SENSATIONAL SIGHTS:

VISUAL CULTURE AND THE FEELING BODY, 1863-1933

by

Carole Chabries

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Acknowledgements

...if she be moved [she] must assert herself as part of that which moves her.

—Dorothy Richardson

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Introduction:

Reflection, Sensation, and the Acquisition of Knowledge

Vision, sensation, and knowledge have long been inextricably linked: whether we attain knowledge through what we see, and whether what we see bears a reliable relationship to the material world external to our bodies, are recurring epistemological and ontological questions. This is no less true of the twenty-first century than it was of the nineteenth. Indeed, in their introduction to Victorian Literature and the Visual Imagination, Christ and Jordan remark that "[n]ineteenth-century aesthetic theory frequently makes the eye the preeminent organ of truth" (xix-xx). As examples of this wide-spread phenomenon they cite Ruskin ("To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion—all in one"[1]); Carlyle ("Poetic creation, what is this too but *seeing* the thing sufficiently?"[2]); Arnold's description of "the ideal in all branches of knowledge": 'to see the object as in itself it really is,'" as well as Mill, Tennyson, Hallam, Mrs. Gaskell, Rossetti, Wordsworth, Henry James, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Dickens, and Thackeray (xx-xxi), all of whom in some way privilege the experience and role of vision in the creation of art.

These kinds of nineteenth-century aesthetic theories are not limited to the Victorian era; Wordsworth and Coleridge, each writing early in the century, also linked

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[1] From "Modern Painters." The Works of John Ruskin, ed. E. T. Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (London: George Allen, 1904-12). 3:4.16.28.

[2] From "On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History." The Works of Thomas Carlyle (New York: Scribner, 1899-1901). 1:104.

vision and sensation to artistic creation.[3] As Wood discusses in The Shock of the Real, Wordsworth's and Coleridge's preoccupation with verisimilitude and the faults of bad copies recur through much of their writings; their aesthetic preferences eventually lead both of them to disparage early nineteenth-century visual activities, such as the panorama, for creating "shock" and other disagreeable sensations. Links between visual culture and sensual stimulus carry through the Georgian and Victorian eras into modernism, developing in parallel to progress in optical gadgetry and technological apparatuses; some of these links are famously explored in the works of Benjamin, particularly in "The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction" and The Arcades Project. As these brief examples suggest, beginning in the early nineteenth century and extending into our own time, the relationship between vision and sensation has taken new shapes and directions as optics and optical technologies have reshaped visual epistemologies.

Optical technologies and devices used for public entertainment were not the sole contributors to this development. Equally important in shaping visual epistemologies were those nineteenth-century sciences which focused on the eye and the meaning and place of the visible. The early part of the century gave rise to the development of many optical devices that played an important role in the natural and biological sciences (such as the microscope) as well as in popular entertainment (such as the peepshow, the stereoscope, and the zoetrope). These devices are part of an epistemological shift away from the visual paradigm dominated by reflection as a mode of seeing, toward a new

[3] For an in-depth analysis of the relationships among Romanticism, visual aesthetics, and sensation, see Wood's The Shock of the Real.

visual paradigm that values perception and sensation over reflection. Crary argues for this shift in Techniques of the Observer: during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, he posits, developments in science, technology and philosophy create a paradigm of "subjective vision" that situates the eye as a creator of meaning. Although there is no identifiable historical moment when the paradigm of "subjective vision" begins, it is markedly different from the earlier "objective" model of vision. In the objective model—based on the operations of the camera obscura—the eye merely replicates a truth that exists external to the body; the eye is considered to reflect, rather than to create, reality. In the subjective vision paradigm, the eye creates meaning that may or may not mirror a material reality external to the body, and it does so by relaying information through the body's nervous system. This paradigm allows for the development of optical devices such as the stereoscope, which use the principles of binocular vision to create the appearance of a coherent three-dimensional image where in fact there are only two, two-dimensional images that are viewed through a pattern of reflecting mirrors. The "image" produced by the stereoscope does not exist in material reality, but the observer can "see" it nonetheless. This paradigmatic shift is perhaps visible—or more appropriately, sensible—in the "shock" experienced by people like Coleridge and Wordsworth, when the visual apparatus confronting them (whether the panorama or a more traditional portrait) did not adhere to the objective model of vision as reflection.

This shift from objective reflection (the model provided by the camera obscura) to subjective sensation (provided by the body and its nerves) guides interrogations into optical epistemologies: is knowledge acquired through sensation—through what we feel

through the body's senses—or through reflection—through mental, non-sensational study and examination? Questions like these run throughout a variety of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century discourses, particularly as scientists, inventors, philosophers and writers reconceived the body's role in creating the visible world and producing knowledge about that world. Indeed, early nineteenth-century physiologists were beginning to distinguish between perception (the mind's awareness of the object stimulating it) and sensation (the actual stimulation to the nerves);[4] these studies continued into the twentieth century in the work of William James and Sigmund Freud.

Literary scholarship has continued to examine these questions: current scholarship includes a significant body of work about the historical and ideological effects of developing visual technologies. Scholars such as Altick, Crary, Gernsheim, Low and Meisel contribute important work that shapes our current understanding of the historical and ideological development of visual technologies. Works like Altick's, Gernsheim's and Low's provide detailed histories of chronological developments, while works like Crary's and Meisel's help contextualize those chronologies within cultural and ideological shifts. Other scholars, such as Danius, Doane, Singer and Wood, have helped us reconsider the relationship between those technologies as they developed, and observers' affective responses to them. Doane and Singer, for example, demonstrate shifting ideological positions contributing to, and effected by, developments in cinema; Danius and Wood focus explicitly on sensational responses to a wider array of technological advances and visual apparatuses in Modernism and Romanticism,

[4] See Winter 39-40; Taylor 53-63; Crary, Techniques chapters 3-4.

respectively. Still other scholars have approached the issue of sensation and perception differently, linking questions of affect and perception to physiology and psychology; notable in this field are scholars such as Hughes, Ryan and Winter, each of whom examines the relationships among subjectivity, visuality and sensation. Finally, scholars like Daly, Faith, Kirby and Schivelbusch examine the impact of technologies of motion and travel—particularly the railway system—as they contributed to shifts in the relationships of sensation and vision.

This dissertation is situated within the context of these scholarly endeavors, contributing to this growing body of knowledge by closely examining textual productions that reveal a shared, on-going relationship among the convergence of technologies of vision and technologies of motion. It is not my intention in this dissertation to trace a historical or chronological development of any group of these technologies, or of studies in contemporaneous physiological and psychological developments of sensation. Instead, this dissertation is interested in local expressions of what other scholars have demonstrated to be a widespread concern. My goal is to focus more narrowly on three examples of one kind of experience that recurs over time: the convergence of technological and visual apparatuses, when that convergence produces a bodily response for the observer that makes her feel a part of the scene she is observing.

To this end, in this dissertation I look closely at three moments—three cross-sections—of the period from 1863 to 1933, and the dominant metaphors operating within them. These three particular moments seem, superficially, to bear little relation to each other, but these differences hide significant similarities. Each cross-section highlights the

relationship among technologies of vision and technologies of motion, relationships that change over time but that nonetheless produce strikingly similar effects. Each cross-section I examine comprises a series of textual productions: the first is the critical response to sensation fiction, published in the periodical press of the 1860s; the second is the Futurist manifestoes, published in a variety of media between 1909 and 1918; the third is Dorothy Richardson's on-going essays titled "Continuous Performance," published in the film journal Close Up during its run from 1927 to 1933. Each of these cross-sections comprises a series of textual responses to the effects of converging technologies of vision and technologies of motion. The effect, most generally, is to create a sensational observer, one whose body feels part of the scene observed.

In the 1860s this sensational observer is characterized as undesirable, although this position has been turned on its head by the 1930s. In 1863 H. L. Mansel railed against "sensation novels" for preaching to the nerves—for playing upon readers' affective, physiological responses to the novels' plots and characters. Many of his contemporary critics similarly protested the novels' abilities to affect the readers' bodies, noting the heightened physiological responses the novels create. Sixty years later, Dorothy Richardson was praising film for having this same ability—for creating an atmosphere in which the viewers' bodies were physiologically involved in sensational responses to film images playing across the screen. These two moments reveal a shift in cultural concern over the body's sensations, a concern that can be characterized more specifically as an interest in the ways that sensational responses to visual stimuli create an observer who feels present in the scene observed. In the case of the critical outcry

against sensation fiction, this kind of response is disparaged, and the material of the novels is held to blame.[5] In the case of Dorothy Richardson's film writings, this response is sought after and defended, and the medium of film is prized for its ability to create it.

The acceptability of affective spectatorship has much to do with visual technologies as they developed during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Early in the nineteenth century, spectators could pay for the thrill of peeking into traveling street peepshows; later, spectators visited panoramas and dioramas (and myriad contemporary spin-offs, designed for both public and private use) that offered an even more intense thrill—the thrill of being present in the scene itself. By the end of the century, when many of these optical devices had lost their popularity, peepshow boxes (Edison's kintescopes) were being used to display the first moving films; throughout the early twentieth century (and extending into the twenty-first), films were shown in cinema palaces designed to seat large audiences. By the early twentieth century, people flocked to film palaces with the same eagerness that they had flocked, a century earlier, to the panoramas; and often, as I discuss in chapter three, they experienced the same kind of affective spectatorship as had the panorama observers.

As viewing activities became increasingly popular in both public and private venues, the idea of spectatorship shifted, as did the kinds of subjectivity created by viewing activities. The historical movement toward cinema effected shifts in expectations and understandings of the bodies of observers; whereas observers of earlier

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[5] Here I mean both the content of the novels—the characters, the plot, the setting—and the actual materiality of the novels, which were faulted for their shoddy workmanship. I discuss these issues in more detail in chapter one.

optical devices such as the camera obscura were understood as *having access* to a representation of the truth, later observers of optical devices (such as the panorama and film) were understood as *producing* a version of the truth through their sensory perceptions.[6]

During this same period of time, affective spectatorship was being changed by technologies of motion, beginning with the train, and extending to automobiles, airplanes, steamboats, ocean liners, and so on. Travelling at faster rates altered travelers' perceptions of time and space: distances were compressed as remote locations became increasingly accessible; time became standardized, enabling travelers (as well as those who used trains for commerce and economic development) to plan their movements down to the minute; and views through the windows of train carriages shifted observers' senses of how places appeared. These developments certainly created the appearance of greater access to places and spaces, but like optical technologies, they shifted the ground of knowledge: old spatial relationships were revealed as falsely distant when the body traveling by train could demonstrate just how close together they were.

Converging technologies of motion and vision provide the foundation for my analyses in each chapter, for while each cross-section is grounded in acts of looking, each breaks from the realm of the purely visual. For example, in the context of converging

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[6] For a full and remarkable discussion of the historical and ideological shifts involved in these technological, epistemological and ontological changes, see Crary, Techniques. Crary makes a persuasive case for the development of photography as part of other optical gadgets: he argues that while the development of photography is chronological, it is neither ideological nor inexorable; photography (in at least its early phases) belongs to the realm of reproducing the real in a way that other optical devices did not.

technologies, reading a sensation novel[7] can be understood as both a visual and a sensational act: the novels play upon mid-Victorians' visual experiences and altered senses of space and time enabled by these converging technologies; in so doing, the novels privilege the *sensations* created by those experiences over the act of looking itself. Readers of sensation fiction encountered sensational novels in the context of the growing cultural presence of public visual shows, private optical devices, and other developing technologies that affected visual perception, such as the railway. These aspects of technological and visual culture helped to train them for the affective worlds that the novels proffered. I suggest in chapter one that the popularity of sensation fiction results at least in part from the widespread attention and public popularity of optical devices that created scenes of which the observer *felt* a part. These devices include large-scale public shows, such as the panorama and diorama, as well as smaller-scale devices designed for, or used in, the home, such as the magic lantern, the zoetrope, and the stereoscope. Reading a novel may not be a purely visual activity, but the success of sensation novels—and the critical outcry against them—depended heavily upon a culture in which particular kinds of viewing were practiced and desired.

Richardson's "Continuous Performance" essays can be seen as a natural extension of the effects of the convergence of nineteenth-century visual shows and the "rise" of sensation fiction in the 1860s. By 1927 (when Close Up began being published and "Continuous Performance" began to appear in the magazine), film goers were

[7] Throughout this introduction I refer to sensation novels as if they constitute a discrete genre, although this is a complicated assertion, as the work of Brantlinger, Bernstein, Gilbert and Loesberg, among others, suggests. I discuss these complexities in greater detail in chapter one.

encountering film as something familiar, a technology that is, in itself, a convergence of seeing and motion. Edison's first kinetoscopes had appeared as much as thirty years earlier,[8] and by the mid-1920s film-going was a common activity. In this context, Richardson responds to film much as sensation fiction critics responded to the novels: by linking the visual experience directly to the body's affective responses. Yet critics of sensation fiction argue that the *material* of the novels was responsible for affecting the readers' bodies, and on those grounds condemn the novels; Richardson, on the other hand, argues that the *medium* affects bodies of the viewers, and suggests—just as sound as being introduced into otherwise silent films—that the medium should not change.

Between these two moments sits the Italian Futurist movement. The Futurists are immediately linked to the visual world, for the movement comprised painting, sculpture, architecture, photography and film, as well as literature and music. In their aesthetic theories the Futurists appeal to all the senses at once, yet in doing so, they privilege the affect produced by viewing. The Futurists are less invested in creating new images to be seen than they are in creating new ways of seeing (and hearing—indeed, *thinking*), and ensuring that these new modes are fundamentally *felt* through the body. While the Futurists are thus deeply embedded in visual culture, they are also fascinated with technological culture, and the speed of the new, mechanized life promised by automobiles, airplanes, trains, and other forms of rapid transportation. Combining the two focal points of vision and speed, the Futurists develop an affective aesthetics based

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[8] The word *kinétescope* first appears in the French dictionary *Le Robert* in the 1890s (Danius 96), although Edison's machine was in public use during the 1880s. By the 1890s Edison had a number of "films" to his credit, a list that grew throughout the early years of the twentieth century. (See particularly Doane Emergence.)

on the speed that new technologies make possible. Thus their position in this dissertation as a fulcrum between the 1860s and the 1930s: they explicitly unite the kinds of optical and technological developments that are only implicitly united in the mid-Victorian response to sensation fiction; as they make that work explicit, the Futurists create a broad context of affect and visual experience that we see explored more deeply and with greater focus by Dorothy Richardson in Close Up.

Although I consider the chapter on the Futurist manifestoes to function as a fulcrum, the dissertation is structured chronologically. But this chronology has the added advantage of simultaneously narrowing the scope of each chapter and the historical moments that comprise them. This narrowing effect can be seen most clearly in the ways technologies of vision and motion converge. In the case of the critical response to sensation fiction, that convergence comes from the sudden and wild popularity of a particular kind of novel, which is read in the context of visual technologies (public and private optical shows) and technologies of movement (particularly the British railway system).[9] Optical shows and train travel helped to create a sense of immediate connection to scenes (viewed from inside a panorama, through the lens of a stereoscope, or through the window of a traveling train) that altered readers' responses to the scenes they read about in the novels. This shift in perspective would likely not have occurred were it not for the converging technologies surrounding the novels' production.

[9] I mean this in a double sense: this is how I situate my analysis of the critical response to sensation fiction, but also how mid-Victorians would have read the novels. I discuss this second aspect in greater depth in chapter one.

In the case of the Futurist manifestoes, this convergence comes in the form of Futurism itself, an avant-garde movement that explicitly conjoins visuality with the speed of new technologies (trains, automobiles, and airplanes, as well as photography and film). This second convergence can be seen as a more explicit, and so a narrower, version, of the first; what is arguably only context for the mid-Victorians is explicit content for the Futurists. That is, the Futurists set out to transform spectators' relationship to their art, and aim to achieve this transformation through re-orienting the viewers' relationship to the material world. This reorientation serves the purpose of making visible the ostensible truth of that relationship as a new product of modern life. Neither sensation authors nor their critics have so lofty or explicit an aim; the effects of sensation fiction, so conceptually akin to the effects of Futurism, seem to be more a contextual by-product that a concerted and developed effort to effect radical change.

The third moment of convergence is even more explicit and focused than is the Futurist moment. In "Continuous Performance," Richardson focuses specifically on film, leaving aside the wide range of visual technologies that were being developed and experimented with during this time. More specifically, even, Richardson focuses on the visual technologies film depends upon, along with the audio technologies it engenders. Like the Futurists, Richardson makes a clear and explicit case for the ways in which film creates a shift in the spectators' responses to spatio-temporal relationships. Yet unlike the Futurists, Richardson is not arguing for a "new" kind of viewing experience; instead, she is arguing for the importance of continuing the present technologies of viewing—silent film—that creates this kind of spectator. Her analysis, focused as it is on film

technology, relies on the observers' ability to bodily transcend time and space in order to feel a part of that which is seen.

As the dissertation progresses, it reveals a double trajectory for the development of a mode of spectatorship that produces a sensational body through the convergence of technologies of motion and vision. The first line of this trajectory follows the level of explicit attention given to this convergence; the second, with reception of the possibilities this convergence creates. Critics of sensation novels do not cite these technologies—neither optical shows nor the railway system—as contributing factors to sensation fiction, but their responses indicate a certain awareness of these cultural changes, and generally resist the opportunities they engender. Unlike the mid-Victorian critics, the Futurists cite technologies of speed (the railway, the submarine, the automobile, the airplane) in several manifestoes. In addition, they cite technologies of vision, and commit individual manifestoes to particular developments (such as "Futurist Photodynamism"); even when they are not citing particular developments, however, they draw upon their pervasive cultural presence. Not only are the Futurists more explicit than sensation fiction critics about the presence of technology and its effect on the sensational body; they enthusiastically support this convergence, and celebrate the changes it promises. Lastly, Richardson approaches this convergence with something of the Futurists' explicit characterizations, as well as the sensation fiction critics' dismay. Focusing solely on the effects of film technologies, Richardson's essays are grounded in the assumption that technologies of vision and of motion have already created new possibilities for spectatorship; however, she expresses concern that these possibilities will disappear in

the face of audio technologies working that are being incorporated into film. Thus, these two entwined trajectories—of explicit attention and of reception—trace a kind of naturalizing process of the relationship between visual technologies and the sensational body, a process whereby the relationship simultaneously becomes more known and less startling, but simultaneously less stable.

These two trajectories can be envisaged as responses to two competing tensions: the simultaneous desires to conjoin the body with the object of observation through its sensational responses, and to contain the body's affect by delimiting the extent of bodily union with objects external to it. Sensation novels reflect what was already a certain cultural interest—the experience of feeling a part of something being observed—while the novels' critics reflect another cultural interest—to contain this conjoining. In the context of sensation fiction, the effort toward containment emerges in the bodily metaphors the critics use. As contemporary scholars such as Bernstein, Brantlinger, Cvetkovich and Gilbert have pointed out, the fiction is often seen as contaminating its readers: at times it is described as disagreeable food, too severely "seasoned" for the discriminating palate, and so affecting individual readers; at other times, it is described as a disease ravaging the bodies of young female readers, and so insidiously infecting the mid-Victorian body politic. These metaphors describe sensation fiction as a "problem" with a cure (medical or otherwise); described in this way, the body experiencing heightened sensational involvement is easily subjectable to traditional policing forces—such as medical treatment or changes in domestic life—and so is containable.

In chapter one, I move away from scholars such as Gilbert and Hughes, who argue that the critical response to sensation fiction represents public anxieties about health (moral, physical, sexual, and so on). Instead, I argue that the critics of sensation novels are responding to the converging technologies of motion and of vision. When we read the critical responses to sensation fiction in this context, we begin to see how that convergence both creates and contains the mid-Victorian sensational body. In particular, I examine the metaphor used by Margaret Oliphant—that the young female readers of sensation novels are represented as having "an eagerness of physical sensation." Oliphant's metaphor is apt for a culture that indeed *is* eager to experience the new sensations provided by technologies of vision and motion. The visual shows and railway travel create a context for eagerly accepting the experience of feeling unified with an observed scene via altered senses of space and time, and these experiences are drawn upon in the creation of sensational events in the novels. But these same technologies are also represented in the novels I examine—Lady Audley's Secret and East Lynne—as exerting control over the sensational body. This is especially true of railway technology, as train travel controls the course of the lives of two main characters (Robert in Lady Audley's Secret and Lady Isabel in East Lynne): not only does the train carry them to and from their most sensational and life-altering locations, it ultimately contributes to locating them in a time and place that halt the plot's sensational events. For Robert, this is marriage and family; for Lady Isabel, it is death. At the end of each novel, both Robert and Lady Isabel are delivered from the sensational ravages of excessive train travel, and the sensational aspects of their lives are put to rest.

