopedic urge, nor does it mean that they did not produce texts that can be considered encyclopedic. Their apparent absence does not necessarily mean that women either were or felt themselves to be silenced or excluded. Such preconceptions, as Margaret Ezell has shown in *Writing Women's Literary History*, derive from models of feminist literary historiography based in the nineteenth-century. The “nineteenth century has had unusual influence in our construction of a literary history for women writers,” leading to “strong preconceptions about genre, gender and authorship. . . . Because of the way we have defined authorship, audience, and literature, we have effectively silenced a large number of early women's voices in our very attempts to preserve and celebrate women's writings” (38).

Central to Ezell's argument is an awareness that linear narratives of women's history that seek to proclaim the advancing freedom of women from repressive structures do so at the expense of the early women writers, who in this narrative must necessarily be the most repressed. Ezell urges us to “quiet our noisy preconceptions in order to hear others” (13).

Rather than looking for—and therefore producing—more examples of the silenced woman writer, then, in this chapter and the next, I focus on the encyclopedic works of two women as they respond to and help to shape the discourse surrounding the encyclopedic urge that I have discussed in Chapter 1. In Chapter 3, I argue that the content of *The Female Quixote* places it in the midst of an important and pervasive debate between the relative merits of “comprehensiveness” and “essence”; in the present chapter, I argue that the content—but more especially the form—of Jane Barker's *A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies* registers its participation in encyclopedic discourse. Specifically, I suggest that by yoking

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3 Examples of this kind of historiography include Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of their Own*, which traces the evolution of women's texts from the feminine, to the feminist, to the female; and Jane Spencer's *The Rise of the Woman Novelist*, which in its very title indicates its belief “that prior to a certain period, women writers occupied a less elevated position than that achieved by the female novelists of the eighteenth century” (29).
together images of women's needlework and the language of science, Barker not only prompts her readers to consider the similarities between constructing a patchwork screen with a needle and constructing a patchwork encyclopedia with a pen, but also prompts those readers (presumed in the "Preface" to be women) to realize how well-trained they are by their needlework to understand and benefit from (if not compile) encyclopedias.

Until recently, very little has been known of Jane Barker's life. Early interest in her life and work centered on the autobiographical nature of her writing—not so much to recover the "facts" of Barker's life, but to trace the ways that Barker created and manipulated a print identity of herself as an author and unmarried woman.4 Recent efforts, especially by Carol Shiner Wilson and Kathryn R. King, have uncovered many important legal and ecclesiastical documents relating to Barker's life (although many remain to be discovered); their hope is that this "extra-literary evidence" will help us "appreciate other dimensions of her texts" without falling into the trap of "biographical reductionism" (Wilson xvii). The most complete biography of Barker currently available is in Wilson's "Introduction" to The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems of Jane Barker (1997).5 According to Wilson, Barker was baptized on 17 May 1652 in Northamptonshire, and was one of three children in the family to survive to adulthood. Barker refers frequently to her

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4 See Jane Spencer's "Creating the Woman Writer: The Autobiographical Works of Jane Barker," and Paula Backscheider's "Women Writers and the Chains of Identification." Such work notes that Barker in fact created at least two identities for herself: "Fidelia" is associated with fidelity to both the Jacobite cause and the Catholic religion, and appears in poems dealing with religious and political topics; "Galesia" (also spelled "Galaedia" and "Galecia") is associated with poems and narratives "dealing with Barker's life before her journey to France and after her return" (Spencer "Creating" 167).

5 Kathryn King's Jane Barker, Exile: A Literary Career 1675-1725 (October 2000), to which I have not yet had access, promises an even more detailed account of the life and the career.
older brother Edward in her poetry; she never refers to her younger brother Henry. Her father was a Royalist who held an important position in the court of Charles I (probably as Secretary to the Keeper of the Great Seal); her mother’s family had also distinguished itself in military service for Stuart monarchs (Wilson xviii). Baker’s extended family suffered heavy losses after the beheading of Charles I and under Cromwell’s protectorate, but by 1662 her immediate family had leased a large property in Lincolnshire. After the death of her father and Edward, being “beseiged by ‘debters, creditors, and lawyers,’” (Wilson xxii), Jane and her mother moved to London in 1685, where they found a circle of royalist sympathizers, and where Barker converted to Catholicism. After the protestant William and Mary assumed the throne in 1688, Barker was “one of almost 40,000 supporters of James II . . . to follow their [Catholic] king into exile in France” (Wilson xxv). By 1696, she was nearly blind from cataracts; one of her poems suggests that she had these cataracts “‘couched’ (removed surgically by a needle)” (Wilson xxvii). Barker stayed in France for many years, returning to England in 1704. In England, she invited her brother Henry’s daughter Mary Barker to live with her; Mary soon married, had two children, and was widowed. Mary left her children to be cared for by Jane when she eloped with a shoemaker in 1714 (Wilson xxix). In 1726 Barker was so ill that she received the last rites (Wilson xxxi). One thing she suffered from was a cancerous tumor on her breast; in a letter written in 1727, Barker supports canonization for James II, because she felt that being touched by a piece of cloth that had been dipped in the dying king’s blood cured this tumor (Wilson xxvii). After her recovery, Barker returned to France, where she died on 29 March 1732, nearly eighty years old (Wilson xxxi).

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6 Henry was evidently disinherited. When Barker’s father died in 1681, he left this son only ten pounds (Wilson xxi).
Barker’s formal education began at a girl’s school in Putney, near London, and ended about 1662 (or at the age of ten), when she went home to live with her family (Wilson xxi). While living in Lincolnshire, she learned to manage farmland and the laborers necessary to such work. In Love Intrigues, Galesia describes her typical daily duties:

My Father gave into my Power and Command all his Servants and Labourers; it was I that appointed them their Work, and paid them their Wages... and tho’ it was an Impediment to my Studies, yet it made Amends, it being itself a Study, and that a most useful one: The Rules to sow and reap in their Season; to know what Pasture is fit for Beeves, what for Sheep, what for Kine, with all their Branches, being a more useful Study than all the Grammar Rules, or Longitude or Latitude, Squaring the Circle, &c. (35).

It is relevant to my argument that Galesia describes the management of farmland as scientific endeavor on par with grammar rules and mathematical ones; and that to describe this scientific endeavor she uses the “Branches” metaphor that Diderot would later associate definitively with his encyclopedia.

Barker also learned a great deal about medicine from her brother Edward, who entered St. John’s College in 1668 and completed his M.A. at Christ Church in 1674-5, and “was at various times a student at Merchant Taylors, Gray’s Inn, and Oxford—an impressive roster of sites of masculine intellectual privilege” (King “PR” 553). In her fiction, Barker describes the medical prowess of Galesia, a character with strong resemblance to Barker herself: “several People came to me for Advice in divers sorts of Maladies, and having tolerable good Luck, I began to be pretty much known” (A Patch-Work Screen (hereafter PWS) 116). In particular, Galesia is known for her “Arcanura” (or secret remedy) for gout (PWS 117). There is good evidence that Barker herself developed a plaster for treating gout:

7 From Edward, Barker learned Latin, herbal medicine, and botany. Barker may also have learned something about medicine from her relative Richard Lower, a prominent London physician in the 1670s and a co-founder of the Royal Society (Wilson xx).
King has found a notice in a book published by Crayle advertising "Dr Barkers Famous Gout Plaister" ("PR" 569, fn 25).

Although Barker clearly learned a great deal from her brother, she just as clearly did a great deal of study on her own. In both her poems and her fiction, she makes skillful allusions to literature both classical and contemporary. As Backscheider and Richetti note, *Love Intrigues* (Barker’s second novel) is a “tightly unified book with an allusive richness that shows wide reading” (81).

Barker claimed that her first publication, *Poetical Recreations* (1688), was published without her permission, though a later manuscript poem heaps praise on those who helped her to print the book. The volume met with little acclaim, and was never reprinted. *Poetical Recreations* is divided into two parts: part one consisting of fifty-one poems by Barker, part two containing poems written by various men of her acquaintance—some to or about Barker, and others miscellaneous. Twelve of these poems in the second part were written by the book’s publisher, Benjamin Crayle. Other poems were written by students at

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8 Here and throughout this study, I use the term “novel” as a shorthand for “the genre that would come to be known as the novel.” The term novel was not widely applied until the latter part of the eighteenth century, most earlier texts that we today would consider novels calling themselves “histories.”

9 For a fascinating and thorough account of the publication of *Poetical Recreations*, see King’s “Jane Barker, *Poetical Recreations*, and the Sociable Text.” In this essay, King argues that “sociability is a more important feature of early women's verse than much feminist scholarship, preoccupied with themes of personal isolation and cultural exclusion, has permitted us to see” (552). Further, she uses Barker’s case to suggest that “the sharply drawn distinction between private writing and public authorship needs rethinking” (564).

10 King has found just one printed reference to the volume—an entry in Robert Southey’s commonplace book ("Poetical Recreations" (hereafter “PR”) 566, fn. 6). Wilson has found that three of Barker’s poems from *Poetical Recreations* were “printed in 1690 with music by Johann Wolfgang Franck in *Remedium Melancolie; or, The Remedy of Melancholy*” (xxiv).

11 As King notes, Crayle “has entered the historical record only in the soiled margins of the ‘lacivious and vicious’ books he was fined for publishing in 1688 and then again in 1690, when he was briefly imprisoned” ("PR" 558). Some of the poems Crayle included suggest a romantic interest between Crayle and Barker, though this rhetoric may also have been more literary convention than anything else ("PR" 559). The publisher of Barker’s later works, including *A Patch-Work Screen*, was the notorious Edmund Curll, and as King notes, “[o]ne has to wonder how the famously decorous Barker came to be published at two junctures by two
Cambridge, who probably arranged to have the book printed for Barker. King mounts
evidence to suggest that Barker made the acquaintance of these friends through a relative,
John Newton, whose family lived near hers in Lincolnshire ("PR" 555). If a similar account
of Galesia's friends from the "University" in *A Patch-Work Screen* can be any guide, beginning
in 1678 (when he matriculated), Newton (who appears in both these poems and in *A
Patchwork Screen* as "Philaster") regularly brought friends (including two called "Exilius" and
"Fidelius") home with him to Lincolnshire, where they visited Barker. When the students
were in Cambridge, they kept up a regular conversation with her in poetry and prose. The
circle kept up its correspondence even after Barker moved to London 1685. *Poetical
Recreations* grew out of this long correspondence. Several of the poems in this volume were
revised and included in *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies*.

Barker's first novel, *Exilius; or, The Banish'd Roman*, was published twenty-seven years
later in 1715, though Barker evidently began working on it before *Poetical Recreations* was
published. (Wilson xxii). *Exilius* is a royalist allegory and heroic romance, which B.G.
MacCarthy crushingly describes as "a deplorable medley of hair-raising adventures in which
female paragons incredibly become entangled. These heroines are all righteous, matter-of-
fact prigs . . . And all the while they cant" (229). Eighteenth-century readers evidently took a
different view, as *Exilius*, bound together with *Love Intrigues*, went through four editions as
*The Entertaining Novels of Mrs. Jane Barker* (1719).

Barker's next three novels are narrated by the same character, Galesia. Although
many have noted, along with Wilson, that her name "recalls the female form of the Latin
name "Galaesus," a son of Apollo, god of poetry" (Wilson xxxvii), we should remember that
different pornographers" (569, fn. 29). For more on the relationship between Curll and Barker, see McBurney's
"Edmund Curll, Mrs. Jane Barker, and the English Novel."
Apollo was also the Greek god of medicine, and that the name also recalls that of Galen, Greek physician and writer of the second century. Galesia lays claim to both elements of her name. Because love does not work out for her, Galesia decides “to espouse a Book, and spend my Days in Study,” modeling herself after Orinda (Katherine Philips) and Sappho (Love Intrigues 15). In addition to being a serious poet, whose poems fill the texts that she narrates, she is, as I have already mentioned, an accomplished healer. Galesia proudly declares that she “wrote my Bills [prescriptions] in Latin, with the same manner of Cyphers and Directions as Doctors do; which Bills and Recipes the Apothecaries fil’d amongst those of the Doctors” (116). Galesia is also extremely nice in her virtue. She refuses, for example, to treat a woman who comes to her with venereal disease, “perceiving her Distemper to be such as I did not well understand, nor care to meddle withal, [so] recommended her to a Physician of my Acquaintance, who was more used to the immodest Harangues necessary on such Occasions” (PWS 113). Despite her dedication to learning, Galesia appears to have mixed attitudes towards it. In A Patch-Work Screen, she imagines that “the Unlearned fear’d, and the Learned scorn’d my Conversation. . . A Learned Woman, being at best but like a Forc’d-Plant, that never has its due or proper Relish. . . . Whereas every Thing, in its proper Place and Season, is graceful, beneficial, and pleasant” (83).

The first novel in which Galesia appears, Love Intrigues; or, the History of the Amours of Bosvil and Galesia (1713), according to Backscheider and Richetti, is “[p]erhaps the first English novel by a woman writer about a woman with inclinations to be a writer” (82). Advanced in years, Galesia recounts the courtship—or anti-courtship—story of her youth. Because Bosvil was inscrutable to Galesia, alternating between coldly polite and passionate (at one point he comes to her with a marriage license for the two of them, at another, he
proposes a friend as a husband for her), Galesia resolves to be inscrutable to him, never betraying her passion, always dressing humbly and modestly when he is near. Her fantasies, however, suggest her real passion for Bosvil: at one point, she imagines running him through with a rapier; later, she imagines caring for him tenderly in an illness. In the end, Bosvil marries another, and Galesia sends him a present of cuckold's horns. This work has been admired for the psychological development of its heroine: “That Mrs. Barker visualizes Galesia’s dilemma as an interior phenomenon, caused by her own temperament, rather than as an opposition between her desires and external forces, gives her heroine more depth of character than is usually to be found” (Grieder 10). Love Intrigues has also been admired for its ambiguity: it is never quite clear whether or not Bosvil really loved Galesia (his friend assures Galesia that Bosvil’s marriage to another woman was simply an attempt drive Galesia from his heart, although Bosvil never formally asks Galesia’s parents for her hand in marriage); nor is it clear whether Galesia really wants to marry Bosvil (her passion for books and study is very strong, and examples of her poetry constantly interrupt the narrative). Barker makes it clear that this novel was meant to challenge the reader’s ability to make sense of confusing, conflicting evidence. Galesia’s story ends with her acknowledgment of the ambiguity: “I believe wiser heads than mind wou’d have been puzled in so difficult a Case, and found enough to do to pass through such a Labyrinth as Bosvil’s subtile Turnings had compos’d” (46).

Barker’s final novel, The Lining of the Patch Work Screen: Design’d for the Further Entertainment of the Ladies (1726, written when Barker was in her seventies), contains another sort of labyrinth through which the reader was challenged to make his or her way. Described as the “lining” (or back) of the screen composed in its prequel (A Patch-Work Screen, to which
I will turn shortly), it is comprised large panes rather than the smaller, intricate patches that make up the screen's front side: "But these Pieces being much larger than the others, I think we must call it Pane-work" (177). In other words, in the Lining, Barker confines herself to prose narratives. The Lining is the only one of Barker's published works not to include any poetry, and the narrator calls attention to this fact in the preface: she admits to having "heard say, Poetry is not much worn at Court" but is commonly "thrown by, as troublesome" (178).

Recent critics of the Lining have not appreciated the coherence of these panes. McBurney, for example, complains that "autobiography provides only minimal unity and the secondary framework of the 'lining' is so poorly contrived that the only merit of the book must be found in the fifteen short novels which are unusually vivid and well-written" (394). But I believe that The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen does in fact contain coherence for readers willing to search for it, that the novel is asks its readers to discern connections between the narratives. Many of the stories, for example are linked together thematically. Several of the "panes" center on unusual forms of communication, not unlike the "oracular" communication of Dunton's dictionary. The novel's Dedication ("To The Ladies") tells us that Galesia left "the good Lady" of the Patch Work Screen to go to London for "Tossing of Coffee-Grounds... it being an Augury very much in vogue, and as true, as any by which Sidrophel prognosticated, even when he took the Boy's Kite for a blazing Comet" (177); many of the stories that follow contain other unusual forms of communication, including talk with ghosts, attempts to communicate with the devil, and messages transmitted through

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12 Like tea leaves, coffee grounds could be read to tell the future. Barker's footnote alerts the reader that Sidrophel appears in Samuel Butler's Hudibras; Wilson's note adds that Sidrophel is a crazed astrologer in this work.
dreams. Other narratives in the *Lining* are linked together by references to fine clothing, which, in the context of the lining of the patchwork screen, makes one think of their eventual life as scraps; the novel ends with a dream in which Galecia receives an unexpected windfall of gold, which she invests in purchasing “Female Virtues” such as sincerity, chastity, humility, repentance, and piety from a merchant vessel recently arrived from the Indies. Galecia employs an agent to resell these wares at court and in high society, but this agent has difficulty locating buyers. Eventually, however, various women begin to “dress” themselves in these virtues: one “Mrs. Rattenbones... fitted her self with divers Suits, both of Piety and Repentance, and sent to several of her Neighbours to come and do the same” (282). Thus one way to read the novel is as trajectory of patches of fabric being gradually transformed into female virtues—another, and perhaps more lasting, form of clothing. Wilson has noticed another pattern of coherence in the *Lining*, one in which “[d]iscarded women... play prominent roles, as in the aptly named ‘Mrs. Castoff.’” Yet the optimistic centerpiece of *The Lining of the Patch Work Screen* is the vigorous and independent Mrs. Goodwife” (xli). While these brief hints show that the *Lining of the Patch Work Screen* operates on principles of coherence more sophisticated than many of its most recent readers have perceived, the *Lining* is by no means the virtuoso performance that *A Patch-Work Screen* is, nor does it so clearly mark its place within encyclopedic discourse. To that work I now turn my attention.

Josephine Donovan calls *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies; or, Love and Virtue Recommended: In a Collection of instructive Novels. Related After a Manner entirely New, and interspersed with Rural Poems, describing the Innocence of a Country Life* (1723) “one of the most important, if ignored, works in women’s literary history” (452); it is certainly becoming more familiar to eighteenth-century scholars. Included in Richetti’s 1969 *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, it has
assumed a prominent place in such arguments as Spencer's The Rise of the Woman Novelist, Todd's The Sign of Angellica, Hunter's Before Novels, and Lynch's The Economy of Character. One reason that the novel has attracted attention is that it dismantles the traditional courtship plot in which women are, according to King, “destined either for marriage, seduction, or rape,” and instead serious inquiries into “the possibilities of the single life for a woman” including elements of “solitude, study, contemplation, writing, and celibacy” (“Unaccountable” 157).  

The premise of the novel is that Galesia, travelling by stagecoach and coming to a place where many robberies have been committed, is entertained by her fellow-travelers by stories about robbery and murder. After these other travelers disembark, the stagecoach overturns on a bridge, tipping Galesia into a river. Galesia finds her way to a poor village alehouse; the next day, she finds more hospitable accommodations at the home of “a Lady.” This Lady is finishing, with help from her maids, an apartment full of needlework furniture, “most curiously compos’d of rich Silks, and Silver and Gold Brocades” (74). Everything except for the screen is completed, and the Lady not only asks Galesia to stay and help with the needlework, but also to look in her luggage for some Bits of one thing or other, that might be useful to place in the SCREEN. But when the Trunks and Boxes came, and were opened, alas! they found nothing but Pieces of Romances, Poems, Love-Letters and the like: At which the good Lady smil’d, saying, She would not have her Fancy balk’d, and therefore resolved to have these ranged and mixed in due Order, and therof compose a SCREEN (74).

13 In “The Unaccountable Wife and other Tales of Female Desire in Jane Barker’s A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies,” King examines a tale from the novel—one in which a woman runs off with her female maid that to modern sensibilities reads as a study in homoerotic passion, but to readers in Barker’s day registered more forcefully as a study in social hierarchies.

14 As Wilson notes, a screen such as the one Galesia and the Lady work on would be composed of several panels, each measuring up to nine by two feet. The patches (or pieces of cloth) would have been appliquéd directly onto the surface, not sewn together first and then backed, as most patchwork is done today (x).
Thus, in the remaining portion of the *Patch-Work Screen*, Galesia and the Lady go through Galesia’s treasure trove of writings, selecting from them patches to appear both on the screen and on the pages we read.

*A Patch-Work Screen* incorporates a wide variety of genres, including elements of traditional romance, shorter fiction of the earlier century associated with Aphra Behn, poetry, proverbs, hymns, recipes, and reflective essays similar to those one might find in the *Spectator*. As Deidre Lynch notes, Barker’s method in *A Patch-Work Screen* suggests that the analogy of “ideas as collectibles and wisdom as a matter of idea collecting” held great appeal in her cultural moment (34).

But these genres, these patches, are not merely collected: they are arranged into a coherent and comprehensive system. Both the introduction and the conclusion of the text stress the idea of coherence. In an introductory letter addressed “To the Reader,” Barker (the letter is signed by her) meditates upon the merits of Patch-Work, and surmises that this particular form of needlework is popular because of its emblematic qualities, its ability to bring a “Dis-union” of patches together into a “harmonious” whole. “Ladies,” says Barker, have pleas’d themselves with this sort of Entertainment [patch-work]; for, whenever one sees a Set of Ladies together, their Sentiments are as differently mix’d as the Patches in their Work: To wit, Whigs and Tories, High-Church and Low-Church, Jacobites and Williamites, and many more Distinctions, which they divide and sub-divide, ‘till at last they make this Dis-union meet in an harmonious Tea-Table Entertainment” (italics reversed, 52).

As patch-work screen arranges fabric of different patterns, colors, and textures together in a pleasingly coherent composition of dark and light; and as the tea-table brings together ladies

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15 Several critics have noted the similarity between a story told by Philinda in *The Lining* and Behn’s *History of the Nun; or, The Fair Vow-Breaker*, which in turn had been borrowed from the anonymous *Letters Portugaises*. These critics have all gone on to point out the irony of Barker’s borrowing from Behn, when in *A Patch-Work Screen*, Galesia indignantly tells an acquaintance that Behn and Katherine Philips (after whom Galesia models herself) “ought not to be nam’d together” (108).
of various political and religious bents into a harmonious entertainment, so Barker's novel brings together a wide variety of genres into a coherent whole. The last patch in the novel, "An Ode In Commemoration of the Nativity of Christ," ends with two lines that similarly emphasize the urge towards coherence: "Make All on Earth, as All in Heav'n, join, / Since All in Heav'n and Earth alike are Thine" (173). These two lines not only serve as a plea to join together all people of the Earth, but also serve to link Earth and heaven together as part of one dominion. That the novel both begins and ends with these explicit images of coherence serves forcefully to remind readers that this is a coherence they are meant to see, even in a narrative that on the surface, at least, appears hodgepodge.

Various elements within the text continue this theme of coherence, even directly invoking the idea of a circle so central to the encyclopedic project. In discussing the medical education that she receives from her brother, Galesia specifically mentions only two texts: "I made such Progress in Anatomy, as to understand Harvey's Circulation of the Blood, and Lower's Motion of the Heart" (82). I think it especially significant that these two texts have

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16 Another poem, "The Rivulet," bears resemblance to the "Ode" in that it is both replete with images of completion, and this sense of completion has religious undertones. For Galesia, the rivulet "dost no less/A kind of Omnipresence, too, express,/For always at the Ocean, thou/Art ever here, and at thy Fountain too. . . . But chiefly thou to Unity lay'st claim,/For though in Thee Innumerable Drops there be,/Yet still thou art but One" (80-81). This connection between the encyclopedic project and divine knowledge is made explicit when Galesia discusses the death of her brother: "The only Comfort I have is, when I think on the Happiness he enjoys by Divine Vision; All Learning and Science, All Arts, and Depth of Philosophy, without Search or Study" (my emphasis 90). In other words, Barker may be suggesting that the encyclopedic project is only perfectly realized in heaven. In fact, the emphasis on secrets in the encyclopedias I have discussed in the first chapter may also relate to the idea of divine knowledge. It may have been difficult for the various compilers to assert that they had included all knowledge, as that would be reaching too far above the human station, presuming to be god-like. However, the emphasis on secrets may have been a way to mediate claims about comprehensiveness and completeness possible in an encyclopedia while still acknowledging the supremacy and unknowability of the divine.

17 In this novel, we learn that Galesia's brother has "gathered a Treasure of Learning from those Two inexhaustible Fountains, Oxford and Paris: thereby to enable him to perform, what he shortly intended to practice, the Cure of Human Maladies, in which he began already to be known and esteemed" (75).

18 Wilson's notes identify Harvey's study as De Motu Cordis (1628) and Lower's as Tractatus du Corde (1669).
to do with circulation: a closed, complete, and—especially—circular system. Galesia calls attention to her expertise in this aspect of anatomy in a poem called “Anatomy,” in which Galesia reduces the entire “Body of Anatomy” books that her brother has studied into this 100-line poem. She asks her muse to help her “chiefly sing those Sons of Art, which teach the Motion of the Heart” (86). Casting the body as an architectural building—with bones as pillars, eyes as windows, flesh as walls, and so on—Galesia leads us on a circular tour of blood flow through major organs. The tour both begins and ends in the abdomen, completing the circle: “And after some small Traverses about, Came to the Place where we before set out: Then I perceive’d, how HARVEY all made good, By th’ Circles of the Circulating Blood” (90).

The fact that this, the strongest image of a circular system, is set within a poem (rather than in another kind of narrative) is not surprising: of the various genres that compose the text, Galesia singles out poetry for special attention. Galesia deploys women’s poetry as the crucial link between women’s needlework and forms of work more closely associated with men. In discussing her early pursuits of poetry, Galesia says that “I was

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19 Galesia says that she takes her inspiration in this venture to reduce scientific texts to a poem from Ovid, who “writ Law in verse” (85). Collison records the fantastic plans of Jean de Magnon to write La science universelle, an encyclopedia composed in 200,000 lines of heroic French verse. Because he was murdered in 1662, only one volume was ever published (1663). Collison. The urge to reduce vast volumes to slight and elegant epitomes is an important feature of the encyclopedic urge, which I discuss at length in the next chapter. While dramatically articulated in this poem, the urge to distill is also explicitly addressed in the novel’s letter “To the Reader,” where Barker justifies her “history reduc’d into Patches, especially since Histories at Large are so Fashionable in this Age” (51).

20 In this poem, Galesia envisions the human body as predictable, coherent system—one that medical scholars such as her brother would soon understand. This view of the body—and especially the heart—as a circular system seems to contrast with Fielding’s opposition of system and heart, which I discuss in my final chapter.

21 King speculates that poetry played an equally-important role in Barker’s life. Because Barker corresponded in verse with her friends at the university, King suggests that Barker saw poetry as “an entrée—of sorts—into the centers of learning from which she as a woman was officially excluded. . . Barker may also
dropped into a Labyrinth of Poetry, which has ever since *interlac'd* all the Actions of my Life”; she admiringly describes the poetry of her model, Philips, as “*interwoven* with Virtue and Honor,” and says that she deserves “Arachne’s Fate” (my emphasis, 76). There is no question that Galesia strongly associates poetry with women: the only two poets she specifically names are, as I have mentioned earlier, Katharine Philips and Sappho. But here Galesia takes this association a step further. Here, with words such as “*interlac’d*” and “*interwoven*,” and with reference to the Greek myth of Arachne (a mortal who was turned into a spider for daring to challenge Athena to a contest to see who could weave and embroider best), Galesia strongly links poetry and needlework. And indeed, carefully spaces as it is throughout the text, poetry can be seen as the stitchery that holds the rest of the narratives in *A Patch-Work Screen* together.

But Galesia does not stop at this association of poetry with needlework. She goes on to associate poetry and healing. In other words, having already likened needlework (strongly associated with women) to poetry (with a few female practitioners, but not many), Galesia pushes gender/work boundaries a step further by associating needlework and poetry with medicine (strongly associated as a male province, especially since most medical textbooks were written in Latin). The poem I have already described on reducing an anatomy textbook to a poem takes one step in this direction, but a poem entitled “On the Apothecaries Filing my Recipes amongst the Doctors” makes the linkes between poetry and medicine most explicitly.

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have used verse exchange to create and sustain friendships more mentally challenging and linguistically sophisticated than those existing in the world she actually inhabited” (King “PR” 553).

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2 For an analysis of the text-textile analogies in *A Patch-Work Screen*, see King’s “Of Needles and Pens and Women’s Work.” For more general discussions of women’s relationship to needles and pens, see Elaine Hedges’s “The Needle or the Pen: The Literary Rediscovery of Women’s Textile Work,” Laurie Yager Lieb’s “The Works of Women are Symbolical: Needlework in the Eighteenth Century,” Lieb and Cecilia Macheski’s “Penelope’s Daughters: Images of Needlework in Eighteenth-Century Literature,” and Elaine Showalter’s “Piecing and Writing.”
Galesia describes how proud she is that she is able to write prescriptions “in Latin, with the same manner of Cyphers and Directions as Doctors do,” and so have them filled at the apothecary’s shop. She further claims that she, as a woman, has been able to cure what men have failed to cure: “The Sturdy Gout, which all Male-Power withstands,/Is overcome by my soft Female Hands” (117). Calling attention to the female “Hands” that effect this cure (rather than her head, or even her recipe for the special gout plaster) serves to reinforce the connection to women’s needlework—also done with the hands—that has already been established. But perhaps most interestingly, in this poem Galesia goes on to link the art of poetry and the art of healing:

That if my Muse, will needs officious be,
She must to this [Medick-Art] become a Votary.
In all our Songs, its Attributes rehearse,
Write Recipes as Ovid Law, in Verse.
To Measure we’ll reduce Febrific Heat [fever],
And make the Pulses in true Numbers beat.
Asthma and Phthisick [tuberculosis] chant in Lays most sweet;
The Gout and Rickets too, shall run on Feet.
In fine, my Muse, such Wonders will we do,
That to our Art, Mankind their Ease shall owe (118-9).

Galesia seems to be suggesting that she can have the same kind of control over illnesses as she has over her poetry; that the process of curing a fever, an irregular pulse, asthma, tuberculosis, gout and rickets is not unlike that of making thought conform to measure: she can make them all “in true Numbers beat” or “run on Feet.”

Galesia very explicitly establishes this chain by which the reader learns to associate poetry with women’s needlework, and then both poetry and needlework with medicine. It is important to notice that Galesia does not merely substitute the pen or the medical bag for the needle, giving up a tool traditionally associated with women in order to take up one traditionally associated with men. As I have suggested above, Galesia on several occasions
even acknowledges the fears she has about venturing into non-traditional roles.\textsuperscript{23} Instead of substituting one thing for another, Galesia makes links in a chain, associating one thing with the next. She herself (not unlike her text) seeks to make connections between worlds perceived as incongruous. This desire to make connections between male and female worlds is in at least one instance dramatically enacted by the characters, when Galesia and her brother together compile an encyclopedia of herbs used in making remedies: “we took many a pleasing Walk, and gather’d many Patterns of different Plants, in order to make a large natural Herbal” (82).

Barker also seeks to make connections between male and female worlds in the novel’s letter to the readers. I have already commented on a small portion of this passage, but I include it at greater length here. In discussing the tradition of patch-work, Barker says:

> And I do not know but this may have been the chief Reason why our Ladies, in this latter Age, have pleas’d themselves with this sort of Entertainment [patch-work]; for, whenever one sees a Set of Ladies together, their Sentiments are as differently mix’d as the Patches in their Work: To wit, Whigs and Tories, High-Church and Low-Church, Jacobites and Williamites, and many more Distinctions, which they divide and subdivide, ’till at last they make this Dis-union meet in an harmonious Tea-Table Entertainment. This puts me in mind of what I have heard some Philosophers assert, about the Clashing of Atoms, which at last united to compose this glorious Fabrick of the Universe.