For the Futurist manifestoes, the metaphor of containment is closely bound up in the language of the manifestoes themselves. The manifestoes celebrate the ways that the body of the observer can be sensationally linked to what the observer sees, and even argue that this kind of connection forms the basis of "modern" life. Much of the manifestoes' bellicose language suggests that the Futurists do not want this body to be contained: the manifestoes are full of the language of excess, especially of bodies exceeding their traditional (physical, emotional and ideological) boundaries. Scholars such as Daly and Poggi have argued that often the Futurists' rhetoric about the body produces a body that is excessive: it is too gendered (both male and female, as in Daly's *la patria*) too masculine, or too metallized, too cyborgian. Other critics, such as Adamson and Nicholls, argue that the Futurists are responding to the perceived excesses of Symbolism, in the process often producing linguistic excesses of their own. I build on these scholarly analyses of the body produced by the Futurist aesthetic by examining the logic behind the linguistic uses of gender in the manifestoes.

In chapter two, I argue that the Futurists' use of language seeks to both free and control the sensational body. In this chapter I analyze the development of the Futurists' claim that their art can put "the spectator in the center of the picture," a claim that is derived from the Futurists' development of motion (dynamism) and vision. In making this argument for understanding the Futurists' construction of an affective spectator, I trace the gendered language of the manifestoes. I draw from my analysis very different conclusions from Daly and Poggi, who find the Futurists deploying binary logic to gender. Instead, I argue that the Futurist body is gendered without this binary logic: the

Futurists do not create a sensational body that is genderless, but rather one that is gendered in potentially inaccessible terms. That is, the Futurists rely on gendered language and referents in the manifestoes, but the effect of this language is to undermine conventional, binarized understandings of gender, in an attempt to do without them altogether.

In Richardson's "Continuous Performance" essays, the sensational body is both created and contained through Richardson's metaphor of "connective tissue." Connective tissue is a metaphor Richardson uses to describe the linkage created, under ideal viewing circumstances, between the observer and the screen. Carrying the metaphor to its logical conclusion, Richardson suggests that connective tissue creates a singular body comprising the cinematic viewer, the film screen, and the space between them. She also suggests that each individual viewer thus created is part of a larger audience-as-body. For critics such as Egger, these connections through connective tissue are problematic, for they erase difference by defacing individual film viewers. For others, such as Gevirtz, the spatialized model Richardson employs throughout "Continuous Performance" serves primarily as a reiteration of Richardson's authorial positions throughout her 13-volume novel, Pilgrimage.

In chapter three, I diverge from the bulk of scholarship on Richardson by examining the "Continuous Performance" essays in relationship to each other, rather than in relationship to Pilgrimage.[10] In this chapter, I suggest that Richardson's metaphor of

[10] For a full-length study of Richardson's writings in Close Up in relationship to Pilgrimage, see Gevirtz. For other work examining links among Richardson's various writings, see Bluemel, Hanscombe, and Watts.

connective tissue, already embedded in technologies of vision and motion (for film technology encapsulates both), is based upon the naturalness and desirability of this convergence. I link Richardson's connective tissue to another of her metaphors—the film house as home, or "the little bethel"—as the site of containment for the sensational body created by connective tissue. Yet Richardson's metaphor of containment is a metaphor of protection as much as a metaphor of control. For within the little bethel—the film house—Richardson's viewers have access to a sensational economy that allows easy movement between behaviors and attitudes that are traditionally gendered according to binary logic. Within the little bethel, silence and contemplation (characterized as feminine) sits in an easier relationship to vocalization and action (characterized as masculine), for one does not have to be forsaken in order to have access to the other. Instead, Richardson suggests that the visual technology of the silent film can create a spectator who participates in the logic of both.

In its early phases, this project was designed partly to bridge the gap between the "Victorian" and "Modernist" eras, as much of my preliminary research indicated important links and continuities between them. It has become, however, something of a commonplace to suggest that aspects of British Victorian culture are indicators of modernity to come, and even more of a commonplace to suggest that the boundaries of what we call "Modernism" are unstable, highly permeable and open to debate.[11] During

[11] Childs summarizes historical definitions of "modernism" by writing that it is "both impossible and undesirable to speak of a single 'Modernism', and the practice of referring to 'Modernisms' dates back to the 1960s. [....] It is [...] invidious to have to say what Modernism was precisely because any history or

the course of this study, what I have come to understand is that the points of entry that allow us to examine continuities among and across periods will always produce different answers about what constitutes a period, even about the values and effects of periodization itself. Thus, for this project I have set aside my initial goal to offer an answer about how to link the "Victorian" and "Modern" periods, as the debate itself is far more interesting to me than is the search for a definitive answer within it. I offer this project, then, in the spirit of this on-going debate. I do not mean to propose that this study gives a definitive answer about the role of the affective body in either Victorian culture or in Modernism; rather, I suggest that the affective body, as it is re-created and responded to over time, helps reveal continuities (as well as disruptions) between these two literary-historical periods.

Of course, it would be a mistake to suggest that the affective body that I study in this dissertation is limited to the years 1863-1933, just as it would be a mistake to suggest that it is limited to the even broader period that covers the Victorian and Modern eras. Indeed, it may be possible to trace variations of the affective body continually further back in time—perhaps even to the Roman Circus, as one reader has suggested. This observation about the historical reach and presence of the affective body both illuminates the scope a larger project about the affective body might take, even as it helps to clarify the moments I have chosen: during the mid-Victorian and modern eras, technologies of

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definition insinuates many implicit exclusions. Modernism has predominantly been represented in white, male, heterosexist, Euroamerican middle-class terms, and any of the recent challenges to each of these aspects introduces another one of a plurality of Modernisms." He concludes that this proliferation of intellectual activity "reveals that there is sufficient currency and investment in the term itself that writers and critics seek to contests its parameters and scope, its centre(s) and meaning(s)" (12-13).

motion developed more rapidly—and provided more rapid kinds of movement—than they had at any time in previous history. As I demonstrate in the chapters that follow, the affective body that responds to those developments is particular to the historical moment I examine. Yet even in the twenty-first century, we experience technologies that continue to unify the body with external objects (e.g. the technologies behind virtual reality); in this way, the question of the relationships among the body, feeling, vision and technology will continue to gain importance. By focusing on the language used to describe such relationships in the past, I hope, in some measure, to inform our own future choices of metaphor and meaning-making.

Chapter One:

'An eagerness of physical sensation': Sensation and Mid-Victorian Culture

This chapter traces the enthusiastic embrace of sensationalism in mid-Victorian popular culture, unifying texts and cultural events that otherwise might not be entwined. My guiding principle is a metaphoric description of young female readers, a metaphor provided by Margaret Oliphant in 1863 when she complains that young girls are being falsely represented as having "an eagerness of physical sensation." Oliphant's complaint is gender- and age-specific, but the eagerness she laments is not confined either to young girls or to readers of sensation fiction. Instead, much nineteenth-century visual culture seems preoccupied with just such an eagerness, and seeks out physical sensation in a variety of ways and activities.

I begin my examination of this eagerness with some of the most popular of optical shows for both public and private (home) use in the first half of the nineteenth century, demonstrating that these optical shows were popular, in great part, for their ability to arouse the observer into feeling bodily present within the scene depicted. In way, this feeling of immediacy is an alteration of traditional experiences of space and time, and I discuss the observers' sensational responses in the context of synchronic and diachronic time. The sensational experiences offered by the optical shows throughout the century are replicated in the 1860s in sensation fiction: by the time the novels appeared in the 1860s, they were reaching a public already eager to experience intensified physiological sensations, and to experience them vicariously and safely. In other words, while the optical developments of the first half of the century had created observers eager to *feel* as

a by-product of seeing, by the 1860s the mid-Victorian public was eager simply to feel, to repeat the intensified sensations that optical shows had made possible outside of the context of the purely or traditionally visual. The public was eager to see and feel "the sensational" across a wide spectrum of daily activities and discourses.

Optical shows compressed or otherwise altered observers' experiences of space and time, and did so by playing upon their bodies' sensations. Contemporary with optical shows was the development of England's railway system, which significantly altered travelers' bodily and psychological experiences of time and space. England's trains contribute to the eagerness I describe by more fully preparing Victorians to feel their bodies in new ways and in new places. By the 1860s this eagerness is omnipresent; it is especially visible in the periodical press, which both amplifies and solidifies the presence of the sensational. Not only did the periodical press pay close attention to sensation novels, but it did so in the wider context of sensational and sensationalized discourse. During the 1860s—the decade which saw the fall of some of the longest-standing public optical shows, as well as the rise (and decline) of the sensational novel (at least by that name)—the periodical press made frequent use of sensationalism across topics and disciplines, thereby both whetting and satisfying the public's desire for sensational experiences. Visual shows, at least in some of their forms, may have been declining; but the public's eagerness for sensation was not.

'More powerful than reality': vision and the sensational body

When the "first" sensation novel—Wilkie Collins's The Woman in White—appeared in serialized form in November of 1859, mid-Victorians were already practiced

consumers of experiences linking vision and sensation. The public had been attending optical shows throughout the first half of the century, and so were accustomed to experiencing new constitutive relationships among observation, sensation and knowledge. Optical shows had been gaining popularity and momentum since the late eighteenth century. Mechanical and industrial technologies during the first half of the nineteenth century improved upon earlier devices, helping create awareness of, and exposure to, the kinds of bodily sensations that could be produced by visual activities by making optical shows more accessible to wider audiences.

Certainly the history of sensation's relationship to visual technology begins much earlier than the Victorian era. As the longevity and utility of the camera obscura suggests, boxes and devices that could offer new perspectives on vision had been immensely popular for centuries, rather than decades.[12] The camera obscura is perhaps a forebear of the peepshow,[13] an optical device popularized in late eighteenth- and early-nineteenth century England (and elsewhere). Like someone looking into a camera obscura, the spectator of a peepshow was positioned outside of a closed box, which had at least one aperture for viewing (although the peepshow sometimes had more), and which may or may not have used mirrors to redirect the observers' eye. Unlike the view through the camera obscura however, the view presented to the peepshow observer

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[12] Crary points out that "it has been known for at least two thousand years that when light passes through a small hole into a dark, enclosed interior, an inverted image will appear on the wall opposite the hole" (27). Crary, Gernsheim and others note that this knowledge was of used by thinkers as diverse as Euclid, Aristotle, Alhazen, Roger Bacon, Leonardo, and Kepler.

[13] There is some suggestion that these roots can be traced to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: in 1558, Giovanni Battista della Porta made the camera obscura popular through the publication of his book Magia Naturalis; in the late 1590s, an Augsburg clockmaker named Magraff combined clocks with early versions of peepshows; and in the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch painters used "perspective boxes," which presented three-dimensional images to the spectator (Balzer 18-20).

employed light, perspective, and sometimes multiple screens (for multiple images) to create its effects. Also unlike the camera obscura's faithful representation of an external world, the peepshow offers the observer a view of the inaccessible (and so invisible): places, sights and objects which are out of the viewer's visual range. As it offers a conceptual break from the camera obscura, the peepshow and its history illustrate some of the ways that sensation and the body came to play an important role in Victorian visual culture.

Because peepshows provide a glimpse of something unknown, they hold a different kind of appeal than the camera obscura. The peepshow promises a vision of a world not constrained by the viewer's own experiences of time and space: it could present "distant lands, never before seen and perhaps never before heard of, ferocious battles and stately monuments, images to startle and delight" (Balzer 12). And it does so while shutting out other visual stimuli, directing the viewer's eye to the peepshow image through an enclosed viewing window. By thus controlling the observer's gaze, the peepshow makes real something otherwise unknown. Furthermore, it uses the eye to produce not only a visual image of something new, but it completes that vision with sensational effects, with images that "startle and delight."

The peepshow is likely to have benefited as much from its nature as from the visions it offered, as its design was a significant element in its appeal. Peepshows benefited from being "small space[s which can] be entered visually" if not physically. Such spaces, writes Balzer, are "intrinsically alluring," and so provide peepshow viewers with a "sense of mystery and excitement of what was in the box and behind the

showman's promise of a larger more exciting world" (10). Thus the excitement of the peepshow was borne as much from the thrill of "peeping"—of being granted access to something unknown and affective—as from the more simple idea of "seeing" a truthful image of the external world.[14] By offering glimpses of the exciting unknown, peepshows created the illusion of transporting the observer to another time and place.

Part of the thrill of the peepshow, and what makes it an important precursor to mid-Victorian sensationalism, is that it offered visions that were only as thrilling as the storyteller or showman made them. "The box was the backdrop for the storyteller," writes Balzer, "rather than the other way around":

> Could [the showmen] conjure up an image and make it more powerful than reality, could they free the imagination and let it wander, could they tempt one, even momentarily, to cast aside one's own world and take a glimpse of something grand or frightening, real or fanciful? Could they cast a spell? Create an illusion? (26)

Since the showmen traveled and hawked their wares on the road, their livelihood depended on their ability to attract audiences who would pay to wait in line for the chance to peep. The job of the showman was not simply to sell an image, but also the story behind the image. Image and story had to combine into a compelling visual and sensational event that was alluring because it was "more powerful than reality." The

[14] Balzer cites "Sergeant Bell, a 19th century storybook peepshow man" who appealed to young viewers with this pitch: "Now make no noise, my girls and boys, but march forward and listen to Sergeant Bell, the raree-showman. If there are any among you who do not desire to obtain knowledge, let them go home and hide their faces with both their hands; let them blush till they are as red as a soldier's jacket; but if you all do desire to know about the wonderful things and places that are in the world, why, march forward, then, my little women and men, and see, and hear, and reap all the advantages offered you by age and experience" (13).

images had to contain enough elements of realism, and the narrative (or other verbal engagement from the showman) had to be stimulating enough, that they combined to create a pleasurable feeling of being elsewhere.

Popular eighteenth- and nineteenth-century illustrations suggest the public's acceptance of the role of the showmen, who are often depicted pulling strings—an attempt either to accurately reflect the mechanical workings of a peepshow with multiple screens inside, or to attribute to the showman the controlling creative force behind the visual experience (Balzer 43). Whether real or metaphoric, the strings pulled by the showman make him an inventor of sorts—an inventor of both sensational tales and images. This sense of explicit manipulation seems to add to the thrill of seeing the unknown: the mystery offered to the observer is a mystery that only *this* showman can serve up. The excitement of any particular peepshow depends upon the observer's willingness to let a particular showman work his particular magic in the viewing moment. In other words, the peepshow as a visual activity was only as good as its promoter could make it. This sentiment continues into the nineteenth century, where the success of optical shows is linked quite explicitly to the "show" that is being put on.

Ironically, the success of peepshows and the showmen behind them contributed to the peepshow's demise. Peepshows were eventually adapted for home use, and the "secrets" of the peepshow were revealed when instructions for creating them at home were published in popular books such as Hooper's Rational Recreations. Not only did peepshows go "private," then, but the principle of the peepshow was used to create "accordion-like peepshow souvenirs commemorating historical events and celebrations"

which were sold as toys in the early nineteenth century (Balzer 34-36). Ultimately, however, the peepshow suffered from the wide-spread industrialization and commercialization of optical devices: as technologies improved, the peepshow became stationary and private, a considerable change from its earlier, more mobile and public nature. As private and immobile devices, peepshows were incorporated into the development of film. In the late nineteenth century a peepshow-like design housed some of the first moving pictures, including Thomas Edison's first movies which were viewed, by one person at a time, in the Kinetescope (Balzer 41).[15]

This historical narrative of the peepshow ends up containing sensation to individual viewing experiences (viewers of Edison's early movies) in private or semi-private spaces.[16] But long before Edison's first movies, observers could choose from among any number of visual activities that competed with the peepshow. Some of these were public, while others were developed for private or home use. Many of these nineteenth-century visual activities were compelling and successful because, like the peepshow, they compressed experiences of time and place through realistic visual

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[15] Much of what is appealing about peepshows is similar to what will be appealing about cinema in the first part of the twentieth century. Like a peepshow, film can transport its viewers to another time and place. Although films are not viewed through the same kind of aperture as are peepshows, they may direct the eye even more than peepshows do. Cinema viewers can see only what has been filmed, just as peepshow observers can see only what is visible through the viewing apparatus; but film can further manipulate what parts of the screen the eye is drawn to, as well as how long any image remains visible. Because of choices like these, film directors—and to a lesser extent, actors (as well as musicians accompanying a silent film)—must, like the raree showman, sell the story behind the image. I discuss these issues further in chapter three.

[16] Balzer takes this narrative a step further, when he ends with the history of the peepshow in the twentieth century, which he describes as less than "illustrious": "Unable to compete effectively with movies [which were ultimately projected onto screens for large audiences,] the peepshow seemed to find an audience through the display of erotic and pornographic images. So, today, we are still left with the word peepshow, still a powerful, evocative phrase, able to conjure up strong images, but seemingly having little to do with its antecedents" (41).

representations that encouraged the observer to feel a part of the scene. Just as the peepshow utilized perspective, mirrors, and multiple screens to create realistic illusions, so too did other optical devices find ways to create for the observer the sense that their visual experience was an experience of the "real."

One of the most "realistic" of the optical developments of the early nineteenth century is the panorama.[17] The first two panoramas in London were housed in circular buildings designed to re-create the sense of visual engagement heretofore available only by actual mobility: by visiting and seeing actual places and objects. Although these panoramas were painted (and needed to be painted skillfully in order to be effective), panoramic canvases were of a different type altogether from typical paintings.[18] Unlike a painting hanging on a wall, panorama paintings were not framed.[19] Furthermore, they controlled the viewers' distance from, and perspective on, the painted picture, for the buildings' design (a circular structure with platforms in the middle connected by flights of stairs) dictated where observers would have to stand to see the image.[20] In addition to

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[17] In The Arcades Project, Benjamin writes that the panoramas were meant to be "a perfect imitation of nature. An attempt was made to reproduce the changing daylight in the landscape, the rising of the moon, the rush of waterfalls. <Jacques-Louis> David counsels his pupils to draw from nature as it is shown in panoramas. In their attempt to produce deceptively lifelike changes in represented nature, the panoramas prepare the way not only for photography but for <silent> film and sound film" (5).

[18] The stylistic conventions of the panorama are described by Wood as having "appropriated the elite academic genres of landscape and history painting to create a spectacular new form of visual entertainment for a mass audience" (9).

[19] Wood describes the technological engineering behind the panorama as a spectacle: at the Colosseum in Regent's Park, "patrons ascended to its viewing platform in London's first hydraulic lift, and were provided with telescopes to view the smallest and most 'distant' aspects of the view of London" (5).

[20] The first building designed and patented for this use was Leicester Square. Leicester Square opened in 1794 and remained "the center of London's popular entertainment industry" (Altick, Shows 132) until the middle of the nineteenth century; it most likely first offered a panorama of London from the Albion Mills, which burned shortly after the artist finished his sketches of them (Altick, Shows 129-132). One of Leicester Square's primary competitors, the Colosseum in Regent's Park, opened in the 1820s; it initially

controlling the observers' perspectives, the panorama eliminated visual distraction by blacking out and blocking off most of the outside world.[21] These three factors (the constructed unit that housed the image; the absence of a typical "frame"; and the control exerted over the observer's line of vision) align the panorama with the peepshow. But because visitors to a panorama were fully encircled by the painted canvas of a long, unbroken vista (most commonly depicting a cityscape or landscape) which obscured the external world, their engagement with the images was even more immediate, and their sensational responses to the images were heightened.

Visitors to a panorama show were likely to report on the ways that the visual event initiated sensational responses. In 1834, an American naval officer described this effect of his visit to the panorama at the Colosseum:

> You insensibly draw back from the balustrade, separating the spectators from [the picture], as from the fearful parapet, from which, on the cathedral itself, you cast a glance into the terrific depth around. And are obliged almost to reason with yourself, to be persuaded that it is not nature, instead of a work of art, upon which you are bestowing your admiration. (qtd in Altick, Shows 149)

For this spectator, the visual experience calls forth sensation and emotion over reason. The officer finds himself "insensibly" drawing away from danger, and then is "obliged to

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offered a panorama of London as seen from a platform, built on scaffolding, outside of the then-under-repair St. Paul's Cathedral (Altick, Shows 141-147).

[21] Not everything was blackened or blocked. The building was designed to allow light in from a ceiling skylight in order to illuminate the panorama's canvas; yet that aperture was hidden from the observers by a canopy. In other words, the technical effects that created realism were invisible.

reason with" himself over his emotional and irrational response. So, too, did other observers report sensational responses that exceed reason. One reportedly heard "a great noise...of carriages, coaches and horses" in the street;[22] while others noted "a low murmuring, as of a busy countless multitude, in eager motion far down beneath" the spot where they stood, as well as the "sound of numerous clocks striking the hour simultaneously, or in quick succession, and occasionally [the] merry peal of bells from a church steeple near or distant."[23] Certainly the height of the panorama changed viewers' perspectives on the picture as they ascended additional flights of stairs and found themselves closer to the top of the picture than to the bottom; it is possible that this more distant perspective on the "multitude [...] far down beneath" contributes to the observers' sensational responses by intensifying the sense of perspectival reality. The panorama clearly engaged the observers' full range of senses, or at least enough so that observers could frequently mistake the panorama for a "real" scene.[24] These nineteenth-century

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[22] Altick calls this quote, from "a visiting Persian," one of "the most fanciful one can conceive." (Najaf Koolee Meerza, Journal of a Residence in England... (privately printed, 1839?), I, 292-93, cited in Altick, Shows 150.) Altick notes that "more than a few spectators insisted that the people depicted in the streets and the parks actually moved" (150), although he doesn't list additional sources.

[23] These observations come from an undated clipping from People's Journal in the 1840s. Cited in Altick, Shows 150.

[24] This point is made in the nineteenth century by Thomas Frognall Dibdin, who described the effect of the panorama in this way: "The learned were amazed, and the unlearned were enraptured. I can never forget its first impression upon my own mind. It was as a thing dropped down from the clouds—all fire, energy, intelligence, and animation. You looked a second time, the figures moved, and were commingled in hot and bloody fight. You saw the flash of the cannon, the glitter of the bayonet, the gleam of the falchion. You longed to be leaping from crag to crag with Sir David Baird, who is halooing his men on to victory! Then, again, you seemed to be listening to the groans of the wounded and dying—and more than one female was carried out swooning. [....] The accessories were strikingly characteristic—rock, earth, water, had its peculiar and happy touch; and the accompaniments about the sally-port, half choked up with the bodies of the dead, made you look on with shuddering awe, and retreat as you shuddered." (Thomas Frognall Dibdin, Reminiscences of a Literary Life, [London 1836] I, 143-46n. Quoted in Altick, Shows 135.) Like the American naval officer (and the young schoolboys at the Cosmorama described below), Dibdin finds himself moved physically, so that the images he observes create a bodily and sensational response, rather than a rational one. He notes not only his own "shuddering awe" and the "swooning" of

eye-witness accounts attest to the power of the enveloping structure to create not only a novel visual effect, but a physiological one as well: observers of panoramic scenes truly felt present at the scene, as if it were not a mere representation but the real thing.

Similar responses were reported by visitors to the Cosmorama. The Cosmorama was contemporaneous with the Leicester Square panorama and the Colosseum, opening first in 1820 and then moving to better quarters in 1823.[25] While the Cosmorama borrowed its suffix from the panorama, and indeed was a visual "show," it differed significantly from the panorama in structure, if not in effect. The building itself was dissimilar: instead of being a dome illuminated from the top and housing one large canvas that encircled the spectators, the Cosmorama housed its series of pictures—"peeps"—in a rectangular room with framed looking holes cut into the walls. These holes revealed miniature visions that, like both the panorama and the peepshow, blocked from view any element of external reality. A kind of hybrid of the peepshow and the panorama, the Cosmorama offered viewers the opportunity to walk up to the framed holes, as they might have walked up to a raree-showman's peepshow, and gaze at the scene inside without any visual distractions; when they had looked to their satisfaction, they could walk on, much as they could choose to circumnavigate the platform or climb

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the ladies, but also a more general sensitive awareness of the panorama's depicted events: he too hears sounds, sees movement, and longs to be part of the scene.

[25] Altick writes that the original building, on St. James Street, was unsuitable at least in part because it lacked adequate natural lighting. The move to 209 Regent Street mitigated this problem (Shows 211).

the stairs at the panorama. The primary difference is that the Cosmorama offered a variety of unconnected sights, whereas the panorama offered one long, unbroken vista.[26]

Even given these differences from the panorama, visitors to the Cosmorama reported similar heightened sensational responses. Dr. Arnott reported in the Mirror that one schoolboy exclaimed, "with fearful delight, that he saw a monstrous tiger coming from its den among the rocks; it was [only] a kitten [...] which, by accident, had strayed among the paintings. And another young spectator was heard calling out that he saw a horse galloping up the mountain side;--it was a minute fly crawling slowly up the canvas" (Altick, Shows 213). These effects would have been created by the mirrors that altered the observer's sense of depth and perspective, and perhaps can be contributed to the youthful imaginations of the young viewers. But insofar as these responses echo those of visitors to the panorama, it is clear that the Cosmorama, like the panorama, frequently called forth sensation over reason. Its visitors experienced fear, in addition to the feeling of speed and movement where there is either none (as in the immobile panorama) or very little (as with the "minute fly crawling slowly up the canvas"). And the predominant sense is of immediacy: of being present in the scene, so that the scene (like the tiger and the galloping horse) can be seen coming to life.

Like the panorama, then, the Cosmorama transported the observer to different times and places, and in so doing created a sense of "being there." The Cosmorama

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[26] In addition to housing such visual effects, the Cosmorama "served as a fashionable meeting place where [...] paintings and other objects of art were offered for sale and light refreshments were available for those who chose to drop in and idle away an hour or so" (Altick, Shows 211). This social function will become more important later in the chapter, and it suggests that as a social activity, the Cosmorama shares features of going to the movies approximately 100 years later. (See the section "The Sensational Body at Home" in chapter three.)

pushed this sensational engagement even further, playing upon viewers' traditional expectations of time and space. Whereas the Panorama transported the observers to one locale that fully enwrapped and engaged them, the Cosmorama assaulted its viewers with a series of "mini" bodily engagements. The Literary Gazette remarked in 1821 on the curious sensation created "when, by walking two or three steps, we pass from a stormy ocean, on which we seemed just about to embark, to the dimly-lighted nave of a noble church, thence again to a Swiss valley surrounded by Alps, whose summits seek the skies, and so on through all the varieties here presented to the eye" (Altick, Shows 212). While visitors to the Panorama would already be accustomed to feeling fully, bodily involved in such sights, the Cosmorama required viewers to accept these sensations in rapid succession—change of locale, perhaps of country or continent, even change of ambience. The Cosmorama subjected its observers to both change of sensations and of places: unlike the immobile panorama, the Cosmorama suggested rapid travel, travel at a rate inconceivable for the Victorian viewing public. Observers were expected to quickly adapt to the effects of being present at a storm on the sea, then to a quiet church, then to the Alps, and so on. This rate of change—of both feeling and of place—potentially offers, much like the peepshow, the "promise of a larger more exciting world," one which visitors embraced and supported through their continued attendance at optical shows.

A widespread cultural interest and curiosity about a "larger more exciting world" and the sensations attendant upon viewing it become even more apparent through the apparatus of the diorama. Like the panorama and Cosmorama, the diorama required a special building to create its visual effects, and it created those effects in part by isolating

observers from the external world. In the diorama observers were seated as an audience, facing a framed set of screens that were dropped, lifted, and otherwise manipulated to create a scene "in motion." The diorama drew upon the panorama's principle of blocking the observers' view of the light source, leaving the viewers literally in the dark, while the only source of light shone directly upon the screen in front of them. Unlike the panorama, however, the diorama did not create an illusion of reality by enveloping spectators in a picture that transported them to distant times or places; nor did it offer a series of peeks, as did the Cosmorama. Instead, the diorama engaged its viewers by creating dynamic effects of lighting and motion. Like the peepshow, the diorama's scenes were altered by strings—pulleys, cords, weights and counterweights—that moved screens, shutters and curtains in order to manipulate the scene presented to the audience. The mechanical system was clearly more complex than in the peepshows, however, since color, light, shade, opacity and transparency could be manipulated across the full viewing screen.[27] The combination of these effects brought the viewers even more immediately into the *action* of the picture, and dramatic events (such as fires and volcanoes) quickly became popular subjects.

The diorama created its sense of immediacy by relying upon tricks of lighting, shadow, and color to create the feeling passing time, the sensation of action, and the sense of first-hand observation. For example, the London Diorama "dramatized" the fire that had consumed the Roman Basilica of St. Paul. The images began with the basilica

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[27] In the peepshow, these effects would have been created by individual screens that were layered against each other. Peepshow screens were significantly smaller than diorama screens, and the effects would have been less affecting.

intact and moonlight streaming in through the open windows. But as observers watched, one witness wrote, "the dark cedar roof disappears, and we see nothing but the pure blue Italian sky, whilst below, some of the pillars have fallen—the floor is covered with wrecks; the whole, in short, has almost instantaneously changed to a perfect and mournful picture of the church after the desolation wrought by the fire" (Altick, Shows, 170). In this case, the vision of destruction creates an emotional effect—a "mournful" picture creating a sense of unhappiness, of desolation, that works in tandem with the viewer's sense of immediate action: the disappearing roof and the wreckage of the fire.

Like the Cosmorama and panorama, the diorama effectively required its viewers to be moved physiologically and physically. The diorama was a two-screen structure that moved: it literally rotated the platform of seated viewers from one scene to another, and so was often a double-billed event. As such it required its viewers to accept moving—visually and emotionally—from one scene to another.[28] And while the movement from place to place would have been less extreme at the diorama than at the Cosmorama (in part because viewers moved only once), the visions and sensations created by the diorama's images were stronger than they were at the Cosmorama: the diorama actually set out to surprise and startle the audience with special effects, unlike the more traditional painted scenes that were less manipulated by lighting, color, and screens at other kinds of optical shows.

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[28] Altick lists some of the double-billings of the 1820s and 30s, which include the Valley of Sarnen and Canterbury Cathedral (1823); Ruins in a Fog and St. Cloud, Paris (1827); and Paris from Montmartre and the Campo Santo, Pisa (1832) (Shows 166) This list begins to give a sense of the disparate landscapes and locations viewers would experience during one visit to the Diorama.

Optical shows of these sorts continued to thrive until the mid-nineteenth century. It is likely that the public's interest in visiting buildings constructed for certain viewing activities helped promote the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851, which in turn helped to strengthen a growing market for public exhibitions. But optical shows and the devices they generated were not always only public province. Susan Horton demonstrates that the mid-Victorian public not only attended "optical shows in droves," but that it also regularly invited "street lanternists" into their homes "for party entertainment," and rented or bought "gadgetry of their own" (10). For example, she lists three ways for zoetropes to be obtained for home use: from biscuit tins which had slats in the side that became a zoetropic wheel when emptied; from newspapers which contained patterns to be cut out and fastened into a circle; and from Milton Bradley, which "was producing zoetropes by 1870" (10). Other mobile devices that were developed for home use during the period include the kaleidoscope, an early version of a toy still popular among children;[29] the stereoscope, which utilized binocular vision to create miniature three-dimensional scenes;[30] the magic lantern, which projected images from transparencies by shining a light behind them; home panoramas for children's play, which took some of the

[29] Invented by Sir David Brewster in 1817.

[30] Invented by Charles Wheatstone in 1832 for scientific purposes, the stereoscope manipulated vision by uniting what the viewer saw with each individual eye into one three-dimensional scene. The stereoscope was modified by Sir David Brewster in 1849, who made it a small box with two lenses that created 3-dimensional images, and then again in 1861 by Oliver Wendell Holmes, who further modified it to be a hand-held device. (Altick, Shows 233; Winter 39; Crary, Techniques 116-124) Altick notes that "the stereoscope was the Cosmorama and the panorama finally domesticated," as "the London Stereoscope Company's stock of 100,000 views" included "all the scenes ever shown in Leicester Square, Picadilly, Regent Street, and Regent's Park, and countless additional ones" (232-33). But the stereoscope can be situated alongside the larger public viewing shows for both its intent and effect: "In devising the stereoscope," writes Crary, "Wheatstone aimed to simulate the actual presence of a physical object or scene, not to discover another way to exhibit a print or drawing" (122).

principles of the panorama and the diorama and adapted them into kits for children to build and play with;[31] and the thaumatrope, the Faraday wheel, and the phenakistiscope, three different devices which similarly combined a spinning device to manipulate the observer's experience of time, motion, and reality.[32]

These optical gadgets, much like the larger, public devices, all played upon the observer's sense of reality by creating a visual image that the viewer actually saw, even if that image did not reflect a "real" scene or event. These devices supplemented the visual culture to which the diorama, panorama and Cosmorama contributed, albeit in somewhat different ways. The panorama, diorama and Cosmorama, for example, each brought to the observer sights not easily seen otherwise—far-off places, past historical events, or cataclysmic natural events (such as fires, storms at sea, and volcanoes erupting.) In addition to this fairly simple manipulation of time and place, the larger optical shows made available more complex spatio-temporal shifts, which brought the scene "to life" with the observer an active participant in it. The panorama, for instance, could "help" the viewer see something not there (such as moving crowds), and the Cosmorama could help the viewer see something that was there (the minute fly) as something that it wasn't (a

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[31] Altick lists "The Panorama of Europe: A New Game," a child's toy from 1815; "A Geographical Panorama," circa 1822, which was "no more than an ordinary toy theatre, with grooves in the stage and colored cut-our figures and scenic pasteboard flats to insert in them"; and an 1826 toy "advertised as being 'on the principle of the Diorama in Regent's Park'" (232).

[32] These last three devices are all described at length in Crary's Techniques of the Observer. The thaumatrope is "a disc with two different images, one on each side, that converge when the disc is spun" (105); the Faraday wheel "consist[s] of two spoked or slotted wheels mounted on the same axis" (106-7); while the phenakistiscope, like the stroboscope and zootrope, allowed spectators to "view...a simulated action, often sequences of dancers, jugglers, boxers or acrobats" (109-110); the diorama "was a machine of wheels in motion, one in which the observer was a component" (112-13); while the stereoscope manipulated binocular vision by uniting what the observer saw with each eye, individually, into one three-dimensional scene.

galloping horse). Smaller optical gadgets, such as the stereoscope and zoetrope, worked somewhat differently. Instead of replicating images of the external world, the smaller gadgets create "unreal" images, images that do not reflect a real event, or that don't have a correlate in the material world. The thaumatrope makes use of retinal afterimages to "trick" the observer into seeing the two objects, one on either side of a spinning disc, as a single image: not a bird and a cage, but rather a bird in its cage. The representation here is of an idea—a bird in its cage—rather than a particular bird in a particular cage. The Faraday wheel played with the observer's sense of time, using rotating images on a wheel to manipulate not the real speed of the rotating objects, but their apparent speed. And the phenakistoscope created the illusion of movement by presenting a series of stilled images of an object in successive stages of motion (Crary 105-9). The image the viewer sees—the bird in the cage presented by the thaumatrope, or the "dancers, jugglers, boxers or acrobats" of the phenakistiscope—were not actually there to be seen, and they were not visible without the manipulation of the observer's experience of time and space. Like the galloping horse, they were a trick of the eye—but they were fun and thrilling and popular tricks.

Despite their differences, these optical devices share an important aspect: they are not complete without the affective participation of the spectator. In some cases, it is the observer's eye that is important, as tricks of light, shadow, and after-image produce images that are visible yet immaterial. In other cases the observer's physical and spatial relationship to the image is important, as perspective and material images alter and

manipulate the observers' affective responses to what is seen. In all cases, the observers' bodies and sensations are crucial components of the success of the visual apparatus.

Optical shows and gadgets do more, though, than thrill the observer with sensational engagement. An important aspect of the sensational epistemology which they help establish is the participants' altered senses of time. Because the large public shows "transport" the observer to another time and place, they alter the observer's sense of both synchronic and diachronic time. The panorama creates a heightened awareness of both kinds of time, especially in its function as a supplemental history lesson: observers would have the experience of watching an aspect of past history unfold in the present moment. This experience unifies both kinds of time, as chronology (the past of the painting in relationship to the present of the viewing moment) runs up against immediacy (the past happening *in* the present of the viewing moment). The observer's bodily engagement—hearing the noises in the street, drawing back from the picture's dangerous heights—is key to this unification, for the body's responses are what make the past *feel* immediate.

Like the panorama, the Cosmorama compresses time and place. It moves observers through a short span of "real" chronological time by offering a kind of synchronicity: visions of disparate times and place experienced within a shortened viewing moment. The diorama compresses time by using lights, colored screens, and other apparatuses to make visible within the span of a few minutes changes that would take hours or even days; its nature as a double-billed event compresses space by bringing together sights that are adjacent in the viewing moment, but not in the external world.

Those optical gadgets designed primarily for individual use (rather than as large public shows) shape experiences of time slightly differently. Devices like the thaumatrope and Faraday wheel effectively create a dual sense of diachronic time: the time spent watching the figures "in motion" is different from the time in which the figures seem to move: the objects in motion move rapidly through a "false" chronological time which is established via the *sequence* of movement; but the observer has the sense of watching this time unfold within "real" time—the time she spends watching the event.[33] This would be especially true of devices such as phenakistoscope, which required the viewer to stand in front of a mirror, with the device between the viewer's face and the mirror, so that the "moving" image the observer saw was actually a reflection of the device—with her own face in the mirror behind it.

Nineteenth-century optical shows and devices, whether public or private, created a sensational epistemology that manipulated bodily responses as well as experiences of time and movement. This epistemology is based primarily in affect rather than in vision. The panorama fully encircled observers, preventing them from seeing anything outside of the landscape or cityscape—but the effects of that full enwrapping are a kind of rapture, the observers "feel" present at the scene, hearing its sounds and seeing its movements. The Cosmorama transports viewers to sequential sites in diachronic time, while the realistically rendered images make the observer feel the (otherwise impossible) synchronic immediacy of the varied scenes. The diorama creates dynamic diachronic

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[33] Rosalind Krauss notes of the zoetrope that it creates a "double effect, of both having the experience and of watching oneself have it from outside" ("Im/Pulse," 58). Horton notes that the rhetorical question used in our own time "Are we having any fun yet?" applies as well to the mid-Victorians' experiences of this double effect.

effects specifically intended to engage the observers' bodies in the immediacy of sights before them. The smaller devices help to bring some of these same sensations and experiences of time into the home, shaping an experience of the real that was otherwise unavailable.

Whether public or private, these optical shows were immensely popular during their time, drawing sizeable crowds and supporting a long-lived visual industry. Visual shows were a significant presence in the cultural climate in the early- and mid-nineteenth century: they helped accustom the public to the physiological responses attendant upon being enraptured by another time and place; they encouraged vision to be valued for its sensational qualities over its reflective ones; they shaped observers' experiences of time and affect; and they helped foster an eagerness for emotional, rather than rational, responses.

A 'phantasmagoria of sights': the sensational body and the railways

The sensational epistemology for which I have been arguing was grounded in observers' physical and physiological experiences at optical shows. As sources of bodily engagement, these shows—especially the large public ones—had a significant impact on mid-Victorian ideas about mobility. In the preceding section I began to suggest some of the ways that the optical shows altered observers' sense of time and movement, particularly movement that was essential to affective involvement in the visual apparatus. In this section I extend that context into another significant technology that shaped Victorian sensibilities about their bodies in time and space: the railway system. For mid-

Victorian culture, trains and train travel serve as a link between optical shows and sensation fiction.

The effects of train travel, coupled with the experiences offered by optical shows, create an enthralling network of nervous stimuli and bodily arousal. Quite suddenly, Victorians were able to experience themselves in new places, both literally and figuratively. Whereas the optical shows brought representations of new places to observers, the trains literally brought Victorians to actual places they may never have been. Like visitors to the optical shows, train travelers also experienced this newness through their bodies, as various physical and psychic shocks to the nervous system were customary experiences (and eventually became legitimate medical complaints). While the technological apparatuses differ substantially, the affective experiences bear striking similarity: both optical shows and train travel contribute to a sensational epistemology by creating knowledge of the "real" through the body.

Most generally, England's rail system simplified and improved mobility: people were able to travel faster and further, and so had swifter access to decreasingly remote places. These reasons are enough for the train to have rapidly changed daily life in England. Although responses to the railway ranged from fascination with it as a new form of technology to hatred of its imposition upon the landscape, the public generally accepted the growing presence of trains and train travel (Faith 17).

One of the most significant changes for the Victorian public was a fundamentally new experience of space and time. The railway system was credited with "annihilating" traditional notions of space and time (Schivelbusch 33): by decreasing the amount of

traveling time between two or more points, the trains brought those spaces into closer temporal proximity.[34] For Victorian travelers, the train altered the *experience* of time and space. The fact of increased speed effectively brought together the spaces of a train's departure and arrival points: instead of being a day's journey apart (or more), two places might be separated by only a few hours. This change is, according to Faith, the most central of all the "disturbance[s] to the nervous system" that the railway system brought with it (41). As radical a change as this is, however, the Victorian viewing public was prepared for it by their experiences at the optical shows, where they were already affectively experiencing remote locations as "real."

In addition to telescoping time and space, train travel required a new awareness of *exact* time, which "generated a new impatience" (Altick, Presence 198-9). "That the railways transformed the Victorian experience of time as well as space," writes Daly, "is no hyperbole: the train brought with it standard time" and so time-tables, watches, and other modern representations of time-consciousness.[35] Travelers by rail could not afford not to have a watch, and "anxiety about missing trains became a recognizable medical complaint, as the title of a contemporary monograph, 'Hurried to Death,' suggests" (Daly 472). Travelers worried about punctuality could take advantage of—but also be ruled over—William Bradshaw's timetable, which, beginning with its first publication in 1839,

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[34] Schivelbusch cites D. Lardner's Railway Economy of 1850, in which Lardner notes that "distances practically diminish in the exact ratio of the speed of personal locomotion" (33).