> Forgive me, kind Reader, for carrying the Metaphor too high; by which means I am out of my Sphere, and so can say nothing of the Male Patch-Workers, for my high Flight in Favour of the Ladies, made a mere Icarus of me, melted my Wings, and tumbled me Headlong down, I know not where (italics reversed, 52-3).

This passage is replete with connections, with the desire to make links in a chain that will contribute to a unified whole. The passage suggests the power of patch-work to create a

\textsuperscript{23} Two more examples of Galesia’s ambivalence: she worries that her “Fingers ought to have been imploy’d rather at the Needle and the Distaff, than the Pen and Standish” (80); she reflects on “how useless, or rather pernicious, Books and Learning are to our Sex. They are like Oatmeal or Charcoal to the deprav’d Appetites of Girls; for by their Means we relish not the Diversions or Imbellishments of our Sex and Station: which render us agreeable to the World, and the World to us; but live in a Stoical Dulness or humesome Stupidity” (132).
coherent whole out of scraps of fabric, and it also suggests that this work of creating coherent wholes in their needlework is a skill that ladies carry over into their tea-table entertainments. But Barker goes further: she likens the patchwork and the tea-table to "the Clashing of Atoms, which at last united to compose this glorious Fabrick of the Universe." With this gesture, Barker brings the female worlds of needlework and the tea-table into the realm of science (analogous to the "Clashing of Atoms"); and she simultaneously brings the world of science into the realm of the ladies' expertise (calling the universe that men attempt to explain with their theories of atoms "Fabrick"). Although it is accompanied by a characteristic attempt to lighten the impact of the gesture ("I am out of my Sphere"), Barker here suggests that the work that women perform every day in their needlework and their tea ceremonies has prepared them both theoretically and practically to understand theories such as those pertaining to the clashing of atoms uniting to create fabric.

Barker makes what is perhaps an even bolder move when she refers to the "Male Patch-Workers," for here she implies not just that women are capable of participating in the traditionally male worlds of science, but that men, in their endeavors, are participating in the traditionally female world of needlework. In other words, here Barker asserts needlework (and especially patch-work) as the primary and central mode of investigation and creation, with the male world of investigation and creation as a modified and adapted version of the original.

In Wilson's view, with this reference to "Male Patch-Workers," "Barker cleverly asserts equality of her work, with its political content and ability to please and instruct, to the histories of the popular Defoe and the works of other men, whom she domesticates as 'Male Patch-workers'" (xl). It is true that several paragraphs earlier in the second paragraph of the
introduction, Barker makes reference to Defoe: “And why a HISTORY redu’d into Patches? Especially since HISTORIES at Large are so Fashionable in this Age; viz. Robinson Crusoe, and Moll Flanders; Colonel Jack, and Sally Salisbury, with many other Heroes and Heroines?” (italics reversed, 51). Certainly many of Barker’s narratives, with their carefully-observed details, bear resemblance to Defoe’s work. And certainly Barker meant to position her own work within the tradition of prose narratives like Defoe’s. But the reference to Defoe is made several paragraphs before the reference to the “Male Patch-Workers,” while the reference to the “Male Patch-Workers” follows directly the discussion of Philosophers asserting theories of clashing atoms. In my view, then, “Male Patch-Workers” is also, and perhaps even more strongly associated with those who would compile their findings in works of science and reference. Her own compilation, A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies, incorporates scientific discourse within its patches, linking this novel to contemporary encyclopedias like those I have discussed in Chapter 1. A Patch Work Screen for the Ladies, “Related After a Manner entirely New,” stands as a testament that their needlework has prepared women not only to understand, but to compile, patch-work encyclopedias.
CHAPTER 3

THE FEMALE QUIXOTE:
COMPREHENSIVENESS VERSUS ESSENCE

The Female Quixote, or The Adventures of Arabella (1752) was Charlotte Lennox's second novel, and is generally agreed to be her finest work and her "most enduring claim to literary notice" (Small 64). The text was extremely popular with the general reading public, appearing in eight editions in English before 1820; it was also admired by eighteenth-century authors and critics as diverse as Samuel Johnson,^ Samuel Richardson,^ Henry Fielding,^ and Jane Austen.6

^ Lennox's first novel, The Life of Harriot Stuart, written by Herself (1751), like her penultimate one, Euphemia (1791), contains many scenes from America, where Lennox was apparently born in 1720. Very little is known of Lennox's early life; for the most complete description of it available, see Small. Lennox wrote three other novels: Sophia (1762), Henrietta (1770) and The History of Sir George Warrington; or the Political Quixote (1797). In addition, she published translations of many histories and memoirs from French; a volume of poetry, a dramatic pastoral (Philander (1757)), and several miscellaneous poems; two plays (The Sister (1769) and Old City Manners (1775)); a magazine (The Lady's Museum (1760-61)); and Shakespeare Illustrated: Or, the Novels and Histories on which the Plays of Shakespeare are Founded, Collected and Translated from the Original Authors with Critical Remarks (1753), a piece of historical and literary criticism.

2 The novel appeared in a second edition by June 1752—just three months after the first edition had been printed. The novel was translated into German in 1754, into French in 1773, and into Spanish in 1808.

3 Johnson, a staunch friend and supporter of Lennox throughout her career, wrote two laudatory reviews of the novel (one for the March 1752 Gentleman's Magazine and another for the April 1752 issue of The Monthly Review). Boswell suggests that Johnson also wrote The Female Quixote's dedication to the Earl of Middlesex (Life of Johnson I 367). Further, Johnson paid Lennox the ultimate compliment by quoting her under the word "Talent" in his Dictionary of the English Language (1755)—one of the rare exceptions he made to his rule of taking illustrative quotations only from authors no longer living ("Preface" 250).

4 Samuel Richardson, to whom Johnson introduced Lennox, used his influence with the publisher Millar to get Lennox's manuscript published, visiting Millar personally, and giving him a "glowing report of
However universally admired, the novel’s earliest readers seem to have been at something of a loss to account for the text’s purpose, the object of its satire. These readers, concluding the novel to be a straightforward attack on the vast French romances that mislead Arabella, consistently note that these romances had not been popular for at least a generation.\textsuperscript{7} Fielding’s \textit{Covent-Garden Journal} review of the novel (24 March 1752), for

\begin{quote}
the novel” that he had not quite finished reading (Isles 421); as he read, he also made notes and suggestions for Lennox as she revised her work (Isles 421-28). In 1753, Richardson wrote a letter to Lady Bradshaigh, proclaiming his admiration of the work: “The Female Quixote is written by a woman, a favorite of the author of the Rambler . . . Do you not think, however her heroine overacts her part, that Arabella is amiable and innocent? The writer has genius” (qtd. in Small 85).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{5} Fielding concludes his \textit{Covent Garden Review} of the novel (24 March 1752) by “very earnestly” recommending the novel “as a most extraordinary and most excellent Performance. It is indeed a Work of true Humour, and cannot fail of giving a rational, as well as very pleasing, Amusement to a sensible Reader, who will at once be instructed and very highly diverted” (161). As Small notes, it is especially significant that Fielding would write such a long and favorable review of the novel, since he himself had already tried his hand at imitating Cervantes’s original. In 1733, Fielding’s play \textit{Don Quixote in England} was performed at the Haymarket Theatre. This is a play in which Don Quixote and Sancho are transported into eighteenth-century England, and encounter an English squire, and English lawyer and doctor, an English knight, and an English election (Small 93-4). It also seems especially significant to me that both Richardson and Fielding—at odds over just what the new species of writing that would come to be known as the “novel” would look like, and who could rightfully claim to be its founder—would both be so supportive of Lennox’s work.

\textsuperscript{6} Austen read the novel more than once. In an 1807 letter to her sister Cassandra, Austen writes: “‘Alphonson’ did not do. We were disgusted in twenty pages, as, independent of a bad translation, it has indecencies which disgrace a pen hitherto so pure; and we changed it for ‘The Female Quixote,’ which now makes our evening amusement; to me a very high one, as I find the work quite equal to what I remembered it” (qtd. in Small 87). In addition, Austen may have borrowed from \textit{The Female Quixote} for her own \textit{Northanger Abbey} (composed 1798-99, published posthumously in 1818). In Austen’s novel, Catherine Morland, like Lennox’s Arabella, misjudges a crucial situation (in this case, General Tilney’s relationship to his late wife) because her perceptions are colored by her reading of romances.

\textsuperscript{7} Margaret Anne Doody declares genre of the romance “officially dead” by the time Lennox publishes \textit{The Female Quixote}, although she does offer some anecdotal evidence that French romances were still a literary presence in England (if already a fading one) as late as the 1730s. The French romances that Arabella reads had been composed in the mid-seventeenth century and were at their heyday (having been translated into English several times) in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Among the romances most frequently cited by Arabella are Gaultier de Coste La Calprenede’s \textit{Chapastra} (1648, first English translation 1652), \textit{Cassandra} (1648, first English translation 1652), and Pharamond (1661, first English translation 1662); and Madeleine de Scudéry’s \textit{Clélie} (1654-60, first English translation 1655-6), and \textit{Artamene; or, The Grand Cyrus} (1649-53, first English translation 1653). While I list here only the first English translations, all of these novels went through several English editions, most of them concentrated in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. For two eighteenth-century views of the romance in England, see Clara Reeve’s \textit{The Progress of Romance Through Times, Countries and Manners} (1785) and Richard Hurd’s \textit{Letters on Chivalry and Romance} (1762). For contemporary introductions to the genre, see W. P. Ker’s \textit{Epic and Romance}, Guy R. Mermier’s \textit{Courtly Romance}, and H. B. Taylor’s \textit{An Introduction to Medieval Romance}. For a discussion of
example, flatters Lennox by suggesting that in many respects, she has excelled Cervantes in her satire. However, Fielding cannot “omit observing, that . . . the Humor of Romance, which is principally ridiculed in this work, be not at present greatly in fashion in this Kingdom” (161). Clara Reeve seems similarly perplexed by Lennox’s apparent target. In The Progress of Romance, Reeve writes that

the Satire of The Female Quixote seems in great measure to have lost its aim, because at the time it first appeared, the taste for those Romances was extinct, and the books exploded . . . . This book came some thirty or forty years too late . . . . Romances at this time were quite out of fashion, and the press groaned under the weight of Novels, which sprung up like Mushrooms every year (II 6-7).

Despite its obvious popularity, then, these reviews suggest that The Female Quixote would have been even more powerful had it been written a generation earlier, when it might actually have spared some young ladies Arabella’s mistakes.

The puzzlement over the text’s purposes is not confined to eighteenth-century readers. Twentieth-century critics continue to read the text as a satire on the grand French Romances of the seventeenth century. Duncan Isles, for example, describes “Mrs. Lennox’s desire to ridicule the French heroic romances, and to point out their potentially harmful effects on the minds of inexperienced readers” (420); Deborah Ross says that “Never did a novel so loudly proclaim its own realism in direct opposition to the romance, which Lennox’s narrator seems unequivocally to condemn” (456). Critics who have read the romance in relation to two important writers of the eighteenth century, see Eithne Henson’s Fictions of Romantick Chivalry: Samuel Johnson and the Romance and James J. Lynch’s Henry Fielding and the Heliodoran Novel: Romance, Epic and Fielding’s New Province of Writing. Finally, for a fascinating account of romance reading as a “declaration of independence” (7) or intervention in the social lives of women in 1970s and 1980s America, see Janice Radway’s Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature.

8 For other readings of the novel as a meditation primarily on French romances, see also James J. Lynch (“Lennox’s principal concern is to ridicule heroic romances in the same way Cervantes ridiculed chivalric romances” (51)); Elaine M. Kauvar (“Mrs. Lennox’s novel is then a burlesque of the French romances of the seventeenth century” (212)); Laurie Langbauer (“Arabella’s excesses of behavior actually reflect what is wrong with romance” (29))); B.G. McCarthy (Arabella must “either abandon the world of the
novel in this way have been extremely unsatisfied with the novel's ending, in which Arabella agrees to give up her romances and marry. Leland Warren "confess[es] disappointment at the novel's not allowing the Countess to lead Arabella from her fantasy" (377); Jane Spencer suggests that "[w]hen Arabella does give up her illusions, she gives up her power. There is nothing left for her to do but accept Glanville and submit to real life" (189). Others have gone a step further, and have suggested that Lennox simply did not have control over her material. Laurie Langbauer complains that

> In having Arabella enumerate romances, Lennox goes too far. Arabella conjures up too many characters, cites too many texts, repeats too many similar scenes. . . . In the end, romance splits the book wide open: Lennox's attempts to evict romance are loose-ended—she introduces the Countess only to whisk her away—and ultimately fracturing—the Doctor comes out of nowhere and introduces a chapter that jars with the rest of the story, rather than smoothly resolving it (36).

Some critics have even gone so far as to argue that Lennox did not even write the chapter in which the "worthy Divine" appears to "cure" Arabella (Volume IX's Chapter XI, entitled "Being, in the Author's Opinion, the best Chapter in this History")—that it is instead the work of Samuel Johnson.⁹

In this chapter, I take issue with these readings of the novel. I argue that it is a mistake to read Lennox's novel as a limp and pointless satire on the Romance, a genre no

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¹ The theory that Johnson actually wrote this chapter for Lennox was first advanced by Rev. J. Mitford in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (N.S. XX (August 1843) 132 and XXI (January 1844) 41). The theory was based on internal evidence, including examples of parallelism and chiasmus, frequency of abstract words and phrases, sentence length, and emphasis on reason and morality. This attribution has been accepted by several recent critics of the novel, although it is certainly a question of controversy. I see no compelling reason to credit this attribution—a point to which I will return below. For a more thorough discussion of this controversy, see *The Female Quixote* IX Chapter XI note 1, as well as Duncan Isles's Appendix to the novel.

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longer in vogue; I argue that this mistake has been made because eighteenth-century and
twentieth-century readers alike have underestimated—if not completely overlooked—the
fact that Lennox was working quite self-consciously within the Quixote premise. (In fact,
Lennox initiated a revival of this premise: her novel precipitated a host of subsequent books
operating within the quixote tradition, although *The Female Quixote* remained by far the most
successful of these works.\(^\text{10}\) Specifically, I argue that Lennox’s text foregrounds a particular
aspect of the quixote myth—the knowledge aspect of the myth—in order to insert her
novel into a vigorous eighteenth-century debate about encyclopedic form. In my reading of
the novel, the Romance functions as a metonym for a phenomenon that *was* greatly in
fashion when Lennox published her novel: the encyclopedic urge. Ultimately, I argue that
by reading the novel in these terms, we can see the novel’s infamously abrupt ending as
argument rather than as failure.

In Chapter One, I have shown that the production of encyclopedias was being
undertaken with unprecedented vigor at the same historical moment that novels were being

\(^{10}\) Mid- to late-eighteenth-century British works inspired by Lennox’s success to create their own
quixotes include Tobias Smollett’s *The History of Sir Launcelot Gravese* (1760-61), *Angelica, or Quixote in Petticoats* (1758), George Colman’s *Polly Honeycombe* (1760), Rosiel de Silva’s *The Spiritual Quixote; or, the entertaining history of Don Ignatius Loyola, founder of the order of Jesuits; of whom it may, with the strictest truth be said, that he was one of the most extraordinary men that ever the world produced* (1754), *Tarrataria, or Don Quixote the Second* (1761), *Fricigg, or the modern Quixote* (1763), *The Spiritual Quixote; or the summer’s Rambles of Mr. Geoffrey Wildgoose* (1773), *The Country Quixote* (1785), *The Amicable Quixote* (1788), Lennox’s own *The History of Sir George Warrington; or the Political Quixote* (1797), George Buxton’s *The Political Quixote; or the Adventures of the renowned Don Blasikio, Dwarfino, and his trusty Square, Seditions* (1820), and *The Spiritual Quixote, Geoffrey Wildgoose, in Cheltenham; or, A Discourse on a race-course* (1827). In addition, at least two American works owe their inspiration to Lennox: Tabitha Tenney’s *Female Quixotland; exhibited in the Romantic Opinions and Extravagant Adventures of Dorcasina Sheldon* (1808), and H. H. Brackenridge’s *Modern Chivalry, containing the Adventures of a Captain, and Teague O’Regan, His Servant* (1793-1805). For a description of many of these works, see Small 97-117.
"elevated" as a genre. It is within the cultural context of the encyclopedic urge, then, that
The Female Quixote was being written, published, and read. In "Libraries without Walls" (the
third chapter of The Order of Books), Roger Chartier begins to describe this cultural context
when he identifies a "tension" in eighteenth-century thought "between comprehensiveness
and essence" (69). On one side of this tension are those who believed that the best way to
organize all human knowledge—a task thought increasingly urgent as the advent of print
culture seemed to multiply this knowledge at alarming rates—was to accumulate it endlessly

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11 The term is Michael Warner's. See "The Elevation of the Novel in England: Hegemony and
Literary History."

12 The tension that Chartier explores is similar to the "rupture" that Foucault describes in The Order
of Things. Foucault argues that before this rupture, which seems to happen around 1775, humans organized
information in terms of resemblances. Human beings strove to discover the different ways that one thing
resembled another, the way that one thing was linked to the next. For example, Traité des signatures (1624)
prescribes the use of walnuts to cure head injuries because the walnut resembles the human head. The hard
outside shell of the walnut would be appropriate for external skull wounds because it resembles the cranium;
the nut itself would be therefore appropriate for internal head injuries, since the nut "is exactly like the brain
in appearance" (qtd. in Foucault 27). However, Foucault calls this method of organizing human knowledge
(which I find similar to "comprehensiveness") "plethoric because it is limitless. Resemblance never remains
stable within itself; it can be fixed only if it refers back to another similitude, which then, in turn, refers to
others; each resemblance, therefore, has value only from the accumulation of all the others, and the whole
world must be explored if even the slightest of analogies is to be justified and finally take on the appearance
of certainty. It is therefore a knowledge that can, and must, proceed by the infinite accumulation of
confirmations all dependent on one another . . . . The only possible form of link between the elements of this
knowledge is addition (30). In other words, in this way of organizing knowledge, nothing can ever be certain
unless every other link is examined and known. The only logical thing to do is to go on endlessly
accumulating and adding more links in the chain.

After the rupture, Foucault argues that humans begin organizing information according to "identities
and differences" (50)—a mode of organization that I find similar to Chartier's "essence." According to
Foucault, the "activity of the mind . . . no longer consist[s] in drawing things together, in setting out on a quest for
everything that might reveal some sort of kinship, attraction, or secretly shared nature within them, but, on
the contrary, in discriminating" (55). This marks an end to endless accumulation; a "complete enumeration will
now be possible" (Foucault 55).

Although the work of Chartier and Foucault nicely dovetail, there are significant differences. In The
Order of Things, Foucault seems content to map ruptures in the history of unconscious knowledge. He is
interested in mapping what it is possible to think or to know at a particular moment in time. Although
Chartier seems to be working on the same set of conflicting impulses in the eighteenth century, he suggests
that the war between the comprehensive and the essential was being waged not only in the realm of the
unconscious, but also in the realm of the conscious. Further, Foucault seems to suggest a linear progression
of the "plethoric" resemblance towards the "complete" organization by identity, while Chartier effectively
demonstrates that comprehensiveness and essence co-existed, both producing and informing one another.
Finally, Foucault seems to be rather optimistic about the "completeness" possible when organizing by
identities, while Chartier argues that both comprehensiveness and essence are fraught with the frustration of
being necessarily incomplete.

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and exhaustively, to bring together all human knowledge in one place (63). These believers in comprehensiveness produced encyclopedias, dictionaries, and print “libraries”—“multiple-volume collections gathering together published works in a given genre such as novels, tales or travel accounts” (66). They also dreamt of comprehensive libraries in the architectural sense: in 1785, for example, Etienne-Louis Boullée proposed the reconstruction of the Bibliothèque du Roi. This library was to “be the largest in all Europe” (62), and would, as near as possible, bring together under one roof “the entire written patrimony of humanity” (63). Of course, this library would have to be more ideal than real; the task of accumulating these books was necessarily endless, new books being published every day rendering the library incomplete.

On the other side of the tension between comprehensiveness and essence were those who found the idealized and ultimately impossible comprehensive project “useless or harmful,” and believed that the best way to organize all human knowledge was to eliminate, select and reduce. These advocates of “essence” produced, rather than massive encyclopedias, the “extraits, esprits, abrégés, [and] analyses” equally popular in the eighteenth century (68). These small, easy-to-handle volumes of extracts and abridgements “aimed at eliminating, selecting, and reducing rather than accumulating a multitude of separate and dispersed works in one collection” (68). The ideal library for these thinkers looked very different from Boullée’s: it sat on a single shelf. In his futuristic L’An 2440 (1741), for example, Louis-Sébastien Mercier writes of a library comprised of “one small cabinet, in

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13 One such print library was the Bibliothèque universelle des dames, published in Paris between 1785 and 1797. This ladies’ library, which consisted of 156 octodecimo-sized volumes, “had encyclopedic ambitions, given that it contained travel narratives, novels, and works of history, morality, mathematics and astronomy, physics and natural history, and all liberal arts” (67)—presumably everything a lady could (or perhaps should) know.
which were several books that seemed . . . far from voluminous” (qtd. in Chartier 68). In order to produce this library, the “enlightened men of the twenty-fifth century” extract “from a thousand in-folio volumes” only what is essential, “somewhat in the same way that the skilful chemists who extract the virtue from plants concentrate it in a flask and throw out the vulgar liquors” (qtd. in Chartier 69). What they end up with for each thousand folios, in essence, is one small duodecimo-sized volume. For these dreamers, too, however, the aim of organizing all human knowledge was not entirely achieved; absences were everywhere apparent.

“The irreducible gap between ideally exhaustive” comprehensiveness and “necessarily incomplete” essence “was experienced with intense frustration,” Chartier suggests, and led the literati to various “extravagant ventures” throughout the period (88). As I have suggested in Chapter One, this intense frustration is everywhere apparent in contemporaneous encyclopedias, all of the compilers asserting that they have come up with a form or method that will render these gaps transparent or unimportant. Here, however, I am particularly interested in reading Arabella’s “extravagant ventures” as an attempt to mediate between the urge toward comprehensiveness on one hand, and the urge toward essence on the other. Throughout Lennox’s novel, the romances that Arabella reads, as well as Arabella herself, are repeatedly associated with encyclopedic comprehensiveness; this mode of organizing knowledge consistently comes into conflict with the impulse towards distilled essence promoted by those around her, including Glanville, the man she eventually marries. In the end, I argue, Lennox envisions an uneasy compromise, with Arabella and Glanville as well as comprehensiveness and essence being mutually dependent upon one another.
It may seem somewhat surprising to read Lennox's novel as a meditation on the debate accompanying the encyclopedic urge, but it should not seem so. As its title telegraphs, Lennox owes part of her inspiration for *The Female Quixote* to Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote* (1605-1615), and Cervantes had already foregrounded the similarities between romances and encyclopedic texts in his own work. In the "Prologue" to the first part of *Don Quixote*, the translator or compiler of the text describes himself as Don Quixote's "step-father," though in appearance his "father"—the "real" author or father, we learn much later, is one Cide Hamete Benegeli (111). This relationship puts this step-father at a distance from his text similar to the distance between a compiler and an encyclopedic work. This step-father, speaking to a friend, expresses his anxieties about how to present the text to the public, since he finds his simple text lacking in the expected encyclopedic form. It is, he says,

"lacking in all learning and instruction, without quotations in the margins or notes at the end of the book; whereas I see other works, never mind how fabulous and profane, so full of sentences from Aristotle, Plato and the whole herd of philosophers, as to impress their readers and get their authors a reputation for wide reading, erudition and eloquence. . . . My book will lack all this; for I have nothing to quote in the margin or to note at the end. Nor do I even know what authors I am following in it; and so I cannot set their names at the beginning in alphabetical order, as they all do, starting with Aristotle and ending with Xenophon—and Zeilus or Zeuxis, although one of them was a libeller and the other a painter" (26).

The step-father's friend suggests a remedy for this dilemma, which puts his mind at ease.

The friend suggests that as to

"quoting in the margins the books and authors from whom you gathered the sentences and saying you have put in your history, all you have to do is to work in some pat phrases or bits of Latin that you know by heart, or at least that cost you small pains to look out. For example, on the subject of liberty and captivity you might bring in:

'Non bene pro toto libertas venditur auro.'"
And in the margin cite Horace, or whoever said it. . . . With these little bits of Latin and such like, they may even take you for a scholar. . . . As to putting notes at the end of the book, you may safely follow this method: if you mention a giant in the text, see that it be the giant Goliath. And by that alone, which will cost you almost nothing, you have a grand note, since you can write: The giant Goliath or Golas was a Philistine, whom the shepherd David killed with a sling-shot in the Vale of Terebinth, as it is recounted in the Book of Kings—in whatever chapter you find it is. . . . Let us come now to references to authors, which other books contain and yours lacks. The remedy for that is very simple; for you have nothing else to do but look for a book which quotes them all from A to Z, as you say. Then you put this same alphabet into yours. For, granted that the very small need you have to employ them will make your deception apparent, it does not matter a bit. . . . And if it serves for no other purpose, at least that long catalogue of authors will be useful to lend authority to your book at the outset (28-29).

Although Cervantes thus begins his book by ridiculing the encyclopedic urge, it is nonetheless extremely telling that in the prologue—a place so important for setting the reader’s expectations for the text to come—he chooses to highlight one aspect of the quixote myth—the knowledge aspect of that myth—over other aspects of the myth that will be rehearsed throughout the course of the text. In other words, while reading Don Quixote, we come to associate many traits with knight errantry, traits that Don Quixote embodies with varying degrees of success. These traits include religious purity, courtly love, selfless altruism, and highly complicated rules of military deportment, as well as astonishing learning and eloquence: as Don Quixote himself says, knight errantry is “a science . . . that comprises all or most of the sciences in the world” (584). But in this preface, Cervantes chooses to highlight the last of these traits—the fact that a knight errant must have an encyclopedic knowledge of the world—thus making explicit the link between encyclopedic works and the chivalric romances that are also ridiculed in the novel.

14 For a complete discussion of the traits associated with quixote myth, see Ian Watt’s “Don Quixote of La Mancha” in Myths of Modern Individualism.
Lennox, then, in some sense is merely following the lead of Cervantes when she herself uses the romance as a vehicle for her meditation on the encyclopedic urge. Lennox begins to forge a link between massive encyclopedias such as the French *Encyclopédie* and the romance by emphasizing their similarity in bulk. We learn early on that Arabella's library consists of a “great Store of Romances” (49). We don’t learn exactly how many volumes she owns, but when Arabella “orders one of her women to bring Cleopatra, Cassandra, Clelia, and the Grand Cyrus, from her Library,” she tells Glanville that she has chosen these “few” volumes “from a great many others, which compose the most valuable Part of my Library” (49)—and these volumes appear to be taken only from the “C”s of Arabella’s library! These four romances alone, by my calculations, account for about 3,402 pages of folio reading. No wonder, then, that the woman who went to fetch them returns “sinking under the weight of those voluminous Romances,” and that Glanville blanches at “what to him appeared an Herculean Labour” of reading them (49). When Arabella asks Glanville to read just one transaction in one of the romances, “Mr. Glanville . . . examined the Task she had set him . . . but, counting the Pages, he was quite terrified at the Number, and could not prevail upon himself to read them” (50). Glanville is not the only one who is terrified by the number of pages involved in the French romances; later in the novel, we learn that Sir George had once “actually employed himself some Weeks in giving a new version of the

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15 We know that Arabella reads these romances in “very bad Translations” (7) and in “huge folio” (49). WorldCat reveals that all of these titles appeared in more than one London edition; here I have tried to give statistics for a typical folio edition. A 1687 edition of La Calprenede’s *Cleopatra* (printed by F. Collins) appeared in 12 parts, ran 958 pages, and measured 31cm; a 1667 edition of La Calprenede’s *Cassandra* (printed for A. Moseley) appeared in 5 parts, ran 858 pages, and measured 28cm; a 1678 edition of Scudery’s *Clelia* (printed by H. Herringman et al.) appeared in five parts, ran 736 pages and measured 33 x 21cm; and a 1653-1655 edition of Scudery’s *Artamenes; or, The Grand Cyrus* (published by H. Moseley) appeared in 5 volumes and measured 28cm (no page total given, but I’m estimating 850 pages based on the average page total of the other three works). The number of pages, however, may be much higher than 3,402 pages: Gallagher says that a ten-volume edition of *The Grand Cyrus* “ran to fifteen thousand pages,” although she gives no evidence for this figure (187).
Grand Cyrus; but the prodigious Length of the Task he had undertaken, terrified him so much, that he gave it over" (129). Both Glanville and Sir George find the comprehensively encyclopedic “terrifying”; this is our first piece of evidence that they are Arabella’s foes in the debate over encyclopedic form, among those who find the comprehensive project “useless or harmful,” and who would prefer to read the abridged version of the story in the small, easily-handled duodecimo. Arabella, on the other hand, clearly prefers the large, comprehensive volumes, whose pages she turns over, “one after another, with Eyes sparkling with Delight” (49).

In addition to linking romances and encyclopedias together by virtue of their shared physical bulk, Lennox also links the two genres by borrowing the language and methods commonly associated with encyclopedias to characterize the romances. At least twice in the novel, Arabella claims that her romances are books “from which all useful Knowledge may be drawn” (48, 151)—a claim, of course, taken directly from the preface of nearly every encyclopedia published in the period. Further, Arabella, like the encyclopedic compilers, is obsessed with method, obsessed with the idea that every piece of information must be related to every other piece of information in an unbroken chain of knowledge.16 For example, when she is in Bath, Arabella asks Mr. Selvin to tell her the histories of some of the people she sees in the Assembly Room. However, when Selvin responds by telling her some of the gossip that he knows about these people, Arabella criticizes his efforts:

“I assure you . . . I know not what to make of the Histories he has been relating. I think they do not deserve that name, and are rather detached pieces of Satire on particular Persons, than a serious Relation of Facts . . . . far from a Detail of Vices, Follies, and Irregularities, I expected to have heard the Adventures of some

16 Recall, for example, that the “Preface” to the first edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* rails against “dismembering the Sciences” (as alphabetical order would do) as this is “repugnant to the very idea of science, which is a connected series of conclusions . . . in one uninterrupted chain.”
illustrious Personages related; between whose Actions, and those of the Heroes and Heroines of Antiquity, I might have found some Resemblance" (276-7, my emphasis).

Similarly, when Arabella asks Miss Groves's servant to relate her mistress's history, Arabella has to interrupt her and ask her to begin again: "Pray... do me the Favour to relate Things methodically: of what use is it to me to know that this is your Lady's second Trip... into the Country, if I know not the occasion of it. Therefore begin with informing me, who were the parents of this admirable young Person" (70, my emphasis). And again, when Arabella's own maid, Lucy, is required to tell Arabella's history to Sir George, Arabella condescends to give Lucy a few hints on how the narration should proceed:

"you ask me to tell you what you must say; as if it was not necessary you should know as well as myself, and be able, not only to recount all my Words and Actions, however instantaneous; relate exactly every Change of my Countenance; number all my Smiles, Half-smiles, Blushes, Turnings pale, Glances, Pauses, Full-stops, Interruptions; the Rise and Falling of my Voice; every Motion of my Eyes; and every Gesture which I have used for these Ten Years past; nor omit the smallest Circumstance that relates to me... you must repeat all the Conversations I have ever held with you upon the Subjects of Love and Gallantry, that your Audience may be so well acquainted with my Humour, as to know exactly, before they are told, how I shall behave, in whatever Adventures befall me" (122-23).

Whenever Arabella tells a story or tries to instruct one of her cousins on a fine point of behavior, she never cites just one example, but instead always cites several related ones. When Arabella lectures Miss Glanville on the importance of not granting lovers too many favors, for example, Miss Glanville is obliged to sit through "a fine Harangue of her Cousin upon the Necessity of Reserve, and distant Behaviour, to Men who presumed to declare themselves Lovers, enforcing her Precepts with Examples drawn from all the Romances she had ever read" (90, my emphasis). This must have been a very fine and very long harangue indeed—too long even for the narrator to include for the reader. Arabella's long lists of examples are so tiring and tedious for people to sit through that they are obliged either to
interrupt her, as did Mr. Glanville when he fears “this Conversation would be very tedious” (104); or else, like Miss Glanville, “quite out of Patience” at yet another “tedious Harangue,” to flounce out of the room “without any Regard to Ceremony” (132).