[35] Doane argues that modernity "was characterized by the impulse to *wear* time, to append it to the body so that the watch became a kind of prosthetic device extending the capacity of the body to measure time." This impulse helped with the standardization of time, effected by the railroads in England in 1880. (Emergence 4-5).

covered all passenger train services in Britain.[36] By telescoping time and space even as it draws attention to the discreteness of particular times and particular places, railway travel creates the simultaneity of synchronic and diachronic time: it relegates the body to standardization and time management, forcing an awareness of the immediacy of the present; at the same time, it compresses the space between long geographical and chronological distances, making shorter work of the past, present and future of the time it took to travel.[37]

For some travelers, these remote regions were the streets of London. Indeed, the proportion of travelers from outside London who visited the London optical shows grew annually, in large part because the railways made traveling to London faster, cheaper, and easier. In the years between 1836 and 1848, at least eight London terminals were opened, with trains that traveled in all directions; in 1857, the London and Brighton railway carried approximately 57,000 travelers, many of whom came to London to visit the Crystal Palace (Altick, Shows 221; 470).

The visual shows took advantage of people's increased interest in and ability to travel, and traveling became, for a short time, the focus of certain shows. In 1834 the Baker Street Bazaar offered the "Padorama," a "combination mechanical-pictorial exhibition" showing, according to the Literary Gazette, "the most interesting parts of the country traversed by the Liverpool and Manchester Railway" (Altick, Shows 203). The

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[36] Faith notes that "after [Williams] died of cholera in Norway in 1853, his name lived on as a symbol of reliability and devilish complication" (260).

[37] Childs writes that the railway "gave a world of glimpses and parallax—a realization, which would be key to Cubism, that the landscape changed when it was viewed from a different position, that what was seen was always relative to where it was seen from" (70). This idea of subjective perspective and the observer's location will be important to my argument in chapter two, when I discuss the Futurists' aesthetic theories that attempt to locate the spectator in the center of the picture.

Padorama consisted of a pictorial background that was rolled on drums; as the scenery moved, it "passed" other moving images also on drums. The effect was to make the viewers feel as if they were on the train, looking out the window at other moving objects. True to the spirit of its times, the Padorama created an alternate experience of the "real." In an observation that resonates with the panorama observers who heard the sounds of a bustling "busy multitude," the Times reported that the Padorama's painted passengers crowding the carriages "might easily. . .be mistaken for living people" (Altick, Shows 203-4). The Padorama was one among many of the "moving panoramas" that exploited public interest in travel.[38]

Just as importantly, train travel itself was described and experienced in language borrowed from the optical shows; scenery viewed from the inside of a train was described by more than one travel as panoramic. In 1865, a French traveler explicitly referred to the panorama-quality of the scenery: "before your eyes [the railway] unrolls its infinite panorama, a vast succession of charming tableaux, of novel surprises. [....] Don't ask it

[38] Technological and imaginative innovations produced a variety of such shows, wherein observers were transformed into passengers. These shows include the "Pleorama," which replicated a boat traveling either "around the Bay of Naples or down the Rhine"; a moving panorama called "A Trip to Niagra" which "portrayed a steamboat journey up the Hudson (with storm and fog effects) through the moonlit Catskills, and then by way of the Erie Canal to Niagra"; a triumphantly successful panorama of a trip down the Mississippi that included "steamboat races and wrecks" and suggested the passage of time by rendering "various locales under different aspects of light—dawn, full daylight, moonlight, [and] an approaching storm"; a similar panorama of a trip up the west bank of the Nile, and then, after intermission, down the east; yet another of the Ohio River; a trip from Washington, D.C. to Oregon called "The Overland Route," which attained even more success once news arrived of the California gold rush; and a similar panorama called the "Overland Route to India" (Altick, Shows, 203-7). Faith reports that in 1833 "the Bazaar in Portman Square in the West End of London showed the Disyntrechon, 'a mechanical-graphicoramic view of the Liverpool railroad.' By the 1870s [...] Stephen James Sedgwick made a handsome living taking 'lantern shows' round the New York suburbs" that were so skillfully done "that by the time he had finished his audience felt they really had traveled by rail to the Western Sea" (253).

for details, but for the living whole" (Schivelbusch 61). A few years earlier, an 1861 traveler noted the stage-like qualities of train travel:

> the steam engine, that powerful stage manager, throws the switches, changes the décor, and shifts the point of view every moment; in quick succession, it presents the astonished traveler with happy scenes, sad scenes, burlesque interludes, brilliant fireworks, all visions that disappear as soon as they are seen[...] . (Schivelbusch 61)

While the metaphor of steam engine as stage manager plays on visual experiences at the theater as well as the image of the raree showman hawking his peepshow-wares, much of this passage resonates with optical shows such as the diorama and the Cosmorama. The diorama, which moved viewers from one changing scene to another, was built of switches, pulleys, screens and curtains that created the effect of changing décor. The less stage-like Cosmorama relied less on change of lighting and décor, and more on moving "the astonished traveler" from varied scene to varied scene (the series of peeks described earlier) which effectively "disappear[ed] as soon as they were seen" and the observer walked on to the next viewing window.

Trains, much like the actual optical shows for viewers, created for travelers a new kind of reality, one based in motion and the body's sensational participation in that motion. Both train travelers and visual observers experienced new relationships of time and space, and negotiated that newness through affect: their bodily responses dominated their reactions. Visitors to the optical shows frequently reported seeing *motion*—a galloping horse, an approaching tiger, a bustling multitude, a military commander leaping

from crag to crag—and they felt that motion in their bodies. On the train, travelers were actually moving, and they linked those sensations back to the optical shows with which they were already familiar. This connection speaks as much to the Victorians' experiences of the railway as affective as to their experiences of the optical shows as real.

Unlike the optical shows, however, which were notable for their safety, traveling by train left its marks on the body.[39] By the 1860s—roughly thirty years after train-travel into London became possible—the public was feeling the aftershocks of the railway system. These shocks had been reported much earlier, of course: in 1829 Thomas Creevy wrote of a trip in a locomotive that "it really is like flying, and it is impossible to divest yourself of the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident."[40] More gently, but with perhaps no less fear, Charles Greville reported in 1837 that "the first sensation" of train travel "is a slight degree of nervousness and a feeling of being run away with" (Faith 17). Shocks to the system had long been a complaint (or comment) about train travel. By the 1860s, however, the bodily effects of those shocks became legitimate medical study. In 1862 The Lancet published the "Report of the Commission on the Influence of Railway Travelling on Public Health," noting the railway's injurious effects on the travelers' bodies. Railway carriages were described as metaphoric skeletons, "a framework of bones without muscles"; traveler's bodies (especially the muscles and

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[39] Beyond bodily and psychic shocks, trains also threatened very real danger: the enclosed traveling compartments created privacy, which had romantic as well as fearful overtones, and news and fictional accounts of "indecent assaults" were not uncommon. In 1864 a traveler was murdered in the train compartment he had been traveling in; the official report of the murder noted that crimes like this were causing a "panic amongst railway passengers" which was prompting "gentlemen passengers, as well as railway officers of all classes, [to] constantly refuse to travel singly with a stranger of the weaker sex, under the belief that it is only common prudence to avoid in this manner all risk of being accused, for purposes of extortion, of insult, or assault" (Schivelbusch 82).

[40] Schivelbusch 15; Faith 14.

tendons) provided the metaphoric connective tissue which literally and figuratively absorbing the physical shocks incurred by railway technology. Furthermore, railway travel was considered to be so nerve-wracking (by keeping travelers in "a [constant] state of great nervous excitement" from the rough jolts of the ride) that many travelers "have been obliged to give it up in consequence of the effect on the nervous system" (Schivelbusch 113-20). Railway travel began to merit serious medical attention when travelers repeatedly complained of feeling shaken, shocked into an awareness of the affective union of their own fleshly bodies with the un-cushioned skeletal systems of the railroad.

The Lancet's report seemed to augur the emergence of railway travel in medical literature. In 1866 three additional medical reports were published: "On the Cases of Injury from Railway Accidents," by Thomas Buzzard; "Railway Accidents or Collisions: Their Effects, Immediate and Remote, Upon the Brain and Spinal Cord and other Portions of the Nervous System" by William Camps; and On Railway and Other Injuries of the Nervous System, by John Eric Erichsen. Each report notes that bodily shocks suffered while traveling on the trains differ from other accidents in the degree of violence they cause to the body; furthermore, each notes that accident victims may appear unharmed at the time of the catastrophe, but suffer bodily later, with symptoms such as headaches, forgetfulness, cold sweats, states of anxiety and disturbed sleep.[41] In the 1860s a new term was coined to describe the bodily shock caused by traveling on trains, even when that travel was accident-free: "railway spine" (Schivelbusch 135).

[41] These reports are notable for their coincidental appearance; none of the reports reference each other, yet each draws similar conclusions. For greater detail, see Schivelbusch, 138-144.

Such shocks—both the bodily wear and tear of travel, and the after-effects of accidents—even had their place in non-medical literature. Novelists throughout the era—including Thackeray, Eliot and Dickens—incorporated passages about the train system and gave the railways a role in their plots and characterizations.[42] Many Victorian novelists, even past the mid-century mark, "used the sheer unaccustomedness of train travel as topical material—the exhilaration mingled with wonder and no little apprehension, the phantasmagoria of sights quickly passing before one's eyes [...]" (Altick, Presence 191).[43] Faith notes the regularity with which Victorian novelists presented scenes of train travel and railway accidents, and how quickly the railway system was adopted as a means to dispose of characters, often through fatal accidents.

While accident scenes may have been common in novels, they were also common material in the periodical press. Interestingly, at a time when periodicals were beginning to make use of technologies that allowed for mass publishing of illustrations, many accident scenes were *not* visually depicted. Instead, they were left to the reader to imagine. For example, the Illustrated London News described an 1850 accident in specific and vivid detail: the last carriage in the train "appeared a perfect wreck; the end, roof, and sides were demolished, and how the unfortunate passengers escaped mortal

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[42] A systematic discussion of the role and presence of trains and train travel in Victorian novels is beyond this scope of this dissertation. For such a discussion, see chapter six, "New Ways of Riding and Writing," in Altick's The Presence of the Present; see also Faith, whose list of novelists who incorporated scenes of railway travel and accidents includes Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, Disraeli, Hardy, Trollope; other writers such as Ruskin, Smiles, Carlyle; and a number of French writers, including Hugo, Flaubert, and Zola.

[43] Note that Altick, like the Victorians preceding him, chooses the language of optical shows to describe railway travel. This linguistic link between descriptions of train travel and the optical shows is made by other critics as well: Sinnema notes that the *Illustrated London News*, in an article called "The Railroad Note-Book," creates the "illusion of actual movement—panoramic movement, as the world unrolls itself for the viewer's pleasure outside the carriage windows" through a Dickensian stylistic excess (162-3).

injury, appeared to the casual observer most miraculous. Many of them were bleeding from wounds in their heads and several parts of their bodies" (Sinnema 153).

Through physical trauma, shocks to the senses, and altered perceptions and experiences of space and time, train travel forced Victorians to experience the possibilities and limits of their own bodies. Perhaps ironically, travel by train—the fastest mode of transportation at the time—is a slowed form of the sensational viewing experiences provided by optical shows: in the shows, the changes in lighting and scenery that accompany a long train ride are condensed into shortened and intensified viewing experiences. The train itself helps to make possible observers' responses to the sights at the shows: faster than any other available mode of transportation, trains were helping create the sensational epistemology which helped to maintain the public's eagerness for the sensational experiences they provide.

An 'eagerness of physical sensation': cultural and literary sensationalism

Bodily experiences—"physical sensations"—were eagerly sought by a consuming public, eagerly produced by entrepreneurs in the visual industry, and regularly experienced by growing numbers of Victorians. The network of nervous stimuli provided by the optical shows and train travel is made even more intricate by the addition of writing, publishing, and the dissemination of printed texts. The eagerness for physical sensation that accompanies visual shows and railway travel reached beyond these media, and for at least a brief time, came to dominate literate culture as well.

Railways created a space for reading novels and newspapers, making possible the double effect of increasing the scope of travelers' knowledge while creating new

sensations (from the jolting travel as much as from the reading). Nineteenth-century travelers by train were regular readers. Schivelbusch notes that "the idea of reading while traveling on trains is as old as the railroad itself," and that by the 1840s English booksellers were a regular feature in railway stations (64-5). He locates this interest in reading in the combination of the train's external and internal worlds: the panoramization of the landscape outside the carriage window, and the social world inside the carriage compartment. Unlike travelers in earlier centuries who banded and bonded together for the duration of a trip, Victorian train travelers found themselves alienated from each other by virtue of their short and frequent trips. Accordingly, they took refuge in reading rather than engaging in the work of getting to know their transient companions. But even reading did not alleviate the physical symptoms caused by railway stresses. Whether one focused one's eye on the words on a page (which would be jostled and jolted while the train moved) or stared out the window at the panoramic scenery, the results were the same: the mind and senses were exhausted (Schivelbusch 68-9).

Bodily sensations, then, especially as experienced through train travel, link the apparently disparate genres of visual shows and written texts. These links are especially notable during the 1860s, when "sensation novels" were a literary craze. Like visual shows and the railway system, sensation novels effectively transport readers to another time and place; also like the shows and trains, the novels create that movement through the body. Although visual shows are significantly different from sensation novels in form, their analogous functions and effects are compelling: both offer a sense of "mystery

and excitement" induced by the "promise of a larger more exciting world," excitement that is experienced as heightened physiological sensations.

Perhaps nowhere are visual culture and sensation novels linked through bodily affect more than in the periodical press of the 1860s. The press played a double role in the printed life of sensation novels: many of the novels were first serialized in magazines such as Temple Bar and Belgravia, and many were the subject of critical commentary in periodicals such as The Quarterly Review and Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine. During the 1860s, the novels were a regular source of complaint for the critics, who were especially concerned about the effects the novels produced in their readers' bodies. But during this decade sensationalism itself becomes especially topical, and literary sensationalism became part of a larger cultural sensationalism. In this context, the press does not need to link the visual shows with the novels *per se*; rather, both play a role in the cultural interest in the sensational that the press helps to form. In this section, I examine some of the links created by the press, links that demonstrate the pervasive influence of sensational bodily responses not just to visual shows or even the novels, but to culture at large.

Let me preface my analysis with a brief description of sensation novels and their general reception. According to most critics, sensation novels are novels that create a physiological response in the reader—or, in the now-famous words of H. L. Mansel, novels that "preach[] to the nerves."[44] (Whether they comprise their own genre, or a sub-

[44] "Sensation Novels," Quarterly Review 1863: 435.

genre of other established novel genres, is still up for debate.[45]) A sensation novel "abounds in incident"—shocking or startling its readers with bigamy, theft, arson, murder, legal deception, and other behavior that is criminal, corrupt, or otherwise amoral. The novels and their shocking plots provoked amazement that in an age "preeminently distinguished for its progress in the exact sciences," readers would still exhibit "the most childish credulity flourishing beneath the shadow of a sensuous and unreasoning materialism" ("Sensational Novels," quoted in Colby 188-89), a critique that underlies my examination of the novels' affective productions. These "sensuous and unreasoning" novels were often called "trash or something worse" ("Sensation Novels" 439); the novelists themselves were often criticized for shoddy workmanship, for failing to produce "deep knowledge of human nature, graphic delineations of individual character, vivid representations of the aspects of Nature or the workings of the soul—all the higher

[45] Many critics refer to the "sensation genre"; some, like Brantlinger and Loesberg, base entire arguments around the notion and definition of "genre" itself. As many critics (including Brantlinger) point out, however, it is difficult for "sensation fiction" to qualify as a distinct genre unto itself, as it draws upon and participates in other generic features, including those of the sentimental novel, the Romance, the Gothic horror, detective fiction, the mystery novel, the Newgate novel, and even the domestic novel. Based on the wide-spread use in the periodical press not just of serialized sensation novels, but of the evocations of sensation itself, I would argue that there is no such thing as a "sensation genre," although there is clearly a "sensation sensation." Bernstein argues that "sensation novels and their contemporary reviewers articulate an *anxiety of assimilation*" which emerges as "distress over the fusing of divisions," including "genre distinctions between types of fiction circulating in British culture" (255). Gilbert points out, somewhat persuasively, that "[b]y the mid-seventies, the sensation genre was redefined with more specificity, and other sub-genres that previously were lumped in with it gained their own identities and were each targeted for critical surveillance by different issues (class, sexual transgression), which yet contained the trace of the ineradicable connection of those issues in the permeability of the body" (81). While the question of whether "sensation fiction" is a meaningful label for an entire genre remains open, the view has been firmly established that the novels were popular with many readers and unpopular with many critics.

features of the creative art" ("Sensation Novels" 437).[46] Held in contempt for such failings, sensation writers were often referred to as "minor novelists" and were characterized as having "no genius and little talent"; furthermore, they were accused of compensating for these failures by "displaying their acquaintance with the accessories and surroundings of vice, with the means of seduction, and with what they set forth as the secret tendencies of the heart" ("Novels" 258-9). Yet despite the critical attacks launched against sensation novels, the public's response was so overwhelmingly positive that even "the staunch practitioners and defenders of the domestic novel, Margaret Oliphant and Charlotte M. Yonge, were forced at the height of the craze to offer their readers sensational novels featuring murders and mysteries" (Wynne 2).[47]

Reviews and commentary on sensation novels were common material in the periodical press during the 1860s, appearing with some regularity in publications such as Blackwood's Edinburgh Review, The Westminster Review, The Spectator, Belgravia, The Quarterly Review, and North British Review. Among the more popular of the novels and novelists reviewed were Lady Audley's Secret and Aurora Floyd by Mary Elizabeth

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[46] Not only the material of sensational tales was criticized; the actual materiality of the books came under fire. Sensation novels were criticized for their means of production: they were written quickly, serialized in periodicals so that readers would be forced to wait in suspense for the next installment, and often published cheaply and printed with "lurid covers," then sold in railway stalls or shared among borrowers from circulating libraries ("Sensation Novels" 436). Springhall notes that one hostile critic called this the "era of the greatest general depravity, as well as literary wretchedness, in the history of periodical fiction" (572).

[47] Wynne refers to Oliphant's Salem Chapel (1862-63) and Yonge's The Trial (1863). The genre itself was popular enough, and the periodical press far-reaching enough, that sensation fiction (like the public optical shows which preceded it) was also "sensational" in America: the American Justin M'Carthy parodied the genre in a novel called "Our Sensation Novel," which drew upon such well-known characters as Fosco, and Hartright ; similarly, *Harper's Magazine* published M'Carthy's "A Little Sensation Drama: In a Prologue, Three Acts and an Epilogue." Bret Harte wrote "Selina Sedilia" as a parody of the novels by Braddon and Wood. *Scribner's* published an article by Edward J. Phelps entitled "The Age of Words," in which he suggests that all citizens may fall prey to the journalist *if* an event from their life can, "by any *misrepresentation or gloss*," be made into and sold as "*a sensational story*."

Braddon; East Lynne, Danesbury House and A Life's Secret by Mrs. Henry Wood; The Last Days of a Bachelor and Nobly False by James M'Grigor Allan; The Countess's Cross by Mrs. Egerton; Uncle Silas, Guy Deverell and Wylder's Hand by J. Sheridan Le Fanu; The Woman in White, No Name, Armadale and The Moonstone by Wilkie Collins; and Hard Cash by Charles Reade. On rare occasion, this list was extended to include Anthony Trollope's Orley Farm, as well as various novels by Charles Dickens.

In their popularity and omnipresence, sensation novels are strikingly similar to nineteenth-century visual shows. Both achieved popularity by playing to topical interests and current events. In this vein, the visual shows reflected popular contemporary issues and interests, or what Altick calls "the preoccupations and tastes of the day" (Shows 173). This topicality took several forms. First, the panorama was often used to illustrate history (one early popular panorama was of a battle scene during the Napoleonic wars), and observers would regularly attend panoramic shows in order to "visualize what it read about in the newspapers" (Shows 176). Yet even after the development of printed plates that allowed illustrated newspapers and periodicals to serve this same purpose, the panorama and its contemporaries remained topical and original by playing to the public's interest in topography and travel. The panorama offered its viewers all the advantages of travel, complete with the bodily experiences attendant upon viewing new sights, without any of the potential difficulties: observing the panorama took less time and cost less money than did a trip abroad; moreover, it completely eradicated the very real threats of bodily harm induced by travel while still providing viewers with the very real thrill of taking in exciting new sights and images. The pleasure of being safely thrilled was an

advantage frequently attributed to public optical shows throughout the decades of their popularity. In 1824 Blackwood's reported that panoramas served this purpose, making images of foreign lands "tangible to the eye" if "not the hand," without losing the feeling that "the scene is absolutely alive, vivid, and true": observers could "feel all but the breeze, and hear all but the dashing of the wave."[48] Almost forty years later, the stereoscope was lauded for producing similar effects. An 1860 article in The Photographic Journal reported that the stereoscope allowed observers to sit comfortably by their firesides and examine "ruins of antique architecture" which illustrate "the historical records of former and lost civilizations" without "being exposed to the fatigue, privation, and risks" imposed upon those who traveled to the actual sites.[49] Clearly the promise of a "larger more exciting world" was a pertinent promise to early- and mid-Victorians, as travel to that world continued to capture not just the minds and attention of

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[48] In greater detail, Blackwood's reports this: "Panoramas are among the happiest contrivances for saving time and expense in this age of contrivances. What cost a couple of hundred pounds and half a year half a century ago, now costs a shilling and a quarter of an hour. Throwing out of the old account the innumerable miseries of travel, the insolence of public functionaries, the roguery of innkeepers, the visitations of banditti, charged to the muzzle with sabre, pistol, and scapulary, and the rascality of the custom-house officers, who plunder, passport in hand, the indescribable *désagrémens* of Italian cookery, and the insufferable annoyances of that epitome of abomination, an Italian bed.