However, these long lists of related examples are not simply imposed on others; Arabella uses these extensive clusters of examples in order to regulate her own behavior as well. Whenever anything happens to Arabella and she has to decide how to proceed, we always see her “searching the Records of her Memory for a Precedent” (13) or “ransacking her Memory for Instances in her Romances of Ladies equally unfortunate with herself” (355), or producing still more “Instances of . . . Compassion in Ladies” in order to justify her own behaviour (317). For Arabella, there is no such thing as an isolated incident—in incidents must always be carefully footnoted and cross-referenced to all other related incidents.

As all of these examples make clear, Arabella is the consummate comprehensive encyclopedist, promoting the task of endless accumulation of knowledge and details. However, these examples also clearly demonstrate that Arabella does not promote random accumulation for accumulation’s sake, but rather she promotes strictly methodical accumulation. She is interested in the “Laws of Romance” (297), is interested in arguing according to “System” (142). In other words, while others around her are content with “detached pieces of Satire” or non-methodical stories and histories, Arabella is interested in placing information within a system or method of organization so powerful that once this system is learned, future behaviors and beliefs can be predicted, and any gaps or omissions are rendered transparent.
Arabella's use of language is similarly comprehensive and at odds with the more essential style of those around her. Arabella speaks the “Language of Romance” (53), and in this language, things take a good deal longer to say than they otherwise might. For example, when Arabella begins to realize that she loves Glanville, she cannot simply say so, even to herself. Instead, she says that “Mr. Glanville's Person and Qualifications had attracted her particular Notice: And to speak in the Language of Romance, she did not hate him; but on the contrary, was very much disposed to wish him well” (53). Throughout the novel, the comprehensiveness of Arabella's language confuses people and causes them to beg her to speak “to the Purpose” (101, 141). Miss Glanville, for example, wants a simple yes or no answer to the question of “whether Sir George believes, Miss Groves was ever married to Mr. L——”; in Arabella's comprehensive manner of speaking, however, the answer to this question takes up several pages (140-43).

At one point in the novel, Arabella and Glanville overtly dispute the merits of her encyclopedic language of Romance versus his more succinct language to the purpose. Glanville suggests, with “Submission,” that

all that can be said, either of Beauty, or of Love, may be comprised in a very few Words: All who have Eyes, and behold true Beauty, will be ready to confess it is a very pleasing Object; and all that can be said of it, may be said in a very few Words; for when we have run over the Catalogue of Charms, and mentioned fine Eyes, fine Hair, delicate Complexion, regular features, and an elegant Shape, we can only add a few Epithets more, such as Lovely, Dangerous, Inchanting, Irresistible and the like; and every thing that can be said of Beauty is exhausted. And so likewise it is with Love; we know that Admiration precedes it, that Beauty kindles it, Hope keeps it alive, and Despair puts an End to it; and that Subject may be as soon discussed as the other, by the judicious Use of proper Words; such as Wounds, Darts, Fires, Languishings, Dying, Torture, Rack, Jealousy, and a few more of no Signification, but upon this Subject (149).

17 “Compassion in Ladies” sounds very much like it could be an entry in Dunton's The Ladies Dictionary, discussed in Chapter One.
Ironically, this discourse on the judicious use of words is one of the longest Glanville delivers in the novel, and he even repeats himself ("may be comprised in a very few Words"; "may be said in a very few Words"). But leaving that aside, Glanville's speech implies that words can be separated into a finite number of categories, that all of the excessive language of love contained in Arabella's romances can be distilled down to a few choice phrases. Clearly, Glanville is organizing language in an essential fashion, and there seems to be a certain element of condescension here as well. Glanville seems to imply that it requires a great deal more knowledge and skill (and perhaps masculinity) to be able to reduce the folio to the duodecimo, to be able to speak succinctly rather than circuitously.

Arabella, however, demonstrates her strong disagreement with Glanville's implicit claim to superior knowledge throughout the novel. When Glanville suggests that all that can be said of love and beauty can be said in a very few words, Arabella objects, and beseeches Glanville "to reflect a little upon those numerous and long Conversations, which these subjects have given Rise to in Clelia and in the Grand Cyrus" (149). Arabella finds that "the agreeable Diversity of their Sentiments on those Heads affords a most pleasing and rational Entertainment" (150). In Arabella's view, what is lost in abridgments, in language too much "to the purpose," is diversity and difference of opinion. Further, if it were not for the first comprehensive efforts of the encyclopedists, there would be nothing for later compilers to distill.

This dependence of essentialism on comprehensiveness is dramatically enacted in at least one instance, where Arabella's encyclopedic urge saves her purse, if not her life: when a band of real highway robbers attack the coach that carries Arabella and her relations, she stands up and delivers a romantic discourse at the top of her lungs: "Hold, hold, valiant
Men, said she, as loud as she could speak, addressing herself to the Highwaymen; do not, by a mistaken Generosity, hazard your Lives in a Combat, to which the Laws of Honour do not oblige you. We are not violently carried away, as you falsely suppose; we go willingly along with these Persons, who are our Friends and Relations'' (258). Although Sir Charles, who fears for his life but does not know what to do, responds with a sneering “Do you think these Fellows will mind your fine Speeches, Niece?” (258), in fact this speech causes the dreadfully confused highwaymen to “abandon their Enterprize, and [gallop] away as fast as they were able” (258).

Despite the fact that in all of these ways, Arabella is clearly and strongly associated with the encyclopedic and comprehensive, the novel also makes it perfectly clear that Arabella is aware of the other side of the debate, and can see and appreciate the merits of the method of distilled, abridged essence. For example, Arabella is perfectly capable of speaking “succinctly” when she wants to (348). After speaking of the involuntary “Mischief” she has done, “certain unavoidable Laws” and “Endeavours” which “may not haply” succeed, Miss Glanville, hopelessly confused, finally begs Arabella to speak more plainly: “tell me in plain English what this Mischief is, which you have done; and to what Purpose you are going out this Morning?” (182). Without missing a beat, Arabella replies in plain English directly to the purpose: “I am going to pay a Visit to Sir George Bellmour, replied Arabella, and I intreat you, fair Cousin, to pardon me for robbing you of so accomplished a Lover” (182). Although she would prefer to speak in the circuitous and “distant Manner” of her favorite heroines (202), Arabella proves herself perfectly capable of being blunt.

In another incident I have discussed above, while Arabella demands from Lucy astonishing minuteness of detail when relating her history to Sir George, she also recognizes that there
are some places where Lucy might profitably adopt the method of abridgement or essence: “because I am willing to spare you the Trouble of repeating Things, that are not absolutely necessary, you must apologize to your Hearers for slipping over what passed in my Infancy, and the first Eight or Ten Years of my life; not failing, however, to remark, that, from some sprightly Sallies of Imagination, at those early Years, those about me conceived marvellous hopes of my future Understanding” (122).

In fact, Arabella seems to stand somewhere in the middle of the debate between comprehensiveness and essence. Arabella is fascinated, for example with men who are at once gifted warriors and gifted speakers in the language of romance—she admires Oroondates, Artaban, Artamenes, Juba and Cleomedon, among “an hundred other Heroes I could name. . . [who] were not more famous for their noble and wonderful Actions in War, than for the Sublimity and Constancy of their Affections in Love” (150). Her interest in these heroes and their ability to “speak” in two different languages reflects her own position between two modes of speaking—between the language of Romance and the language of everyone else around her, between comprehensiveness and essence. In this respect, Arabella is certainly more generous, more even-handed—if not more sane—than those around her, who would completely dismiss and denigrate the comprehensive mode and champion essence alone.

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18 In “Of the Conversation of Women: The Female Quixote and the Dream of Perfection,” Leland E. Warren writes convincingly of Lennox’s “dualistic way of drawing Arabella” (370), in particular in terms of her speech, which seems to lie somewhere between masculine and feminine discourse: “what choice is open to a woman who rejects the kind of [trivial] talk for which her sex is ritually condemned?” he asks (374). For other essays exploring Arabella’s use of language, see Catherine A. Craft, who suggests that the “language of romance is women’s language, a tongue that men cannot understand, and its ultimate achievement is to establish a community of women” (836), and David Marshall’s “Writing Masters and ‘Masculine Exercises’ in The Female Quixote.”
Although Arabella appears to be the most informed participant in the debate and the one occupying the most central position, her interest in and insistence on the merits of the comprehensive and the encyclopedic cause those around her to label “delirious” (367), as suffering from “Madness” (200), or as having a head “a little turned” (201). Eventually, after Arabella throws herself into the Thames to escape some imagined ravishers, and as a result falls into a dangerous fever which does result in a brief delirium, a “worthy Divine” (366) is called in to cure her. But interestingly enough, as the novel gets closer and closer to this hypothetical cure, the form of the novel begins to reflect the struggle that has until this point been played out only between characters. Chapter II of Book VI, for example, is entitled “In which Sir George, continuing his surprising History, relates a most stupendous Instance of Valour only to be paralleled by that of the great Oroondates, Cæsario, &c. &c. &c” (217). Taken alone this title might suggest that the narrator, like everyone else around Arabella, finds her language of romance and her need for infinite examples a bit tedious. But the attitude implied by the “&c.”s has its counterpoint by occasions when this same narrator seems to adopt the language of romance. In the following passage, for example, the narrator describes one of Sir George’s first visits with the heroine in language we would be more likely to expect from Arabella than from anyone else:

Happy was it for him that he was prevented by her Vigilance from attempting a Piece of Gallantry, which would, undoubtedly, have procured him a Banishment from her Presence; but, ignorant, how kind Fortune was to him in balking his Designs, he was ungrateful enough to go away in a mightily ill Humour with this fickle Goddess: So little capable are poor Mortals of knowing what is best for them! (87).

Taken together, these passages begin to show how the conflict between comprehensiveness and essence is dramatized not only by the characters, but by the narrator as well.
Beginning with Book VII, the tension between comprehensiveness and essence within the form of the novel itself begins to accelerate. This book begins with a chapter entitled “For the Shortness of which the Length of the next shall make some Amends” (255); it is followed by Chapter II, entitled “Not so long as was first intended: But contains, however, a surprising Adventure on the Road” (257). Chapter titles such as these make formal the debate that earlier in the novel had been suggested in content, and serve to emphasize the fact that the novel as a whole has been a meditation on the conflicting impulses of shortness and length, of comprehensiveness and essence. But perhaps most dramatic is the eighth chapter of Book Eight, entitled simply “Which concludes Book the Eighth” (330). In this chapter, only one page long, two things happen. First, the Countess who promised to reform Arabella is suddenly and summarily torn away from the pages of the novel—she is simply called away by “her Mother’s Indisposition” (330). Second, Arabella and the Glanvilles travel to London, and the narrator suddenly adopts a summary, teasing tone, informing us only that during the journey, Arabella made “several small Mistakes” (331), which of course translates into “had several adventures.” Although the narrator hints at the nature of one of these mistakes—“a Lady or Princess in Disguise, forc’d away by a Lover she hated” (331)—the narrator also says that several others took place, but refuses to share them with the reader. This sudden deployment of the language of essence, extract, and abridgment makes the reader actually long for the story to be spun out in all its prodigious length. Having grown used to the encyclopedic language of romances, to be suddenly deprived of these details, as well as to have one of the most interesting characters put beyond our reach, is both dramatic and disconcerting.
Although this slight chapter has attracted little critical attention, I believe that it can provide clues for reading the novel’s penultimate chapter—a chapter that receives a great deal of critical attention—in its proper light. I believe we can see that the disconcerting, jarring, abridged and to-the-purpose nature of this chapter is part of its main point—we’re supposed to see it as unsatisfactory. Just like the abrupt departure of the countess in the previous chapter, the sudden appearance of the divine in this one is precisely the point: as detached pieces of plot unconnected by any system to what has gone before, we’re supposed to see these contrivances as dissatisfying, and so be drawn closer to Arabella’s position in the debate between the comprehensive and the essential. To see and organize the world in only the way of essence cannot be enough.

Furthermore, I remain unconvinced that the divine’s attempt to “cure” Arabella is as complete and crushing as other critics have read it to be. Langbauer, for example, in describing Arabella’s cure, suggests that “Lennox herself, literally or figuratively, must disappear; power and authority can enter her text only as a man; only a man can dispel romance” (43). A very grim reading of the ending of this novel indeed; and yet a very common one.19

I can offer several reasons for re-evaluating this assessment of the novel’s ending. In this penultimate chapter, the divine attempts to cure Arabella by persuading her that her histories are fictions, that they are absurd, and that they are criminal. He doesn’t get very far with the first prong of his argument: Arabella tells him that she will never believe that any

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19 Some other depressing readings: Arabella “can be a heroine but never an author . . . . In abdicating the authority of autobiography, in surrendering her life story, Arabella risks surrendering her life” (Marshall 121); “The clergyman hears a story of a foolish girl, her mind o’erthrown by fiction; he reforms her. I read a story of a social critic able to show wisdom in folly, and of her ultimate defeat” (Sparks 542); “When Arabella does give up her illusions, she gives up her power. There is nothing left for her to do but accept Glanville and submit to real life” (Spencer 189).
narrative that has "no strong Temptation to Deceit" can be "without one Argument on its Side," no matter how fictional it may be (376). However, for the sake of argument Arabella is willing to concede the divine this point temporarily, so that they can go on to the second point.

As for Arabella’s histories being absurd, the divine’s whole case rests on the idea that he knows the world better than she does. This argument is on its own a very weak one, since everyone in the novel who supposedly knows the world better than Arabella does is at one time or another mistaken in a distinction between truth and fiction, between what is realistic and what is absurd. (The incident with the highwayman that I have described above is just one example of this confusion.) Further, I think that it is very important to note, as Mary Pat Martin has in her excellent study of this novel, that the divine’s main message in this portion of their discussion is that Arabella must not stop reading fiction altogether, but instead begin to substitute the reading of novels like Clarissa for her reading of the romances. As Martin puts it, the divine’s lecture "is not... one of moral instruction, but rather a lesson in genre, for as the Divine repudiates one form of fiction... he elevates another" (45). This is not a very difficult point for Arabella to concede—indeed, the transition from the Cleopatra and Cassandra to Clarissa should be a relatively comfortable and easy one for Arabella: after all, Clarissa is just as voluminous and as encyclopedic as Arabella’s beloved romances. Indeed, the novel here is not arguing for the abandonment of one genre in favor of another, for the triumph of the novel over the absurdities of the romance (as many recent critics have read this passage), but instead—even with so simple a device as beginning all the works of fiction in question with the letter “C”—is foregrounding the connectedness of the genres, their reliance upon and relatedness to one
another. By first so strongly associating Arabella and her romances with encyclopedias, and then by extending another link in the chain to connect novels to both romances and encyclopedias, Lennox seems to be arguing for the fluidity of genre, for the idea that one genre inevitably shapes and informs the others. Romances shape and are shaped by novels; novels produce and are produced by encyclopedias.

The divine does win the third point of dispute—whether or not Arabella’s histories are criminal. Arabella is mortified to realize how close she came to having human blood sacrificed to her sense of her “own Glory” (381). Arabella bursts into tears, and her conversation with the divine comes to an end. Next, Arabella must listen to “the poignant Sting of Ridicule” Glanville arranges for her—Sir George’s confession of the “Farce he had invented to deceive her” (382). (Sir George had hired an Actress to impersonate a Romance heroine.) Arabella then retires to her room “for near two Hours afterward” (383). But to what extent should we accept this retirement as evidence of Arabella’s cure?

Earlier in the novel, Arabella herself reminds us that whenever someone takes too long a time in forming a narrative, it makes it look as if what is thereafter delivered is a carefully-crafted utterance that needs to be closely examined rather than taken at face value. Arabella cautions Lucy “against making your Audience wait too long for your Relation; it looks as if you was to make a studied Speech, not a simple Relation of Facts, which ought to be free from all Affectation of Labour and Art; and be told with that graceful Negligence which is so becoming to Truth” (306). Since Arabella makes her audience wait two hours for her response to the divine’s and to Sir George’s revelations, we must at least take the

20 For a more thorough and fascinating discussion of the novel’s account of the relationship between romances and novels, see Martin, and also Margaret Anne Doody’s “Shakespeare’s Novels: Charlotte Lennox Illustrated.”
expiation she delivers “with a noble Ingenuity” with a grain of salt. Further, it is important to note that it is Arabella who proposes marriage to Glanville (while Glanville maintains an “emphatic Silence” throughout the scene (383)), and that his father Sir Charles, who has been ridiculing Arabella throughout the novel and dismissing her as a potential wife for his son, thanks Arabella for the “Honour she conferred both on himself and his Son by this alliance” (383). If Arabella has really been so entirely crushed and defeated as other critics have suggested, I would expect dynamics quite different from these.

Rather than as the triumph of reason, truth, and the novel over Arabella and romance, then, I read the ending of this novel as an uneasy truce. Arabella may have given up reading of Cleopatra and Cassandra, but she now has Clarissa. She may have condescended to marry a man and give up her high and noble adventures, but she does so on her own terms, and Glanville appears to be at least equally subdued. In the end, Lennox seems to suggest, no genre, and no one mode of organizing knowledge, is superior to the others or can stand on its own. In other words, as Arabella has known all along, comprehensiveness and essence, the romance, the encyclopedia, and the novel, must go hand in hand.
RICHARDSON AS ENCYCLOPEDIST

We have too long been content with certain commonplaces about Samuel Richardson. First, ever since Dr. Johnson taught us that "there was as great a difference between [Richardson and Fielding] as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial plate," Richardson's epistolary fiction has insistently been credited with giving us characters of psychological complexity and depth. In this standard account of the author, the letters written "to the moment" give us access to the immediate and fleeting thoughts of the characters who produce them; because the letters come from more than one person, we see events from a variety of perspectives, and so are better able to compare the minds and imaginations who experience and report those events. But as Deidre Lynch notes in The Economy of Character, Johnson’s mechanistic metaphor—Fielding being able to tell the time, and Richardson, looking past the surfaces, knowing how watches are made—is "troublingly dehumanized" (43), and should cause us to question just exactly what Johnson meant—and just exactly what we mean—when we agree that Richardson reveals the secrets of the human heart and mind.²

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¹ Boswell's Life II 48-9.
² Lynch suggests that "if the heart Richardson investigated was the sanctum of individual inner life, it also, in an era where knowledge and money both could be figured as the nation's 'blood,' represented the
Second, Richardson is repeatedly associated with novels of extraordinary length. Certainly novels such as *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* are long, even by the standards of an era accustomed to long novels—so long in fact, that they inspired Dr. Johnson’s (other) well-known quip that “if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself.” (*Life* II 173-75). But to focus exclusively on the length of Richardson’s works is to overlook the fact that he spent equal energy reducing and extracting from his behemoth works in order to create elegant epitomes of them—tables of contents, indexes, extracts, and collections of moral sentiments. Richardson crafted these epitomes with care and diligence enough that he felt they could stand on their own, performing work similar to and complementary to their longer counterparts. “But as [the novels] were all written for ye Sake of Instruction to young People, who are apt to read rapidly wth. a View only to Story” he writes to Thomas Edwards in August 1755, explaining his *Collection of Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflexions, Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison,* “I thought my End wou’d be better answer’d, by giving at one view ye Pith & Marrow of what they had been reading... in order to revive in their Minds the Occasions on which ye Things were supposed to be said & done, ye better to assist them in ye Application of ye Moral” (qtd. in E&K 421).

Further, by focusing on the sprawling length of his works, we have forgotten one of the major aspects of his epistolary fiction: the premise that a large body of disorganized papers has been sorted through, edited, organized, and orderly digested—a premise dramatically emphasized in Clarissa’s “mad papers” (Letter 261). Clarissa’s mad papers began life as scribbled scraps torn and thrown “in fragments under the table” (letter 261, p. 889); metaphoric center of the systems of ‘circulation’—of converse, of commercial exchange, and of common and prevailing sympathies—that drew feeling individuals into a social order” (43).
they are recovered (or stolen) by the women who keep Clarissa captive, transcribed by Lovelace and Dorcas, and sent to Belford. Readers of the novel read snippets of Paper X printed askew on the page. Thus set apart, the mad papers seem to form a typographical nucleus around which the rest of the novel’s letters hover. These papers not only reveal something about Clarissa’s disordered mind (a mind prior to her rape so very orderly); they also (and more importantly) serve to emphasize the original disordered state of the papers that the novel’s ostensible editor has organized and shaped into a coherent whole. The papers serve to remind us that the work of assembling this epistolary novel lies, theoretically, in creating order out of chaos, in locating and arranging and ordering and footnoting and cross-referencing rather than in composing.\footnote{Other critics take slightly different but complementary views of the function of the mad papers and other letters. John Bender also sees the assembly and manipulation of the letters as an important theme in the novel: “control of narrative resources is . . . of extreme concern in Richardson’s novels of the 1740s. . . . In them the composition, conveyance, concealment, and collection of letters, as well as every other imaginable manipulation of written documents (including forgery, itself a capital crime), become a primary means of exercising power in the fictional present and of storing up future authority” (156). J. Paul Hunter highlights the suggestion, implicit and even foregrounded in *Clarissa*, that the letters the editor has so carefully assembled may at many points have been hidden, gone unnoticed, or otherwise slipped out of the power of that editor: “Clarissa’s ability to hide her letters represents a liberty feared by the adult world, and illicit traffic between colluding individuals (Anna Howe and Clarissa, for example . . .) meant not only that secret papers and books could be stored there but that such private space was the external symbol of a secret world youths could protect from adult scrutiny” (158). Terry Castle, however, takes a different approach, suggesting that the mad papers call into question, if not completely demolish, the role of the editor and the status of the papers themselves: mad paper X, she says, “raises suspicions about the epistemological status of the text of *Clarissa* itself. None of the mad papers has a signature; they are all thus without official origin, cut off from ‘authority’” (121).}

Finally, it is commonplace to conclude, along with Richardson’s biographers, Eaves and Kimpel, that Richardson is an accidental genius, a sort of literary simpleton who could neither explain nor live up to his works of genius: “For anyone interested in literature, the apparently complete divorce between the author of *Clarissa* and the kindly but slightly ridiculous printer who collected the *Moral and Instructive Sentiments* makes Richardson an especially good example of the creative mind at work, unsupported by learning, analytic
intelligence, or even much experience, and thus thrown back on its own native strength” (E&K 618). But Richardson himself thought of all of his work—including both *Clarissa* and the *Moral and Instructive Sentiments*—as a coherent whole. A letter written to Mark Hildesley emphasizes the crucial importance Richardson attached to this collection of reflections taken from *Pamela, Clarissa,* and *Sir Charles Grandison.* The *Moral and Instructive Sentiments* was designed to show, he says, “that there are not many of the material articles that may be of use for the conduct of life and manners unattended to in one or other of [his three novels]; so that *all together they complete one plan,* the best I was able to give” (my emphasis; 21 Feb. 1755; qtd. in E&K 420). The *Moral and Instructive Sentiments* is no insignificant and easily-dismissed collection of sentiments repeated from earlier works, but is instead meant as a crucial link between texts, an integral part of Richardson’s work as a whole.

In this chapter I will argue that by focusing so exclusively on the psychological advantages and the prodigious length of Richardson’s “new species of writing,” and by considering these novels’ “divorced” from his other work, we have lost sight of an important element of his work: the urge towards the encyclopedic that I have characterized in chapter one. I aim to demonstrate that *all* of Richardson’s work—as a fiction writer, as a non-fiction writer, as an editor and as a printer—is motivated by this encyclopedic urge. From this perspective, the novels are not essentially different from the *Moral and Instructive Sentiments* so derided by Eaves and Kimpel, or from the *Apprentice’s Vade Mecum.* While critics following in the path of Watt have valued Richardson’s novels for their portraits of the unpredictable idiosyncrasies of an individual mind, Richardson’s contemporaries understood

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1 I use the term “novel” here as a shorthand for the new genre of fiction that would come only by the end of the century to be consistently called the novel. In the mid-eighteenth century, Richardson and Fielding called their works “Histories,” and were most interested in distinguishing their works from improbable Romances.

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them as a species of technical manual, as texts meant to be appreciated for the detached
rigor of their encyclopedic mode of organization, for their clockwork mechanism. However,
over the last 250 years we have gradually lost the reading practice that renders these aspects
of Richardson's works legible. Examining the contemporary reception of a book such as
Clarissa, I conclude, offers an excellent way to recover this reading practice.

From its very beginning, Richardson's professional life as a printer was closely tied to
books of reference. Richardson's apprenticeship was spent with John Wilde, whose specialty
was almanacs (E&K 11). Once his apprenticeship was finished and Richardson set up as a
printer himself, he continued publishing similar kinds of books. He chose to print a variety
of dictionaries, including several editions of Philip Miller's highly successful Gardener's
Dictionary (first published 1731; E&K 43), as well as Nathan Bailey's Dictionary (E&K 43) and
Robert James's Medicinal Dictionary (1743-5; E&K 84). In 1736, Richardson began to publish
the massive, encyclopedic The Universal History, by 1744, the ancient part (except for a
supplemental volume) was completed in 20 volumes octavo. In 1751, he began work on the
Modern part of the Universal History, with Tobias Smollet as one of its editors. This modern
part ran to 44 volumes octavo—a number that outstrips even the French Encyclopédie (17
volumes of text, plus 11 volumes of plates). In addition, Richardson was involved with
another large-scale but not so obviously encyclopedic printing project: he printed bills,
orders and occasional reports for the House of Commons, and beginning in 1742, he began
printing their Journal. (This lucrative project was largely responsible for spurring on

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5 Richardson was a partner in this printing venture; and it is while working on this dictionary
that he may have met Dr. Johnson. Johnson helped write the proposals for the work, wrote the
dedication, and wrote some of the dictionary itself ((E&K 84).
Richardson’s success as a printer.) Although it is not clear to what extent Richardson was involved with producing the content of these works, this early work of his career undoubtedly influenced his novels.

Richardson’s hand is more well-documented in some of the other texts that came through his shop to be printed, where we can clearly see his efforts to refine and define their structure and organization. As I have shown in chapter one, eighteenth-century encyclopedias emphasized structure and order—the formal aspects of the work—over the importance of the contents of an individual entry. Indexing and the coherence of the text as a whole were of supreme importance, and it is this sense of structure that Richardson was especially adept at imparting to the texts he worked on. In an autobiographical letter he wrote to his Dutch translator, Johannes Stinstra, Richardson mentions that the booksellers “thought fit to seek me, rather than I them, because of the Readiness I shewed, to oblige them, with writing Indexes [and] Prefaces... abstracting, abridging, compiling, and giving my Opinion of Pieces” (E&K 50). We will probably never know how many indexes and abridgements Richardson wrote for others, but this comment suggests that the number was high. One extreme example of his work in this vein is the table of contents he wrote for a collection of letters called *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe*. Sir Thomas Roe was a 17th-century statesman and British Ambassador at Constantinople. In the late 1730s, Richardson encouraged the Society for the Encouragement of Learning to print the statesman’s papers and letters. The Society agreed, and Richardson was assigned the task of writing a preface and a table of contents. After seeing a sample of Richardson’s work, the committee asked him to contract it as much as possible, and it is easy to see why: this completed table of contents runs to almost 90,000 words (over 1/8 of the letters it summarizes), and contains...
careful cross-references and explanations (E&K 82). To us, perhaps, the prodigious nature of Richardson's attempt to reduce the letters into a concise form is somewhat absurd, but to readers in the eighteenth century, it does not appear to have been. Richardson's friend Aaron Hill writes glowingly of Richardson's success, using terminology that dovetails precisely with Chartier's description of the tension between the comprehensive and the essential: "Good God!" Hill writes. "What a Task have you had and what a comprehensive and satisfactory Abstract have you made of this Matter! It is such a Part of [Roe's] work, as a Chemical Quintessence is of a Vegetable—It increases ye Virtue by diminishing the Bulk" (emphasis mine; letter from Hill to Richardson, 27 September 1739; qtd. in E&K 82). For Richardson and for Hill, at least, chemical quintessence can take 90,000 words to achieve.

Richardson's impulse to bring encyclopedic principles to bear on other authors' texts is even more apparent in his work revising Daniel Defoe's Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain (first published 1724-27). Defoe's original Tour gave the impression that everything described had been seen first-hand, but as Richardson's biographers Eaves and Kimpel note, a "travel book seems an odd thing for Richardson to have worked on, since few men were less traveled" (73). In fact, under Richardson's care, the Tour becomes less and less like a travel book, and more like a "methodical and complete survey of the country." (E&K 74). In his version of Defoe's Tour, Richardson adds details of town government, tables of statistic, lists of members of Parliament, lords and bishops, and frequently quotes from the acts of Parliament that he was at that time printing (E&K 73-5).

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6 Chartier is invoked throughout this chapter in a shorthand way; for a more extensive discussion, see Chapter Three.

7 Eaves and Kimpel present evidence that Richardson was involved with the project, possibly as the sole or chief editor, as early as the 2nd edition (1738), as well as the subsequent editions of 1742, 1748, 1753, and 1761-2 (E&K 72).
However, Richardson did not only add these objective, “fact”-oriented bits of information in the encyclopedia he was creating upon the back of Defoe’s *Tour*, he also added the kind of moral reflections we so often associate with the author. For example, a “breakfasting house in the mansion of the Earl of Ranelagh at Chelsea calls forth a disquisition on the dissoluteness of manners and the necessity of industry” (E&K 75). Such inclusions are especially important to my argument, and so I want to pause here to emphasize this fact: In this work that Richardson revised up to five times, each time making it less and less like a tour book and more and more methodical like an encyclopedia, Richardson finds it appropriate and important to add moral reflections. In other words, for Richardson, the rift between works that would be categorized as “encyclopedic” and those that would be categorized as “literary” was not so great as that rift is today, if it existed at all. The French *Encyclopédie*, “[r]ather than faithfully recording acquired knowledge, [instead] generated an epistemological system that provided a new understanding of human moral and political identity” (Moscovici 389). In the same way, Richardson’s mini-encyclopedia of Great Britain, rather than faithfully recording acquired knowledge of the island, instead served as a platform from which to launch a system of moral conduct. The genres we are so prone to separate here seem to blend together.

The *Tour thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain* was not the only one of Defoe’s texts upon which Richardson worked. Richardson also revised the fourth edition of Defoe’s *Complete English Tradesman* (1737, dated 1738), and in this work as well, Richardson’s ability to bring sense of order and coherence to an already-existing text is readily apparent. In some places he pared it down, in others he made significant additions (for example, Richardson added a whole chapter on recent bankruptcy law and many moral reflections). More
significantly, however, the “method of the book has been made uniform, chapter headings have been rewritten and expanded so that the table of contents now looks like those epitomes Richardson loved to write for his later works...” (E&K 71).

The first publication that Richardson is known to have written himself is *The Apprentice’s Vade Mecum; or, Young Man’s Pocket Companion* (1734). Designed as a manual for prospective apprentices, the book was begun when Richardson’s nephew, Thomas Verren Richardson, was apprenticed to his Uncle Samuel. Like many of Richardson’s previous works I have already highlighted here, the text seems obsessed with organization and structure almost at the expense of content: here, the excess of organizational apparatus for the work stands out at first glance. The book’s three parts are first summarized on the title page in three paragraphs. Part One, we learn, contains general comments on indenture as well as a warning against playhouses; Part Two contains specific rules and directions; and Part Three lays down and vindicates principles of Christianity “in so intelligent and forcible a Manner, as may serve for a Preservative against the contagious Infidelity of the present Age.” The Preface, after pointing out the need for such a work as well as the fact that none has thus far been attempted, goes on to summarize the three parts again, this time at greater length (here, about three pages are devoted to the task). A minutely-detailed list of contents follows this Preface, each of the three parts with its own list. The “Contents of the First Part” begins as follows:

| Definition of the Word Indenture and Apprentice | Page 1 |
| Obligation on the Part of the Apprentice         | 2      |
| To keep inviolably his Master’s Secrets         | *ibid.*|
| To do his Service cheerfully                    | 3      |

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* Thomas Verren Richardson was apprenticed to Samuel Richardson on 1 August 1732 and died 8 November of the same year (E&K 50).
Not to commit Fornication  
Nor contract Matrimony  
Reasonableness of these Prohibitions; and Inconveniences of too early Marriages  
Not to game  
Gaming a sordid Vice  
The fatal Consequences of it

These detailed contents continue on for eleven pages. As the work itself runs 84 pages, this epitome is, like that for the Roe papers, roughly 1/8 of the content it summarizes. And before Part One begins, the reader encounters yet another paragraph summary of what is to come. The same is true for Parts Two and Three. Finally, the text itself is accompanied by sidebar headings keyed to these detailed contents. In other words, each entry in the table of contents is also printed in the margin of the main body of text, next to the paragraph it summarizes. Such an elaborate apparatus for a rather slender volume serves at least two purposes: it made the work, which began as a personal document, appear more worthy of more general public consumption; second, this elaborate apparatus seems to suggest—as do the encyclopedias that I discussed in chapter one—that it is just as important (in fact, probably more important) for a young apprentice to internalize the sense of system and order, as it is for that apprentice to memorize the specific rules set down within the body of the text. The apprentice must learn that every piece of information, as well as every individual in a printing shop including the apprentice, has a specific place, and a specific relationship to every other piece of information and every other person.

The first of Richardson’s publications that we would today consider literary was Pamela (1740). Richardson himself reported that when working on a letter for his collection
of Letters written to and for Particular Friends, on the most Important Occasions—one between a serving girl and her father—he was reminded of a story he had heard years earlier of a serving girl marrying her master. Pamela was published anonymously, but when Aaron Hill discovered Richardson's authorship, he immediately wrote to Richardson, flattering the author's "encircling and all-mastering Spirit" as well as the "Comprehensiveness of his Imagination" (my emphasis; Hill to Richardson, 23 January 1741; qtd in E&K 119-20). To call Richardson's spirit "encircling" as well as his imagination "comprehensive," of course, is to place Richardson's work very deliberately within the discourse circulating around encyclopedias of the period.

But Hill was not the only one who noticed the ties of Richardson's novel to the encyclopedias circulating in the period. While it is well-known that Richardson's Pamela sparked a whole host of imitators, it is less familiar that these imitators picked up on and made explicit the encyclopedic nature of Richardson's original text. The authors of Pamela's Conduct in High Life (1741), a spurious continuation of Richardson's Pamela, claimed in advertisements to be "Printed from the Original Papers, regularly digested by a Gentleman more conversant in High Life than the vain Author of Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded" (my emphasis; qtd in E&K 136-7). In other words, these authors distinguish their work from Richardson's by claiming that it is more encyclopedic—more "regularly digested," arranged in

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9 The book was eventually published in 1741.

10 For a complete discussion of Richardson's account of the composition process for Pamela, see Eaves and Kimpel 87-99.

11 Pamela's Conduct in High Life was written by John Kelly, whom a bookseller named Richard Chandler had hired to continue the work. Once this work was underway, Chandler attempted to blackmail Richardson: either Richardson wrote his own continuation for them (in which case they would destroy their work so far), or else they would publish. Richardson refused, and the work appeared (E&K 136-37).
a more orderly and logical manner than the original *Pamela*. To us, this claim to superior orderliness seems an odd one to make for a novel, and perhaps more appropriate for an almanac or a dictionary or an encyclopedia, but for the eighteenth-century consumer of novels, it was evidently a persuasive selling-point.

*The Life of Pamela* (1741), another bogus continuation, rewrites Pamela’s story in the third person. This work (probably by people connected with Chandler and Kelly, since it twice mentions *Pamela’s Conduct in High Life* as the “authentick” *Pamela*), claims to be taken from “‘original Papers now in the Hands of the Reverend Mr. Perkins of Shendisford Abbey,’” and censures Richardson’s version for its departures from truth: “‘We shall rectify a thousand . . . Mistakes that have been made in that Work’” (qtd. in E&K 140). Whenever this author, translating the letters into prose, encounters an event in Richardson’s work he finds improbable or improper, “as when Mrs. Jervis lets Mr. B. observe Pamela in her country dress or when Lady Davers bursts into Mr. B’s bedroom, he does not change the event but merely mentions its absurdity” (E&K 140). It seems, then, that the authors of this work saw a potential market in people who had already read *Pamela*, and who would be interested in reading a “corrected” version—even perhaps comparing the originally-published letters against the prose narrative. It would appeal to people who would be interested in detecting mistakes in the original, and carefully comparing more than one version of the same story. In this, it is very similar to Bayle’s intended purpose in writing his dictionary, one he later gave up as he was led to believe that there would be no audience for such a work. Perhaps Bayle misjudged: certainly the authors of *The Life of Pamela* felt that Richardson’s *Pamela* invited a certain kind of reading practice that would make this new work, which traded on detection of minutia, a financial success.

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Yet another spurious continuation of *Pamela, Pamela in High Life, or Virtue Rewarded* (1741), also underscores and emphasizes the encyclopedic urge to accumulate information apparent in Richardson’s *Pamela, Pamela in High Life* purports to be a journal written by Pamela for her parents. Scattered throughout reports of long conversations Pamela has with her neighbors,

the reader is given such amusements as an explanation of the office of alderman, detailed lists of Pamela’s charities, the enormous bill of fare of a week-long feast (2,100 bottles of wine, 200 geese), much information about Mr. B.’s large income (he has over L15,000 a year from land and L150,000 invested), an account of the marvelous economy of ants and bees, another of the motion of the earth and of the tides of the Thames, a long discussion of the relation between natural and revealed religions, a fantasy by Mr. B of the rise in the time of Enoch of public worship and the consequent power of the priesthood, a sermon on the Gunpowder Plot, and a great deal of geographic information” (E&K 141).

These lists and bills and tables and digressions sound rather far-fetched to our ears, and it is tempting to dismiss them as the attempt of hack authors merely to fill space in the volume. However, I believe that these authors, hacks though they may have been, were merely amplifying what they had seen and read in the original *Pamela*—scenes such as what Nancy Armstrong calls “the tediously protracted description of the household in *Pamela*” (63). These lists and tables and digressions signal a formal coherency that we seem to have lost the ability to read for in the last 250 years.

Furthermore, these lists and tables and digressions are not significantly different from the content of Richardson’s *Pamela Part II*: in his own continuation, Richardson includes lengthy discussions on the importance of titles, on pluralities, on Scots tutors, on English shipping, and on keeping servants in their places. In other words, Richardson’s own continuation confirms what the spurious continuations have led us to suspect: that all of these works were read much as an encyclopedia would have been read—as a collection of

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information that may not on the surface appear to be related, but which is tied together by
some underlying structure that is either more apparent (as in the case of the Vade Mecum) or
less apparent (as in the case of Pamela and especially Pamela II). This underlying structure is
clearly something that Eaves and Kimpel are not attuned to when they write that the “great
fault of the continuation of Pamela is that there was nothing which could happen in it, and
the best excuse that can be offered for it is that Richardson was evidently forced to write it,
without any urge from inside. . . . The ideas are sensible enough, but hardly exciting or
novel” (149-50). What “happens” in the novel is that Pamela’s thoughts and experienced are
organized and presented as a “circle of learning,” and that is what is “novel” about Pamela
and all of its continuations.

After Clarissa came Richardson’s final novel, Sir Charles Grandison (1753-4). The novel
has come under fire for two main faults, both of which I think are related to the
encyclopedic aspirations of the text. First, as Eaves and Kimpel summarize, Grandison the
character is faulted for being “always reasonable, using logic rather than emotion to support
his ethical code” (395). Richardson’s biographers explain this modern-day reaction to the
character in terms of cultural constructions: “We may be unduly irritated today with virtue
based on a system [as is Grandison]. We are, after all, still in the shadow of the movement
[Romanticism] which followed closely on Richardson’s heels and to which he even
contributed, which holds that the true morality is that of feeling” (393). While the long-
lasting influences of Romanticism certainly affect our own expectations for the novel—we
may be more used to seeing a more solid commitment to feeling—I believe that it is equally
important to emphasize the other part of Eaves and Kimpel’s explanation: that Sir Charles
Grandison is a novel based on system. It is a novel bent, like its encyclopedia counterparts, on
imparting to its readers a solid sense of how one thing in the novel (be it a character, a decision, an incident, a response, a personality trait, etc.) is related to every other thing in the novel in a completely predictable, coherent, systematic way—completely predictable, that is, once the reader has discovered for him or herself the links that bind these elements of the novel together. The novel, like an encyclopedia, contains secrets to unlock.

The second major fault of which Sir Charles Grandison is frequently accused is that of being too long: as Eaves and Kimpel summarize this response, the “variety of stories necessary to show all of Sir Charles’s virtues somewhat dissipates the interest” (388). The key here is that word “all”: the novel was meant to be a complete system, and a certain length is necessary to complete that system, to forge all of the links in the chain. Further, Richardson designed the novel not to be read straight through to in order to receive, passively, a simple moral; but rather, like an encyclopedia, this novel was designed to be read in a more complicated way, backwards and forwards, comparing passages and incidents in order to construct a moral of one’s own. In a letter written to Hester Mulso, Richardson clearly supports this kind of active, engaged reading practice: “‘The whole piece [Sir Charles Grandison] abounds, and was intended to abound, with situations that should give occasion for debate, or different ways of thinking’” (21 Aug 1754, qtd. in Keyner 73).

Richardson’s index to the novel helped to facilitate this reading practice. Rather than waiting (as he had with Clarissa) until after the novel had been published to extract important sentiments, the “Index, Historical and Characteristical,” to this novel came out in the first edition of Sir Charles Grandison. In addition to signaling formally the link between this novel and encyclopedias, the index allows active readers to locate quickly the passages they might compare. Further, the entries themselves can sometimes telegraph the novel’s encyclopedic
urge: an entry such as “Genius’s, different, given by providence for different ends, and that all might become useful links of the same great chain” simultaneously conjures up d’Alembert’s famous image for the encyclopedia, and gives readers some instruction for reading the text. Each of the many, many episodes must be seen as a link in a chain, and the reader is responsible for putting those links together in the proper order.

Shortly after Sir Charles Grandison was published, Richardson began forming a plan for a continuation of the novel. His scheme was to assign each of his lady friends to write letters in the voice of one of the characters, and send them to him. The project never got off the ground; Lady Bradshaigh opposed the idea, saying that the resulting novel would be “a piece of patch-work” (letter from Lady Bradshaigh to Richardson 1754; qtd. in E&K 412). Lady Bradshaigh seems to have significantly underestimated Richardson’s powers of forming a coherent whole from disparate pieces. The idea of becoming a true compiler (rather than merely posing as one, as he had in his previous novels) appealed to him very much, and it is unfortunate that Richardson never had the opportunity.

In his later years, Richardson began to concentrate on books of extracts. Richardson clearly valued this kind of work: according to Eaves and Kimpel, one of the few faults Richardson found with his daughters was that they did not themselves make extracts of their reading (475). In 1753 Richardson indicates in a letter to Lady Bradshaigh that he “has, for a trial, classed under particular heads, alphabetically, the Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, the Books of Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus, and called it (though he has not yet taken it into his head to publish it) Simplicity the True Sublime” (letter to Lady Bradshaigh, 24 Feb 1753; qtd. in Eaves and Kimpel 573). Although the book may have circulated among friends,

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12 The connection to Jane Barker’s A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies, though perhaps coincidental, cannot go unnoticed.
Richardson never did publish it. A similar (but as far as I can tell, separate) book of extracts was circulated among Richardson's friends in 1758. Entitled "Clarissa's Meditations: a little piece, hitherto unpublished" (July 30, 1758), the book purports to be the one Clarissa bequeaths to Mrs. Norton in her will, "being extracts from the best of books, suited particularly to [Clarissa's] own case." Like Simplicity the True Sublime, the work is a distillation of the Bible, containing 36 passages from Job, Psalms, Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus, in which Clarissa is supposed to have found solace at various stages of her tragedy after the rape.

Richardson's most ambitious book of extracts was published in duodecimo on March 6, 1755. He began work on the collection in 1750, while he was revising Clarissa for the third edition. In letter to Lady Echlin, he writes that "the collection was set about, and carried through (and a very painful and laborious task it was) more with a view to do good, than to profit. I could not expect a great sale of it, though it is the pith and marrow of nineteen volumes, not unkindly received" (Collection xiii). Published anonymously, but "Printed for S. Richardson," A Collection of Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections, Contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison arranges sentiments from the novels largely alphabetically, under headings such as "Advice to Young Women," "Comedies. Tragedies. Music. Dancing.," "Masters. Mistresses. Servants.," "Procuress. Profligate Women.," and "Minutiae."¹³ Many of the passages are not in fact extracts, but have been completely rewritten—perhaps in order to make the sentiments from the novels more clear, or to make them better able to stand on their own. Other entries are "sentiments which had not been expressed in so many words but had been implied by the

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¹³ The sentiments are extracted from the novels in the following proportion: those from Pamela, pages 1-83, from Clarissa, pages 85-216, from Sir Charles Grandison, pages 217-394. The index to all three collections, occurs on pages 395-402.
characters and situations" (E&K 421). The sentiments are documented by page references to both the duodecimo and the octavo editions of the novel, so that readers using any edition of the work can access their own novels via this guidebook. Further, many of the topics under which sentiments are arranged are repeated for each novel, allowing readers easily to compare related sentiments between novels (“Advice to Women,” “Anger,” “Masters. Mistresses. Servants.,” and “Secrets,” for example, are some of the many headings that occur under all three novels). Finally, many of the headings are themselves cross-referenced to other headings. “Advice to Young Women” contained in Pamela is cross-referenced with:


This elaborate handbook to his works, upon which Richardson labored so intensely, and which he clearly meant as a final comment upon and shaping of his works, is one of our best pieces of evidence regarding the way that Richardson meant these works to be read. First, the Moral and Instructive Sentiments shows that—at least in retrospect, if not as he was composing the individual works—Richardson thought of his entire opus as one coherent whole, a comprehensive encyclopedia of sentiment and right conduct. When the Moral and
Instructive Sentiments was about to be published, Richardson said that it would show "that there are not many of the material articles that may be of use for the conduct of life and manners unattended to in one or other of [his three novels]; so that all together they complete one plan, the best I was able to give" (my emphasis; letter to Mark Hildesley, 21 Feb. 1755; qtd. in E&K 420).

The elaborate indexing also appears to transform the reading practices the novels are capable of supporting. The elaborate indexing makes it easier for readers to enter and re-enter the novels in whatever manner, time, or place they see fit. Thus the Moral and Instructive Sentiments suggests that Richardson meant not only that these books be read only from cover to cover, but backwards and forwards, from the middle outward, in bits and pieces and over and over again, always searching for connections.

While the Moral and Instructive Sentiments informs the reading of the novels, it also functions as an encyclopedic work in its own right. The experience of reading through the Moral and Instructive Sentiments is remarkably similar to that of reading through an encyclopedia such as John Dunton's Ladies Dictionary. Both the headings and the use of cross-references seem to invite readers to trace their own paths (or circles of learning) through the material presented. Many of the headings (like those in Dunton's work) are so vague or all-encompassing as to be all but useless if they are intended to be used to quickly locate a simple answer. Instead, entries under such titles as "General Observations" (for both Pamela and Sir Charles Grandison) or "Minutiae" or even "Advice to Women" (there are presumably very few sentiments taken from these novels that could not be categorized under this last heading) invite readers to browse and make their own connections between the entries.

Other headings, such as "Comedies. Tragedies. Music. Dancing," seem to make connections
within the title itself, asking readers to make connections that they might not otherwise have made. Such a method for indexing is clearly not meant to simplify and reduce the novels to static, predictable moral messages, but instead are meant to open up and complicate the reading. The other method that Richardson deploys to encourage his readers to make new connections lies in the use of cross-references. Many of the cross-references I have listed above for “Advice to Women” may seem quite obvious, especially in the context of the novel to which they refer. It makes sense, for example, that the advice to women culled from *Pamela* is cross-referenced to entries on masters and servants as well as those on “heroic” poverty and low life. But if Richardson here is building a sort of contrast between high and low (men over women, masters over young servants, parents over children), why doesn’t he cross-reference the entry on “High Life”—the entry that directly follows Heroic Poverty? I believe that the answer is that while Richardson was content to make some suggestions (in the form of cross-referencing) for circles of learning for his readers to trace, he also wanted his readers to make their own connections. He trusted that readers who wanted to read more on heroic poverty would find the contrasting and complementary entry on high life. This theory is further supported by cross-references such as those to “Procuress. Profligate *Women,*” which advises readers to see “Advice to Women. Guilt. Libertine. Lover. &c.” That “&c” is an unmistakable indication that Richardson expected his readers to go beyond the cross-references he supplies to create their own.

It is clear to me that this index was not designed, as is so often assumed, to make things easier and more simple-minded for readers. It does not function to reduce or confine the novels to trite morals. Instead, both in relationship to the novels and in its own right, *The Moral and Instructive Sentiments* adds layers of complexity. The index functions as a spur to
more thoughtful and complicated reading and thinking practices, and therefore The Moral and Instructive Sentiments stands as one of Richardson's most impressive attempts to place his work firmly within the genre of the encyclopedic.¹⁴

Thus far I have attempted to trace the outlines of Richardson's career as an encyclopedist; I have indicated some encyclopedic traits not only in Richardson's early works with dictionaries and almanacs, but in what we today call his "literary" works as well, because I think that it is important to note that the encyclopedic urge in the eighteenth century permeated generic boundaries whose walls we today perceive as more unyielding. But of all of his works, Clarissa displays Richardson's commitment to the encyclopedic project most clearly, and it is to this novel (and especially to its reception) that I devote the remaining portion of this chapter.

Ian Watt's The Rise of the Novel (1965) has been hugely influential in the way that Clarissa has been read in the late twentieth century. According to William Warner, "[n]o one has done more to advance the reading of Richardson as an artist of the psychological than Ian Watt" (221). But more important to my argument, Watt credits Richardson's work with being one of the first to resolve "the main formal problems which still confronted the novel

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¹⁴ One of the more fascinating cultural phenomena linked to the Moral and Instructive Sentiments was a card game that appeared in 1760 and was advertised as follows: "The New Impenetrable Secret; or, Young Lady and Gentleman's Polite Puzzle. Being an entire new Set of Entertaining Cards. . . . Consisting of moral and diverting Sentiments, extracted wholly from the much admired Histories of PAMELA, CLARISSA, and SIR CHARLES GRANDISON. The whole designed, while they amuse and entertain, to establish Principles of Virtue and Morality in the Minds of both Sexes." (More on this card game can be found in Alan Dugald McKillop's Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist 218.) Obviously the status of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments was strong enough in its own time to prompt a spin-off game; the fact that reading has been turned into a game, and that it emphasizes "Impenetrable Secrets," lends credence to my argument in Chapter One about how works of reference were designed to be read.
by creating a literary structure in which narrative mode, plot, characters and moral theme were organised into a unified whole” (208).

William Warner and Terry Castle have taken issue with Watt's impulse to read Richardson's work as “a unified whole.” Warner, in fact, criticizes what he sees as Richardson's attempts to impose an order on his text as well as Watt's reading of those attempts. Warner's belief in author authority is so slight that he bitingly likens Richardson to a hack “sideshow illusionist”:

To gain a hold on his reader, Richardson plays a game... he publishes the novel in three installments so as to keep his reader in suspense as to the story’s outcome; he diminishes his overt role to that of an editor who collects and orders the letters of others; he lets characters take on a 'life of their own' by writing their own narratives; and he tells an involving story of love to interest the reader he intends to instruct. Of course, Richardson only makes *Clarissa* into an inviting plaything so as to lure the reader into the coils of the fiction before sending the artifice (and its reader) on a swerve towards virtue. My study charts the discrepancy between this cunning design and the actual incidents of reading this text precipitates. It lays bare an affiliated divergence between the pure intentions that avowedly govern the text and the much more impure dispersal of meanings generated by the social network of unruly transactions that carries this text away and gives it a life in history. By tracing this history, we can investigate the inherent limits of an author's authority, watch how the very pressures calculated to consolidate this authority can disrupt it, and gradually shift our picture of the author—from that of the deity of a little kingdom of meaning (the book) to a sideshow illusionist (xi).

While I certainly agree that an author's authority has inherent limits, and that the process of reading is an unruly one constrained by complicated cultural transactions, I cannot admire Warner's deconstructionist attempt to cast Richardson's work as carnival hack with a dishonest bent. I believe that more recent studies of the history of the book have shown that systems of intention and interaction between authors, readers, publishers, printers, and booksellers can be traced in complicated and thoughtful ways that do not dismiss the idea of intentions.
Further, Warner attacks Watt as a "humanist critic" who worships uncritically (and in fact, erotically) *Clarissa* as a unified whole:

The idea of a text as a 'unified whole' assumes a radical demarcation between the inside of the text, and that which lies outside. . . . This means that the text, like the virgin Clarissa, should not be touched; it is 'inviolable'. . . . This leads to an intuition. Perhaps the idea of the text as a unified whole is grounded in an eccentric erotic relationship between the humanist critic and *Clarissa*. . . . From this perspective, abridgment (any gap in the letters) is experienced as an unbearable intervention in the highly charged intimacy between a reader. . . and a character. . . It is easy enough to dismiss . . the wayward reader or editor who would tamper with the text as the author designed it; for we have seen that the humanist critic is deeply respectful of authority, and has nothing but contempt for those who are not. Such readers/abridgers can simply be dismissed as 'outsiders,' hostile to the author's true intentions (235-6).

Warner argues that while Richardson's addenda to the second and third editions of *Clarissa* were designed to make the novel appear to be "[s]imple and whole and unified" (188), the novel itself works against this simplification and unification: "even texts which seem to invite a [simple, whole and unified] humanist reading, like *Clarissa*, carry their own protest and antidote against that ideology—in the form of a Lovelace, or the artistic processes Richardson must engage to produce his text (256). Of course, it is the assumption of my study that “whole” and “unified” is by no means equated with “simple”; and that Richardson's attempts to make his text more and more whole and coherent and unified can be read, rather than an attempt to simplify the novel, as an attempt to associate it more and

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15 In this group Warner places Joseph Spence, Sara Fielding, Henry Fielding, and Denis Diderot in the eighteenth century; and William Sale, Ian Watt, Mark Kinkead-Weekes, and others in the twentieth century. Warner says that humanist critics are those who "make themselves the caretakers of an institution that is designed to use literature in general, and Clarissa in particular, to enforce a particular conception of man, and to uplift and 'humanize' the reader. . . . The humanist critics are not hostile to the interest and categories Clarissa and Richardson bring to bear on the text. In fact, these humanist readers affiliate their interpretations of the text with Clarissa's and Richardson's by describing the text in terms of 'character,' 'plot,' and 'theme'. The humanist critic is anxious to efface the contingency of events; he also wants a sturdy, reliable image of man. Thus, humanist criticism is replete with tributes to Richardson's 'power' of characterization. . . " (230). Further, Warner charges that humanist critics, uncomfortable with "an unruly struggle of interpretations," would prefer "a benign dictatorship where the author would sit enthroned like a king at the center of a dominion of loyal readers, to guarantee a continuity of response to his book" (232).
more strongly with the encyclopedias being produced at roughly the same time. I argue that Richardson’s addenda may be read as an attempt to complicate—by simultaneously connecting this work both to other hefty books of reference and to the equally popular books of elegant extracts—rather than as an attempt to simplify, to reduce to a simple moral.

Like Warner, Terry Castle sees no unified whole in Richardson’s work. Rather, Castle describes “a cacophony of voices, a multiplicity of exegetes struggling to articulate different ‘constructions’ of the world” (21). Like Warner, Castle also distrusts authorial authority, suggesting that Richardson’s intentions/expectations were thwarted by his own text: “Contrary to Richardson’s own expectations, the novel’s moral impact lies not in any simple programmatic ‘message’; the text is, after all, a plethora of contradictory messages. Rather, the moral dimension of *Clarissa* shows up in the way it compels a certain readerly self-examination.” (29).

Recent critics have been more generous towards Richardson, more open to the possibility that Richardson himself was comfortable with a certain degree of ambiguity and contradiction in his novel—that Richardson intended to confront his readers with this kind of difficult reading, and that he intended these readers to see his texts as unified wholes. J. Paul Hunter, for example, says that in a novel like *Clarissa*, “the wrestling with contradictory perspectives is more important to the reading process than following the action” (46). But by far the study that investigates this possibility most completely Tom Keyner’s excellent *Richardson’s Clarissa and the Eighteenth-century Reader*. Distancing himself from criticism linking Richardson to psychological realism, Keyner notes that such criticism obscures the fact that *Clarissa* is preoccupied with writing and reading, not thought and feeling (6).\(^1\) Drawing

\(^1\) Keyner’s study questions the too-common assumption that what Richardson was after when deploying the epistolary form for his works was more immediacy and more psychological realism, and instead
heavily from Richardson's correspondence, correspondence between others concerning Richardson's work, and complex examinations of cultural conventions such as those surrounding letter-writing, Keyner concludes that “[f]ar from placing the reader in immediate possession of each novel’s story, Richardson’s method complicates his access to it to an unprecedented degree, confronting him with problems of interpretation and response. . . Meaning remains vexed, controversial, even indeterminate (xvii); he argues that “to cut through the complexities of Clarissa’s case and endorse her conduct wholeheartedly, as readers detached from the ideological context of the 1740s will naturally do, is to miss much of the novel’s original challenge. However reprobate the Harlowes, there is by prevailing standards much to be said on their side, and whatever Clarissa’s victimization there is much to be said against hers. The dilemma at Harlowe Place is strictly speaking insoluble, and in his method of posing it Richardson offers no easy resolutions” (Keyner 139).

Keyner uses many passages from Richardson’s own correspondence to support his claim that Richardson intended the contradictions that critics such as Warner and Castle, writing within the context of deconstructionist criticism, imply they have uncovered. In a letter written to Lady Bradshaigh on 8 February 1754, Richardson explicitly states that he has left it “[t]o my Sovereign Judges the Readers, to agree as well as they can, which to blame, which to acquit.” In the same letter, Richardson goes on to show that he expects and even welcomes varying responses to the dilemmas the text poses: “Thank Heaven, I find not looks at what the epistolary form, as it was conceived in the eighteenth century, has to offer a novelist. For a really fascinating discussion of eighteenth-century attitudes towards letter-writing, and whether they revealed or obscured the human heart, see Keyner 1-45. Two representative quotations may begin to answer this question. Hugh Blair writes that it “is childish indeed to expect that in letters we are to End the whole heart of the Author unveiled” (qtd. in Keyner 7); and Dr. Johnson, when preparing the biography of Pope for his Lives of the Poets, writes, “There is no transaction which offers stronger temptations to fallacy and sophistication than epistolary discourse” (qtd. in Keyner 12).
often two of the same Mind, in relation to the more delicate Circumstances” (qtd. in Keyner 74). A similar sentiment is expressed in another letter, written to Lady Bradshaigh later the same month (25 February 1754):

“The undecided events are sufficiently pointed out to the Reader, to whom, in this Sort of Writing, something, as I have hinted, should be left to make out or debate upon. The whole Story abounds with Situations and Circumstances debatable. It is not an unartful Management to interest the Readers so much in the Story, as to make them differ in Opinion as to the Capital Articles, and by Leading one, to espouse one, another, another, Opinion, make them all, if not Authors, Carvers” (qtd. in Keyner 74).

Richardson shows here that he felt that the most artful composition of a text was one that left its readers guessing. He clearly wanted readers who were involved enough in the novel to work at understanding it, to have opinions about it that evolved from one to another upon subsequent readings and upon discussing the text with other, similarly-committed readers. Richardson’s method of writing “to the moment” in epistolary form teaches readers not only to distrust what various characters report of their own actions and feelings, but to distrust their own first reactions to what they read. As Keyner puts it, because each of the authors of the letters is engaged in a particular kind of self-justification directed at a particular reader,

it is on the reader’s active involvement, given the openness and incoherence of the text itself, that the onus of interpretation falls. Unguided by any objective voice and assailed instead by a babble of partisan voices, the reader must judge independently of them all (yet at the same time in light of them all), and so make sense of the underlying “History” on his own initiative. Acknowledging the gulf that separates him from immediate possession of Clarissa’s story, he must be ready to read against the grain, in continual awareness of possible discrepancies between each narrative segment and the ‘truth’ it pretends to deliver (58).

This deferral of “possession of Clarissa’s story and the reading “against the grain” and with “continual awareness of possible discrepancies” puts me in mind of the renvois (cross-
references) and d’Alembert’s instructions to the reader of the *Encyclopédie*—the reading practices expected of both sets of readers seem remarkably similar. Both texts expect an active, exacting reader.

A letter written to Aaron Hill as the first edition of *Clarissa* neared completion (7 Nov 1748) emphasizes the high standards Richardson set for his readers, and the challenges he knew he faced in writing the kind of text he was writing (one that asked its readers to really study the work carefully). Richardson writes to Hill about the “Stupidity” and “Indolence” into which contemporary readers had fallen, and blames these conditions at least partially on Alexander Pope. Pope, of course, was notorious for adding explanatory footnotes to his work; Richardson found these authorial directions to the reader obnoxious. Pope “could not trust his Works with the Vulgar,” Richardson sardonically complains, “without Notes longer than the Work . . . to tell them what he meant and that he had a Meaning, in this or that Place. And thus every-one was taught to read with his Eyes” (qtd. in Keyner 66).\(^\text{18}\)

Given his condescending attitude towards Pope’s footnotes as a strategy for getting readers involved in the text, how can we explain Richardson’s well-known revisions of *Clarissa*? How to explain the second and third editions that—with their summaries and footnotes—seem on the surface to follow Pope’s model of reader control quite closely? Is it merely the voice of inexperience or over-optimism talking in this letter to Hill, which was written before *Clarissa* was published? Did Richardson concede a loss after the initial

\(^{17}\) Keyner notes that according to Johnson’s *Dictionary*, a “carver” is “one who chooses for himself.”

\(^{18}\) Richardson contrasts Pope’s overactive use of footnotes with Milton’s refusal to footnote *Paradise Lost*—a challenge to readers that Richardson admired, but one that put Milton’s work out of reach for many. For a full discussion, see Keyner 66-67.
reception of his work? Even if Richardson did begin with a complicated, challenging text for his reader, did he gradually reduce that complexity, simplifying the novel to a “single moral message” in an easy-to-swallow format (as so many critics, including Castle and Warner have claimed)? I believe that Richardson’s use of footnotes and other apparatus in Clarissa is in fact quite different from Pope’s use of similar apparatus. In the case of Richardson, I believe that this apparatus preserves the challenge to readers, serves to complicate the text rather than clarify it, much in the same way that the footnotes in the Encyclopédie does. A brief look at these subsequent editions will serve to support this theory.