Now [...the] mountain or the sea, the classic vale or the ancient city, is transported to us on the wings of the wind. [....] We have seen Vesuvius in full roar and torrent, [....] Constantinople, with its bearded and turbaned multitudes [....] and now Pompeii, reposing in its slumber of two thousand years[...]. There is no exaggeration in talking of those things as really existing. [....] If we have not [these sights] tangible by our hands, we have them tangible by the eye—the fullest impression that can be purchased, by our being parched, passported, pummelled, plundered, starved and stenched, for twelve hundred miles east and by south [...]." (Blackwood's, 15 (1824) 472-73, qtd in Altick, Shows 181.)

[49] The Photographic Journal reports that the stereoscope is "[t]he general panorama of the world. It introduces us to scenes known only from the imperfect relations of travellers [...], illustrating the historical records of former and lost civilizations [...]. By our fireside we have the advantage of examining them, without being exposed to the fatigue, privation, and risks of the daring and enterprising artists who [...] have traversed lands and seas, crossed rivers and valleys, ascended rocks and mountains with their heavy and cumbrous photographic baggage." (A. Claudet, "Photography in its Relation to the Fine Arts," The Photographic Journal, vol. vi, 15, June 1860. Qtd in Gernsheim, History 191.)

the "daring and enterprising artists" who brought the images home, but also sight-seers, explorers, settlers, photographers, missionaries, and colonizers.

Similarly, topicality is a primary point of interest for sensation fiction. The novels often drew from current events for their plots, events, and characterizations, and these connections—the influence of sensation fiction on news, and the influence of news on sensation fiction—were played up in the periodical press. The press regularly drew attention to the sensational elements of its articles. One such news item, titled "Love and Murder," opens with an explicit link to sensation fiction: "It is no exaggeration to say that all England reads novels, and scarcely an exaggeration to say that half England writes them." The piece then goes on to express surprise that amid the flurry of excited authors and excitable readers, the "hot succession of works of imagination" has done little "to clear up the mysteries of even the one passion on which they all turn": love. Or is it murder? "Love and Murder" proceeds to relate the real-life criminal deeds of one George Hall, who has enacted upon his sweetheart a vengeance "so terrible and extreme that his own life is forfeit to the law" (The Spectator 289). It is clear from the language and the title that the news article relies upon its readers' ready familiarity with the sensational, and uses this familiarity to sensationalize its own story.

In an even more explicit piece, Belgravia asks "Where do authors get new ideas from?" The answer is simple:

> Take one out of the many stirring events that you see daily recounted in the columns of the press, throw in a little more colour here, a little more shadow there, make yourself one with the hero of the story, and

> if you are a man endued with the power of expressing yourself, you can write a narrative that would bear comparison with the most sensational novels. ("Truth is Stranger Than Fiction" 103)

Readers are told that with only "a few slights of fancy" and "a few dashes of colour," they, too, can fashion from "the daily papers" their very own "sensation novel" (106). The idea of directing color and shadow resonates with the visual shows, especially those like the diorama that relied upon colored screens and changing effects of light and shadow to create verisimilitude. And the public, as indicated by observers such as Dibdin, the American naval officer, and the young spectators at the Cosmorama—all of whom reportedly felt themselves to be "in" the scenes they viewed—were already accustomed to making themselves "one with" the story, perhaps even longing, like Dibdin, to be the hero of the illustrated picture.

Occasionally the press would draw upon sensation fiction in more subtle ways. For example, when The Spectator reported, in 1864, on the final decision in the Yelverton bigamy trial, its article was titled "Wife and No Wife"—a lively combination of two recent sensation novels: The Doctor's Wife (in current serialization in 1864) and Collins's No Name (recently serialized in 1862-3).[50] Given the frequent press coverage of sensation fiction and its links to news reports—as well as The Spectator's own regular

[50] The Yelverton bigamy-divorce trial was a test of the marriage laws in the United Kingdom. Major Yelverton had taken two wives on two separate occasions; at issue were the validity of either marriage, the question of which one carried legal precedence, and the status of the marriages in different parts of the United Kingdom—most notably Scotland and Ireland. Not only were the marriage laws at stake, but the question of legitimacy and inheritance for Major Yelverton's children.

reviews of sensation novels—it is unlikely that this connection would have been missed by The Spectator's readership.

Beyond topicality, sensation novels and optical shows share other similarities. The visual shows were popular enough to be kept in business for decades; this popularity is attributable not just to the sights and sensations they provided, but to the resilience of their names. Business owners and other "entrepreneurs sought to give [optical shows] constantly fresh, though largely factitious, novelty through elastic applications of the time-tested names 'panorama' and 'diorama' or the invention of new ones" (Altick, Shows, 173). Just as the names panorama and diorama—or even the suffix, "—orama"—retained popular power to draw in observers, so too did the term "sensational" retain popular appeal to the reading public. Even though those who wrote sensation novels did not coin the name of this new "genre," the fiction itself undoubtedly capitalized upon the pervasiveness of the term "sensation," which appeared throughout the periodical press of the 1860s.[51] The wide-spread use of the term "sensation," in its application to such varied fields as politics, science, art and literature, illuminates mid-Victorian's eagerness to participated in heightened physiological experiences.

A sampling of titles from periodicals during the 1860s, titles which demonstrate the range of topics and ideas considered "sensational," makes this clear. "Sensation

[51] I would like to offer anecdotal evidence for the strength and importance of Belgravia for popularizing the term and ideology of sensationalism; my work with the periodicals suggests to me that this magazine, benefiting from the guidance and hard work of Braddon, did more to introduce the term "sensation" in playful, ironic, and even meritorious terms than any other. Clearly Braddon would have had an investment in swinging critical attitudes toward her favor, even though in her long career she eventually turned away from the early sensationalism of Lady Audley's Secret and Aurora Floyd. For additional and thorough research into Braddon's work with Belgravia, see Robinson and Onslow.

Diplomacy in Japan," details the activities of a British diplomat overseas[52]; "How to Make a Novel: A Sensational Song," is a copy of song lyrics, sung to a traditional air, that parody sensation novel-writing[53]; "Sensationalism in Science" a recurring column in Belgravia, asks, "what are all the startling scenes portrayed in novels [...] to the dreadful catastrophes predicted for us and for all creation in the pages of Science?"[54]; "Nerves and Nerve" is a commentary on an article published in the Argosy which proclaimed the value of suffering from a "nervous condition"[55]; "The Mechanical Sensation Drama" discusses the material and mechanical devices used in melodrama to heighten the audience's nervous anticipation[56]; "Decline of the Drama" laments "comedy 'adapted from the French,' and of melodrama pillaged from popular novels"[57]; "Carpenter's Scenes" suggests that life is like popular dramas, riddled with "shams, makeshifts everywhere"[58]; and "A New Sensation Wanted" is an American political commentary on the quickness with which various European countries begin and end wars, a commentary that indicts Europe for its insistence on quickness, and similarly indicts America for its appetite for the excitement produced by such quick-moving politics.[59] (Thus the title can refer to all involved on both sides of the Atlantic.)

Even articles that do not indicate sensationalism in their title rely upon the rhetorical effects of sensation—the readers' "eagerness [for] physical sensation"—to

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[52] Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine DLXX (Apr 1863): 397-413.
[53] Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (May 1864): 636-37.
[54] Belgravia 5 (May 1868): 555.
[55] Spectator 1865: 1336-38.
[56] The Manufacturer and Builder 20 (Nov 1888): 139-140.
[57] Belgravia 2 (Mar 1867): 57-65.
[58] *Ibid*, 455-60.
[59] Punchinello 2 (1870): 62

make their points. In "Novelist's Law," Britain's legal system is characterized as sensational: novelists who fail to understand it fully create fictional "legal effects [which] are startling," revealing that "from the novelist's point of view, [the law...] is often a fearful and wonderful institution" (124). "Literary Criticism" insists that criticism has long produced sensational effects upon writers: Keats suffered from "madness" as a result of the Quarterly Review's criticism of Endymion, "and he was with difficulty prevented from suicide" (23); Ritson, who "became insane" from critical attacks on his works, claimed he was "brought to an end in ill-health and low spirits; certain to be insulted by a base and prostitute gang of lurking assassins who stab in the dark" with "poisoned daggers" (23).[60] The Spectator, in its regular review of the review magazines, praises Blackwood's for its "tolerably fair biography of Andrew Jackson, the American President" because it is "racy" ("The Magazines" May 1862, 500).

As these examples from the periodical press of the 1860s make abundantly clear, sensation novels are situated in a cultural moment where sensation itself was topical and popular.[61] Sensation novels were part of a general attention to sensationalism as a

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[60] The fact that these articles come from Belgravia—a magazine "conducted by M.E. Braddon, author of Lady Audley's Secret" (so reads every frontispiece)—undoubtedly has some bearing on the pervasive presence of sensational rhetoric, for Braddon's continued success created a place for such a language.

[61] Many scholars have examined these connections in greater detail than is possible here. In Evil Encounters, Altick demonstrates the two-way relationship between the sensationalism of crimes in periodicals and newspapers, and the sensationalism of crimes in sensation novels. Wynne's study, The Sensation Novel and the Victorian Family Magazine, similarly links sensationalism in the periodical press and novels, pointing out that sensationalism "was not limited to fiction; magazines presented non-fiction which also discussed sensational topics such as crime, female transgression, insanity, and violence," and that Victorian magazines thereby "established literary sensationalism as the dominant discourse of the 1860s" (2). Brantlinger's list of the "artifacts other than novels" to which the terms "sensation" and "sensationalism" were attached includes "sensation dramas," melodramas, the Yelverton bigamy-divorce trial, and other current news and political items (such as divorce law reform and greater sexual freedom) in which the public showed great interest (5-6). Loesberg goes so far as to link the structure of sensation novels to the ideological structure of class anxieties and responses to the Second Reform Bill.

phenomenon, made apparent through journalism, fiction and optical shows, all venues that provided for physiological responses. Furthermore, the rapid development and dissemination of the mid-Victorian periodical presses meant that sensation fiction and sensationalism were both readily available to an increasingly literate public.[62] One mid-Victorian critic remarked that whether his contemporaries were to "take up the *Times*," "go into society" or simply look around at their clubs or drawing rooms, they would find that "the last [i.e., most recent] novel is a more interesting topic than the state of the weather," and that monthly and weekly publications could be found "by dozens, scattered over tables, chairs, and sofas" in fashionable abandon ("Truth is Stranger Than Fiction" 103).[63] Even this commentary about the relationship of novels to clubs bears striking resemblance to the relationship between the Cosmorama and its social function. It is easy to imagine the idlers in the "Cosmorama Rooms," who might "drop in and idle away an hour or so in casually inspecting whatever was on display and gossiping with

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[62] Writes Springhall, "The market for printed material increased rapidly from the mid nineteenth century onwards[...]. Railway distribution, the penny post, and a growth of government spending, all helped to raise the scale of demand for print to an entirely new level. Periodical and newspaper publishing, in particular, saw a vast expansion in the second half of the century," and the resulting influx of capital "led the way in a gradual steam-driven, technical revolution of the printing press" that "helped to bring cheap fiction before a mass audience" (567-8). These developments in printing and publishing were instrumental in creating a reading public, as "widespread literacy in even the poorer sections" increased as a direct result of "a desire to peruse entertaining fiction" (569). In addition to Springhall's research, I find it notable that that throughout 1861, The Spectator includes this notice under its title: "'The Spectator' is published every Saturday Morning, in time for despatch by the Early Trains, and copies of that Journal may be had the same Afternoon through News-agents in any part of the Kingdom." By May 1861, this notice has been emended to include "New-agents are, therefore, enabled to deliver that Paper at the residences of subscribers in London before EIGHT o'clock a.m." This notice, presumably no longer necessary, is omitted by 1865.

[63] Recent scholarly research, including work by Altick, Bernstein, Brantlinger, Cvetkovich, Gilbert, Loesberg, Pykett and Wynne, makes the case that sensation fiction played to popular cultural interests, including politics, criminal activity, mass production, and the feeling body; this body of research demonstrates the widespread and pervasive nature of the discourse of sensationalism.

acquaintances" chatting excitedly about the latest installment of their favorite sensation novel, or about the most recent sensationalized news event.[64]

The periodical press played a major role in creating a sensational cultural climate, linking what might otherwise be disparate ideas and experiences of sensational activities. Even more, the press played perhaps *the* major role in the hype and distribution of sensation novels, since many of them were serialized in periodicals before being published as novels. In all of this, attention to the body of the reader—the sensational, feeling body—remained primary.

In the press, the reader's body received both serious and playful attention. The physiological effects of sensation fiction on the body were the focus of a satirical piece in 1863, when Mr. Punch mockingly advertised a new journal: "The Sensation Times, and Chronicle of Excitement." The journal was promised to be

> devoted chiefly to the following objects: namely, Harrowing the Mind, Making the Flesh Creep, Causing the Hair to Stand on End, Giving Shocks to the Nervous System, Destroying Conventional Moralities, and generally Unfitting the Public for the Prosaic Avocations of Life. (quoted in Hughes, 3)

Punch's use of sensations—creeping flesh and shocked nerves—are more exaggerated and even perhaps more rooted in fear than were those reports from visitors to the panorama, diorama, and Cosmorama. In this case, Punch is playing more to the

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[64] This kind of social function will extend to film-goers, as I discuss in chapter three. In particular, Dorothy Richardson argues that film creates a "world-wide conversation," a conversation made possible because film—particularly silent film that doesn't rely on language for its meaning—can have an international reach and scope.

readership and publication of sensation novels than to the purveyors of visual sensations, as sensation novels were notable for the "shocks to the nervous system" that they could produce through fear, surprise, or other forms of physiological tension and arousal. Yet the similarity between the effects of the novels and the effects of the visual shows is marked: both work on the body, thrilling a public eager to be thrilled, eager to experience physiological sensations based on encountering worlds beyond the everyday perimeters of their lives.

Less parodically, mid-Victorian critics frequently invoked the evils of sensation fiction by linking the novels to the specific physiological responses they call forth in the reader. Readers of Blackwood's learned that the mundane or ordinary could be thrilling, for sensation novelists were able to "boldly take[] in hand the common mechanism of life" and in so doing "thrill[ ] us into wonder, terror, and breathless interest, with positive personal shocks of surprise and excitement."[65] Subscribers to the Quarterly Review read that sensation novels aim at "[e]xcitement, and excitement alone," an end they accomplish "at any cost,"[66] and that "the mysterious thrill of [the woman in white's] sudden touch" was a sensation "distinct and palpable."[67] Fraser's postulated that "in order to be accepted by a magazine [for serialization], a tale must needs be full of horror, excitement, and crime," and that it must "excite[] a desire in the mind of the reader to know what is coming next."[68] Echoing some of the first-hand reports of optical shows, the North British Review suggested that The Woman in White induces an unfortunate

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[65] "Sensation Novels," Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, May 1862: 566.
[66] "Sensation Novels," Quarterly Review 113 April 1863.
[67] *Ibid*, 571.
[68] "Popular Novels of the Year." 262-3.

"passionate curiosity" and No Name "enchains" the reader,[69] keeping her so fully enthralled with her sensational experience that she is unable to walk away from the book.

Affect and arousal are not the only metaphors critics use to decry the novels; metaphors of health—of both body and the mind—abound. In some cases, the novels were likened to unhealthy food. Blackwood's wrote that "half-a-dozen inoffensive stories go down in the same gulp with which we swallow the more startling effort,"[70] while the Quarterly Review postulated that "works of [the sensation] class...[are] called into existence to supply the cravings of a diseased appetite, and...stimulate the want which they supply."[71] Metaphors like these link eating with buying, suggesting that the books are ruinous consumer goods, whether they are consumed via the mouth or the pocketbook. The North British Review goes further, linking the public's physical health to its mental health in its argument that the popularity of Lady Audley's Secret was "indicative of a certain morbid condition of the public mind."[72] Similarly, The Spectator reports that mothers should worry that reading sensation novels "perverts, or defiles, or destroys the imagination" of their daughters.[73] Female readers seem especially susceptible to mental and physical debilitation. Margaret Oliphant warns girls away from sensation fiction, as the novels falsely "represent as the natural sentiment of English girls" an "intense appreciation of flesh and blood" and an "eagerness of physical

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[69] "Novels and Novelists of the Day." 98.
[70] "Novels." Aug 1863: 168.
[71] "Sensation Novels." Apr 1863.
[72] "Novels and Novelists of the Day." 100.
[73] "The Effect of Novel-Reading on Girls." 1208.

sensation."[74] This picture of young women—which, Oliphant argues, is hung where all can see, in "boudoir and drawing room" alike (259)—is especially dangerous, for "[g]irls in their teens, sober matrons, respectable or busy wives, prudish and pious spinsters, all indulge in the mental refreshment afforded by the red or green bound volumes spread over the kingdom through the medium of the circulating libraries."[75] This final piece of criticism suggests an interplay of consumption and health: as "mental refreshment," the books are able to feed the mind and help it to feel rested, refreshed. Yet the books-as-food are not considered healthy, which calls into question the kind and quality of the refreshment they offer: the mind "refreshed" by the books is also mind perverted, destroyed, or defiled, a mind suffering from a "certain morbid condition." This morbid condition is the condition of heightened and intensified sensation.

Many twentieth-century scholars have been drawn to mid-Victorian critics' consistent evocation of readers' sensationalized bodies. Gilbert argues that "'sensation' became a thinly veiled literary euphemism for the action of disease upon the body" (80). Disease and health are notable concerns in the periodical press, and are often conflated, as suggested by the term "mental refreshment" above. Taking a different approach, Cvetkovich suggests that "[a]s the term 'sensation' novel itself suggests, the critics feared the prospect of a reader reduced to a body reacting instinctively to a text" (19), and that "[u]nderlying the critics' discourse about sensation fiction are the assumptions that the body and emotion are distinct from and inferior to mind and reason" (22). Bernstein notes a similar anxiety about the bodily construction of sensation fiction heroines, who

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[74] "Novels," 259.
[75] "French Novels," 81.

are sometimes drawn as "suspect amalgamations of feminine human form and bestial passions," and so whose animal natures lie uneasily next to their higher powers of control and reason. Certainly this concern about the relationship of body to mind bears out in the context I offer here, especially as it hearkens to some of the irrational physiological responses felt by visitors to the optical shows. As a cultural phenomenon, sensationalism relied upon the separation of body and emotion from mind and reason; this separation seems to be a large part of the appeal and popularity of sensationalism as an ideology.

Arguing for a more general awareness of the role of the body in sensation fiction, Brantlinger notes that "the first reviewers of sensation novels raised a great hue and cry" about the novels' introduction of "sex and violence" into novel form (3). Certainly readers' (and occasionally characters') bodies—affective, appetitive, animalistic or ailing—were regularly foregrounded in many reviews; it is important to examine their place, however, in the wider discourse of sensationalism during the 1860s. The wide-spread use of not only the words "sensation" or "sensational," but of the affective body (for instance, in "Nerves and Nerve") in places other than literary reviews suggests that the critics' "hue and cry" is not merely about concern for the readers' (or characters') bodies. Certainly the bodily metaphors of disease and desire invoked by the critics are telling, but I believe they tell us something about the nature of perception and the social structures enabling and encouraging new ideologies of sensation. Most broadly, the "hue and cry" functions as a commentary on an emergent ontology, one that privileged *feeling* as a way of *being*. Critical anxiety about this emergent ontology is grounded in the era's sensational epistemology, which in turn is produced by (and producing) the complicated

network of sensational experiences I have described: visual shows, train travel (and other contemporary technologies of speed, including publication and dissemination of printed material), the periodical press, and sensation fiction.