In the second edition of Clarissa (1749), Richardson added a table of contents designed so that it “will not only point out the principal Facts, and shew the connexion of the Whole; but will enable the youthful Readers of both Sexes to form a judgment as well of the blameable as of the laudable Conduct of the principal persons” (qtd. in E&K 309). This table of contents covers forty-three closely-printed pages. It tells the story in some detail, and uses italics to emphasize certain important points. While it is certainly possible that one of the functions of this table of contents was to direct careless readers on what to look for and how to judge (as Eaves and Kimpel conclude), I find it difficult to believe that such careless readers would go to the trouble of reading such a detailed and relatively dry document rather than jumping straight to the more juicy details of the novel itself. When Aaron Hill saw the new table of contents, he worried that poachers could simply read the table of contents and learn Clarissa’s story without purchasing the book, but Richardson was

19 Richardson also increased his use of italics within the letters of the novel. In addition, Richardson added “several thousand small, but cumulatively important, modifications” to the first four volumes of the text (Ross 16).
unworried about such uses of this first epitome of the work. I suspect that because he designed the table of contents for a very different purpose than simply summarizing the story for careless or penny-pinching readers, he was not worried about those who would put the contents to that use. Just as eighteenth-century encyclopedists used their prefaces to teach their readers to concentrate not so much on the discrete facts, but instead on their position within the circle of learning, so too Richardson uses his table of contents to downplay the “story” by telling it up front. This table of contents serves, rather than as summary, to emphasize the “connexion of the Whole,” serves to remind readers that they hold in their hands not only a novel but a well-designed system of learning: “Is Clarissa a mere Novel? Whoever considers it as such, does not understand it. It is a System of religious and moral Precepts and Examples, planned on an entertaining Story, which stands or goes forward, as the excellent Design of the Author requires” (my emphasis; Hints of Prefaces 8).

The other significant change made to the second edition of the novel is the addition of twenty-two footnotes, retained in the third and fourth editions. Much has been made of these footnotes, because, as Angus Ross explains, many of these footnotes “act against the subtle process of unfolding the story in the letters, by brusquely pointing forward into the following narrative,” “directly forcing the reader’s response,” and working “against the strength of the epistolary form” (17). One footnote has been found particularly jarring: added to the second edition at the place where it seems that Clarissa can name the day of her marriage to Lovelace, a note reminds readers who would like to see her do so that “she is proposed as an example; and therefore in her trials and distresses must not be allowed to dispense with those rules which perhaps some others of her sex in her delicate situation, would not have been themselves so strictly bound to observe” (qtd. in Warner 237). When
Clarissa is “proposed as an example,” according to Warner, readers are suddenly confronted with the constructedness of the text they have been reading: “Clarissa is not just a character with the nature of a ‘real’ person, but a trope—an element in the rhetorical functioning of a work of art” (237). But I am afraid that too much has been made of these added footnotes. The first edition of the novel contains over 315 of Richardson’s footnotes. The large majority of these footnotes are cross-references to other letters and pages, although a few contain longer explanations designed to control reader reception. If Richardson added only twenty-two footnotes to the second edition, that represents only about a seven percent increase over the number of footnotes included in the first. While some (in fact, a very small number) of these footnotes (such as the one cited by Warner) may have functioned similarly to the notes added by Pope to his poetry, it is certainly not the case either that the notes are longer than the work, or that these notes tell the reader “what” the author “meant and that he had a Meaning, in this or that Place.” Rather, Richardson’s footnotes serve, on a formal level, to signal the link between his work and other works of compilation and reference. And the overwhelming function of all of the footnotes—even including the longer, explanatory ones that have been found so objectionable because so apparently obvious an attempt to control readers—is to encourage readers to go back and look for themselves, to read and read again, to compare and contrast letters written by different people describing the same event.

20 This footnote is a source of particular glee for Warner, because it “deals a blow to the humanist idea of the text as a ‘unified whole’” (237).

21 Interestingly, Richardson formally integrates and thematizes his use of footnotes by having Lovelace footnote one of his own letters (letter 233).
The changes made to the third edition (duodecimo) and the fourth edition (octavo), which Richardson edited simultaneously (1751), make this function of his apparatus even more clear. In the third edition, Richardson added almost 200 pages to the body of his text. While many critics believe that these pages were designed merely to control reader reception, I am not so sure. Richardson went to the trouble of placing inverted quotation marks in the margins of the text in order to mark clearly all of the lines and passages he added to the text. As Warner points out, editions before the Clarissa Project (based on the third edition of the novel) do not replicate these quotation marks, and thus “hide the resulting striations of the text, so that it takes on the appearance of a finely woven, seamless fabric” (viii). His point is a good one: to read a text where some passages are italicized and others have quotation marks in the margins, where some letters have been summarized in the beginning and others have not, is much more difficult, and requires a much more strenuous reading practice than reading a text that appears to be seamless, where typographical oddities aren’t constantly interrupting the mimesis. Richardson’s use of footnotes, then, like the emphasis on the textual additions to later editions, seems to add rather than to remove a layer of complexity to the work. The experience of struggling with these complicated layers is mirrored in various letters of the text: in the letter in which Lovelace interweaves, in a letter to Clarissa, his own forgeries (in italics) with a letter from Anna Howe (239.1); in the letter where Lovelace marks (with little amputated hands marking places for revenge) the intercepted

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22 In this third edition, Richardson kept the several thousand small changes he had made to the first four editions of the second edition, and made several additions: Forty-two of these additions “are more than a page in length, and six are more than eight pages long” (Ross 16). For a summary of Richardson’s changes in these volumes, see Van Marter.

23 Warner reads this editorial procedure as an attempt on the part of (“humanist”) editors overly-enamored by Richardson to hide “the all-too-human struggles of interpretation that give birth to this text” (viii).
letter from Anna Howe to Clarissa (229); and in the letter in which Clarissa responds to Lovelace's proposed marriage settlements. The reading experience is more and not less complicated, the message made more ambiguous rather than simplified because it seems to come from more than one voice.

A letter that Dr. Johnson wrote to Richardson while the latter was revising for this third edition supports my reading of the apparatus as complicating rather than simplifying. Johnson writes that *Clarissa* "was not a performance to be read with eagerness and laid aside for ever, but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious, and therefore I beg that this Edition . . . may want nothing that can facilitate its use" March 9 1751; qtd in *Collection* viii). In other words, Johnson was advising Richardson to do everything he could to give readers as many ways to enter the novel as possible. He did not expect readers merely to read from cover to cover, from beginning to end (although that was certainly one way, and perhaps the first, that readers would read the work). Readers also needed to be able to compare passages, quickly locate passages in the middle of the text, and so on. While Richardson's changes to the third edition certainly helped to facilitate this kind of studious reading practice, the changes he made to the fourth edition (which contained the *Moral and Instructive Sentiments*, discussed above) made *Clarissa*, but also *Pamela* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, much more flexible in the ways that they could be read. In short, it made the novels much more like encyclopedias.

I am not alone in noticing the connections between Richardson's work and eighteenth-century encyclopedias. A great deal of the contemporaneous commentary on *Clarissa* seems to suggest that the novel's first readers noted parallels between this work and those of contemporaneous encyclopedias. One of the many people to whom Richardson
sent a draft of *Clarissa* was Colley Cibber, who, borrowing the metaphor of the tree of knowledge from the French encyclopedists, suggested cutting the work drastically, taking “away whole Branches” (Cibber to Richardson, 20 May 1753; qtd. in E&K 181). By re-deploying d’Alembert’s famous image, Cibber notes the similarity (at least in length) between Richardson’s work and the *Encyclopédie*, which very well may be taken as a compliment. However, since Cibber’s ultimate advice is to cut drastically, the link he forges between the two works may be seen as a humourous one, poking fun at Richardson’s great long work, and trying to embarrass the author into the editing Cibber thought necessary.

However, Richardson was dedicated to the idea of an encyclopedic text. He dismissed Cibber’s suggestion, but adopted the metaphor, and in a letter to Edward Young uses the word “pruning” twice to make sure that Young doesn’t miss the fact that Richardson is consciously linking his own huge work to that of the encyclopedists: “I have run into such length!—and am such a sorry pruner... that I am apt to add three pages for every one I take away... But last week [I sent] the beginning of it to my indulgent friend, Mr. Hill... [And] if he prunes it, as I have requested he will, then perhaps shall I have the courage to proceed” (my emphasis; E&K 206). In fact, Richardson never did prune his work. Moreover, he went to great lengths to defend the work’s length as well as the interconnectedness of all of the episodes and characters, the perfection of his plan. Richardson claimed that “long as *Clarissa* is, there is not one Digression, not one Episode, not one Reflection, but what arises naturally from the Subject, and makes for it, and to carry it on” (*Preface, Hints* 4). Richardson, like those French encyclopedists, felt that taking away one letter, one link in the chain, or one of the branches of the tree, would be destructive to both the form and content of the work.
Several other contemporaneous critics use language which implicitly compares Richardson’s work to encyclopedias by echoing the language used to describe those projects. David Graham uses the image of a circle held secretly together by one fixed point to describe *Clarissa*: each of the “‘different situations,’” he says, are bound together by one “‘grand rule of morality; which seems to consist in an unreserved obedience to the divine will: In which, as in a fix’d point, all the duties resulting from the several relations of social life, like lines drawn in a circle, so as not to interfere with each other, should ultimately center’” (qtd. in Keyner 87). Hazlitt, Philip Skelton and Tobias Smollet all find in Richardson first and foremost a system. For Hazlitt, that system is overpowering and bothersome: “‘He furnishes his characters, on every occasion, with the presence of mind of the author. He makes them act, not as they would from the impulse of the moment, but as they might upon reflection, and upon a careful review of every motive and circumstance in their situation’” (qtd. in E&K 614). Skelton and Smollet, however, admire Richardson’s sense of order. Skelton calls *Clarissa* “‘a System of religions and moral Precepts and Examples’” and *Sir Charles Grandison* “‘a living system of manners’” (qtd. in Keyner 87); Smollet calls the novel “‘a sublime system of ethics’” (qtd in Keyner 87).

Sarah Fielding’s *Remarks Upon Clarissa* perhaps more thoroughly than any other critical work highlights the encyclopedic themes in Richardson’s novel. 24 This work begins as a direct “Address” to Richardson, ostensibly reporting readers’ reactions to the work to its author. Fielding’s work quickly becomes more dramatic, though, when the speaker reports attending “a pretty large Assembly of mix’d Company” (4) for which *Clarissa* provides the subject of conversation. The first specific comment pertains to the novel’s length. A

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24 *Remarks on Clarissa* was first published on 7 January 1749, just a month after the final three installments of *Clarissa* were published.
“Gentleman said, ‘His chief Objection was to the Length of it, for that he was certain he could tell the whole Story contained in the two first Volumes in a few Minutes’” (4). He proceeds to summarize those volumes in about 260 words, and concludes by asking “how it is possible for this Story, without being exceeding tedious, to be spun out to two Volumes, containing each above 300 pages?” He is answered by the sensible Miss Gibson (evidently a stand-in for Fielding herself), who “took a little Almanack out of her Pocket, and, turning to the Place where the Births and Deaths of the Kings of England were marked, gave it to the Gentleman, and said, ‘that by his Rule of Writing, that was the best History of England, and Almanack-makers were the best Historians’” (5). This exchange immediately places Clarissa and its earliest readers within the tension Charrier identifies with the eighteenth-century: a tension unable to be resolved between comprehensiveness and essence, verbosity and shortness. Moreover, by implicitly comparing Clarissa to an almanac, Miss Gibson suggests that Clarissa should be classed among books of reference including almanacs and (as I extend the argument here) encyclopedias.

This conversation continues as a Mr. Johnson proceeds to “relate the Roman History. . . in as little time as had been expended in the summing up the Story of Clarissa” (5). In other words, Mr. Johnson, arguing for comprehensiveness, shows the dangers of reducing histories of the Roman empire or of Clarissa to their essential components by reducing so far that the history he tells becomes absurd. After this humorous performance, a “Mr. Singleton laugh’d, and said, ‘He was surprised to hear a Man of Mr. Johnson’s Understanding display so much Eloquence to prove, (if he intended to prove any thing by it) that the knowing the Particulars of the Family at Harlow-place was of as much Consequence, as the knowing the Springs and Wheels on which turned the Affairs of the greatest
Commonwealth that was ever heard of since the Creation of the World.” (5). The Lady of the House then replies to Mr. Singleton (her authority established by the mention of the three sons and three daughters “who do Honour to her Education of them” (7)):

“I really think the penetrating into the Motives that actuate the Persons in a private Family, of much more general use to be known, than those concerning the Management of any Kingdom or Empire whatsoever: The latter, Princes, Governors, and Politicians only can be the better for, whilst every Parent, every Child, every Sister, and every Brother, are concerned in the former, and may take example by such who are in the same Situation with themselves” (7).

The thrust of this portion of the conversation is two-fold. First, of course, the passage serves to justify hundreds of pages written and read about a particular and private person rather than corporate or public figures or empires. But perhaps less obviously, it serves to reinforce practices of reading that, as I have demonstrated in earlier chapters, are specifically associated with reading encyclopedias. Mr. Singleton talks not merely of reading Clarissa, as in being familiar with what happens to her, but in the same breath speaks of “knowing” the particulars of her family and “knowing the Springs and Wheels on which turned the Affairs of the [Roman] . . . Commonwealth.” In other words, for Mr. Singleton, one reads not just to learn the particular facts, whether they be facts of a young woman’s life or the facts of the Roman Empire; instead, in both cases, one should read with enough care and attention to understand “the Springs and Wheels,” behind the facts. As in the encyclopedias, where the compilers expected the readers to understand the deep structure of the encyclopedias themselves, and to understand how each piece of information contained in the encyclopedia was related to every other piece of information, so too in Clarissa did Mr. Singleton expect readers to delve beneath the surface of things to understand the mechanics behind Clarissa’s actions (recall Dr. Johnson’s timepiece analogy).
My reading of the passage as one designed to draw parallels between *Clarissa* and the encyclopedias of the day is supported by its conclusion, when a Mr. Clark proclaims that “the whole Account of the Mind of Man, were we only to mention the primary Passions, might be comprised in a few Words; but (continued he) from those Fountains to trace the several Channels into which they flow, and to get a Clue to guide us through all the winding Labyrinths into which they turn themselves, is no such easy Matter” (7). This passage, which deserves particular attention because it is allowed to stand as the conclusion to the debate between those who despise and those who admire *Clarissa’s* length, contains two strong references to the encyclopedic urge. The image of the single fountain flowing forth into numerous channels is simply an aquatic precursor of d’Alembert’s famous tree. And to suggest that *Clarissa* contains a “Clue” to the “Labyrinth” of the human “Mind” and “Passions” is to deploy language commonly used in encyclopedias of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. In the “Preliminary Discourse” to the *Encyclopédie*, for example, d’Alembert suggests that the “general system of the sciences and the arts is a sort of labyrinth” through which his work will guide the reader (46); Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana* (1815) claims that its “Method” provides a “clue to the labyrinth” that will guide its readers in “every step in our progress through the whole circle of art and science” (2).

The conversation of this assembly continues, turning next to a discussion of Mrs. Harlowe’s character. But after this short interlude, the discussion turns again to the more formal or technical elements of Richardson’s work. Mr. Dellincourt finds “great Fault with the Liberties you [Richardson] have taken with the English Language, and said, you had coined new Words, and printed others as if you was writing a Spelling-book, instead of
relating a Story” (12). This objection is answered by Miss Gibson, who suggests that many liberties are allowable in writing familiar Letters, which may be condemned in other kinds of writing. But the particulars of Miss Gibson’s response are to me less important than the fact that Fielding’s work documents the objections circulating around Richardson's work, leaving traces of the reading experiences of the novel's earliest readers. This passage suggests that for at least some of these readers, reading *Clarissa* was hard work, involving wading through unfamiliar words, the eyes being bombarded by the new words and new spellings in a way that ours cannot be. (Indeed, in Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary*, *Clarissa* is cited 97 times—a testament to the large number of new words Richardson coined in that work.) This is an experience of reading that we cannot easily recreate, but this passage reminds us that these readers were clearly not only being absorbed by pondering the psychological complexities of the characters (although they did ponder these psychological complexities as well, as the earlier discussion of Mrs. Harlowe’s character shows). But they were also keenly aware of the formal innovations of the work—innovations that specifically tie Richardson’s work to the encyclopedias.

The second part of Fielding’s *Remarks on Clarissa* consists of letters exchanged between Miss Gibson and Bellario. Bellario begins his letter to Miss Gibson by stressing the author’s design, the “compleat Story” as he calls it. He quotes a “celebrated French Critic” (perhaps it is Diderot, an avid fan of Richardson’s work?) who says that “it must be an EXTRAORDINARY GENIUS that can work his Design, and fashion it according to Justness and Proportion: For ‘tis necessary that the same Spirit reign throughout; that all

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25 In fact, Richardson is the most-cited living author in Johnson's *Dictionary*, with *Pamela* cited 3 times in addition to the previously-mentioned citations of *Clarissa*. After Richardson, Johnson himself is quoted 50 times, Charlotte Lennox 18 times, and Edward Young 13 times. Many of the words Johnson cited come from the “Moral and Instructive sentiments” added to fourth edition of *Clarissa* (Eaves and Kimpel 334).
contribute to the same End: and that all the Parts bear a secret Relation to each other: all depend on this Relation and Alliance."

"Let the nicest Critick examine the Story of Clarissa," continues Bellario, "and see if in any Point it fails of coming up exactly to the before-mentioned Rule. The Author... has beautifully made use of every Labyrinth, in the several Minds of his Characters, to lead him to his purposed End" (36). Both the quotation from the French critic and Bellario's commentary on it borrow language from the encyclopedias to describe Richardson's project. With its concern for a reigning Spirit and insistence on a "secret Relation" between parts, the passage from the French critic echoes (in advance) the "Preliminary Discourse" of the Encyclopédie. And as I have said above, the trope of the labyrinth, through which the reader is expertly guided, is one that recurs in encyclopedias throughout the eighteenth century. Bellario continues to praise the cohesion and connectedness of Richardson's novel throughout his letter to Miss Gibson; "The Web is wove so strongly, every Part so much depending on and assisting each other, that to divide any of them, would be to destroy the whole," he concludes (50).

What is perhaps most striking about all of these expressions of praise for Richardson's novel that I have here gathered together is not so much that they draw so heavily upon encyclopedic discourse to describe Richardson's work (although that is in itself quite striking), but that nearly all of these critics agree that Richardson has succeeded in creating a comprehensive whole, in which no letter or episode is superfluous, and in which each part bears a (secret) relation to all other parts. These critics are content to grant Richardson success, in other words, in creating an encyclopedia. This is extraordinary, because success in ordering an encyclopedia in the eighteenth-century seems to have been
extremely elusive, or in Chartier’s words, an apparitional objective “experienced with intense
frustration.” While the prefaces and other introductory apparatus of eighteenth-century
encyclopedias almost always make a claim that their own particular method will finally
succeed in making the links between human knowledge apparent, this introductory apparatus
seems to concentrate equally (if not more) strongly on explaining why every other method
tried to date had failed. This impulse to dismiss the attempts of others was so strong that
Coleridge can make the completely astonishing claim (after a whole century of intense work
on encyclopedias) that “to methodize” “a compendium of human knowledge . . . “has either
never been attempted, or the attempt has failed, from the total disregard of those general
connecting principles, on which Method essentially depends” (1). Coleridge goes on to avow
that “METHOD” is “to be the principal aim and distinguishing feature of our publication” (1)!
Now of course partly these claims were designed to sell encyclopedias, to render old
encyclopedias obsolete by promoting new and improved, more methodical ones. But I think
as well that this rhetoric was both symptomatic of and helped to produce the eighteenth-
century tension between comprehensiveness and essence, the intense frustration that
Chartier describes between the ideal but necessarily incomplete “comprehensive” approach
to organizing human knowledge, and the wavering faith in the ability of method or system to
render that gap transparent. Richardson, at least in the eyes of many of his contemporaries,
seems in large measure to have succeeded. Perhaps Clarissa was a more fit platform from
which to launch a new understanding of all human knowledge than the Encyclopédie, perhaps
the novel form more encyclopedic than an encyclopedia.
CHAPTER 5

TOM JONES: FIELDING'S ANTI-ENCYCLOPEDIA

If Richardson is commonly associated with novels of psychological complexity, his rival in the claim to have founded an entirely new species of writing, Henry Fielding, is commonly associated with novels of intricate plot.

The novel's earliest readers wrote approvingly of the coherent intricacies of the plot of Tom Jones. Astartea and Minerva Hill, for example, reported reading the novel to their friend Richardson (22 July 1749): "it is with an honest pleasure, which we take in adding, that... All the changeful windings of the Author's Fancy carry on a course of regular Design; and end in an extremely moving Close, where Lines that seemed to wander and run different ways, meet, All in an instructive Center" (qtd. in Baker 774). By 1834, the admiration of the plot was evidently so commonplace that Coleridge could famously, if not hyperbolically, pronounce "the Oedipus Tyrannus, The Alchemist, and Tom Jones, the three most perfect plots ever planned" (qtd. in Crane 844). In the twentieth century, critics have rather extravagantly gone so far as to use

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1 The symmetry of the plot of Tom Jones is perhaps too often commented upon. Divided neatly into eighteen books, the first three deal with life in Sommerset, the middle three with life on the road, and the final three with life in London. The first and the last books each have thirteen chapters, and many cross-references connect these two chapters. Crucial characters meet (or miss meeting) at the inn at Upton in the two books at the very center of the novel, IX and X. Just before the convergence at Upton, Tom hears a story parallel to his own from the Man of the Hill (Book VIII); just after the convergence at Upton, Sophia hears a story parallel to her own from Mrs. Fitzpatrick (Book XI). Two more interpolated tales flank these: in Book VII Tom hears the tale of the Quaker and his daughter who ran away for love; in Book XII, a puppet show continues the theme of love unapproved.
architectural analogy to capture the symmetrical design of the plot: Dorothy Van Ghent deployed the analogy of a Palladian mansion, while Frederick W. Hilles took this analogy a step further by representing the “mathematical exactitude” of *Tom Jones* in terms of “Prior Park, the stately home of Fielding’s patron Ralph Allen” (919).

Given this widespread attention to the systematic plot of *Tom Jones*, it would seem to be the obvious choice to conclude this discussion of the relationship between encyclopedias and novels in eighteenth-century Britain. Not only in its form, but also in its content does Fielding link his masterpiece to the encyclopedic urge. Formally, Fielding, like his counterpart encyclopedic compilers, has an interest in creating a circle of learning in which every episode, and every character, no matter how digressive it seems, contributes to the unified whole. The narrator explicitly warns his readers

not to hastily condemn any of the Incidents in this our History, as impertinent and foreign to our main Design, because thou dost not immediately conceive in what Manner such Incident may coduce to that Design. . . . for a little Reptile of a Critic to presume to find Fault with any of its Parts, without knowing the Manner in which the Whole is connected, and before he comes to the final Catastrophe, is a most presumptuous Absurdity (398).

And in introducing a character like Mrs. Miller, the narrator reminds readers that as the

"History doth not, like a News-Paper, give great Characters to People who never were heard of before, nor will ever be heard of again; the Reader may hence conclude, that this excellent Woman will hereafter appear to be of some Importance in our History” (540). The narrator insists on the coherence of both passages and characters, of the relatedness of each piece of information to every other piece of information contained within the text. Further, the narrator’s directions to the reader—to go back and re-read crucial passages of the text

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2 However, not everyone who has noticed this system has celebrated it. Arnold Kettle, for example, believes that “the contrivance of [Fielding’s] plot does violence to the characters he has created” (qtd. in Hilles 917). For a further summary of others who have found fault with Fielding’s plot, see Hilles 917.
(including directions to re-read the passage which leads Partridge to wrongly conclude Jones a Jacobite (335) or the directions to go back and re-read the scene at Upton “to admire the many strange Accidents which unfortunately prevented any Interview between Partridge and Mrs. Waters” (709))—function much as do the *renvois* in the *Encyclopédie*. In other words, these directions give the reader clues to discover for him or herself certain secrets that the compiler has thought fit to conceal for a time, and not only encourage but reward non-linear reading.

*Tom Jones* also aligns itself with the encyclopedic project on the level of content. The narrator emphasizes the unusual capacity of his novel to incorporate works of reference early on: after referring to “Coke Upon Littleton,” he notes that this “learned Author. . . was never quoted before in any but a Law-book” (75). Further, the narrator so often refers to works of reference that the novel itself becomes a sort of book of elegant extracts from these encyclopedias. (I will return to this point below.) In discussing women’s love for bravery in men, for example, the narrator refers not only to passages from Aristotle’s *Política*, and Homer’s *Odyssey*, but also to *Osborne’s Advice to a Son* (1656, a conduct manual) and *Bayle’s Historical and Critical Dictionary* (the same encyclopedia that I discuss in Chapter One).

Despite these obvious encyclopedic connections, however, in this chapter I will argue that Fielding constructs this encyclopedic text precisely in order to *undermine* the encyclopedic urge. Although throughout his literary career, and especially in the social tracts he wrote while a magistrate, Fielding shows himself strongly influenced by (and eager to influence) the encyclopedic imperative, in *Tom Jones* he teaches his readers to be wary of

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3 Sir Edward Coke’s *The First Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England, Or, A Commentary Upon Littleton, Not the Name of a Lawyer Only, But the Law Itself* (1628) was a translation, with extensive commentary, of a Norman French text. “Coke Upon Littleton,” as it was known, was the basic legal text of the time.
elaborately-constructed systems of knowledge. As Sophia reminds Tom, “A human Mind may be imposed on; nor is there any infallible Method to prevent it” (753). And as J. Paul Hunter reads the novel’s central scene—the “incest” scene at the inn at Upton—it serves to remind “readers of the shortcomings of observation and the limits of human knowledge even in a world in which explanations are daily rolling back the darkness” (209). Rather than relying exclusively on (encyclopedic) systems constructed by human minds, Fielding emphasizes the surpassing importance of reading with “Heart.”

Many critics of Fielding’s work and life construct a progressive narrative of the man and the career—one beginning with the wildness of a youth spent in brothels and gaming houses and in authoring political satire so bawdy and biting that it prompted Walpole’s Theatrical Licensing Act of 1737, and ending with the sobriety of the magistrate authoring plans for comprehensive projects designed to bring order and regularity to a city he saw edging ever nearer chaos. Martin Battestin, for example, describes Fielding’s trajectory thus: “Once the mischievous exponent and champion of liberty unbridled—whether in his political satires or in the excesses of his private life—Fielding had come to value order, restraint, stability” (Battestin 568). But in fact, I believe that Fielding’s drive for encyclopedic order is just as apparent in Fielding’s early life and works as it is in Tom Jones—arguably his most complete, mature and explicit meditation upon the encyclopedic urge. As early as 1730, an unknown contemporary of Fielding’s, in giving us the earliest extant

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4 The most comprehensive recent biography of Fielding is certainly Battestin’s. Another esteemed biography is F. Homes Dudden’s Henry Fielding: His Life, Works and Times.

5 Though Battestin gives no date for this poem, its footnote (d) suggests that it was written soon after 30 November 1730, the first day that The Battle of the Poets was added (without Fielding’s consent) to performances of Tom Thumb.
portrait of the author, makes apparent that those around him saw Fielding as a proponent of order, and emphasizes the encyclopedic nature of Fielding's early work:

Bedaub'd o'er with Snuff, and drunk as a Drum,
And mad as a March Hare Beau [Fielding] does come;
He staggers, and swears he will never submit
To Correction of (a) Friends, or the Censure of Pit;
He says what is flat shall for ever be so,
Who tells him a Fault he esteems as a Foe;
He begs that Apollo'll his Labours compleat,
And give him the Bays, or the Wearer's Estate:
He instances each little Thing he has wrote,
And makes a new Item of every Thought;
Commending himself as he passes along,
From Rape upon Rape to (b) Belinda a song:
He vamps upon wretched heroick Bombast,
And sings the Success that attended the last:
He'll shew both himself and (c) Assistants are no Wits,
By valiant Tom Thumb and his (d) Battle of Poets:
He steals all his Beauties when they're in their Fulness,
As by (e) Luckless appears, and the Goddess of Dulness.

(a) This Gentleman is so self-conceited that he quarrels with everyone that shews him a fault.
(b) Vain Belinda are your Wiles, a favourite Air in the Temple Beau, but none of the best, for a Simile between a delicate Belle and a Ruffian Bully can never be coherent.
(c) Said to be assisted by several Hands in his Dramatrick Performances, as a Scene from this, and a Scene from that person of Quality, which he introduces as he thinks fit: How true it is we leave our Readers to judge, but will say this, his Plays seem Pieces of Sense and Nonsense, like Harlequin's Patch-work Jacket sow'd together.
(d) A new Scene introduced in Tom Thumb upon the Scotchman's Holy-day.
(e) Vide Author's Farce, the Scene between Luckless and his Landlady, pirated from Love in a Bottle, and the Goddess of Nonsense from the Goddess Dulness in the [unciaed] (qtd. in Battestin 103-4).

Although this poem begins by describing the "chaos" of Fielding—his drunkenness, his untidiness, his madness, his reputation as a "Beau"—the form of the biographical sketch

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6 Battestin suggests that the poet may be Thomas "Hesiod" Cooke, but this cannot be known for certain (102).
quickly contains and overcomes this supposed chaos. Although the second line has an extra pyrrhic foot followed by a spondaic one

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And Mad as a _March_ Hare, _Beau F_ does come

(appropriate enough since the line describes his madness), the rest of the poem assumes a quite regular iambic tetrameter meter using rhymed couplets. Furthermore, the use of footnotes as long as the poem itself seems to nudge the chaos into strict regularity; this use of footnotes also emphasizes what many must already have recognized of Fielding’s style: his association with the Scriblerians and their mobilization of mock scholarship for satirical purpose, his mixing of generic forms, his insistence on digressive paraphernalia more elaborate than the ostensible original text.

The content of this short piece makes this impulse towards the encyclopedic more explicit. When the poet says that Fielding “instances each little Thing he has wrote,/And makes a new _Item_ of every Thought,” he or she may be using “instance” in the sense of either “to point out” or to “urge” or to “importune” (all, according to the OED, senses of the word in use in Fielding’s day), implying that Fielding lost no opportunity to promote himself and his works; when the poet says that Fielding makes “a new _Item_ of every Thought,” he or she may be implying that Fielding produced new works (too) quickly. In other words, as Battestin reads these two lines, the poet may mean to suggest merely that Fielding “had a fertile imagination” and could “fill a theater with paying customers”

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7 Fielding wrote some 27 plays between 1728 and 1737; the Player’s opening speech to Scriblerus in _The Welsh Opera_ (performed as an afterpiece to _The Tragedy of Tragedies_ in April 1731) reflects this pace: “Upon my word, Mr. Scriblerus, you write Plays (or something like Plays) faster than we can act them, or the Town damn them; I hope your Opera will take up more time in Running than it hath in Writing” (qtd. in Battestin 113).
But both “instance” and “item” have connotations more explicitly linked to works of reference: according to the OED, “Instance” is most commonly associated with giving examples “in illustration or proof”; and “item” is commonly associated with “an enumeration, computation, or sum total; an entry or thing entered in an account or register.” So as I read them, these two lines contribute to the sketch’s portrait of Fielding’s early interest in the encyclopedic method. Footnotes (b), (c) and (e) help to fill in this portrait. Footnote (b) remarks on Fielding’s penchant for yoking seemingly disparate images; footnote (c) calls attention to Fielding’s role as an editor, orchestrating the input from multiple contributors much as a seamstress would sew together a “Harlequin’s Patch-work Jacket”; footnote (e) registers Fielding’s incorporation of outside texts into his own. All of these footnotes center on Fielding’s ability to construct a coherent text from disparate sources, a vital element of the encyclopedic urge.

Of course, the use of footnotes, the timing of its publication, and the mention of the play’s title suggest that this biographical sketch serves to comment upon Tom Thumb as much as it comments upon its author. Tom Thumb itself may be seen as a comment upon the encyclopedic project. According to its “Preface,” The Tragedy of Tragedies: or, The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great (1731) is ostensibly a play “written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth,” (though the narrator throws out hints that it may have been written by Shakespeare himself), and edited by Scriblerus Secundus. Scriblerus Secundus adds footnotes designed to as

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8 The first version of this play, the two-act Tom Thumb, was performed as an afterpiece to Fielding’s The Author’s Farce in April 1730. Tom Thumb was a tremendous success: it was performed forty-one times in its first season, and appeared in several print editions. For a more complete account of the reception of this play, see Battestin 87. The three-act The Tragedy of Tragedies: or, The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great was an even greater success: it remained popular throughout the century.

9 Fielding’s choice of pseudonym associates him with the work of the Scriblerians Pope and Swift, the first Scriblerus, Martinus, having appeared in Pope’s Peri Bathous. As they are commonly understood, the Scriblerians produced “mock” scholarship in order to ridicule what they thought was the ever-increasing
"Justification" for the "Sentiments" of the play; for such sentiments as "Sure such a day as this was never seen" and "Excess of joy... Gives tears" he produces "parallel Passages out of the best of our English Writers." These copious footnotes (they take up at least as much if not more space on the page as the text they supposedly footnote) come from some forty-two tragic and heroic plays of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (These footnotes prefigure Johnson's use of illustrative quotations in his *Dictionary of the English Language*—a sort of handbook to selected passages of great works.) Scriblerus Secundus feels himself equal to the task of producing these footnotes, "having for ten years together read nothing else; in which time I think I may modestly presume, with the help of my *English* dictionary, to comprehend all the meaning of every word of it" (Preface). While this last comment is, of course, meant to be humorous, it also serves to emphasize the more serious encyclopedic aims of the play. To read for ten years in order to understand the meaning of every individual word is both ridiculous and non-encyclopedic. This sort of scholarship cannot recognize the connections between the words, connections between the passages in the ostensible text and their ostensible footnotes. Such a scholar could not have produced *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, which is a study in making connections, a study in constructing a coherent whole, no matter how ridiculous that whole may be. As is the case in many encyclopedias, the content takes a back seat to the structure and organization, the coherent volume of scholarship that did not match their standards. Pope, for example, after making his fortune as a "hack" writer translating the *Iliad*, went on in the *Dunciad* to make fun of those who would attempt to make their own fortune just as he had done. But I would argue that although this was certainly a part of their project, the aim of the Scriblerians was not merely to put these hack writers in their place. Their project was more complicated: they were also speaking to the encyclopedic urge. Their dedication to producing whole and coherent texts (even if the content of those texts was ridiculous nonsense), as well as in their concern for teaching their readers to read these complicated texts properly (as a coherent whole), suggest that the relationship of the Scriblerians to the encyclopedic urge needs to be more fully examined.
way in which the information is presented. In fact, I believe that the ridiculousness of the content serves to highlight the importance of form all the more strongly.

It would be possible, though rather tedious, to go through the *Tragedy of Tragedies* and all of Fielding’s “literary” works—especially *Shamela, Joseph Andrews, Don Quixote in England*, the *Miscellanies* and *Amelia*—and to locate encyclopedic tendencies in both their form and content. In all of these works, I would seek to show that it is not merely the case that Fielding is engaging in mock scholarship to make fun of the kind of pedantic scholarship to prevalent in the age, or for the sake of “sheer play,” but instead as a deliberate attempt to engage the intense debate surrounding the encyclopedic urge. I will save that argument and that close scrutiny for *Tom Jones*—generally acknowledged as Fielding’s masterpiece—taking it as a case study with implications for Fielding’s “literary works” in general. But before I turn to that novel, I want here to illuminate Fielding’s particular interest in the encyclopedic urge, one that we have not seen in the other novels and encyclopedias I have examined in this work, and one that has a direct bearing on my reading of *Tom Jones*. Specifically, I argue that throughout his career, Fielding attempted “encyclopedize” humanity, in the sense that he tried to forge connections between masses of people. He tried to make explicit and clear the orderly relationships that could or should exist between people, and where he did not see those clear relationships, he created structures and institutions and texts that could facilitate such connections.

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10 In “The Learned English Dog: Fielding’s Mock Scholarship,” Bertrand Goldgar accounts for Fielding’s mock scholarship in this way: “something other than satire on pedantry, and something distinct even from the admiration often implied by parody, is involved in his best mock-scholarship. Fielding, more often than not, is not so much satirizing as engaging in sheer play for its own sake, play in which his own considerable learning is on show as an end in itself” (195).

11 Part of my argument in this chapter, as it was in the previous chapter on Richardson, however, is that all of Fielding’s work—as a playwright, an essayist, a novelist, and as a magistrate—should be considered together, as motivated by and as catalyst to the encyclopedic urge.
I am by no means suggesting that Fielding promoted equality among human beings. As Battestin puts it, Fielding was no prophet of libertarianism. . . Fielding was profoundly conservative as a social thinker. . . In this, we should bear in mind, he was entirely representative of his age: the doctrine of ‘subordination’—the doctrine which assumes that the ranks and degrees of society are ordered according to a divinely ordained hierarchy extending from the king and the nobility through the gentry down to ‘the Commonality’—is the fundamental axiom of Fielding’s social philosophy, as it is of Swift’s and Pope’s, of Smollett’s and Johnson’s, of Goldsmith’s and Burke’s (Battestin 514).

But if he did not promote equality, Fielding seems to me to have been almost obsessed with places where people from all walks of society could come together. He was, for example, very enthusiastic and optimistic about the waters of Bath and Glastonbury—not only because they promised to help his steadily-declining health, but also, I think, because they were a place where people from all parts of the nation and all ranks of society (including the royalty) gathered. In a defense of the curative properties of the Glastonbury waters, Fielding suggested that the waters would benefit the “whole Society” (qtd. in Battestin 527).

Fielding also seems to have envisioned newspapers as a “place” where all manner of people could be brought together. Fielding was enthusiastic about periodical publications in general, being deeply involved with The Champion, The Covent-Garden Journal, The History of Our Own Times, The Jacobite’s Journal, Public Advertiser, and The True Patriot, and contributing articles to The Comedian, Common Sense, The Craftsman, Daily Advertiser, Daily Journal, Daily Post, Fog’s Weekly Journal, General Advertiser, Mist’s Weekly Journal, and Universal Spectator. Many of his schemes for improving civic life are centrally dependent upon newspapers. His Public Advertiser, for example, was designed as the designated place where people who had been robbed would advertise their loss immediately, so that pawnbrokers could assist in recovering goods or could be held liable to prosecution if they took in goods they knew (or
could have known) to be stolen (Battestin 561). The *Covent-Garden Journal* was “intended as a vehicle for promoting the Universal Register Office and for keeping the public apprised of Fielding’s activities and concerns at Bow Street” (Battestin 542). The audience for this summary of his legal cases presumably was a very large and varied one, and thus served as another place where people from all walks of life could be thought of as coming together. In this *Journal* Fielding not only would have expected to impress his superiors with his stories of his successes (he always hoped for, but never received, a preferment to a higher office); he would also have wanted to instill a sense of security to all citizens within the limits of his magistracy, as well as to deter any would-be criminals by showcasing his ability to convict.

The *Covent-Garden Journal* had another interesting column for the first twenty numbers: entitled “Covent-Garden,” this column reprinted epitomes of items from other current newspapers, glossed with “witty commentary” under the heading “Modern History. *Cum notis variorum*” (Battestin 543). In a sense, then, the *Covent-Garden Journal* became a compendium other popular newspapers, drawing them, too, all together in one place.

Perhaps the most overtly encyclopedic of Fielding’s periodical publications was *The History of our Own Times* (1740/1). Unfortunately, the publication ceased after only four issues—most likely, Battestin surmises, owing “to Fielding’s being clapped into a sponging house at a critical juncture when the magazine had scarcely had time to establish itself” (292). This periodical was divided into three parts:

I. An Account of Foreign Transactions, from Time to Time, in a Historical Method, and on a regular Plan; by which our Readers may be enabled to form a Judgment of the Interests and Measures of the several Potentates of Europe.

II. The present History of Great Britain, subdivided into the following Sections: 1. The History of the Great or Polite World; in which will be contained an Account of the Pleasures and Diversions of the town. 2. Of the Learned World; in which we shall give an Account and Character of all new Books
and Pamphlets in all Languages, wherever they are publish’d, (with Extracts from such as merit it) and a constant Review of the political and other learned Controversies which shall occur. We shall likewise present our Readers with several original Pieces both in Prose and Verse. 3. Of the three learned Professions, Divinity, Law, and Physic. 4. Military and Naval Affairs; in which will be introduced an exact Journal of the Operations of the present War. 5. Of Mercantile Matters; containing an Account of all Schemes advanced either for the Improvement or Hindrance of Trade; the freshest Advices from our Ports, from Exchange-Alley, from Bear-Key, and the other most considerable Markets; and the Prices of Goods at the said Places.

III. Such new Parliamentary Speeches as may come to Hand (qtd. in Battestin 292).

In addition to the fact that Fielding explicitly calls attention to the “Method” and “regular Plan” of this periodical (calling to mind the prefaces to the encyclopedias), what is striking about the plan for the History is the ambitiousness of its scope, the clashing together of information from so many different sources all on one page, and (presumably) the appeal to such a wide variety of people, all of whom would turn to this one newspaper: not only the learned but also the polite world, not only the merchants but also the military, not only the British but also the foreign, not only those interested in verse but also those interested in the prices of goods, political news, and legal, medical, and divine knowledge.

While Fielding’s impulse to bring all sectors of society together in an orderly system is evident in his periodical work, three longer essays—one an advertisement for his Universal Register Office, and two social tracts, An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers and A Proposal for making an effectual Provision for the Poor—bring this urge into clear focus. Fielding and his half-brother John opened their Universal Register-Office “in the Strand, near Southampton-street, and opposite Cecil-street” (Plan 6), and it was evidently so prosperous that “it spawned a host of rival and unscrupulous imitators” (Battestin 498). In A Plan of the Universal Register-Office (1751), Fielding outlines the goals of the office: those who need services and those who have services to provide will both register, and for a small fee, the Fieldings will
put the two together: "Here the Buyer and the Seller, the Master and the Scholar, the
Master and the Apprentice, and the Master and Servant are sure to meet: Here ingenious
Persons of all Kinds will meet with those who are ready to employ them, and the Curious
will be supplied with every thing which it is in the Power of Art to produce" (6). Other
people Fielding can arrange to bring together include those who need housing and those
with estates to sell and lodgings to let, those who need money and those with money to lend,
those with places and employments to be sold and disposed of and those who desire such
places, and those who need to travel and those with "Conveniences for Travelling in all
Manners by Sea or Land" (9). So again, Fielding's plan is to bring people from all walks of
society together, "to bring the World as it were together in one Place" (6).

Fielding both literally and figuratively places himself and his office at the center of
these people: he locates the office "in the very Middle of the Town, [so it] cannot be far off"
(9) from any of its members. And he sees his role in the center of the people as organizing
them into a comprehensive system, facilitating the connections between people that must be
made so that each member of society can do his or her part, just as each part of the body
contributes to "the Good of the Whole." And like his encyclopedic-compiler counterparts,
Fielding aims at nothing less than complete or "Universal" success, complete registration
and regulation, not one person missing or unassigned a position within the system.13

According to Fielding, a society does not reach its "utmost Perfection" until it is "so
regulated, that no Talent in any of its Members, which is capable of contributing to the

12 An important feature of the Office was its "Secrecy" (10); unlike newspaper advertisements, the
Register-Office would not expose "a Man's Circumstances to all his Neighbours" (7). It is somewhat
paradoxical that in order to achieve this privacy, one had to come to Fielding's office to register, thus in a sense
giving up that privacy. This is also an interesting analogy to the secrets contained/produced when an
encyclopedia is compiled.

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general Good, should lie idle and unemployed, nor any of the Wants of its Members which are capable of Relief, should remain unrelieved” (my emphasis, 3). Fielding reiterates the importance of the universal nature of his plan again when describing how the Universal Register-Office is superior to its competition—other places in which people come together, including

Fairs, Markets, Exchanges, and all other Publick Meetings for carrying on Traffick and Commerce between Men.... All these Methods, however, are so far defective, as they fail to be Universal; for to the Perfections of a Society it is required, that none of the various Talents of the Members shall remain unknown and unemployed, nor any of their Wants unsupplied. This, as it seems, can only be attained, by providing some Place of universal Resort (my emphasis, 6).

Driving the point home, Fielding returns to the theme in the conclusion to the Plan: “the great Utility of this Office, when its Correspondence is become universal, must be apparent to everyone. Indeed, its Use consists chiefly in its Universality” (10). Unless the registration was universal, Fielding would feel that his opus was incomplete. And while this may be ascribed partly to mercenary motives (every person who registered, of course, paid a fee to the Fieldings), I think it at least equally related to Fielding’s encyclopedic urge.

Fielding’s attempt to bring all sectors of society together in an orderly system can also be seen in what many (including Battestin, 510) see as his most important social tract, An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers (1751). The “work sold so briskly, even at a half-crown a copy, that the first printing of 1,500 copies was quickly exhausted” (Battestin 521). Probably one reason the work sold so well is that the problem of robberies—and murder—had become a significant one in London. As Battestin explains, the incidence of crime and violence in the metropolis had increased markedly, owing to circumstances that swelled the ranks of the vagrant poor: their number was augmented annually by hundreds of migratory Irish who came to English to harvest

13 Fielding cites Aristotle as another who believed that complete use of all people and talents in a society was an attainable goal: “Of this absolute Degree of Perfection, Aristotle seems to think it capable” (3).
crops and were left to shift for themselves when this seasonal labor was done; and now, the war with France at an end, the situation was exacerbated by thousands of disband ed soldiers and sailors. These desperate men, often in huge gangs, infested the streets and highways, plundering the public and, since hanging was the punishment equally for murder or for the theft of goods worth a shilling, using their victims cruelly (512).

Fielding himself felt that the problem was bound to get worse than it already was: the “Evil” of robberies “seems . . . not yet to have arrived to that Height of which it is capable. . . . In fact, I make no Doubt, but that the Streets of this Town, and the Roads leading to it, will shortly be impassable without the utmost Hazard; nor are we threatened with seeing less dangerous Gangs of Rogues among us, than those which the Italians call the Banditti” (75). The citizens of London were eager to listen to anyone who had a plan for doing something about this problem, and Fielding’s position as a magistrate must have lent increased authority to his proposals. 14

Fielding’s Enquiry is divided into two main sections: an examination of the root causes of and temptation to robbery; followed by an examination of what Fielding call the “Encouragement” to robbery (125)—that is, the problems associated with convicting and punishing known robbers. The first major cause to which Fielding attributes the increase in robberies is an addiction to luxury. Rather than working for the “Wages to which their Industry would intitle them,” the “Lower Kind of People” are imitating those of higher classes and “abandoning themselves to Idleness” (77) on all days of the week and in all seasons of the year. Places of idle diversion, including “Plays, Operas, and Oratorios . . . Masquerades and Ridottos . . . Assemblies, Drums, Routs, Riots and Hurricanes” (83); Fielding argues, are leading the “Lower Kind of People” into too much expense, as well as teaching them to covet what it is not in their power to acquire by any honest means. These
places of idle diversion also promote two more forms of luxury—drunkenness and gaming—which can also make men and women desperate enough to commit robberies. To correct these problems, Fielding suggests that the diversions of the lower classes of people should be "confined to certain stated Times" (81); that "all spiritous Liquors" be "locked up in the Chymists or Apothecaries Shops" or else that the price be raised so high "by a severe Import" that it would become beyond the means of the poor (91); and that the laws against gaming be more strictly upheld, and that citizens be encouraged to become informers against gamers (97).

A second major cause to which Fielding attributes the increase of robberies is the "improper Regulation of what is called the Poor in this Kingdom" (98). Fielding divides the poor into three classes: those unable to work, those able and willing to work, and those able but unwilling to work. The number of people falling into the first of these classes is so small, Fielding argues, that it is a very small matter "to support and cherish them" (109). He saves his discussion of the second of these classes—promising to produce a comprehensive plan "when I shall have any Reason to see the least Glimpse of Hope, that my Labour in drawing it out at length would not be absolutely and certainly thrown away" (111). (This plan would appear as A Proposal for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor, which I discuss below.) As for the third of these classes of poor, Fielding proposes regulating wages. He attributes the idleness of a great many in the city to the fact that they can name the price at which they will work, and "most of these, if they cannot exact an exorbitant Price for their Labour, will remain idle. The Habit of exacting on their Superiors is grown universal" (119). And if they will still not work, Fielding proposes confining them to a work house, and compelling them

14 None of Fielding's major suggestions seem to have been adopted.
to work at hard labour, rather than sending them to prison and allowing them to remain in
idleness, which he argues is for them no punishment at all.

Fielding contends in the *Enquiry* that if these recommendations “to provide for the
present Poor, and to prevent their Encrease by laying some effectual Restraints on the
Extravagance of the lower Sort of People” were to be adopted, “the remaining Part of this
Treatise would be rendered of little Consequence” (124). Not feeling optimistic enough that
these recommendations will be effectively mobilized, Fielding goes on in the second half of
the *Enquiry* to examine the detection and punishment of robbers. Here, Fielding lays out
seven recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the justice system. First, the
receivers of stolen goods must be controlled. Victims of robberies must not be allowed to
advertise a reward for the return of their items with no questions asked; pawnbrokers must
be regulated, if not entirely eliminated; and receiving goods known or suspected to be stolen
must be made an “original Offence” (130), not subject to the conviction of the thief.
Second, Fielding proposes that the poor not be allowed to wander beyond their own Parish,
where “it will be impossible for them to steal or rob, without being presently hanged or
transported out of the way” (144). Third, ordinary citizens must be both informed of and
prompted to fulfill their responsibilities for aiding in the capture of thieves—either by
citizens arrest, or during a Hue and Cry. Most importantly, this provision requires an
adjustment of popular attitude toward thief-takers: at present, Fielding complains, the
“Person of the Informer is in Fact more odious than that of the Felon himself; and the
Thief-catcher is in Danger of worse Treatment from the Populace than the Thief” (151).
Fourth, those who are robbed must be encouraged, if not compelled, to prosecute the
thieves; and those too poor to support the time and costs of these prosecutions must be
helped monetarily. Fifth, evidence—including alibis and character references—must be thoroughly evaluated “with utmost Care and Strictness” (163). Sixth, the King’s frequent pardons of robbers must be stopped: Fielding is confident that pardons—and the hope, if not confidence, they give criminals—“have brought many more men to the Gallows than they have saved from it” (166). And finally, Fielding recommends that the execution of robbers be conducted “as soon as possible after the Commission and Conviction of the Crime” (169), that the execution be as private and as solemn as possible, so that criminals “die in the Presence only of their Enemies” (170). Fielding complains that in the present system, in which criminals are executed in front of a crowd who go there for entertainment, the “Day appointed by Law for the Thief’s Shame is the Day of Glory in his own Opinion” (167).

As important as Fielding’s Enquiry is as a social and legal document, I believe that it is equally important for what it reveals about Fielding’s encyclopedic vision of society. Fielding dedicates the Enquiry to the “Right Honourable Philip Lord Hardwick, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain,” and claims in the dedication that although the problems Fielding treats are below the Lord’s notice, “however ignoble the Parts may be in which the Disease is first engendered, it will in time be sure to affect the whole Body” (63). This is Fielding’s first use of a recurring metaphor of the whole of Great Britain, including both its people and its laws (all of which fall under the term “Constitution” (65)) as a body, and is

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15 As a legal document, Fielding’s work is a methodical summary of all law pertaining to the points he raises. For each of the causes he identifies as causes of the increase in robberies and encouragements to continue in robbery, Fielding summarizes the history of the laws pertaining to that point. In some of these summaries Fielding goes back to precedents set in ancient Greece and Rome; for most others, he goes back as far as the time of Queen Elizabeth.
one indication that Fielding really sees all classes as related to one another, one not really capable of being isolated from the others.

Another indication of Fielding's encyclopedic vision of society, where every person is connected to every other person, can be seen in the way he purportedly limits the scope of his proposals in the *Enquiry*. Although Fielding repeatedly claims to be making proposals to affect only "the lower Sort of People" (81) or the "inferiour Part of Mankind" (92), these repeated, insistent claims only serve to emphasize the fact that Fielding meant his proposals to extend to "the Great World" (84) as well. The audience of the *Enquiry* is certainly meant to be those in the upper classes—the only people able to afford the half-crown price, and the only people able to effect the changes Fielding is proposing. And Fielding drops occasional hints that the love of luxury in the upper classes is not only excusable, but even beneficial to society: "The more Toys which Children of all Ages consume, the brisker will be the Circulation of Money, and the greater the Increase of Trade" (83). Such reassurances cut as a double-edged sword, however. While on one hand they imply that Fielding's treatise on robbery does not really ask them to mend their ways or assume any responsibility for the problem (the problem ostensibly being placed squarely on the shoulders of the poor); on the other hand, calling the rich "Children" and their luxuries "Toys" is certainly no compliment, and throughout the *Enquiry*, Fielding subtly shifts responsibility to the rich as well. Fielding reminds readers that "bad Habits are infectious by Example, as the Plague itself by Contact"

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16 Fielding consistently tells the reader that his *Enquiry* addresses only the poor. "One known Division of the People in this Nation is into the Nobility, the Gentry and the Commonality. What Alterations have happened among the two former of these, I shall not at present enquire" (67). Fielding suggests that among "the Great...Luxury is probably rather a moral than a political Evil" (77), and refers the "Great" elsewhere for direction: he recommends that they "answer for the Employment of their Time, to themselves, or to their spiritual Governors." Fielding makes similar statements about the confinement of his proposals to the poor on pages 63, 78, 81, 83, 84, and 92.
(77); he gives a specific example of a bad habit in the form of gambling. After summarizing the laws on gambling, Fielding states that he has “given this short Sketch of these several Acts, partly for the Use and Encouragement of Informers, and partly to insinuate to certain Persons with what Decency they can openly offend against such plain, such solemn Laws, the severest of which many of themselves have, perhaps, been the Makers of” (97). Perhaps most spectacularly, Fielding even attempts to incorporate the King into his plan in the section on the “Encouragement given to Robbers by frequent Pardons.” Fielding recognizes that presuming to tell the King what to do is “too tender a Subject to speak to” (163), and rather than directing his comments to the king himself, begs “to direct myself only to those Persons who are within the Reach of his Majesty’s sacred Ear” (164). But Fielding’s objective is clear: he believes that the King has set a bad example by issuing too many pardons; Fielding wants to incorporate not only the poor, but everyone ranging even up to the King into his comprehensive plan.

The connections that Fielding seeks to forge in this Enquiry are not only those between classes. Fielding also seeks to make connections between ordinary citizens and legal professionals, by attempting to incorporate them in the business of taking thieves. In his section on “apprehending the Persons of Felons,” Fielding reminds his readers that “every private Man may arrest another on Suspicion of Felony” (146); and that when “a Hue and Cry is raised, every private Man is not only justified in pursuing; but may be obliged by Command of the Constable to pursue the Felon, and is punishable, if he disobey, by Fine and Imprisonment” (148). Fielding also reminds readers that the system of thief-catchers extends to the very heights of society: “If to bring Thieves to Justice be a scandalous Office,
what becomes of all those who are concerned in this Business, some of whom are rightly thought to be among the most honourable Officers in the Government?” (154).

One indication of just how committed to the comprehensiveness of his plan, and how tied he was to the idea of an encyclopedic, all-inclusive vision of society is the fact that the greatest punishment Fielding can conceive of is to be cut off from that very society.\textsuperscript{17} Fielding’s plan for reforming the manner of execution—cutting the ritual of execution off from picnicking crowds, and performing the it only “in the Sight and Presence of the Judges”—he proposed because he thought it would be more shocking both to the criminals themselves as well as to the “Minds of every one” (171).\textsuperscript{18} Another of Fielding’s proposals for punishment of offenders was solitary confinement, which, according to Bender, “was to become one of the leading notions of the reformers” (147). In other words, Fielding’s model and ideal is having everyone included in a systematic plan; the greatest punishment he can conceive is cutting someone off from that system.

All of this evidence suggests that Fielding meant his plan to incorporate all walks of life. It is also clear that he wanted that society to function systematically. Ironically, Fielding seems to uphold as models for the kind of systematization he envisions the very people he seeks to reform. For example, in the “Introduction” to the \textit{Enquiry}, Fielding informs his readers “as an unquestionable Fact, that there is at this Time a great Gang of Rogues, whose

\textsuperscript{17} Fielding had articulated a similar esteem for society in the \textit{Plan of the Universal Register Office}. “Society alone affords an Opportunity of exerting all the human Faculties; and . . . it alone can provide for all the Wants of which our Nature is susceptible. In Society alone, Men can mutually enjoy the Benefit of that vast Variety of Talents with which they are severally endowed; the Members of the Body Corporate, like those of the Natural Body, having their several different Uses and Qualifications, all jointly contributing to the Good of the Whole” (\textit{Plan 3}).

\textsuperscript{18} Interestingly, Fielding looks to the poets for justification for this method, as he believes that poets have a more competent knowledge of human nature than many legislators. The “good Poet and the good Politician do not differ so much as some who know nothing of either Art affirm; nor would Homer or Milton have made the worst Legislators of their Times” (168).

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Number falls little short of a Hundred, who are incorporated in one Body, have Officers and a Treasury, and have reduced Theft and Robbery into a regular System. There are of this Society Men who appear in all Disguises, and mix in most Companies” (my emphasis, 76). One can hear in this reference to Jonathan Wild’s gang almost a hint of admiration for their systematization along with the clear reference to the essential way of organizing human knowledge described by Chartier (see above). Again, when describing the difficulties in apprehending felons, Fielding laments that “it is a melancholy Truth, that at this very Day, a Rogue no sooner gives the Alarm, within certain Purlieus, than twenty or thirty armed Villains are found ready to come to his Assistance” (145). Fielding clearly wants the innocent citizenry to be as well-organized and systematized as are these thieves. He wants citizens to respond quickly and eagerly to a Hue and Cry. He wants political evils to be eradicated by the creation of and adherence to regular systems.\footnote{Fielding did succeed in creating a system of police as organized as Jonathan Wild’s gang or the gang of armed villains ready to aid their fellow outlaws. In late 1753, a rash of violent crimes swept London. At the Duke of Newcastle’s request, Fielding prepared a plan to create a professional police force to address the crime wave; Newcastle presented this plan to the Privy Council, which quickly accepted it. With an initial deposit of 600 pounds (thereafter, the annual expense of Fielding’s police never exceeded 400 pounds), Fielding hired “seven constables—‘all men of known and approved fidelity and intrepidity’—whom he reinforced, when occasion demanded, from a pool of trustworthy ex-constables held in reserve” (Battestin 578). Victims of or witnesses to crime were to send immediately to either Fielding or his brother John; the Fieldings “would immediately dispatch a Set of brave Fellows in Pursuit, who . . . are always ready to set out to any Part of this Town or Kingdom, on a Quarter of an Hour’s Notice” (Battestin 579). The Bow Street Runners were so successful that by mid-October, “the whole gang of cut-throats was entirely dispersed, seven of them were in actual custody, and the rest driven, some out of town, and others out of the kingdom” (Battestin 579). By early December, Fielding could boast “that since his plan had been approved, ‘no one Robbery, or Cruelty hath been heard of in the Streets, except the Robbery of one Woman, the Person accused of which was immediately taken’” (Battestin 580).}

For a more ideal model of the kind of encyclopedic organization he envisions for English society, Fielding reaches back to the time of “Alfred, at the End of his Wars with the Danes.” Fielding especially admires the way that Alfred systematically organized his people into progressively smaller units. According to Fielding, Alfred “limited the Shires or
Counties in a better Manner than before,” and then for divided those shires even further “into Hundreds, and these again into Tithings, Decennaries, or ten Families” (131). At the head of these Tithings presided a Chief who tried small offences, while larger ones were referred to the court established over each Hundred. The head of each family was responsible for the behavior of all the family, including servants and guests; and if any person fled from justice, the whole Tithing and Hundred paid a fine to the King. Further, Alfred’s system not only “provided for the incorporating of the Subjects,” it also “confined them to the Places where they were thus incorporated” (133). If citizens wished to move about the country, they had to secure a license from the sheriff or governor before doing so. And any Tithing that received a person without such a license was responsible for the deeds of that person. The main features of this system that Fielding admires so much are twofold: first, that every person is clearly related to every other person in society, in a hierarchical and traceable chain. There is no possibility of obscurity, of slipping between the cracks, of murkiness or migrating from one area to another in order to escape the “incorporation.” Instead, everyone is strictly accountable to his or her neighbors. Second, everyone is involved in the policing of everyone else. Every family is responsible—both morally and financially—for the actions not only of everyone associated with their family, but also of everyone in their Tithing and in their Hundred. Anyone could serve as a “Pledge” for anyone else in their Tithing.

In summarizing the Enquiry, Fielding describes his endeavour in terms suitably encyclopedic. Fielding suggests that he has attempted “to trace the Evil from the very Fountain-head, and to shew whence it originally springs, as well as all the Supplies it receives, till it becomes a Torrent, which at present threatens to bear down all before it” (171).
Fielding’s use here of the Fountain metaphor is a reprise of its earlier use in the *Enquiry*, in the discussion of drunkenness: “The first inventor of this diabolical Liquor [gin] may be compared to the Poisoner of a Fountain, whence a large City was to derive its Waters” (90). In both instances, the metaphor seeks to emphasize the connectedness of the people, their mutual reliance upon and contribution to one central source. Like d’Alembert’s image of the tree of knowledge, the image of the fountain emphasizes that no matter how far the torrent may travel, it may nonetheless always be traced back to its central source.

In his *Proposal for Making an Effectual Provision for the Poor, for Amending their Morals, and for Rendering them Useful Members of Society* (1753), Fielding again returns to the idea of encyclopedizing humanity. Battestin praises the “ingenuity of its elaborate design” (566) as well as its “practical details” (568), but Fielding’s contemporary readers were evidently less impressed by it. As John Upton, chaplain to the Lord Chancellor, wrote to James Harris on 12 February: “I much like Fielding’s scheme for providing for the Middlesex poor, but I am afraid it will meet with the fate of other schemes: I have heard cold water and cold reflexions cast on it by those I wish would patronize it” (qtd in Battestin 570). In fact, the proposal was never adopted. It is worth examining, however, both as an example of Fielding’s ability to bring order and system to chaos and confusion, and because as in this work Fielding is at his most explicit about why he is so enthusiastic about places where people come together in one place.

In the “Introduction” to his *Proposal*, Fielding states that the laws hitherto enacted relating to the poor are in a particularly bad state: “Nor is there any Walk in all this Wilderness of Laws more intersected or more perplexed with Mazes and Confusion, than this which leads to the Provision for the Poor” (229). In an attempt to systematize these
laws, Fielding has undertaken “a careful Perusal of every thing which I could find that hath been written on this Subject, from the Original Institution in the 43rd of Elizabeth to this Day” (232), and has streamlined, simplified, and modified the best of these initiatives in his Proposal. The formal characteristics of the Proposal reflect Fielding’s urge to systematize: each of the fifty-nine amazingly detailed proposals is put forth in a numbered paragraph, and most of these proposals are demarcated by rubrics in the margins. Each of the proposals are further elaborated upon and defended in a section entitled “Arguments in Explanation and Support of the Foregoing Proposals,” each argument numbered to correspond to its proposal, “to which the Reader is desired to refer as he proceeds” (235). As if to further emphasize the clear, systematic order that Fielding is attempting to impose upon the body of work addressed to the care of the poor, the Proposal begins with an architectural drawing of the County-House and County-House of Correction that Fielding seeks to build, which in its clean, symmetric, balanced design seems the very antithesis and antidote to the irregular architecture and street grid of London that Fielding complains of in the section of “Laws relating to Vagabonds” in the Enquiry: “Whoever indeed considers the Cities of London and Westminster, with the late vast Addition of their Suburbs; the great Irregularity of their Buildings, the immense Number of Lanes, Alleys, Courts and Bye-places; must think, that, had they been intended for the very Purpose of Concealment, they could scarce have been better contrived” (131).