Critical response to sensation novels gives them—and the discourse surrounding them—a central position in the paradigmatic shift from reflection to sensation. For the optical shows and devices, this shift comes from the relationship between seeing a reflection of something really there (as in the camera obscura) and seeing and *feeling part of* a view that has no material, external correlate. For the railway system, this shift comes from the new visions made possible through the compression of time and space, as well as the bodily experiences of that compression and the visions it enables. For the novels, this shift comes from metaphorical kind of seeing. For unless novels have accompanying illustrations, they provide images through the imagination rather than through representation.

Novels for mid-Victorian readers and critics were (or were supposed to be) composed primarily of plot and character; they were valuable insofar as they cultivated "what the real world already contained" (Kendrick 21)—in other words, insofar as they were mimetic, and faithfully represented "the real." Mimetic novels function according the paradigm of the camera obscura: they represent an external world that is true, a truth reflected for the reader through a lens (in this case, the novel itself) which is not open to misinterpretation. Despite the clear connections between sensation fiction and current news reports of crimes and other transgressive behavior, sensation novels were regularly

accused of creating unreal, unnatural characters and plots. They were simply not considered mimetic.

Sensation novels threaten the mimetic paradigm of subjective vision offered by the camera obscura by proffering a novel-world for readers to actively, eagerly create through their physiological responses to the novels themselves. Within the mid-Victorian body politic, the possibility of a material truth external to the body grows decreasingly problematic: as sensation fiction is widely and easily circulated, it increases the numbers of readers who begin to understand "seeing" as sensational rather than reflective, and who contribute to shifting expectations of the novel as a genre and of mimesis as a literary characteristic. For this reason, I propose that sensation novels emerge in the 1860s as perhaps the apex of literary realism for their time. They are mimetic of their time and place precisely *because* they engage their readers' bodies: just as optical shows do with observers, and as trains do with travelers, sensation novels help their readers create a new reality through their bodies. Indeed, it is arguable that this reality—created from experiences as diverse as visiting the diorama to reading a novel—was impossible to create without the presence and participation of the observers' bodies; the observers' bodies, in other words, are an intrinsic component of the apparatus itself. For mid-Victorians, sensation has become an epistemological grounding, providing a particularly modern form of knowledge.

'A New Sensation Wanted': the mid-Victorian subject at the limits of modernity

Throughout this chapter, I have been arguing that Victorian culture produces a sensational epistemology that becomes dominant by the mid-Victorian era. We see this

dominance most notably in the periodical press, where the term "sensational" is applied to such disparate topics as politics, natural science, visual and mechanical technologies, and reading. During the 1860s especially, the periodical press consistently demonstrates that the sensational can eclipse the rational in all elements of life, and that any *type* of event or idea can be made sensational. By the sixties, mid-Victorians regularly perceive the world through their bodies: they feel a physiological connection to what they perceive, and understand their perceptions as sensational events. Moreover, this mode of perception allows them to experience events synchronically and diachronically: they take in chronological time at a glance, and feel the immediacy of the present even during extended moments of perception. Whether traveling by rail, attending the latest optical show, subscribing to magazines or the circulating library, or reading the latest installment of the season's most current sensation novel, mid-Victorians are submitting their bodies to a new form of discipline, to a sensational "chaos of delight."[76]

The metaphor of "eagerness" for physical sensation operates as a kind of cognitive lens that can be broadened to take in a wide picture of the mid-Victorian world. The technologies behind mass publication and mass printing—including the periodical

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[76] The term is Darwin's, and especially appropriate here. It is hardly coincidental that Darwin's On the Origin of Species, published in November 1859, drew frequent attention to Darwin's own synchronic and diachronic visions. His struggle is most famously exemplified in a closing passage of the Origin, in which he describes contemplating a "tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us" (648). Although Darwin "contemplates" and "reflects," he experiences synchronic and diachronic time: the bank's ecosystem is the product of eons of geological and biological work, which Darwin literally takes in at a glance. And despite Darwin's attention to the rational, he ends this passage on an emotive note: "Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers [...]; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved" (648-9).

press but extending to novel publishing, circulating libraries, and even journalists, artists and photographers who traveled abroad to gather images for their visual shows and stories for their newspapers (*pace* "A New Sensation Wanted")—produce broader vistas, and bring far-reaching sensational events back home. The heightened circulation of ideas made possible by printing and publishing technologies, rapid transit, and improved shipping grants increased access to global concerns: an English diplomat's experiences in Japan ("Sensation Diplomacy in Japan"); animal and natural sciences ("Unknown Sensations"); and American ideas about European wars ("A New Sensation Wanted").

In this context, it becomes clear how sensation novels can be considered highly mimetic; they are mimetic of a society that moves, travels and communicates faster than ever before, as well as of the bodily effects produced by (and responding to) these rapid advancements. Readers of sensation novels were undergoing the same paradigmatic shifts in subjectivity as were those who visited optical shows and reveled in new optical gadgets and toys. They were subjects who were both "site and producer of sensation," and therefore creators, rather than simply witnesses, of the visible world around them.[77] I do not mean here that readers of sensation fiction were "seeing" in the same way that visitors to optical shows were "seeing"; nor do I mean simply to call the reading experience a visual experience.[78] Instead, I mean to suggest that reading sensation

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[77] The cited phrase is Crary's. For a full description of the historical development of this kind of subjectivity in the context of vision and cognition, see Techniques of the Observer, especially chapter three.

[78] The closest I might come to this would be to borrow Krasner's term "imaging"—to suggest that what readers do as they read, especially as they read descriptions of landscape, is to "image" the description so that they see it in their mind's eye. Krasner writes persuasively of the way that Darwin affected late nineteenth-century novelists' descriptions of landscape. While "imaging" is a useful way to think about readers of sensation fiction and what they "saw" (murders, arson, other crimes and evidence of crimes—or even what they think they saw, especially if they aligned themselves with characters whose vision failed

fiction and visiting optical shows (or taking part in any of the new experiences which were turning the model of the camera obscura, like Marx's table, on its head) create analogous subject positions: both subjects create, rather than merely receive, the external world which plays upon their nerves. Readers of mimetic novels ostensibly read reflections of the world external to their bodies, just as viewers of historical panoramas were ostensibly "seeing" history as it was being made. But readers of sensation fiction and observers of optical shows had primarily *sensational* experiences. Like the young boy in awe of a galloping horse and creeping tiger, and the officer who insensibly responded to the dangers of the panoramic image, readers of a sensation novel created that novel's world through their affective bodies. Even more than the visitors to the visual shows, however, readers of sensation fiction were creating *the world in which they lived.* Sensation novels don't merely help create a readership eager for sensation; they represent that very eagerness as part of an exciting, desirable, new kind of life, and the reader helps create that life through the act of reading. Thus, the mimesis the novels enable is a mimesis of desire: the novels both create and represent the desire for sensation as a natural part of mid-Victorian culture.

The issue of mimesis is, I suggest, what makes irrelevant the question of whether "sensation fiction" is a genre. What is at stake in this discussion is the ways sensation novels flaunt accepted attitudes about the expectations of the novel as a genre, irrespective of sub-genres. In his analysis of The Woman in White, Kendrick explains that for "mid-Victorian critics and realistic novelists" alike, "the value of fiction

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them, as does Rachel Verinder's in The Moonstone), the term fails to capture the necessary shift in subjectivity, a shift based on sensation, for which I argue.

depended on its cultivation of what the real world already contained"; this imperative towards realism motivated "the great mid-Victorian realists as well as their reception by critics," while "[t]he major sin of the sensation novelists was their breach of this realistic faith." By breaking faith with the standards of realism, Kendrick continues, sensation novelists "made of fiction merely a game, an activity which [...] stands to the real world at best in an arbitrary relation" (21).

Mid-Victorian critics substantiate the core of Kendrick's assertion: in the 1860s periodical press, novels and tales are praised if they are considered mimetic, while those which are overly imaginative and reach beyond the bounds of "the natural" are reviled. In language that foreshadows our own era's attention to subjectivity, the novels' mimesis is described in language of interior and exterior. Of the novel as a genre, we read that "it is the mirror in which society looks, in order that she may become acquainted with her own countenance ("Novels and Novelists of the Day" 90); here, the critic suggests that the external countenance—the face and body—can be "seen" through the novel as lens. But society's internal countenance is ostensibly as important. One critic remarked that "it is impossible for [an author] of any mental power at all to invent human beings and set them in motion without touching, expressly or by implication, the problems of human existence" ("Mr. Trollope's Novels" 369).

Even more generally, "French Novels" opens with the rhetorical question "What is a novel?" The article proceeds to answer its own question in the language of interior and exterior: a novel is a

> picture representing, with more or less truth and faithfulness, the manners and customs of society. A work of fiction delineating dramatic or humorous characters. A web in which are skilfully [sic] wrought the passions, emotions, or feelings, supposed to fill the human breast, as well as the incidents which bring them into play. (78)

This critic, too, argues that the function of novels is to reveal the "truth" of the reader's world. Much praise or ridicule of contemporary fiction seems implicitly to agree with assertions like this, finding those novels notable which represent, with more or less truth and faithfulness, a particular kind of life or particular sorts of characters.

A series of examples from sensation fiction reviews demonstrate the prevalence of this critical attitude. In praising Lady Audley's Secret and condemning Sir Jasper's Tenant, one reviewer writes that "[t]he secret of Miss Braddon's power" was that "she related melodramatic incidents in a *tolerably natural way*" ("Sir Jasper's Tenant" 1174, emphasis added). Braddon is also praised for her work in The Doctor's Wife, where she is credited with moving away from "'sensation' stories and the low rank of the world of art to which they stand condemned" and is instead trying "her hand at a regular novel of *character*," at which she "display[s] quite unexpected power" (emphasis added); Braddon's artistic innovations with Isabel Sleaford include her ability "to create a female character ordinary and yet bizarre," while being able to "analyze [Isabel's] emotions with delicate skill, and display her action in incidents each of which is a surprise, yet on reflection is pronounced by the reader accurate and natural" ("Miss Braddon's New Novel" 1214). The less generous—but much more entertaining—author of "Sensation

Novelists: Miss Braddon," harps incessantly on Braddon's miserable characterizations: save one, "not a single personage [in Lady Audley's Secret] has any resemblance to the people we meet with in the flesh" (186). More importantly for this critic, Braddon fails to meet the general expectation of "a lady novelist" to present "portraits of women which shall not be wholly untrue to nature"; this critic complains further that Braddon's "gentlemen are, if possible, still less attractive and life-like than the ladies" (189-90). The true test for this critic of Braddon's failure is her facile fascination with the hair of her heroines: "we must admit"—not without relish, it seems—"that Miss Braddon is not given to admire any particular hue, and that she evidently loves hair for its own sake, provided that it be abundant" (189). Braddon's chief fault as an author is not that she is absorbed in unnatural concerns—certainly women were concerned with their hair and other aspects of their toilet—but that she is absorbed to an unnatural degree. In one of the most lively passages in this review, the critic complains:

> After reading that Olivia's hair 'was dark, fathomless, inscrutable,' and that, when excited, 'two streams of lurid light emanated from her eyes,' and 'two spots of crimson blazed' in her hollow cheeks, we are inclined to think she is but a creature of Miss Braddon's imagination, and that such a personage is as unreal as a hobgoblin. (195)

Yet the danger here seems offered as much by the critic as by Braddon, as the link of a feverish young woman to a "hobgoblin" may likely raise, for some readers, the specter of Christina Rossetti's sexualized young sisters in "Goblin Market."

Nonetheless, if Braddon stands alone in her unnatural fascination with hair, she is in good company in other aspects of her failed mimesis. Collins is blamed for having "little spontaneity of humour, no reflection, no aphoristic wisdom, no poetry, [and] but little painting of scenery," suggesting that he is oblivious to the social world around him. Even more telling against him is this criticism: "So long as you have his book open, you are spell-bound; whenever you close it, you feel you have been existing in a world of impossible incidents, and holding converse with monstrosities," where "everything"—from character to plot—is tense, strained, and unnatural" ("Novels and Novelists of the Day" 97-8). Trading in the same discourse of character and plot, a reviewer in The Spectator lambasted The Woman in White because its "creation of 'the subtle, cowardly intellectual sybarite' Count Fosco was considered 'a far higher artistic effort...[than] the cleverly wrought mystery'" (qtd in Colby 189). Even in this case, where Collins's characterization outweighs his merely clever plot, the characterization still fails to merit praise.[79]

It is easy to see that a general critical consensus asserts that characters and plots of novels should reflect life—the natures and events of "real" people—and that sensation

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[79] The criticisms against sensational characterizations continue to mount: Le Fanu is praised for his "ingenious" and "closely knit" plot in Wylder's Hand, but soundly criticized for creating, in the novel, characters who "are very unequal" ("Wylder's Hand" 271). He is similarly faulted for dealing "with the spectacle of external character, not with feelings or motives," and judgment is passed: "So far as he attempts the latter task he appears to fail, though he has done it so little that we can hardly judge" ("Uncle Silas" 1475). Another author, Hamilton Aïdé, was called merely a clever novelist—as opposed to a great one—because he could describe "the intensity of every kind, whether in passion or hate, malice or fear," without appreciating the "ordinary... character"; his writing is faulted for having "little faculty of analysis" and for lacking "true human pathos" (qtd in Colby 189). These criticisms stand in stark relief against the few instances of praise: Mrs. Gascoigne is extolled for originality in Doctor Harold, wherein she creates an "atmosphere of daily life," which is "refreshing after so many sharp gusts of murder and bigamy" ("Doctor Harold" 1259).

fiction failed to meet this basic, but crucial, criterion, especially regarding characterizations. Yet this consensus is questionable: exactly *how* the novels fail to be mimetic is much less clear if we look for mimesis not in literary standards for plot and characterization, but in the novels' contribution to a sensational epistemology. As both a contributor to and an effect of the mid-Victorian sensational epistemology, sensation novels ultimately create and represent characters and plots which constitute mid-Victorian bodily experiences.

'What the real world already contains': sensation fiction as mimetic fiction

These experiences in relationship to sensation fiction and the periodical press comprise the final section of this chapter. To open, I'd like to return to "Novels and Novelists of the Day" and this observation about reading The Woman in White: "So long as you have [Collins's] book open, you are spell-bound; whenever you close it, you feel you have been existing in a world of impossible incidents" (97-8). This response to the novel echoes the reports of visitors to optical shows, whose comments suggest they, too, existed in another dimension of time and space. For the observers as well as for readers, this altered experience of spatio-temporal relationships stems from the sensations produced by the aesthetic form—the relationship between the medium and the sensational perceptions it induces.

In some instances, those sensational responses could be manipulated by the appearance of the text on the page. According to Alison Winter, "Collins was acutely concerned to keep and manage his readers' attention [...]"; he "paced his verbal cues" and "even tried to control how his readers' eyes would take in the print" by telling the

"printer exactly where he should use 'small capitals, 'white lines' (the breathless gaps that punctuate the narrative), and 'italics.' As readers' eyes made passes down each page," Winter continues, "the optical sensations created by the running pattern of black and white were coordinated by the novelist" (326).[80] She goes on to argue that although Collins may not have "set out literally to mesmerize his readers," it is possible that Collins used The Woman in White as "an experiment in mental influence and nervous stimulus in a more literal sense than readers might assume"; he could have done so by manipulating the mesmeric "nervous phenomena that could be produced by the act of reading": states of deep reverie, from which it is easy to be jarred or startled by unexpected events (327-8).

In making this argument about the relationship of reader to text, Winter suggests that the reader of The Woman in White has a role in creating the text's sensationalism: it takes the reader's affective responses to the visual construction of the pages to create the sensational aspects of the novel. The novel effectively startles the readers precisely because the visual aspects of the novel's construction induce the reader's reverie. Thus the reader is induced, as is Walter Hartright as he walks toward London, into a calm serenity from which the body can be easily jolted or jarred. Indeed, the link to mimesis emerges most emphatically in the moments like that when Walter is startled by the touch

[80] This kind of authorial control over the presentation of visual material will recur in both of the following chapters. For the Futurists, this control is most closely connected to Marinetti's work with language and the placement of text on the page; more broadly, this kind of control over how the observer "takes in" the visual images can be seen in the Futurist artists' use of force-lines to encircle and engage the observer. For Richardson, this kind of control can be seen most explicitly by the use of placards in the silent films, which she describes as invisible when used properly. The "seamless" experience thus created—the film viewer's lack of awareness of the ways language intrudes into the silent film—contributes to the onlooker's "creative collaboration" with the film.

of the woman in white, for those moments produce a double recognition: the body of the character undergoes a sensational response to a narrative event which the reader may recognize, but which is manifest through the readers' own affective body. That is, the character is central to the creation of a sensational response, and it is this position as central to sensationalism that the reader recognizes—often through her own sensational response, one that mirrors that of the character.

This relationship plays itself out in Braddon's Lady Audley's Secret as well as in Mrs. Henry Wood's East Lynne. In the first novel, the character Robert is startled out of a deep reverie by unexpected events, events which propel him—and the reader—forward to uncover Lady Audley's "secret." Although Robert is not a central character in terms of the plot's sensational elements—he commits no crimes, covers up no misdeeds—his experiences of, and stemming from, those elements are primarily responsible for the novel's sensationalism. In this, Robert is much like the reader: he is little more than an accessory to the plot's forward movement, but central to the plot's affective qualities. East Lynne's mimetic qualities also depend upon the reader recognizing, in one of the characters, her own position as a spectator creating a sensational apparatus: when Lady Isabel Vane returns home in disguise and takes a position as governess to her own children, she creates a position for herself as spectator to the life she could have had, and the nervous shocks continually reapplied as a result of her position as observer of her own life eventually kill her.

In Lady Audley's Secret, Robert Audley is "a handsome, lazy, care-for-nothing" young barrister who, through the effects of his "listless, dawdling, indifferent, irresolute

manner" has never bothered himself to do any legal work (21-22). Professionally, Robert is a barrister; but by vocation, we infer, he is a reader: the narrator tells us that "when the weather was very hot, and [Robert] had exhausted himself with the exertion of smoking his German pipe, and reading French novels, he would stroll into the Temple Gardens" and "tell grave benchers that he had knocked himself up with over work" (22). Similar references are made throughout the novel: Robert is frequently described as "serene" and "indifferent," as well as an avid reader.

The combined effects of the presence of Lady Audley (his uncle's young new wife) and the disappearance of his widowed friend George Talboys jolt Robert from his indifference. While the descriptions of Robert change only slowly, these jolts build momentum over the course of the novel; as Robert is increasingly active in searching for George and uncovering Lady Audley's secret, he is decreasingly described as indifferent and lazy. Furthermore, Robert's actions are always described as the effect of his sensational responses to his world. When he meets Lady Audley for the first time, he becomes "almost enthusiastic," and describes her to George in the most rousing language he has yet used in the novel:

> She's the prettiest little creature you ever saw in your life, George. [...] Such blue eyes, such ringlets, such a ravishing smile, such a fairy-like bonnet—all of a-tremble with heart's-ease and dewy spangles, shining out of a cloud of gauze. George Talboys, I feel like the hero of a French novel: I am falling in love with my aunt. (38)

His comment about the French novel is especially telling. In the periodical press of the 1860s, French novels were held up as examples of what English novels should *not* be, and as having paved the way for the British "sensation novel." As the plot of Lady Audley's Secret continues to intensify Robert's involvement and his feelings—and as Robert recognizes in himself the character of a French novel—he becomes increasingly active and mobile (and so less and less like "himself," and perhaps even more like a typical railway passenger of the time). At the beginning of the novel this mobility is physical, as he rouses himself from quite solitude and begins rushing around England on trains in search of his missing friend; by the novel's end, Robert's mobility is both social and professional, as he settles down as husband and father and becomes a successful working barrister.

Once Robert is actively searching for George and is suspicious about the cause of his disappearance, his search induces increasing anxiety and frantic feelings for both himself and the reader. This opening tension sets the stage for the more sensational events that will thrill and enchain Robert and the reader in the remainder of the novel. In terms of physical mobility, George's disappearance sets in motion frantic train travel: Robert travels quickly from Essex (Audley Court) to Southampton (home of George's small son and the boy's maternal grandfather) and then back to his own home in Figtree Court, London, where he finds himself "worn out by a long day spent in hurrying from place to place" (64). Despite his exhaustion, he picks up his same frenetic pace the next day, hurrying by cab to Euston Station only to discover that "[t]he Liverpool express had started half an hour before he reached the station, and he had to wait an hour and a

quarter for a slow train to take him to his destination" (66). When his search in Liverpool proves fruitless and he returns by yet another train back to London, he is both "thoroughly worn out" but newly determined to discover what has happened to his missing friend. As Robert commits to finding out the truth about his George's disappearance, he grows increasingly eager for and responsive to sensation: he is progressively responsive to his own anxieties, and pursues courses of action that intensify those anxieties as his circumstantial evidence against Lady Audley mounts.