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30 The details included in Fielding’s proposals range from the architecture of the buildings, the numbers and ranks of the officers to oversee the project, the exact wording of a pass to be issued if anyone desires to leave the county house for a short period of time, the times the bells should be rung to wake the laborers (4am) and their fires should be put out (9pm) to the various offense for which the laborers can be punished and the amount they will be paid.
But it is Fielding’s compulsion to bring people together in one place, and to impose an systematic order upon them, that I find most fascinating in the Proposal. Fielding begins the Proposal by emphasizing the fact that the “strength and Riches of a Society consist in the Numbers of the People” (225), and certainly Fielding’s ambitions for this project consisted of great numbers: his proposed County-House was to be large enough “to contain Five Thousand Persons, and upwards; and the said County-House of Correction large enough to contain Six Hundred Persons, and upwards” (235)—and this only to serve Middlesex County. Over and over again, Fielding insists upon the necessity of bringing the poor together in one place: the only way to make the poor useful, he claims, is to “bring them as much as possible together; at least so as to collect the Poor of a single County” (257); “The true Reason therefore that the Poor have not yet been well provided for, and well employed is, that they have not yet been drawn together” (260).

However, Fielding goes on to clarify that it “is not barely... in the Numbers of People, but in Numbers of People well and properly disposed, that we can truly place the Strength and Riches of a Society” (226). One of the innovations that Fielding proposed was a double-entry system of bookkeeping to keep track of the people who would labor in his County-House and County-House of Correction.21 When anyone arrived at the County-house, the Governor was

21 A crucial argument behind Fielding’s plan is that there exist a great number of able poor and idle who would work if they were given the chance to do so. “The County-house is indeed a Place contrived for the Promotion of Industry only, and is therefore a proper Asylum for the Industrious of their own Accord to fly to for Protection” (268). The poor would not only be assured of work, food and shelter, but might also be trained “in the Manufactures and Mysteries now exercised in this Kingdom” (247). The County Work-House, on the other hand, was designed as an alternative to Bridewell—a place where Justices could send criminals in the hope that they would be better cared for. They would, for example, be compelled to work rather than to lie idle, they would be separated from members of the opposite sex (“Our present Houses of Correction, for Want of this Regulation, are Places of the most infamous and profligate Debauchery” (261)), and they would be compelled to attend chapel prayers.
to examine the said Person as to his Age, Ability, and Skill in any Work or Manufacture, and shall then order the Receiver to enter in a Book, to be kept for that Purpose, the Name and Age of the said Person, the Parish to which he belongs, and the Day of his Admission into the County-house, together with the Kind of Labour to which he is appointed; and a Duplicate thereof shall likewise be entered in another Book, to be kept by the Store-keeper. . . . In the said Book shall likewise be entered, an Account of the Moneys advanced to him by the Receiver, and of the Repayments to be made by him as hereafter is ordered and appointed (243).

What is interesting about this proposal is that the main concern seems to be to enter people into this double-entry system of bookkeeping. Keeping the account of money spent and received (normally associated with these practices) seems almost an afterthought. Similarly, in order to keep track of all of the materials brought into the county-house for the purposes of manufacturing items, and all of the goods wrought in the house later to be sold, Fielding proposes to enter the information “in two Books by the Receiver and Store-keeper, allowing a separate Page to every Man” (247). Certainly when trying to keep track of the production of 5,600 people “and upwards,” there are much more efficient ways to proceed than by keeping a page for every man. But this proposal emphasizes Fielding’s way of thinking, his interest in creating a system of categorizing and ordering people rather than materials or anything else.

Thus far I have argued that from the earliest stages of his career, Fielding’s works demonstrate an engagement with the encyclopedic urge that developed into a specific preoccupation with bringing together a wide variety of people into encyclopedic systems. I turn now to Tom Jones, a work that clearly articulates Fielding’s encyclopedic urge on this general as well as more specific level. Though the novel explicitly engages the encyclopedic urge, in the end I argue that it should be read as an anti-encyclopedia. But before I describe the way in which the novel undercuts the encyclopedic urge, it will be helpful to trace in
greater detail the ways that *Tom Jones* mimics and enlarges upon both the form and the content of contemporaneous encyclopedias.

The Table of Contents is one of the first ways that the novel signals its status as a coherently-ordered system and as part of the debate surrounding encyclopedic form. Many of the chapter descriptions suggest that the novel contains rules and recipes to be followed as a species of instruction manual: these chapters include one “Containing many Rules . . . concerning falling in Love” (I xi); another containing “Rules” for “domestic Government” (II v); one containing “A Receipt to regain the lost Affections of a Wife” (II viii); and yet another containing “Hints concerning the Education of Children” (III). Some of the chapter descriptions signal the connectedness of all the incidents in the novel, including the one promising “much clearer Matters; but which flow from the same Fountain with those in the preceding Chapter (IV xii). (As I have noted above, the use of the image of the fountain is a common one in describing encyclopedic form, and seems to be a forerunner of d’Alembert’s image of the encyclopedic tree. In both trees and fountains, it is possible to trace the remotest reaches back to their source.) And a very large number of these chapter descriptions, like those in the Table of Contents of *The Female Quixote*, foreground the tension between comprehensiveness and essence. Many chapters are described as “A little Chapter” (I iv), “A short Chapter” (VI xiv), “Too short to need a Preface” (V i), “Containing five Pages of Paper (IV i) or “Short and sweet” (XV viii); while many others are described as “A very long Chapter (V v), or “A wonderful long Chapter. . . being much the longest of all our introductory Chapters” (VIII i). Some descriptions associate their chapters with both the short and the long: “A Picture of formal Courtship in Miniature, as it always ought to be drawn, and a Scene of a tender Kind, painted at full Length” (VI vii). Like Lennox, Fielding
seems to enter the debate in order to propose a compromise, suggesting that neither comprehensiveness nor essence is always appropriate. His method, the narrator explicitly states, is that "When any extraordinary Scene presents itself (as we trust will often be the Case) we shall spare no Pains nor Paper to open it at larte to our Reader; but if whole Years should pass without producing any Thing worthy his Notice, we shall not be afraid of a Chasm in our History; but shall hasten on to Matters of Consequence, and leave such Periods of Tim totally unobserved" (59).

Like Clarissa, in which Richardson coined many new words, causing some readers to complain that reading that novel was like reading a spelling book or a dictionary, Tom Jones can also be seen as a sort of dictionary of hard or unusual words. In the novel's very first sentence, the narrator uses the word "eleemosynary," a word as unusual to eighteenth-century readers as it is to us. Fielding stocks the first chapter with equally-interesting words, including "Calipash" and "Calipee," "Bayonne Ham and Bologne Sausage" and "hash" and "ragoo" used as verbs. Other unusual words that Fielding uses include "Rhodomontade" (146); "Demirep," which the narrator goes on to define as "a Woman who intrigues with every Man she likes, under the Name and Appearance of Virtue" (628); and "Drum," defined as "an Assembly of well dressed Persons of both Sexes, most of whom play at Cards, and the rest do nothing at all" (694). In fact, the theme of defining words runs throughout the novel. Several of the novel's footnotes serve to define words. "Mob" is defined in a footnote as "Persons without Virtue, or Sense, in all stations; and many of the highest Rank are often meant by it" (45); "Critic" is defined in another footnote as "every Reader in the World" (302). Further, Square and Thwackum constantly quibble over the

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22 Of course, the use of footnotes in the text is another formal way in which this novel, like Clarissa, seeks to align itself with other encyclopedic projects.
meaning of words: in one argument, for example Square complains that “it was impossible to discourse philosophically concerning Words, till their Meaning was first established; that there were scarce any two Words of a more vague and uncertain Signification, than the two he had mentioned [Honour and Religion]” (95). The narrator, however, frequently implies that neither Thwackum nor Square knows the true meaning of many of the words they dispute: though the two “would both make frequent Use of the Word Mercy, yet it was plain, that in reality Square held it to be inconsistent with the Rule of Right; and Thwackum was for doing Justice, and leaving Mercy to Heaven” (111). The narrator also prompts the reader to consider his or her own definitions of words. In the Table of Contents, one chapter promises to help “the Reader... correct some Abuse which he hath formerly been guilty of, in the Application of the Word Love” (V vi).

In fact, Battestin reads in Fielding’s career as a whole—not merely in Tom Jones—an interest in defining words, building up in both his poetry, periodical essays and in his novels a “moral vocabulary” (Battestin 290). In verse addressed to his friends, Fielding had defined such terms as “True Greatness,” “Good-Nature,” and “Liberty” (Battestin 372); Fielding’s novels continue to develop definitions within that moral vocabulary: Joseph Andrews and Jonathan Wild define “the true meaning of such concepts as Charity, Chastity and Greatness” while Tom Jones can be seen as “an exercise in the fictive definition of “Virtue, or moral Wisdom” (“Fielding’s Definition” 818).

Related this interest in the use of individual words is the novel’s preoccupation with diction and “Linguo.” Many critics have noticed the variety of diction contained in the novel. In his Life of Johnson, Boswell reports that Tom Jones was praised by its early readers for “the varieties of diction.” Nearly every character in the novel can be distinguished by his or
her diction, with the exception of the evil Blifil: as Simon Varey has noticed, Blifil “has no linguistic style of his own, but, like other time-servers he adapts his register to the expectations he thinks his audience will have” (98). Western disparages Mrs. Western’s “Hannoverian Linguo” (619), but he is not the only one who has difficulty understanding what others are talking about. Throughout the novel, the characters (and the reader) are presented with a variety of lingos: legal lingo (124), medical lingo (155, 290, 312) theatrical lingo (246), gamester lingo (352), sportsman’s lingo (359, 478), and Gypsie lingo (514). The common reaction in all of these situations is that the hearers “really understood not a single Syllable” (155). Fielding even seems to be composing a lingo of gestures: the gestures, glances and blushes exchanged by Sophia and Tom are often their most effective means of communication; Squire Western, unable to decipher it, requires his daughter to speak out loud, “as he understood none of the Language, or as he called it, Lingo, of the Eyes” (258).

In addition to its function as a kind of dictionary of unusual words and lingo, Tom Jones makes frequent mention of outside works of reference, including dictionaries and encyclopedias. Both Bayle’s Dictionnaire Historique et Critique (153) and Nathaniel Bayle’s Dictionarium Britannicum (253) are mentioned, as are several histories: Echard’s The History of England and Paul de Rapin’s The History of England (29), Echard’s History of Rome (208), John Oldmixon’s Critical History of England (161), and Nathanial Hook’s Roman History, from the Building of Rome to the Ruin of the Commonwealth (609). Other reference works included are “Coke upon Littleton” (75, 94), Francis Osborn’s Advice to a Son, or Direction for your Better

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23 Related to the varying diction of the characters is the varying diction of the narrator. In Tom Jones, Fielding seems to set himself the challenge of bringing a patchwork of style together into a convincingly coherent whole (much like Barker does in A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies). Perhaps the most famous variation in style occurs when the narrator adopts “the Sublime” to describe Sophia (116-17); other variations in style can be found on 195, 197, 229, 331, 389, 412, and 525.
Conduct (153), John Freke’s *An Essay to Shew the Causes of Electricity, and Why Some Things are Non-Electricable* (65, 140), Miller’s *The Gardener’s Dictionary* (373), Hoyle’s *Short Treatise on Whist* (539), and Banier’s *Mythology and Fables of the Ancients* (539).

In addition to works like these that we would rather automatically think of as works of reference, *Tom Jones* contains references to several other systems of learning, including Hogarth (51, 62, 104, 423), Handel (116), Shakespeare (64, 380, 423, 433, 657), and Pope (26, 114, 318, 458, 474, 568), in addition to numerous references to classical authors (42, 43, 61, 424, 506, 534, to pinpoint just a few). Because of the way they are used, I believe that these texts should be considered part of an encyclopedic system as well. The narrator frequently uses them as a sort of shorthand, simultaneously sending readers to consult the texts he mentions, as well as incorporating those texts within the compendium he himself is composing. For example, after Allworthy discovers that Tom shielded Black George from punishment for poaching, Thwackum “enlarged much on the Correction of Children, and quoted many Texts from Solomon, and others; which being to be found in so many other Books, shall not be found here” (99). Or when alcohol reconciles former enemies in the Inn at Upton, the narrator stops short of actually describing the scene: “Indeed there is very little Need of being particular in describing the whole Form, as it differed so little from those Libations of which so much is recorded in Ancient Authors, and their modern Transcribers” (386). The experience of reading *Tom Jones* becomes somewhat analogous to reading an epitome of these works of reference. The sheer number of these references suggests that all of these other texts have been distilled for us into a more portable and more easily-digested

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24 Published in 1721, this dictionary was one of the starting points for Johnson’s *Dictionary.*
form. The narrator himself calls to mind such systems for reducing one’s voluminous reading to a concise, indexed, representative distillation. After Western first learns of the love between Sophia and Tom, his Parson congratulates himself on his attempts to make peace between them, “and proceeded to read a Lecture against Anger... This Lecture he enriched with many valuable Quotations from the Antients, particularly from Seneca.... The Doctor concluded this Harangue with the famous Story of Alexander and Clitus; but as I find that entered in my CommonPlace under Title Drunkenness, I shall not insert it here” (232). Tom Jones becomes not only a kind of commonplace book for its readers, but also an inspiration to the keeping of one’s own commonplace book, perhaps beginning with an extract from Tom Jones.

Like the social tracts I have discussed above, in Tom Jones Fielding seems to be obsessed with bringing a large number of disparate characters together into a coherent whole. Many recent critics have noted the vast number of characters in the novel: Kenneth Rexroth describes Tom Jones as “an immense panorama of mid-eighteenth-century England, as populous as any novel of Tolstoy’s or Dostoevsky’s” (904); Simon Varey more specifically remarks that in “the first third of the novel Fielding introduces some twenty characters” (79). Although the number of people Fielding includes in his novel is indisputably large, as John Richetti reminds us, it is a mistake to too-easily conclude that Fielding actually represents people of all classes. “Tom Jones promises a richly comprehensive social

25 Fielding is careful, however, about the texts that he chooses to incorporate into his own. He borrows freely from the “Ancients,” as they “may be considered as a rich Common, where every Person who hath the smallest Tenement in Parnassus, hath a free Right to fatten his Muse. ... [they are] to be esteemed among us Writers, as so many wealthy Squires, from whom we, the Poor of Parnassus, claim an immemorial Custom of taking whatever we can come at” (474). He refrains, however, from borrowing from his contemporaries: “All I profess, and all I require of my Brethren, is to maintain the same strict Honesty among ourselves, which the Mob shew to one another. To steal from one another, is indeed highly criminal and indecent” (475).
representation, but Fielding undercuts that promise. . . . Especially from our current
historical perspective, the specific effect is to suppress or deny the existence of plebian
culture, which becomes simply a degraded or parodic mirror image of the dominant culture”
(92).  

Although Fielding’s representation of other classes is certainly filtered through the lens of the more powerful one, the novel nevertheless attempts to project itself as a place where vast numbers of people from all backgrounds can come together. Early in the novel, the narrator gives a short history of “Places set apart for publick Rendevous” (66). Reaching back to the barber shops of ancient Greece, the narrator suggests that coffee houses are the modern equivalent for men, while the Chandler’s Shop—“the known Seat of all the News; or, as it is vulgarly called, Gossiping, in every Parish in England” (66)—serves the same purpose for women. Throughout the remainder of the novel, Fielding’s ideal or “sagacious” reader will notice that much of the plot centers on places where people of all walks of life may come together—at inns and masquerades, at puppet shows and playhouses. The two similes by which Fielding identifies his novel—in the opening chapter of the first book, a “public Ordinary, at which all Persons are welcome for their Money” (25); in the opening chapter of the last book, a “Stage-Coach” (706)—suggest that Fielding thought of the novel, too, as a place where all manner of people might meet.

And like the social tracts I have discussed above, Fielding is not only interested in bringing vast numbers of people together, but in organizing those people systematically. R. S. Crane has noted not only the number of characters but the way they are all related to one another in coherent whole: “A distinctive whole there is, however, and I venture to say that

\[\text{For a further discussion of this reading of Fielding’s portrayal of the lower classes, see Richter, as well as Richetti’s reply to Richter.}\]
it consists... in the dynamic system of actions, extending throughout the novel, by which the divergent intentions and beliefs of a large number of persons of different characters and states of knowledge belonging to or somehow related to the neighboring families of the Allworthys and the Westerns are made to co-operate” (850). The narrator himself explains that “human nature” is a “true practical system.” By this he means on one hand that the nature of each individual human being may be thought of as a predictable system: he tells his readers that it is possible to become familiar enough with the system of each individual to be able, with “Certainty,” to “foretel the Actions of Men, in any Circumstance, from their Characters” (88-9), and presumably to teach this skill is one of the aims of the novel. But on the other hand, when the narrator claims that human nature is a true practical system, he is also talking about the connectedness of one person to another, how the actions of one affect others. In describing Sophia snatching her muff out of the fire, and that action’s effect on Tom, the narrator declares that the “World may indeed be considered as a vast Machine, in which the great Wheels are originally set in Motion by those which are very minute, and almost imperceptible to any but the strongest Eyes” (170). The Man of the Hill serves as the exception to prove this rule. Not only has the Man of the Hill chosen to isolate himself from the world (and as I have argued above, Fielding saw that kind of isolation as the worst kind of punishment imaginable); he cannot even distinguish the differences between human beings of different cultures. The Man explains to Tom that the “Design” on his travels “was to divert myself by seeing the wondrous Variety of Prospects, Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Insects, and Vegetables, with which God has been pleased to enrich the several Parts of this Globe” (366). Tom wants to know more about the people that the Man met on his travels: “I have always imagined,” Tom muses, “that there is in [human nature] as great Variety as in all the
rest; for besides the Difference of Inclination, Customs and Climates have, I am told, introduced the utmost Diversity into Human Nature." The Man, however, is completely unable to satisfy Tom on this point. Despite his vast learning, and his interest in cataloguing Beasts, Birds, Fishes, and so on, he is completely uninterested, if not incapable, of distinguishing and cataloguing human beings: "Human Nature is everywhere the same, every where the Object of Detestation and Scorn." The Man's vehement disinterest in the varieties of human nature only serves to emphasize the novel's interest in the subject; the Man of the Hill's isolation only serves to emphasize the connectedness of all of the other characters.

In all of these ways, *Tom Jones* bears the mark of the age in which it was produced: on many levels it engages the encyclopedic urge. Recent critics, however, have been divided on how to interpret these elements of the novel that don't easily square with our notions of what a novel should be. Ian Watt declares that "Fielding's technique was too eclectic to become a permanent element in the tradition of the novel—*Tom Jones* is only part novel, and there is much else—picaresque tale, comic drama, occasional essay" (288). Certainly the encyclopedic elements that I have identified here help to contribute to Watt's sense of the novel as a hodgepodge, and they contribute to his reading of *Tom Jones* as an anomaly in the trajectory of the novel that began with Defoe and Richardson, and developed through Austen.

Barbara Benedict accounts for what I am calling the encyclopedic elements of the novel by stressing the relationship of *Tom Jones* to literary miscellanies and anthologies. In the larger historical picture, Benedict argues that novels eventually took over "many of the cultural functions of the literary anthology" (176), and that *Tom Jones* is a particularly crucial
and clear moment and in the transfer of these functions. According to Benedict, miscellanies traditionally deployed the metaphor of a large and varied feast for the reader (the word “miscellany” means “mixed feasts”); Fielding emphasizes the ties between his own work and the miscellany when he uses this feast metaphor to introduce himself and his work: “An Author ought to consider himself, not as a Gentleman who gives a private of eleemosynary Treat, but rather as one who keeps a public Ordinary” (25). According to Benedict, *Tom Jones* shares a variety of other traits with the miscellany tradition, many of which I have also highlighted above: its appeal to a mixed audience of readers, its oscillation “between various tones in a fashion closer to the deliberately carnivalesque printed miscellany than to the consistent model of the epic,” the juxtaposition of “ornamental language, epic diction and conversational prose” in order to provide “the experience of aesthetic contrast and multiplicity of stylistic treatments,” its concern with “contemporaneity, variety, cultural instruction, and—of course—novelty,” and its incorporation of a variety of different genres ranging from “pastoral songs, passages of burlesque description, play dialogues, moral fables. . . [to] miniature histories” all mark this relationship (176), as do the novel’s “discussions of aesthetic values, authorial procedures, and the role of literature that echo the treatises and poems on writing, translation, and reading so prominent in poetic collections” (178). While I have learned much from Benedict’s argument, she, like Watt, implies that the novel (as well as the miscellany) were embarked upon a steady progression towards consistency and coherence which *Tom Jones* had not quite achieved. In other words, *Tom Jones* is properly seen as a half-way point, not quite miscellany, and not quite novel.

Alexander Welsh, on the other hand, argues that Fielding “showed off in *The History of Tom Jones* a kind of epitome of narrative for the next 150 years” (6). In *Strong Representations:*
Narrative and Circumstantial Evidence in England, Welsh argues that a shift in the kind of proof considered persuasive or conclusive occurred in the eighteenth century. Rather suddenly, eyewitness or direct proof became suspect, and “carefully managed circumstantial evidence, highly conclusive in itself and often scornful of direct testimony, flourished nearly everywhere—not only in literature but in criminal jurisprudence, natural science, natural religion, and history writing itself” (ix). One important feature of circumstantial evidence is that it must be arranged as part of a coherent narrative; eighteenth-century legal (and other) experts theorized that these “chains” or “trains” (the metaphors most often deployed) of circumstances were a sort of protection against falsification: the connectedness and interdependence of individual facts within the narrative of circumstantial evidence, it was thought, made it impossible to fabricate such a complicated system. No longer wanting to trust eyewitness accounts, the eighteenth century preferred instead to trust the legal professionals who knew how to manage evidence, how to contrive a coherent narrative from circumstantial evidence. As an eighteenth-century judge put it in his summation for the jury:27 “Witnesses, gentlemen, may either be mistaken themselves, or wickedly intend to deceive others.... But circumstances, gentlemen, and presumptions, naturally and necessarily arising out of a given fact, cannot lie” (qtd. in Welsh 24). Justice Buller, in his charge to the jury in a famous poisoning trial (R. v. Donellan 1781),28 described the theory thus: “it is not within the reach and compass of human abilities to invent a train of circumstances which shall be so connected together as to amount to a proof of guilt, without

27 Trial in Ejectment between James Annesley and Richard Earl of Anglesea, 1743.

28 Donellan was convicted of poisoning his brother-in-law before the latter came of age; although a motive was never clearly proven, Donellan’s wife stood to inherit if the brother-in-law died a minor.
Welsh argues that novelists like Fielding and his successors, "inveterate falsifiers. . . . most designing of designers. . . . rose to the challenge . . . to invent 'a train of circumstances that cannot be invented'" (41). In *Tom Jones*, Fielding "manages the evidence imaginatively, wittily, and triumphantly. . . . in a pattern that I take to be prototypical of novels of circumstance; first various representations of the facts are marshaled against the protagonists, then a fuller representation exonerates them (48). Welsh's argument has obvious connections to my own. The impulse that he identifies—the impulse to arrange circumstantial legal evidence into coherent narratives, and rather than relying on eyewitness testimony, to feature indirect evidence and thus "invite listeners or readers to share in the work of drawing evidence" (x)—can also be seen in contemporary encyclopedias, with their impulse to arrange entries in coherent circles of learning, and to invite readers to discover for themselves the links between entries. Like Welsh, I read Fielding's most famous novel as a study in (even as a triumph of) coherence, not as an eclectic, miscellaneous hodgepodge; and as exemplary as a novel of the eighteenth century, not as an anomaly in its development.

Further, my argument is parallel to Welsh's in that we both read Fielding's novel as simultaneously elevating and undermining a dominant discourse. Specifically, Welsh argues that while the novel shows how easily direct evidence can lie and instead seems to promote circumstantial evidence ("the evidence that holds up in *Tom Jones* is nearly all indirect, and the evidence that misleads is mostly direct" 57), the novel itself stands as a monumental challenge to the "Theory of Presumptive Proof" (28, fn 61): the astonishing chains of circumstances that Fielding invents (and, in his introductory chapters to each book, keeps...
reminding us that he has invented) challenge directly the theory that chains of evidence cannot be falsified. Similarly, I argue that while Tom Jones on one hand incorporates to perfection the form and content of the encyclopedic project, on the other hand it challenges the structures and systems upon which the project depends. Tom Jones ultimately teaches its readers to distrust comprehensive systems, to distrust a “reading” of the world based on elaborate, comprehensive systems. Instead, the novel advocates reading with “Heart.”

The characters who most obviously adhere to comprehensive systems in this novel are Thwackum and Square. Thwackum is the divine to whom Allworthy has committed the education of Blifil and Tom, Square the moral philosopher who lives on Allworthy’s hospitality. Square’s “natural Parts were not of the first Rate” though he was “a profess Master of all the Works of Plato and Aristotle”; he holds “human Nature to be the Perfection of all Virtue,” and “measured all Actions by the unalterable Rule of Right, and the eternal Fitness of Things” (94). Thwackum, on the other hand, maintained that the human Mind, since the Fall, was nothing but a Sink of Iniquity, till purified and redeemed by Grace”; his favorite phrase is the “divine Power of Grace,” and he measures all actions “by Authority,” using “the Scriptures and their Commentators, as the Lawyer doth his Coke upon Littleton, where the Comment is of equal Authority with the Text” (94). These two men, of course, constantly argue with one another, and their continued disputes serve to both to highlight the fact that they adhere dogmatically to systems, and to highlight the inadequacies of these particular systems, and by extension, of systems in general. The narrator explicitly tells us that these men are meant as objects of derision, and in doing so, also explicitly puts “System” and “Heart” in direct opposition to one another: “Had not Thwackum too much neglected Virtue, and Square Religion, in the Composition of their several Systems; and had
not both utterly discarded all natural *Goodness of Heart*, they had never been represented as Objects of Derision in this History (my emphasis, 97).

Blifil has learned much from these two tutors, and has learned to apply their systems to his advantage; he too stands as a clear warning against adhering too dogmatically to system. When he maliciously slips the string off the foot of Sophia's bird Tommy, he justifies himself by drawing on both Square and Thwackum's systems: he declares both that it was "against the Law of Nature" to confine any creature (this taken from Square's philosophy), and that "it is even unchristian; for it is not doing what we would be done by" (this taken from Thwackum's) (121). His real motive, however, is jealousy of Sophia's affinity for Tom, who gave her the little bird, and after whom it was named. When justifying his pursuit of Sophia as a wife, although he knows she does not love him, Blifil availed himself of the Piety of Thwackum, who held, that if the End proposed was religious (as surely Matrimony is) it mattered not how wicked were the Means. As, to other Occasions he used to apply the Philosophy of Square, which taught, that the End was immaterial, so that the Means were fair and consistent with moral Rectitude. To say Truth, there are few Occurrences in Life on which he could not draw Advantage from the Precepts of one or another of those great Masters (263).

Far from having a heart, Blifil is described by the narrator as being a friend of the devil (721), and by Allworthy as a "viper," a notoriously cold-blooded creature (735). The feelings of a heart—either his own or Sophia's, never enters his head: "as to that entire and absolute Possession [sic] of the Heart of his Mistress, which romantic Lovers require, the very Idea of it never entered his Head" (224).

Two relatively minor characters, who also adhere dogmatically to system are Nightingale's father and Nightingale's uncle. These two men "lived in a constant State of Contention about the Government of their Children, both heartily despising the Method which each other took" (757). In both cases, the children make matches against their
parents’ wishes, evidently punishing these parents for following systems rather than to their own hearts or to the hearts of their children.

Partridge makes attempts to adhere to a comprehensive system, and in these attempts he succeeds mainly at making himself a laughingstock. When he comes to Tom with the good news that Black George is a servant in Sophia’s household, and would be willing to convey a letter to her, he has difficulty coming to that point. After Partridge makes several asides, Tom begs him to tell him of Sophia, but Partridge insists on telling his story in his own way: “You are so impatient, Sir, you would come at the Infinitive Mood, before you can get to the Imperative” (638). This comment suggests that Partridge puts great stock in coherent arrangement and predictable order—like that found in a grammar book.

And it is true that Partridge has a great deal of knowledge. He is constantly quoting Latin phrases (however badly misapplied), speculating on the etymology of words, seeing signs and omens, recounting ghost stories. But the problem with Partridge is that he has no idea how to bring the knowledge and the system together. He has no ability to make pieces of information relate to one another. Part of Partridge’s problem may well stem from his library, which he describes when offering to loan Tom a book to read:

what Book would you have? Latin or English? I have some curious Books in both Languages, such as Erasmi Colloquia, Ovid de Tristibus, Gradus ad Parnassum, and in English I have several of the best Books, tho’ some of them are a little torn; but I have a great part of Stowe’s Chronicle; the sixth Volume of Pope’s Homer, the third Volume of the Spectator; the second Volume of Echard’s Roman History; the Craftsman; Robinson Crusoe, Thomas a Kempis, and two Volumes of Tom Brown’s Works (320).

Rather than complete volumes, Partridge has access only to selected ones. There are random, gaping holes in his library, which ostensibly have produced disconnection in

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29 Baker’s footnote indicates that in Lily’s Grammar, the moods are arranged in the following order: Indicative, Imperative, Optative, Potential, Subjunctive, and Infinitive.
Partridge's knowledge. Further, Partridge has no ability to separate the relevant from the irrelevant. Somewhat like Arabella, he is always much too particular in telling a story. When trying to tell Mr. Allworthy that he is not the father of Jones, for example, Allworthy has to ask Partridge three separate times "not to be so particular" (724), and even then, Partridge gives Allworthy "a very particular Account of their first Meeting, and of every Thing as well as he could remember, which had happened from that Day to this; frequently interlarding his story with Panegyrics on Jones, and not forgetting to insinuate the great Love and Respect which he had for Allworthy" (725). He expects the same excess of information from others: while the Man of the Hill is trying to tell his story, Partridge constantly interrupts him, always hungry for more details. At one point, when the Man of the Hill talks of saving his friend Watson from drowning himself, the Man says he "will not trouble you with what past at our first Interview: for I would avoid Prolixity as much as possible." 'Pray let us hear all,' cries Partridge, 'I want mightily to know what brought him to Bath.' 'You shall hear every Thing material,' answered the Stranger" (360). Although Partridge attempts the encyclopedic, he fails spectacularly. Unable to follow a coherent method, Partridge must include and inquire about everything, never knowing what is material and what isn't.\(^{30}\)

The Man of the Hill is presented as a sort of human encyclopedia. He has an extensive education, and has traveled worldwide. He describes himself and his friends as "Men of true Learning, and almost universal Knowledge" (my emphasis, 359); in his "Hutt," he has a "great Number of Nicknacks, and Curiosities, which might have engaged the Attention of a Virtuoso" (338). Despite this encyclopedic collection of knowledge, however,

\(^{30}\) Partridge's use of quotations is an obvious parallel the narrator's. His lack of ability to connect appropriate passages from the ancients and current events only serves to reinforce the connections that the narrator is able to forge.
the Man has disconnected himself from the rest of the world. In thirty years, he has spoken to fewer than six people (339). In explaining why he has shunned society, the Man specifically names problems of the “relative Kind”: he says he avoids and detests mankind “not on Account so much of their private and selfish Vices, but for those of a relative Kind; such as Envy, Malice, Treachery, Cruelty, with every other Species of Malevolence” (342). In other words, the Man believes that being “related” to other human beings is what causes the chief ugliness in the world; he, therefore, has deliberately cut himself off from the world. Thus Partridge and The Man of the Hill have a great deal in common: both are examples of encyclopedic information rendered useless by a lack of connection.