By this point in the novel (roughly one-third into it), all the machinations are in place for Lady Audley's demise, although the knowledge belongs, so far, only to the characters: she has been revealed (to George) as a bigamist and a murderess (or attempted murderess); she has a secret which Phoebe and Luke use to bribe her and which will lead to her act of arson; even her madness has been suggested. All of these sensational events are implicit and require the remainder of the novel to be revealed, yet this withheld knowledge only intensifies the affective work being exercised upon the readers' bodies. Lady Audley's crimes have yet to thrill the reader, to paint "unlovely" portraits for female readers to "hang up" or aspire to, or to preach to the readers' nerves (they will do so in the second two thirds of the novel). Nevertheless, Lady Audley's Secret succeeds in setting up those criminal thrills through Robert's sensational responses: he is frantic; he is exhausted by train travel, which covers large geographic regions in short order; he has feelings for his aunt which rightly belong in a racy French novel. And while he finds all of these sensations shocking him out of his typical course of indifference, he pursues them actively, eagerly, throughout the course of the novel.

Like the readers of sensation fiction, Robert exhibits an eagerness for sensation; such an eagerness is also a feature of Mrs. Henry Wood's East Lynne, and contributes to its mimetic qualities as well. Lady Isabel Vane, the novel's main character, seems eager for sensations of a different sort from Robert's: whereas Robert's actions lead him to solve a crime and so to allay his (and his family's, and the readers') anxieties, Isabel's actions only intensify her already torturous sensational experiences. Still, she seeks these experiences, and welcomes the agonizing affect she creates.

The plot of East Lynne turns on the ease with which Isabel Vane is led to misperceive: to believe that the secret between her husband and Barbara Hare, as evidenced by their frequent meetings (and finally as seen by Lady Isabel), is that they love each other, not that they are contriving to save Barbara's brother from ruin. Isabel's misperception leads to the novel's sensational elements: she deserts her husband and children, running away in the middle of the night with Francis Levison, who has encouraged her false beliefs about her husband; she bears Levison's illegitimate child abroad; and then suffers a train accident which kills her infant and leaves her (she believes) physically altered recognition.

Thus disfigured and incognito, Isabel returns to East Lynne as Madame Vine, and is hired to be the governess to her own children, who are now being mothered by her husband's new wife. As part of her disguise Isabel wears an overly large cap, a veil, and strange blue spectacles. The spectacles, perhaps more than any other element of her costume, help hide her identity, and are the source of much speculation: at one point Barbara comments "I can't think why she wears those blue spectacles: it cannot be for

her sight, and they are very disfiguring" (422); later, when the spectacles are in a shop being repaired, Miss Carlyle is struck by the likeness between Madame Vine and Isabel Vane, "especially in the eyes" (476). Once the subject of the spectacles arises (ironically, because of their absence while they are being repaired), Miss Carlyle asks Isabel outright why she wears glasses. "My eyes are not strong," Isabel replies. Miss Carlyle counters: "They look as strong as eyes can be. But, why wear coloured glasses? White ones would answer every purpose, I should suppose," to which Isabel can only answer "I am accustomed to coloured ones. I should not like white ones now" (477). The answer is weak, and both Isabel and Miss Carlyle know it. But it is not untrue: Isabel would not like "white ones now," precisely because that would diminish the work the glasses do.

That work is to raise two specters: the first is the "dead" Lady Isabel, whom various inhabitants of East Lynne recognize in moments when she is seen without the costume of "Madame Vine." At William's deathbed, Joyce reveals to Isabel that the night of the fire, when Madame Vine had rushed out of her bedroom without cap or veil or spectacles, Joyce believed that she lost her "senses" and saw "a spectre; the spectre of [her] dead lady." Joyce relates the moment of revelation: "Your face was not disfigured then: the moonlight shone full upon it, and I knew it, after the first few moments of terror, to be, in dreadful truth, the *living* one of Lady Isabel" (599). Later, when Madame Vine herself is dying, she is revealed as a ghostly Lady Isabel to Miss Carlyle:

> Ah! There could be no concealment now. There she was, her pale face lying against the pillow, free from its disguised trappings. The band of grey velvet, the spectacles, the wraps for the throat and chin, the huge cap,

> all were gone. It was the face of Lady Isabel: changed, certainly, very, very much: but still hers. The silvered hair fell on either side her face, as the silky curls had once fallen; the sweet sad eyes were the eyes of yore. (623)

As preternatural as Lady Isabel looks with her pale face and silver hair, she looks even more so to Mr. Carlyle, her husband, when he sees her in the sickbed in which he expected to see Madame Vine: "Did he think, as Joyce had once done, that it was a ghost he saw? Certain it is, that his face and lips turned the hue of death, and he backed a few steps from the bed [...]. He looked at her, he looked round the room, as does one awaking from a dream" (625). Without Madame Vine's disguise—perhaps most importantly, her disfiguring colored glasses—nobody else can trust their own eyes, and all who see her are subject to sensational responses.

The second specter raised by the spectacles is not of Lady Isabel, but *for* her: it is the specter of her home and family as it had been, and might continued to have been. As Hughes points out, once Lady Isabel is disguised as Madame Vine she is condemned to view her home and family and to see another woman in the place where she should have been. Or to put it in more sensational terms, "Mrs. Wood indulges her heroine (and readers) in a prolonged, luxurious orgy of self-torture, as the miserable governess, in going about her humble duties, must watch the repeated caresses of her former husband showered upon his second wife"; as a result, Isabel is "subjected to agonizing torments" that ultimately kill her (Hughes 115). The colored spectacles Isabel wears create a kind of double vision: they prevent Madame Vine from appearing to be Lady Isabel, while

they allow Lady Isabel to see her life as it might have been—to see her life, in fact, as only Madame Vine makes possible.

Isabel's glasses create one element of the novel's sensationalism, in particular Isabel's own self-immolating desires that compel her, the narrative, and the reader forward. Through the visions that her glasses enable, Isabel is positioned like the spectator of earlier optical shows: she is part of the sensational apparatus, a crucial component both of the event and the affect it creates. Isabel, like Robert, and like visitors to optical shows, is central to the creation of a sensational epistemology.

Also like Lady Audley's Secret, East Lynne relies on train travel to create sensational plot elements, although in East Lynne the train has even a stronger sensational presence. Playing off of readerly awareness of train travel, the narrator comments that "[r]ailway accidents are less frequent in France than they are with us, but when they do occur they are wholesale catastrophes, the memory of which lasts for a lifetime"(324).[81] The accident itself is of course described in sensational detail:

> The train was within a short distance of the station when there came a sudden shock and crash as of the day of doom: and engine, carriages, and passengers lay in one confused mass at the foot of a steep embankment. [...] The carriage in which Lady Isabel with her child and *bonne* travelled,

[81] Dickens himself provides a nice anecdote here. On June 9, 1865, Dickens was in a railway accident from which he escaped without harm. Later, when writing a letter describing the accident and how he helped other passengers away from the train, Dickens noted that "in writing these scanty words of recollection I feel the shake and am obliged to stop." These aftershocks were a commonly described side-effect of railway accidents. Camps, in "Railway Accidents or Collisions," notes that "there is something in the crash, the shock, and the violence of a railway collision, which would seem to produce effects upon the *nervous system* quite beyond those of an ordinary injury [...which can be] such a *shock* to the system as for a time to shatter the whole constitution, and this, moreover, to such a degree, to such an extent, that the unfortunate sufferer may not altogether recover throughout the remainder of his life" (Schivelbusch 137-9).

> lay beneath a superincumbent mass of ruins: they were amongst the last passengers to be extricated. The *bonne* and the baby were quite dead. Lady Isabel was alive and conscious, but [...] severely injured [...] The injuries lay in one leg, and the lower part of her face. [...] She was unable to move, but the shock had deadened sensation; she was not yet in pain, and her mind was for a short interval preternaturally clear and lucid. (324-5).[82]

And of course it is a train that carries Lady Isabel and Sir Francis Levison away from East Lynne; that carries Lady Isabel from France to Germany, where she works as governess for the Crosbys; and ultimately, that returns her to East Lynne as Madame Vine. Even when railway travel is not the instrument of death, travel, or even simply nervous shock, it is still sensational: when Lord Mount Severn reads in the London "evening paper" that Sir Francis Levison is opposing Mr. Carlyle for M.P., he responds to the news by leaving his club, fetching his carpet-bag from home, and then "shrieking and whistling down to West Lynne [...]. Or, if he did not whistle and shriek, the engine did" (470).

In both novels, sensationalism is created through synchronic and diachronic vision. While in Lady Audley's Secret that vision must see through—must solve—a mystery, in East Lynne that vision reflects some of the more startling aspects of mid-

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[82] It is striking to note that in East Lynne a technology of the future (the train) kills the product of the more a-historical female technology of child-bearing (the baby). Of course, given the novel's structure, the illegitimate child can't be allowed to live, for it would prevent Lady Isabel from returning to East Lynne as Madame Vine. Given the many sensational ways death and disfigurement can happen, however, it is striking that Wood chooses a fatal train accident.

Victorian culture. Events in the narrative are visible as they unfold in diachronic time, for the newspapers, the post and the telegraph ensure that even the most shocking news can travel quickly. But the spectacles also enable a vision of events as they unfold synchronously: Madame Vine is able to see her life as it is—her life as disguised governess to her own children—and her life as it should be—her life as beloved wife and mother. Furthermore, they enable Madame Vine and Lady Isabel to live simultaneously, inhabiting the same space, for in their absence they reveal truths to others, much as wearing the spectacles reveals truths to Isabel.

Taken together, physiological affect, visual and industrial technologies, as well as synchronic and diachronic time create a kind of sensationalism through which sensation novels hold out the promise of affective engagement for their readers, just as they contain the sensational events in the novel that create such engagement. The reader who sees in Robert's frantic excursions a reflection of his own experience with train travel will find those sensations contained by Robert's domestication at the novel's end; likewise, readers aroused into affective spectatorship through observing Lady Isabel will find the sensational events of her life contained by her morally-laden death. Each novel ends by delivering these characters from the sensational ravages of excessive train travel, and so by putting the sensational aspects of their lives to rest.

Sensation novels, and more generally, the discourse of sensationalism, has pushed (and perhaps even seduced) the mid-Victorian subject to new limits of visual and physiological experience, limits that suggest that this subject is already becoming

modernized. The coming shape of avant-garde art and the cinema will continue pulling the modern viewing subject into this emerging visual epistemology.

Chapter Two:

"All things move, all things run, all things are rapidly changing": Futurist *dynamism* and sensational spectatorship

From Frith to Futurism: an outline of motion and sensation

In 1862—the same year that Robert Audley was exhausting himself taking frequent trains between Essex, Liverpool and London, and three years before Dickens's famous railway accident[83]—William Frith's painting *The Railway Station* was exhibited and reviewed. In The Spectator (as elsewhere), Frith's painting was lauded for its mimetic qualities—for its exemplary Realism:

> Conscientiousness has been [Frith's] motto—from the face of the bride to the farthest arch of the iron roof. The globular glass lamps depending from that roof with their varied reflections—the portmanteaus and boxes, with their old ticket labels partially rubbed away, and varied methods of cordage—the textures of draperies, from the silky bournouses of the bridesmaids, and the rich Indian shawl of the mother of the boy going to school, to the worn velveteen suits of the porters—are all so many proofs that the artists, while not forgetting the higher qualities of true expression and appropriate action, has sought to render his picture as complete as possible by realizing each picture in the scene as thoroughly as he was able.[84]

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[83] For more on Dickens's accident and the effects of train travel on the population more generally, see Daly, Faith, Schivelbusch, and Sinnema.

[84] The Spectator (Apr 19) 1862: 438.

These compliments to Frith's work place *The Railway Station* firmly in the subset of Victorian Realism Brettell calls "Transparent Realism": a tradition that "retained the academic techniques of defining pictorial space and the groupings of figures or forms," but rejected "traditional imagery (from history, religion or literature)" and chose instead "subject-matter [which] came from modern life" (14). For Victorian Transparent Realist painters—and Brettell counts Frith among them—"it was the overtly modern subject that created a sense of modernity in their work" (14).[85] The painting captures much of the frenzy born from modern railway travel, with porters packing and hurrying and the crowd in confusion and disorder while small groups of travelers bid their friends, families and loved ones farewell. In many ways, *The Railway Station* "realistically" captures the busy last moments before the train roars its way out of the station, the kind of nervous energy created and represented by train travel in the mid-nineteenth century that was so well-represented in novels like Lady Audley's Secret and East Lynne.

Despite this attention to the reality of the present moment and the busy energy made commonplace through the technologies of train travel, *The Railway Station* does not necessarily capture those sensations for the spectator, or offer them up as her own to experience. The painting does not require the presence and participation of the

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[85] Brettell sets "Transparent Realism" against "Mediated Realism," which relies on technique rather than subject matter to create a sense of modernity. Of Realist artists more generally, Kleiner notes that they "focused their attention on the experiences and sights of everyday contemporary life," seeking subject matter in the mundane and quotidian, and disapproving of "traditional and fictional subjects on the grounds that they were not real and visible," that they "were not of the present world" (891). His observation that they "depicted these scenes on a scale and with an earnestness and seriousness previously reserved for grand history painting (891) is evident not only in the painting, but in The Spectator's response to it, which highlights Frith's "conscientious" attention to "the higher qualities of true expression and appropriate action."

observer's body in order to create sensational responses—at least not in the same way as did optical shows and sensational novels. Because the viewer of *The Railway Station* is intentionally positioned outside of the painting's action, the viewer is not worked on in the same way as are readers of sensation fiction: unlike sensation novels, which figuratively pull the reader's body into sensational involvement with characters and plot, *The Railway Station* leaves the viewer individuated, viewing the energy of the station while safely positioned at a distance from the bustling crowd. This marked separation may be one effect of the painting's deployment of traditional lines, perspectives, and use of color, even as those formal components are used in order to represent the excitement inherent in the modernized reality of railway travel. Sensations are not absent from this painting, but they are primarily representational.

In the years following the exhibition of *The Railway Station*, the relationship between painting and viewer shifted with the emergence of the avant-garde. Indeed, *The Railway Station* helps to mark a turning point in art, a shift that repositions not only the purpose and function of painting and other arts, but that also creates new roles for viewers.[86] While Frith is neither the earliest nor the most significant painter to diverge from the classical Renaissance painting tradition, *The Railway Station* augurs some of the shifts that will characterize the avant-garde. Whereas Frith finds the "modern" in subject matter more than in technical approach, many later artists will take increasingly radical approaches both to the subject matter of art and the techniques by which those subjects

[86] I am explicitly not claiming that *The Railway Station* is a pivotal painting, or that it marks *the* shift into the avant-garde. Still, I find it interesting that Arnason's History of Modern Art notes that 1863—the year after Frith's *The Railway Station* was reviewed—is perhaps one of the most commonly chosen dates "used to mark the point at which modern art supposedly began" (16).

are represented. This change is especially marked in the decades after the 1860s as new groups of artists experiment with subject matter, technique, color, light, and artists' and spectators' relationships to the visual world. What emerges during this period—from the mid-nineteenth century through World War I and beyond—is a vortex that reconceives visual art and by association, the roles and responses of the spectator's affective body.

An important component of this vortex is the shift from objectivity to subjectivity. As new experiments with, and approaches to, art produced works that no longer "necessarily corresponded to objective natural facts," Hamilton argues, those "objective" facts ceased to operate as evaluative criteria for the art. In the absence of this kind of objectivity "the work of art became more exclusively a manifestation of the artist's intimate, subjective experience," and evaluation of the work of art "depended upon the spectator's subjective response to its particular artistic order" (16). Because "each new development required a new [or revised] aesthetic," spectators were no longer able to "be entertained by images passively presented" to them, as had been the case since the Renaissance. Instead, Hamilton suggests, modernized spectators had to "become actively engaged with the work of art" and "accommodate [their] most recalcitrant visual habits to new forms and new ways of seeing forms" (17). Of course, as I argue in the previous chapter, spectators were already being modernized in this way: many aspects of visual culture required a new kind of looking, one that fully engaged the body and its senses. This shift in visual habits—which will be echoed loudly by the Futurists in their twentieth-century manifestoes—becomes visible through a comparison of three paintings that span the gap between sensation fiction and the Futurist manifestoes: Frith's *The*

Railway Station (1862), Claude Monet's *Arrival of a Train* (1877) and Gino Severini's *Red Cross Train Passing a Village* (1915).

The Railway Station draws upon classical Renaissance perspective and other traditional components of painting, but simultaneously subverts them, encouraging the viewer to develop "new ways of seeing."[87] The painting's adherence to traditional perspective is visible in some aspects of the picture's construction. The scene is structured by traditional orthagonals that draw the viewer's eye from the two bottom corners inward and upward, to a human figure (the man in the top hat) in the center of the picture (which is also the center of the canvas). The painting also exhibits some aspects of traditional balance (the white of the bridal party on the right balancing the light of the station at the left, and the flowing black form on top of the train offsetting the high arch above it). Yet even with these traditional perspectival and technical aspects, the painting requires new viewing strategies. Despite the presence of the central human figure, the painting does not draw the viewer's eye only to the middle space that the figure inhabits. Instead, the painting simultaneously opens up the space to the left of the canvas, where natural light pours in to illuminate the far end of the station as it recedes, while closing off the space to the right of the canvas, where the train sits shrouded in darkness. The viewer's eye is thus pulled in multiple directions: it is drawn to the painting's traditional, central vanishing point, but also to the far left edge of the canvas where light pours in,

[87] The train, it may be argued, is a relatively new form in 1863; but in the few decades that train travel had been possible in England, the railway system had grown to such a degree that trains were losing their status as novelty and were becoming quotidian, a standard element of daily life.

even as it is discouraged from lingering on the shadowed foreground of the far right edge of the canvas.

By moving the viewer's eye away from the central figure of the painting, Frith forces a shift away from the established Renaissance perspective of foreground, middle ground, and background. For the viewer situated on the station's platform, the travelers are closest: they are at the bottom of the canvas and in the painting's foreground. But in the horizontal plane in the middle of the canvas sits the train, the front of which appears to be in the foreground (on the right side of the canvas), while the back of the train (visible towards the left of the canvas) appears to be in the background. According to the Renaissance logic whereby perspective is created in accordance with horizontal planes, the end of the train is no "further away" than is the front of the train, and both are situated in the space traditionally considered the middle ground. The traditional Renaissance space of the background—the top horizontal plane of the canvas—also presents the perspectives of foreground, middle ground and background: at the top right is the roof of the station, receding to the distance (and opening onto the city) as the eye travels from right to left. These modern, technological components—the train and the station that houses it—are organized according to vertical planes rather than horizontal ones: the foreground is at the right, the middle ground is in the center, and the background is at the left. Conversely, the human components—the travelers and even the spectator—are positioned more classically, according to horizontal planes.

It may well be that these spectatorial shifts contribute to the energy of the painting, as they are suggestive of the kinds of movement and altered perspectives

created by train travel itself. Certainly the speed of travel, its newly compressed temporal relationships, and even the changed scenery outside the train window, all contributed to an altered experience of spatio-temporal relationships. The painting's formal shifts intensify the excitement created through these changed experiences by representing newly-charged human interactions and the new experiences of spatio-temporal relations made possible by train travel.

Monet's painting, while dramatically different in technique and style from Frith's, shares some important perspectival features. Trains loom large in both paintings, where they are technological creations "housed" within a built structure. As in *The Railway Station, Arrival of a Train* deploys traditional orthagonals, drawing the viewer's eye to the center of the picture (in this case, the smoke-laden air between two trains). These orthagonals are echoed in the station's ceiling, a triangular structure containing the smoke, confining it (to some extent) within the structure of the station itself. Also like *The Railway Station, Arrival of a Train* shifts foreground, middle ground, and background: the train's smoky emissions are clearly on top of and behind the train on the right, but even though they are at the top of the canvas, they are not in the painting's background. Instead, the visual background is in the center of the canvas, in the form of the city beyond the station and its billowing steam. The effect here forces the eye to move even more than in Frith's painting: while *The Railway Station* draws the viewer's eye to a central point but also to the alluringly lit left side of the canvas, Monet's painting requires the eye to move back and forth, from the center of the canvas as background to the left side as middle ground and the right side as foreground. Monet's painting goes

even further than does Frith's in forcing the viewer's eye to move fluidly among horizontal and vertical planes in order to create a sense of perspectival depth.

In these two paintings, Frith and Monet share similarities in their representation of the relationship between technology and nature. As in *The Railway Station, Arrival of a Train* places in the background that which lies behind technology: the natural light and the city outside the station. Both paintings use light to represent that which lies the furthest distance from the train(s), although the technical effects are different: Frith situates his train in the shadowy right foreground of his painting, while Monet situates his trains in from the overhead natural light pouring in through the glass ceiling. Whereas Frith deploys orthagonals to draw the viewer's eye to a central human figure, however, Monet uses them to draw the viewer's eye to the wide space between the trains, a space filled with billowing smoke that partially obscures the brightly-lit city behind it. Here, too, Monet has gone one step further than Frith in his subversion of traditional spectatorial habits: both trains are separate from the human figures and from nature, but a human figure does inhabit the central space of Frith's painting, while the central space of Monet's is filled with the effects of train technology.