The Man of the Hill seems the bigger tragedy, however, because he has (or once had) the potential to be a man of heart. In fact, in addition to the fact that their stories are parallel (the Man says that “there appears some Parity in our Fortunes” (342)), the Man of the Hill and Tom are explicitly compared in language involving “flow.” The Man of the Hill describes himself as having a “violent Flow of animal Spirits... and [being] extremely amorous” (344). Tom, too, is described as having “a Flow of Animal Spirits” (387). That this “flow” is linked to the heart is made apparent in a later passage. Upon their first acquaintance, Tom makes a lively and entertaining impression upon Nightingale, Nancy and her mother, though he is distracted by melancholy thoughts: “Indeed half his natural Flow of animal Spirits, was sufficient to make a most amiable Companion; and notwithstanding the Heaviness of his Heart, so agreeable did he make himself... that... the young Gentleman earnestly desired his further Acquaintance” (539). In other words, because Tom’s heart is heavy with thoughts of Sophia, he has only half of his natural “flow.” That

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31 For an interesting analysis of a related kind of flow—a medical/scientific system of thought based on venting various fluids in the body, see Paulson.

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something has gone desperately wrong with the Man’s heart and his flow is indicated by the fact that there is a great deal of blood coursing through his story, but he seems to be disassociated with it, too. We are introduced to the Man of the Hill in a struggle that ends with Tom staining the Man’s sword “with the Blood of his Enemies” (340), and his story ends with Tom rushing to the aid of Mrs. Waters, potentially involving himself with blood again, while the Man sat quietly, “though he had a Gun in his Hand” (377). Although within his story, the Man comes upon his own father in London, robbed and beaten and “very bloody” (355; perhaps his heart bleeds for his son), there is virtually no blood associated with the Man of the Hill, a point which seems to be emphasized when Partridge not once but twice interrupts the Man’s story to pray that they may all be kept “from dipping our Hands in Blood” (349). (I will suggest a contrasting portrayal of the flow of blood below, in my discussion of Tom and Sophia.)

These foregoing characters are all to be read as cautionary tales for the reader, all of them either evil or ridiculous or tragic as a result of their adherence to a misguided notion of the encyclopedic project. The didactic purpose of the novel does not work only by negative example, however; several characters are upheld as paragons worthy of our imitation. Allworthy, for example, as his name suggests, has a very good heart. “Neither Mr. Allworthy’s House, nor his Heart, were shut against any part of Mankind” (46). When Blifil reveals that Tom had concealed Black George’s involvement in the poaching incident, something in Allworthy’s breast (his heart) prevents him from condemning Jones: “There was something within his own Breast with which the invincible Fidelity which that Youth had preserved, corresponded much better than it had done with the Religion of Thwackum, or with the Virtue of Square” (99).
But if Allworthy has such a good heart, what are we to make of the fact that
Allworthy is so many times deceived with respect to his nephews? The answer to this
question, I believe, has two parts. First, while Allworthy does have a good heart, he does not
always listen to it. When Allworthy perceives that Blifil is "absolutely detested" by Bridgit, he
implements a system that proves faulty: "Henceforward, he saw every Appearance of Virtue
in the Youth [Blifil] through the magnifying End, and viewed all his Faults with the Glass
inverted, so that they became scarce perceptible. . . . he no sooner perceived that Preference
which Mrs. Blifil gave to Tom, than that poor Youth (however innocent) began to sink in his
Affections as he rose in hers" (106). That is, although Allworthy's heart prompts him to
prefer Tom, his mind, and his love of compassion and justice, prompts him to ignore the
dictates of his heart. In this case, Tom's attempt to comfort Allworthy at the novel's
conclusion stands as a warning against trusting too much to the mind: "A human mind may
be imposed on; nor is there any infallible Method to prevent it" (753). The implication here
is that the heart, if one will only trust it, is much more infallible.

Part two of my answer, however, is that Allworthy trusts too much to his heart, and
not enough upon system. In other words, Fielding suggests that while it is better to err on
the side of heart than on the side of system, a healthy knowledge of system will prevent you
from making many mistakes. The narrator warns readers early on that simply having a good
heart is not enough: "Goodness of Heart, and Openness of Temper, tho' these may give
them great Comfort within . . . will by no Means, alas! do their Business in the World. . . . It is
not enough that your Designs, nay that your Actions, are intrinsically good, you must take
Care they shall appear so" (106). One of the implications of this warning is that if one is
savvy enough to present one's own designs to the world, one will presumably be savvy
enough to recognize these designs, these constructed systems, in others: “in discovering the
Deceit of others, it matters much that our own Art be wound up, if I may use the
Expression, in the same Key with theirs” (213). If Allworthy had been more attuned to these
kinds of designs, he may have been a more equal judge of the systematic Blifil, as in the
incident where he let Sophia’s bird go. Allworthy decides not to punish Blifil, as it was
“apparent to him, that he could have no other View but what he had himself avowed. (For
as to that malicious Purpose which Sophia suspected, it never once entered into the Head of
Mr. Allworthy)” (122). This reading of Allworthy is close to the one articulated by John
Bender in Imagining the Penitentiary. In his reading, “[f]ar from piecing out the truth from
scattered fragments, Squire Allworthy has to be confronted with the declaration of a dying
man [Square] before he arrives at an accurate judgment” (178). In other words, Allworthy
cannot be held up as a model judge (of people, and by extension, of works like Fielding’s)
because he is not capable of systematization. Bender further argues that Fielding offers two
alternatives to the flawed, random justice of Allworthy’s heart: the narrator (to whom I will
return below), and Tom Jones.

Bender argues that Fielding proposes Tom Jones as an alternative to Allworthy and
model magistrate: “This kind of justice is prospectively realized within the action itself by
Tom Jones, an honest man who understands human nature through experience. Tom
inherits Allworthy’s goodness of soul and, in the end, gains not only Sophia but presumably
assumes the position as local magistrate that would accompany Squire Western’s
reassignment of the family seat and estate to him” (179). In a slight modification of Bender’s
argument, I believe that Tom is held up as a paragon because he embodies an appropriate
balance of system and heart—that is, while Tom shows appropriate mastery over systems,
the emphasis of his character is on his heart. Tom does display adept mastery over systems.
When the Man of the Hill recounts his story, for example, Tom “has to spend most of his
ergy keeping order because Partridge, the other hearer, is so busy responding
enthusiastically—but with no understanding or appreciation of the Man’s didactic aims”
(Hunter 49). Unlike Partridge, Tom can easily distinguish between the relevant and the
irrelevant (not to mention Tom’s superior knowledge of Latin). Unlike the Man of the Hill,
Tom can both distinguish and appreciate the “true practical System” of human nature: he
does not under-categorize humanity, lumping them all together, but instead seems rather
eager to know their differences. Unlike Allworthy, Tom is able to perceive the designs of
others. He sees through Blifil, and after Allworthy’s recovery from illness, Tom begins for
the first time to keep secrets from his enemy Blifil (225).

All of these are indications of Tom’s proficiency with system, but far more important
is the emphasis placed on the goodness of Tom’s heart. There is hardly a character who does
not, at one time or another, speak of Tom’s “great Goodness of Heart” (738). Tom’s heart is
first introduced with a rather elaborate simile: Mr. Jones had Somewhat about him, which,
though I think Writers are not thoroughly agreed in its Name, doth certainly inhabit some
human Breasts; whose Use is not so properly to distinguish Right from Wrong, as to prompt
and incite them to the former, and to restrain and with-hold them from the latter. This
Somewhat may be indeed resembled to the famous Trunk-maker in the Play-house” (129-
30). The Trunk-maker, of course, is described in the Spectator 235 as a man who sits in the
upper gallery at the theater and bangs the benches with an oaken stick as a signal to
applause. The “Somewhat” in Tom’s breast, I argue, is Tom’s heart; the banging of the
trunk-maker its beating. (This reading is supported by the fact that immediately following
this elaborate introduction, the narrator goes on to discuss Tom's heart explicitly: "The Truth then is, his Heart was in the Possession of another Woman [Molly]" (131). Tom's heart is frequently described as being "full," and in need of some kind of venting. (This is certainly related to the "violent flow of animal spirits" noted above.) After Thwackum's whipping in the poaching incident, Allworthy repents and gives Tom a horse: "And at that, from the Fullness of his Heart, had almost betrayed the Secret" (93). In this case, Tom succeeds in keeping his secret. But in many others, his heart overflows, words either spoken or written providing the necessary venting. When unexpectedly meeting Sophia in a garden, Tom accidentally reveals too much of his feeling for her. "Pardon me if I have said too much. My Heart overflowed" (181). After being banished from Allworthy's home, he writes a farewell letter to Sophia, which begins by begging pardon for that which "flows from a Heart so full, that no Language can express its Dictates" (239). When he receives a final insulting letter from Blifil, thoughts of never again seeing Allworthy prompt "a Flood of Tears... [which] possibly prevented his Misfortunes from either turning his Head, or bursting his Heart" (250).

But very soon, these metaphorical overflows become physical ones. Tom, it seems, is constantly covered in blood, evidently a symptom of his over-full heart. When he fights with Blifil and Thwackum in an attempt to conceal Molly in the bushes, Tom emerges the "Conqueror... almost covered with Blood, part of which was naturally his own, and Part had been lately the Property of the Reverend Mr. Thwackum" (200-01). After a dispute over Sophia's reputation, Northerton hits Tom in the head with a bottle; this time Jones is seen "to lie motionless" on the ground, "and Blood beginning to flow pretty plentifully from his Wound" (286). Later that night, in an attempt to gain satisfaction from Northerton, Tom
appears in “a light-coloured Coat, covered with Streams of Blood. His Face, which missed that very Blood, as well as twenty Ounces more drawn from him by the Surgeon, was pallid. . . . So that the bloody Banquo was not worthy to be compared to him” (295-6). And in addition to these fights in which Tom’s blood is described, Tom is involved in many others in which the blood is not described, but we can certainly infer it to be present: when he comes to Molly’s rescue after her fight in the churchyard (137), in the fight with Northerton when Tom rescues Mrs. Waters (377), in the fight with the Upton landlord and landlady (382), in the fight at Upton against Fitzpatrick, who believes that Tom is with his wife (402), and in the duel with Fitzpatrick in London (673). One almost gets the sense that Tom’s heart beats outside himself; that Fielding is using the image of the circulatory system as another image for the connectedness of all humanity.

There is certainly some indication that Tom and his heroine, Sophia, share—metaphorically—the same circulatory system, that one influences the flow of the other. Each of the times that Tom appears all bloody, Sophia is near: she appears after the fight with Thwackum and Blifil, she and her name is the cause of the fight with Northerton, which turns Tom into a bloody Banquo, she is in the same inn when Tom fights with Mr. Fitzpatrick, Fitzpatrick threatening to “have [Tom’s] Blood in the Morning” (403), and immediately following the duel with Fitzpatrick in London, in which Tom does have Fitzpatrick’s blood, he receives a severe letter from Sophia renouncing him forever. In another potentially bloody scene, the surgeon caring for Tom (after Northerton hits him with a bottle) wants to let Tom’s blood—a treatment Tom refuses, as he has lost so much blood already from the original injury. Again, this intense focus on Tom’s blood is intimately
related to Sophia: he is sleeping in the same bed in which she had slept, and the surgeon awakes him from a dream of Sophia (312-13).

While Sophia has obvious impact on Tom’s circulatory system, Tom has a similar impact on Sophia’s. He can clearly make Sophia’s heart stop and race: the thought that he might “make Love” to her makes “her Colour [forsake] her Cheeks,” and when he kisses her hand, the “Blood, which before had forsaken her Cheeks, now made her sufficient Amends, by rushing all over her Face and Neck with such Violence, that they became all of a Scarlet Colour” (126-7). (The “Violence” with which this happens suggests that Sophia, too, has a “violent Flow” to match Tom’s.) When Tom breaks his arm, it is Sophia who is persuaded to be “blooded,” while Tom waits patiently. The graphic detail in which this operation is described—as Sophia “stretched out her beautiful Arm,” the surgeon attempting to reassure her, Sophia assuring him that she is under no apprehension, and “adding, if you open an Artery, I promise you I’ll forgive you,” Western threatening to “ha’ the Heart’s Blood o’un out” should he do so, and Tom all the while waiting to have his broken arm set, though “when he saw the Blood springing from the lovely Arm of Sophia, he scarcely thought of what had happened to himself”—makes a more than equal match for the times when Tom’s blood is described in detail, suggesting again the compatibility of their hearts. One scene, however, makes the intimacy of their circulatory systems even more clear. When they see each other in London, after the way has been cleared for them to marry, Western makes one of his usual crass jokes “Sophia was all over Scarlet at these Words, while Tom’s Countenance was altogether as pale, and he was almost ready to sink from his Chair” (752). It is as though the blood that runs out of Tom’s face has been pumped by their shared heart into Sophia’s.
Once the way has been cleared for the two of them to marry, Sophia makes it clear that her only hesitation is over the integrity—if not the virginity—of Tom’s heart. As she tells Mrs. Miller, “I once fancied . . . I had discovered great Goodness of Heart in Mr. Jones . . . but an entire profligacy of Manners will corrupt the best Heart in the World” (745). She reiterates the concern when she speaks to Tom himself: she cannot easily forgive the fact that he engaged “in a new Amour with another Woman, while I fancied, and you pretended, your Heart was bleeding for me!” (753). Tom assures her that his heart was not involved in any of his previous escapades: He assures Sophia that her image “never was out of my Heart. The Delicacy of your Sex cannot conceive the Grossness of ours, nor how little one Sort of Amour has to do with the Heart” (754). Eventually convinced of the purity of Tom’s heart, and willing to follow the dictates of her own heart, they agree to marry.

So Sophia has a heart to match Tom’s, one intimately connected to his, but what of her ability to comprehend or construct comprehensive systems? Sophia shows early on that she has better judgment about Tom and Blifil than Allworthy: as I have mentioned above, in the little Tommy bird incident, Sophia immediately perceives Blifil’s real motives behind releasing the bird—motives that Allworthy, with his presumably wider experience in the world, cannot see. Indeed, there are many such indications that Sophia would be perfectly at home in the world of comprehensive systems. She is praised, however, because she chooses not to participate in anything resembling the encyclopedic project. In praising her, Allworthy says:

‘But she hath one Quality . . . which as it is not of a glaring Kind, more commonly escapes Observation; so little indeed is it remarked, that I want a Word to express it. I must use Negatives on this Occasion. I never heard any thing of Pertness, or what is called Repartee out of her Mouth; no Pretence to Wit, much less to that Kind of Wisdom, which is the Result only of great Learning and Experience; the Affectation of which, in a young Woman, is as absurd as any of the Affectations of an Ape. No
dictatorial Sentiments, no judicial Opinions, no profound Criticisms. Whenever I have seen her in the Company of Men, she hath been all Attention, with the Modesty of a Learner, not the Forwardness of a Teacher. You'll pardon me for it, but I once, to try her only, desired her Opinion on a Point which was controverted between Mr. Thwackum and Mr. Square. To which she answered with much Sweetness, 'You will pardon me, good Mr. Allworthy, I am sure you cannot in Earnest think me capable of deciding any Point in which two such Gentlemen disagree.' Thwackum and Square, who both alike thought themselves sure of a favourable Decision, seconded my Request. She answered with the same good Humour, 'I must absolutely be excused; for I will affront neither so much, as to give my Judgment on his Side.' Indeed, she always shewed the highest Deference to the Understandings of Men; a Quality absolutely essential to the making a good Wife. I shall only add, that as she is most apparently void of all Affectation, this Deference must be certainly real' (681).

Here Sophia is praised because she has no pretensions wit or wisdom, because she has been shielded from Learning and Experience. Women who would attempt to interject themselves into the (male) world of encyclopedic systems like those of Thwackum and Square would be, in Allworthy’s opinion, no better than an “Ape.” Thus while the men who are held up as paragons (Tom, and to a certain extent, Allworthy) must embody both qualities of system and heart, to be a paragon like Sophia, a woman must embody only heart.

Indeed, the learned women in the novel are punished rather severely. Jenny Jones, who had “obtained a competent Skill in the Latin Language, and was, perhaps, as good a Scholar as most of the young Men of Quality of the Age” (36), is pitched upon as Bridgit’s accomplice because of her outcast status; she is further punished by not only false promises of marriage by Captain Waters, but a second lecture from Allworthy: “I am sorry, Madam,’ said Allworthy, ‘you made so ill an Use of your Learning. Indeed it would have been well that you had been possessed of much more, or had remained in a State of Ignorance” (732). Clearly, given his praise of Sophia, the latter option would have been far preferable. Mrs. Western, another example of a learned woman, is presented no more sympathetically:

She had lived about the Court, and had seen the World. Hence she had acquired all that Knowledge which the said World usually communicates; and was a perfect
Mistress of Manners, Customs, Ceremonies, and Fashions; nor did her Erudition stop here. She had considerably improved her Mind by Study; she had not only read all the modern Plays, Operas, Oratorios, Poems and Romances; in all which she was a Critic; but had gone through Rapin's History of England, {Eachard's Roman History, and many French Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire}; to these she had added most of the political pamphlet and Journals, published within the last twenty Years. From which she had obtained a very competent Skill in Politics, and could discourse very learnedly on the Affairs of Europe. . . . For her masculine Person, which was near six Foot high, added to her Manner and Learning, possibly prevented the other Sex from regarding her, notwithstanding her Petticoats, in the Light of a Woman. However, as she had considered the Matter scientifically, she perfectly well knew, though she had never practiced them, all the Arts which fine Ladies use when they desire to give Encouragement, or conceal Liking, with all the long Appendage of Smiles, Ogles, Glances, &c. as they are at present practised in the Beau-mond (207-8).

This passage, which follows the heels of a discussion of love, and an exhortation to the reader to use his heart in reading, is important because it implies that one of Mrs. Western's main problems is her lack of heart. She has studied romance "scientifically" rather than with her heart. Indeed, Mrs. Western's erudition and experience and lack of heart leads the narrator to question her femininity. She is a source of torment rather than comfort to Sophia, and though not punished as severely as Jenny Jones, she does fade out of the novel altogether.

In this novel too, then, like the others I have examined, arguments about the encyclopedic urge are staked out over gendered lines. While men held up as paragons (such as Tom and to a certain extent Allworthy) are expected to be embody both system and heart, the world of system is clearly identified with the male world. And while system is shown to be inadequate on its own (thus implying the importance of a world of heart, evidently presided over by women), the novel also, ironically, staunchly protects that world of the encyclopedic as a male province.\footnote{According to Hester Thrale, after Sarah Fielding took up the study of ancient languages against her brother's wishes, Fielding "began to teize and taunt her with being a literary Lady &c. till at last . . . becoming}
As I mentioned above, Bender argues that *Tom Jones* offers not only Tom Jones but the narrator as a model for the new kind of magistrate: “Fielding subordinates the liminal randomness of patrician justice [represented by Allworthy] . . . to consistently structured narrative procedure” (179). In place of the random and unpredictable justice of Allworthy, in other words, Fielding “proposes the justice of his narrator—a man of benevolent nature, intelligence, and tenacity who, like the ‘good magistrate’ in *Jonathan Wild*, inquires into ‘every minute circumstance’” (179). In my parallel argument, the narrator embodies the very balance between system and heart that his novel advocates. In piecing together the novel that is *Tom Jones*, the narrator has shown that he is perfectly capable of mastering comprehensive systems. However, he also explicitly tells us that such mastery is not enough. In the introductory chapter of book 9, the narrator lays out all the qualifications one needs to write his kind of history. These qualifications include “Genius,” “a good Share of Learning” and “Conversation” leading to “the understanding the Characters of Men. . .[of] All Ranks and Degrees” (372-4). But last among the qualifications (which the narrator himself obviously embodies, especially as he has invented both the form and the rules that govern it), and the qualification to which he gives most weight, is that the writer “have what is generally meant by a good Heart” (374).

In addition to the narrator, I believe that *Tom Jones* proposes the reader as someone who embodies the balance between system and heart that it advocates. While the novel’s form and content teach readers to notice and appreciate the novel’s attention to encyclopedic comprehensiveness, the reader’s heart is consistently emphasized. The narrator justly eminent for her Taste and Knowledge of the Greek Language, her Brother never more could persuade himself to endure her Company with Civility” (qtd. in Battestin 381). Though Battestin notes that it is “unlikely” that Sarah’s study spoiled their relationship, he also admits that given “Fielding’s views on the subject of scholarly females, there is probably a grain of truth in this chaff” (381).
occasionally calls upon the reader's heart to supply details that the narrator chooses not to
describe. In describing a scene in which Sophia mistakenly believes that Tom may be going
to speak to her of love, the narrator defers to the reader's heart: Sophia's "Sensations,
however, the Reader's Heart (if he or she have any) will better represent than I can" (126). In
the introductory chapter on Love, the narrator says "there is in some (I believe in many)
human Breasts, a kind and benevolent Disposition, which is gratified by contributing to the
Happiness of others... Examine your Heart, my good Reader, and resolve whether you do
believe these Matters with me. If you do, you may now proceed... if you do not, you have, I
assure you, already read more than you have understood" (207). Fielding evidently felt that
he could, with his novel, produce a reader that would both be attuned to the system and
learn to trust and privilege his or her heart. The reading practices produced and enforced in
the reading of this novel would have implications when reading encyclopedias and other
books of reference.

Fielding himself apparently practiced the kind of reading with heart that he
recommends and attempts to teach to his readers. In the famous conciliatory letter he wrote
Richardson after reading Clarissa (October 1748), Fielding recounts a narrative of his own
heart as he read:

Can I tell you what I think of the latter part of your Volume? Let the Overflowings
of a Heart which you have filled brimfull speak for me.

When Clarissa returns to her Lodgings at St. Claris the Alarm begins, and
here my Heart begins its Narrative... The Circumstance of the Fragments is Great
and Terrible; but her Letter to Lovelace is beyond any thing I have ever read... This Scene I have heard hath been often objected to. It is well for the Critick that my
Heart is now writing and not my Head... Here then I will end: for I assure you
nothing but my Heart can force me to say Half of what I think of the Book (qtd. in
Battestin 442-3).
Here Fielding outlines a practice of reading that relies not on the logical, systematic objections that can be made by the head (and which Fielding, at least in this case, thinks are wrong), but instead upon a progression of passions that assaulted his heart. It cannot be completely articulated (he cannot say half of what he thinks of the book), but it is strong enough to prompt Fielding to make this overture to his rival "for that Coy Mrs. Fame" (ibid, qtd. in Battestin 444). Richardson never accepted Fielding’s peace offering, remaining Fielding’s “bitter enemy, hating the success of Tom Jones” (Battestin 445). In fact, Richardson claimed never to have read Tom Jones, preferring to think disparagingly of the work that bears so many striking similarities to his own masterpiece as “a rambling Collection of Waking Dreams, in which Probability was not observed: And that it had a very bad Tendency” (letter to Astrea and Minerva Hill, 4 August 1749; qtd in Baker 775).
CONCLUSION

The major goals of this work have been twofold: to redefine encyclopedias and novels as genres, and to reconstruct some eighteenth-century reading practices that have been overshadowed by other reading practices, habits, and assumptions over the course of the last three centuries. In Chapter One, I argued that many eighteenth-century encyclopedias were designed to be read as coherent narratives. Their compilers, especially in the prefaces and in articles such as “Encyclopédie” in the Encyclopédie, vehemently insist that the seemingly disparate entries in their works are in fact linked together: every entry must be seen and understood as related to every other entry, the whole text seen as a complete and comprehensive “circle of learning.”

John Locke registers similar assumptions about the coherence of texts and the coherent reading practices associated them. To Locke’s sensibilities, the new (for him) typographical custom of separating the text of the Bible into chapter and verse threatened to destroy the coherence of God’s Word, creating “loose Sentences, and Scripture crumbled into Verses.” Locke deplored the fact that not “only the Common People take the Verses usually for distinct Aphorisms, but even Men of more advanc’d Knowledge in reading them, lose very much of the strength and force of the Coherence and the Light that depends on it” (my emphasis; qtd. in Chartier 12).

In the subsequent chapters, I made the parallel and complementary argument that many eighteenth-century novels were not only designed to be read from beginning to end,
but also were designed to support different kinds of reading practices. Many eighteenth-century novels were meant to be approached and used much as we today would use a work of reference. These novels—and this can be most clearly seen in Samuel Richardson's novels and their accompanying apparatus, including tables of contents, indexes, footnotes, epitomes and collections of sentiments—facilitated dipping and skimming, reading backwards and forwards, comparing passages. Many eighteenth-century novels, like contemporaneous encyclopedias, were above all else interested in teaching their readers to make and see connections, to forge links in a chain of knowledge.

The American novelist Charles Brockden Brown, in an essay entitled “Remarks on Reading” and published in the *Literary Magazine* (1806), explicitly articulates this kind of reading practice—presumably one of the reading practices he would have expected from the readers of his own novels. A poor reader, according to Brown, reads “in a pleasing distraction” and a “tumultuous sensation” (995). The poor reader reads only on the level of “Perception,” noticing only “the simple impression of objects” (995). In other words, the poor reader builds no connections. Brown’s ideal reader, on the other hand, “will have enriched his own mind by a new accession of matter, and find a new train of thought awakened and in action” (my emphasis, 999). This ideal reader knows how to make “accessions” or connections, even constructing a “train” of ideas. The ideal reader does not stop at perception, but instead proceeds to form “Ideas”: ideas require “an exertion of the reasoning powers, which form no mean operation of the mind. Ideas are therefore labours” (999). Brown taught his readers to expect their reading to be work—not mere entertainment in

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1 As Welsh notes, the “train” was a metaphor nearly as popular as the “chain” in the mid-eighteenth century for signifying the connectedness of ideas. See Chapter Five.
which they could lose themselves, not the "curious reading" that DeMaria associates with novels.

Brown goes on to give some more specific suggestions or "regulations which appear to be of general utility" for reading. First, Brown suggests that it is not necessary to read every book entirely; instead, he extols the virtues of the index.

Of the little supplement at the close of a volume, few readers conceive the value; but some of the most eminent writers have been great adepts in the art of index-reading. An index-reader is, indeed, more let into the secrets of author, than the other who attends him with all the tedious forms of ceremony. I, for my parts, venerate the inventor of indices; and I know not to whom to yield the preference, either to Hippocrates, who was the first great anatomiser of the human body, or to that unknown labourer in literature, who first laid open the nerves and arteries of a book (996).

An index, of course, is designed to facilitate a certain kind of reading. But as Brown presents it, the index facilitates not random, disjointed reading, but instead facilitates a dipping and skimming in order to make connections. An index allows one to trace through a long work the "nerves and arteries" that connect its parts. An index allows one to discover an author's secrets.

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2 The idea of "secrets" plays an important role in Brown's discussion of reading practices. Earlier in the essay, Brown notes that "there are secrets in the art of reading" (996). Both here and at the conclusion of the essay, Brown emphasizes the fact that authors purposely keep secrets from their readers. At the end of the essay, Brown says that one "ought not to see every thing distinctly, but only certain parts of it; the imagination properly supplies the intermediate links. Hence are derived what some consider the obscurities of genius, which indeed are only the obvious parts which it wishes to conceal" (999). This emphasis on secrets has obvious connections to the secrets to which the encyclopedia compilers alerted their readers: both Brown and the encyclopedia compilers felt that admitting—and even foregrounding—secrets would prompt their readers to become more sensitive and alert, more aware of the connections between entries and between ideas.

3 Brown's comparison here of indexes as the "nerves and arteries of a book" to human anatomy echoes Barker's use of anatomy and especially the circulatory system in A Patch-work Screen for the Ladies (see Chapter Two), as well as Fielding's use of the "flow" of body fluids to and from the "Heart" in Tom Jones (see Chapter Five). Clearly, the connections between encyclopedic method and early modern Anatomies deserve further study.

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Second, Brown explicitly states that it is not always necessary to read books by
beginning at the beginning and reading on to the end; nor should we consider a book as an
entity in itself.

Gibbon says, we ought not to attend to the order of our books, so much as of our
thoughts. The perusal of a particular work gives birth perhaps to ideas unconnected
with the subject it treats; I pursue these ideas and quit my proposed plan of reading.
Thus, in the midst of Homer, he read Longinus; a chapter of Longinus led to an
epistle of Pliny; and having finished Longinus, he followed the train of his ideas of
the sublime and beautiful in the Inquiry of Burke, and concluded by comparing the
ancient with the modern Longinus (996).

Here, the connections that a reader makes in his or her mind take precedence over the order
of the text as it is printed on the pages. And just as Richardson’s *Moral and Instructive
Sentiments* were designed to allow readers to make connections between all of Richardson’s
novels, and to compare passages between them, here Brown recommends that readers
compare thoughts and ideas and passages between authors.⁴

Considering encyclopedias and novels together has illuminated aspects of these two
genres that individual consideration would not have exposed. I have attempted to show that
the two genres depended upon and developed in their readers similar reading practices; and
have thereby begun to refine theories of reading like that offered by Robert DeMaria.

Further, I have attempted to show that these two genres, so sharply divided in our own time,
shared both formal characteristics and conceptual foundations. Novels such as those by
Barker, Lennox, Richardson and Fielding suggest that the generic boundary between
encyclopedias and novels was, in this period, often blurred. I have attempted to show that
asking questions about the larger cultural issues and questions that both encyclopedias and

⁴ While I recognize that the examples Brown cites are not novels, I believe that the reading practice he
outlines here is meant to be applicable to texts of all kinds, including novels.
novels, (and encyclopedists and novelists) attempted to address can lead to new insights that would not reveal themselves if the focus were to remain on the genres themselves.

In my discussion of William Smellie’s *Encyclopædia Britannica* and of Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones*, I have suggested that these two texts may show signs of a waning interest in the encyclopedic project, a waning optimism about the possibility of a perfectly comprehensive and perfectly orderly encyclopedic method that could not only collect and unite the rapidly-accelerating store of all human knowledge, but also teach proper reading practices to the rapidly-accelerating numbers of middle-class readers. By using the word “waning” I mean to imply that the nature of interest in the encyclopedic project is probably cyclical—waxing and waning over time. Interest in the encyclopedic project certainly reached a peak in the mid-eighteenth century, in the publication of the first volumes of the *Encyclopédie*, and in the careers of Richardson and Fielding. However, it would be possible to locate other peaks in a more wide-ranging account of the encyclopedic urge. In the early part of the eighteenth century, for example, the Scriblerians’ mobilization of mock scholarship for satiric purposes certainly has encyclopedic elements. In the nineteenth century, Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851), especially in its incorporation of cetology, relies on encyclopedic underpinnings; Casaubon’s *Key to all Mythologies* in George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* (1871-2) portrays encyclopedism as a pursuit doomed to failure, but the novel nonetheless takes the encyclopedic urge as a central theme.

The encyclopedic urge is also quite prominent in the sentimental novels of the late eighteenth century. Christopher Fanning, for example, has examined the relationship of Ephraim Chambers’ *Cyclopaedia* (1728) and Lawrence Sterne’s *A Sentimental Journey* (1768),
arguing that “the encyclopedic epistemology outlined by Chambers has an important analogue in Yorick’s apostrophe to the “great SENSORIUM of the world,” an apostrophe invoking “a transcendent totality which vibrates, if a hair of our heads but falls upon the ground.”” Fanning argues that Sterne applies Chambers’ philosophy of knowledge and encyclopedic organization to interactions among individuals, showing how such organization can facilitate their interactions, and link them “both to one another and to an unknowable whole.” Elizabeth Kraft has examined the use of the Linnaean system of plant classification—“a sexual system” popularized by Darwin in his poem “The Botanic Garden”—in Charlotte Smith’s The Young Philosopher (1798). In this novel, Smith uses footnotes to link the Linnaean botanical system to the story of a heroine who, pregnant, finds herself living in a cave after her husband is abducted by pirates and she herself is persecuted by an ogrish aunt. Kraft argues that in her “comprehensive cataloguing of ‘natural’ desire and plant sexuality,” Smith preserves “some of the power afforded [women] in the constructions of sexuality offered by a libertine philosophy.”

The mid-eighteenth century, however, stands out for the number of encyclopedic projects that were undertaken. Further, the work of organizing all human knowledge into a coherent whole, and of teaching readers to comprehend those circles of learning, was undertaken with unprecedented enthusiasm and optimism by both encyclopedias and novels in this period, and it is this enthusiasm and optimism that I have attempted to register in these pages.
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