In the way that *Arrival of a Train* captures a fleeting moment in natural light, it bears some of the transitory features that mark Impressionism. Even so, it is not a gentle image; compared to Frith's, it is significantly more aggressive. Instead of standing comfortably among the bustling crowds of the platform in *The Railway Station*, the viewer of *Arrival of a Train* stands in the middle of the train tracks, confronted head-on by the trains, their soot, and their smoke. And because Monet's trains are not hidden

behind a bustling crowd, they loom larger than does Frith's train; there is, figuratively speaking, nothing but empty space to separate the viewer from the heavy iron bodies of the locomotives. Where there are human figures, they do not function empathetically or mimetically to connect the viewer to an increasingly familiar activity: rather than groups of emotionally-charged travelers meeting or departing from their families and loved ones, they are the isolated figures of laborers. Through these aggressive qualities, *Arrival of a Train* goes further in capturing the energy of the technology itself, rather than the new human relationships and interactions created by that technology.

Severini's *Red Cross Train Passing a Village*, on the other hand, reconceptualizes these interactions between humans and technology. Not only are people and a station conspicuously absent from Severini's piece, but the lines, colors, and perspective in the painting present different ideas about how spatio-temporal relations and industrialization can affect modern bodies. Whereas in *The Railway Station* and *Arrival of a Train* the trains are presented in the context (literally, under the roof) of a station, alongside either the hustle and bustle of arrival and departure, or the threat of looming technological power, *Red Cross Train Passing a Village* is set loose within a village landscape consisting of hills, sky, and houses, steel girders and perhaps even covered bridges. And while Severini's train may be the figurative center of the painting, the viewer's eye is not drawn to it via orthagonals or other perspectival techniques. Instead, the train is the center from which radiates evocative colors and lines, suggesting ways in which industrialization, modernized travel, and warfare have re-shaped and re-aligned

countryside landscapes.[88] It is this re-imagined landscape, rather than the roof of a railway station, that "houses" Severini's train. The viewer is asked to confront the image alone, without the "company" of painted human figures.[89]

The spectator of the Futurist painting is not simply asked to reckon with new subject matter (railway technology and the new human relationships it engenders), or simply to see objects in new ways or through new perspectives. Unlike Frith and Monet, both of whom suggest the landscape is "outside"—separate from—the train, Severini's painting forces the spectator to experience the visual, spatial and temporal relationships among "industry" and "nature" as connected: the "natural" landscape (hills, valleys, trees, water) intersects with the "industrial" landscape (the train, its tracks, a bridge or trestle, perhaps even a propeller), effectively combining all the material objects in the painting into a spinning vortex of interpenetrating material bodies. Whereas Frith captures a busy moment and Monet captures a fleeting one, Severini creates a whirling sense of the continuous present, a simultaneity of views that catches the spectator in the vortex—and

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[88] Demonstrating the extent to which (some of) the Futurists were affected by Cubism, Arnason argues that "with the coming of the war, the theme of the train flashing through a Cubist landscape intrigued Severini," and *Red Cross Train Passing a Village*, with all of its Cubist inflections, is Severini's "response to Marinetti's appeal for a new pictorial expression for the subject of war 'in all its marvelous mechanical forms'" (219). Yet if we hold with Hamilton's argument that the artist "does not merely illustrate" his ideas, but rather that the artist's "works *are* [his] ideas, in the form of art" (18), then we see that Arnason's reading of *Red Cross Train* suggests that it fails as a Futurist piece: it is not motion, but is instead only "a stylization of motion." Furthermore, Arnason's description suggests that the painting, with "large, handsome planes of strong color, sometimes rendered with a Neo-Impressionist brushstroke," is primarily "static rather than dynamic and is surprisingly abstract in feeling" (219). It could be argued that the piece fails to create the "dynamics sensation" that I will argue is so central to the Futurists' aesthetic theory, and even that the abstract quality of the piece works directly against the "rules" of Futurism as delineated by the manifestoes themselves. Nonetheless, weighed against Frith's and Monet's pieces, Severini's piece successfully evokes a substantially different vision of, and response to, technology and an artist's work with, and response to, it.

[89] This isolation hints at one of the complicated aspects of the Futurists' aesthetic theories: they argue for interrelationships among all bodies while simultaneously, if implicitly, arguing for a kind of isolated, Romantic hero. This is but one of many contradictions that the manifestoes present.

perhaps even danger—of interpenetrating bodies that collide, bisect, and are layered on top of each other. Like the train, the water, the hills and the trestle, the viewer of *Red Cross Train* is enmeshed in the material world.

Understood in this way, *Red Cross Train* fails according to models of traditional mimesis: unlike *The Railway Station* and *Arrival of a Train, Red Cross Train* offers the observer no point of entrance from which to recognize the external world, even if that world is changed by new technologies and relationships. Compared to the other two paintings, *Red Cross Train* may in fact offer the observer no point of entrance from which to recognize a painted image at all, as traditional elements of perspective have been flattened out and rendered simultaneous rather than progressive. Yet this new perspective is, according to the Futurists, more accurately mimetic than the "static" kinds of pictures which precede it (and certainly *The Railway Station* and *Arrival of a Train* would count, for the Futurists, as static paintings, even though they capture their own kind of energy and motion). In the Futurist model, *Red Cross Train* is mimetic of new, modern relationships, relationships that can be characterized as simultaneous and interpenetrating; like optical shows, train travel and sensation novels from the nineteenth century, these relationships rely on the simultaneous experiences of synchronic and diachronic time.

This reconceptualization of bodies and materiality is at the center of the Futurists' work and their accompanying manifestoes. As an *oeuvre*, the manifestoes exhibit a fascination with the simultaneous unification and dispersal of bodies in the material world, and grapple with how unity and dispersal can be represented as the Futurists claim

they are experienced: through motion and sensation. Following the initial lead of F. T. Marinetti and his grandiose proclamations about how motion and speed can provide new directions for literature and art, the Futurists use their manifestoes to stake their claims: they refuse to adhere to traditional themes and subjects of art, and they promise to take up movement itself as their subject matter. This focus on motion shapes the Futurist movement and is traceable through the manifestoes, which explore and extend the possible ways of understanding movement and the emotional rules that govern it.[90]

The comparison of the three paintings brings to the foreground some of the key elements of my analysis of the manifestoes. Most generally, they provide a visual reference for some of the Futurists' claims about previous art. While I do not wish to claim that Frith's or Monet's work can be considered representative of what the Futurists call "traditional" art—and certainly it is important to recognize the Futurists' own shortsightedness in applying that label—*The Railway Station* and *Arrival of a Train* can be used as a baseline for generalities such as perspective, use of light, and so on. Perhaps most important for my analysis, however, is the shift in the spectator's constructed position vis-à-vis the painted image. In both *The Railway Station* and *Arrival of a Train* the spectator is positioned as outside of the action; in *Red Cross Train* the spectator is part of it, caught up in the whirling images that meet and collide. This spectator is the direct descendant of the visitors to optical shows and readers of sensation fiction, precisely because the spectator of the Futurist image is imagined and constructed as part

[90] Movement is one of many elements that resound throughout the manifestoes; it is perhaps the most primary, as other recurring themes (war, gender, and so on) are often grounded in motion, or what the Futurists call *dynamism*, as I discuss in the following sections.

of the apparatus; the Futurists claim throughout their manifestoes that their goal is to put "the spectator in the center of the picture."

This chapter examines the aesthetic theory provided by the Futurist manifestoes, with the purpose of sketching the outlines of the Futurist subject who inhabits the "center of the picture." I investigate the construction of this subject for very particular reasons. The Futurists make explicit their claim that the spectator can inhabit the center of the picture, which links the manifestoes conceptually to the mid-Victorian visual culture that requires the spectator's affective body to be part of the viewing experience. Indeed, the Futurists' claim takes the mid-Victorian position one step further, arguing for an intentional repositioning of the spectator within that which is seen. It seems likely that the creators of visual shows had this kind of repositioning in mind—why else build the panorama, if not to make the observer (standing on a platform in the middle of the circular building) the literal center point? It is even likely that Collins's efforts to control the visual aspects of reading a sensational text make a similar move toward repositioning the reader in relationship to the novel. Still, it is the Futurists who articulate this repositioning specifically as an aesthetic theory grounded in sensations. Even as the Futurists' spectator harks back to the mid-Victorian observer of visual shows and readers of sensation fiction, it augurs the cinematic viewer as conceived by Dorothy Richardson later in the twentieth century. Not only does Richardson argue that the best cinematic spectatorship is affective and uses sensation to create unity among bodies, she also makes this argument in ways that resonate with some of the Futurists' own statements about relationships among bodies. When she writes "In life, we contemplate a landscape from

one point, or walking through it, breaking it into bits," she could be describing a visitor to the panorama or Cosmorama, as much as someone wandering through a natural landscape. But when Richardson continues this thought by noting that "the film, by setting the landscape in motion and keeping us still, allows it to walk through us" ("Narcissus 185), she effectively encapsulates the shift in spectatorship effected between the early visual shows and twentieth-century film. In between these two positions sit the Futurist manifestoes, articulating a visual theory that helps contextualize how such a shift might happen.

In the next section, "Manifesting Futurism," I briefly discuss Futurism in the context of Symbolism, in order to set the groundwork for my later analysis of the Futurists' aesthetics in terms of gender and the body. This context is crucial because Marinetti was linked to, and active in, the Symbolist movement, which embraced some particularly gendered ideas. Symbolism's effects are discernible within some of the manifestoes' language, and these traces help explain what might appear to be contradictions within the theories the manifestoes put forth. In addition, they help explain some of the Futurists' claims to exclusivity, however rightly or wrongly those claims were made. Within this historical and aesthetic context, I then develop a unified reading of the manifestoes as an *oeuvre*, focusing on the implications of the Futurists' insistent assertion that their art puts the spectator in the center of the picture. I am especially attentive to those moments when the Futurists suggest that the spectator's new position is a direct result of movement; in the section "Force Lines = Environment + Object = Emotional Laws," I seek to clarify the links the Futurists themselves make

between movement and sensation (for they use the terms interchangeably, regularly equating them). I focus on this nexus of spectatorship, movement, and sensation throughout the manifestoes because it forms the foundation of the logic behind the Futurists' construction of the spectator. In the penultimate section, "The Futurist Subject: The Spectator in the Center of the Picture," I examine how sensation works in the Futurists' theories to situate the spectator as part of that which is viewed; in the final section, "The Futurists' Gendered Subject," I discuss the implications of gender for such a subject. The Futurists' subject is one which takes pleasure in sensations, a pleasure which might seem to link the Futurists to the Symbolists; but, as I argue in the final section of this chapter, the Futurists' own use of language undermines such a reading, for it roots the pleasures of affect in language which can be seen as transcending traditional gender constructions. The Futurists' use of language throughout the manifestoes suggests that their sensationally-based subject exists outside of the binary constructions of "masculine" and "feminine," thereby opening new avenues of interrogation for links among affective bodies and visual engagement. These links set the groundwork for the following chapter on Dorothy Richardson's writings for the film journal Close Up.

Manifesting Futurism

The Futurist movement has been described as a "brief utopian phase of early Modernism when artists felt themselves to be on the verge of a new age that would be more exciting, more promising, more inspiring than any preceding ones" (Perloff 36). Perloff points to Futurism as a movement that helped to foreground the interrogation of "the integrity of the medium, of genre, of categories such as 'prose' and 'verse' and most

important, of 'art and life' (38);[91] what Futurism encapsulates is so much of a piece with its moment in history—beyond the confines of the Italian movement itself—that Perloff even names her book "The Futurist Moment," following Poggioli's contention that the "Futurist moment" was "a significant symptom of a broader and deeper state of mind," a state of mind expressed internationally and across artistic forms and genres (Poggioli 69). Futurism may, indeed, capture a certain spirit of the early twentieth century, and it may be, as Apollonio notes in the introduction to his edited collection of the manifestoes, that "a whole new world of art has grown up" and out from the Futurist moment (16). It isn't hard to imagine Futurism having this kind of reach when we consider the close conversations (literal and figurative) among different avant-garde movements in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.[92]

My goal here, however, is not to consider the full range and reach of these interactions. Rather, in this chapter I focus on the Futurist manifestoes themselves, with occasional forays into the history and relationships of other movements when such divergences are appropriate and helpful. I am particularly interested in the manifestoes because the Futurists use them to explain their aesthetic theorizations, and, I argue, this

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[91] This connection of art to life recurs throughout various aspects of modernism, and is a recurring feature of Richardson's writing. For more on Richardson's ideas about the connections of art and life, see Hanscombe.

[92] I do not mean to imply here that Futurism is singular. Orban, in company with critics such as Nicholls, Crispolti and Morgan, divides Futurism into "two distinct periods": the first, the pre-war period "build[s] support and outline[s] its aesthetic positions," and focuses primarily on "painting, manifestoes, and poetry"; the second, the post-war period that had lost several of its members to the war, "branch[es] out into other areas of research in an attempt to create an all-encompassing Futurist universe" expanding its initial sphere to include new 'genres' such as Futurist cuisine, and fashion" (29). The manifestoes function similarly throughout both stages, however. They proclaim "adherence to new ideals" as they reject "old ones," and later manifestoes are also used to clarify, extend, or modify "earlier statements" made in earlier manifestoes (29). Even more, many art historians insist on the conceptual links among the Futurists and Cubists (see Arnason and Hamilton).

theoretical work provides the contours of the Futurist subject. Over the approximate decade during which the manifestoes were written, they revise, clarify, and extend this aesthetic outline; these various revisions make it difficult to follow a straight or clear argumentative line through from Marinetti's first manifesto ("The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism 1909" to Balla's final one ("The Futurist Universe 1918"). Because the manifestoes pose such a problem for a linear reading, my approach in this chapter is to read them thematically, exploring aspects of the Futurists' aesthetic theories by drawing out the themes and issues as they recur, a-chronologically, throughout the documents.

Marinetti "announced" Futurism through the publication of "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" which made him, according to Orban, "the first avant-garde artist to conceive of propagandizing his theories" (13)[93]; moreover, she suggests that the manifestoes are an effective tool for "bringing the ideals of the avant-garde to the attention of the general public" (3). Golding describes Futurism as "the first cultural movement of the twentieth century that sought to change not only art but life itself," although he notes wryly that it seems unlikely that "anyone other than Marinetti saw things in quite this way" (153). Still, this attitude toward publicity and propaganda would help increase the scope of the Futurists' audience. Even before Marinetti wrote "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," he had made a name for himself as a prolific writer, translator and publisher. Despite his literary activities, however, nothing before

[93] Marinetti rented the front page of the French newspaper *Le Figaro* for the publication of this manifesto. Other manifestoes were disseminated by force—*Contro Venezia Passatista* was literally hurled at people disembarking from a ferry in Venice (Golding 155, 151).

February 1909 can be truly be called "Futurist,"[94] and his work and words up to this point would have reached only an elite and literary. Yet the pre-Futurist Marinetti had been a presence: he had traveled in Egypt (his birthplace), France, and Italy; he had founded a poetry review while still at school, contributed to a number of French symbolist magazines, and established his own Symbolist publication, *Poesia*.[95] Marinetti's first manifesto calls upon this past, especially his links with the Symbolist movement and its valorization of "ideas" as well as ancient and classical traditions, only to ostensibly repudiate it: the manifesto prophesizes a liberated attitude toward literature and writing and promises to break with all long-standing stagnant traditions.

Literary critics generally agree that the Futurists claim to break from tradition, and that Marinetti sought a break with Symbolism in particular. Many even agree that despite this break, Marinetti's ideas retained some of Symbolism's power.[96] Nicholls argues that Marinetti's particular "recoil from Symbolism" emphatically rejected Symbolism's interest in femininity and immobility, while embracing Symbolism's

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[94] Falasca-Zamponi writes that "Before the publication of the manifesto no Futurist work of art existed. And although Marinetti had already foreshadowed many Futurist themes in his early poems, only after February 1909 did a group of artists gather around him and began to produce a new kind of art inspired by Futurist aesthetics..." (45).

[95] Orban 25-6.

[96] Morgan suggests a broader context for Futurism than just the Symbolist aesthetic, arguing that "many, if not all, of the principal ideas associated with Futurism, as well as the larger Futurist movement, developed and intensified over a long period, going back at least to the early years of the nineteenth century. That century's belief in progress, focusing attention toward the future, was first and foremost tied to achievements in science, industry, and technology; but it was no less critical for the arts," (132). Hutton notes that the language used in response to the Neo-Impressionists drew on "such catchphrases of the late-nineteenth-century art world as *truth, synthesis, and vibrancy*" (2). In these comments, Morgan and Hutton both point to words and ideas that are prominent in the Futurist manifestoes. These comments suggest the utility of drawing out links from the nineteenth century to the twentieth, and particularly from the "Victorian" era to the "Modern" one. This chapter contributes to this work by focusing on the links provided by sensation and the body.

rejection of "the open spaces of the public domain" ("Futurism," 204).[97] Orban argues that Marinetti "was very much affected by the Symbolist past," and that while "many of his early poems show the influence of Emil Verhaeren and other predecessors," "many of his poetic ideas and techniques are direct rejections of that movement's influence" (Culture 24-5). She agrees with Drucker's contention that "although Marinetti rejected obvious thematic and stylistic mannerisms of the Symbolists, he retained their concern for the 'mechanics of signification':

> From the symbolists [sic] dreamy world of the psyche with its organic metaphors of smoke, ritualized transcendence, and esoteric alchemy, methods of communication bound into the fluid media of mind and flesh, Marinetti moves immediately into the world of transmission, broadcast, communication dependent on the new technology of electricity. (Drucker 108)

For Marinetti, Futurism is a move out of the symbolic realm and into the real: the tangible, the material, the experiential. But into this tangible and material world Marinetti brings his own version of the Romantic hero, a figure not incompatible with Symbolist ideology.

As an aesthetic descendant of Romanticism and a reaction against Realism, Symbolism provides features that Marinetti clearly finds appealing, and it proves difficult

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[97] Nicholls suggests that breaking from the Symbolist past meant, for Marinetti, rejecting "the symbolic focus...on those attitudes toward language, subjectivity and sexual difference which . . . seemed to characterize a Symbolist or decadent poetics" ("Futurism" 204). Nicholls argues that this "recoil from Symbolism" was not unique to Marinetti; it was shared by a "the crop of avant-garde movements which sprang up around the turn of the century—[long-forgotten] movements...like Naturism, Humanism, Unanism," all of which favored an "extrovert poetics of collective feeling and social concern" (205).

for the Futurists to fully leave behind. Romanticism, for example, valorizes imagination and feeling over reason, and privileges what is unique in the individual; this valuation of the individual's creative energy continues in Symbolism, which promotes "extreme subjectivism" for artists who are "beings of extraordinary insight" (Kleiner 925, 924); it is also present in the manifestoes, in their celebration of the artist's "individual intuition" (ExP 46) and the search for truthful representations of life through the artist's "intuitive stages" (PF 90). Indeed, writes Arnason, the Futurists "were concerned with the unrestrained expression of individual ideals, with mystical revelation, and with the articulation of action" (218). To reject Symbolism in its entirety would be to reject the first and last of these values, which the manifestoes clearly do not do.

There are further subtleties and complications in Marinetti's attempts to free himself from the Symbolist tradition in which he was steeped. As Nicholls points out, Futurism's focus on "sensory immediacy" is closely linked to Symbolism's "linguistic opacity," although "in practice the results are very different and derive from a quite opposite conception of language..." ("Futurism" 207). More important for my purposes here is that Marinetti considered emotions—a significant shared feature of Symbolism and Romanticism—important enough to retain as an essential, and a visible, component of art. But in a modern and technological world, when the Futurists draw upon emotions they locate their sources in urban life, speed, and even war, rather than in the esoteric, the dreamlike, or the fantastic.[98]

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[98] Even here the Futurists stand in complex relationship to the past from which they (claim to) break. Richards notes a nineteenth-century "uniformity" of taste, part of which held a common underlying "Ruskinian belief, in the role of art to uplift, enlighten, ennoble, educate, to reflect the dominant spiritual

Connections to other artistic movements of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries will emerge in my discussion of the manifestoes. I have paused here to discuss Futurism's relationship to Symbolism because this relationship of influence illuminates the Futurist conception of the body, a point to which I will return later in the chapter. Symbolism seems to offer clearly binarized terms for understanding the body: it values the feminine and feminizing qualities of particular kinds of "language, subjectivity and sexual difference," as well as "excessive sentimentality, and an obsession with the past" that are often characterized as feminine (Nicholls, "Futurism" 204). For Marinetti, these aspects of Symbolism are debilitatingly traditional, and he rails against them and their futility in the modern world. But the aesthetic that develops in place of the Symbolist tradition is not necessarily a masculine one that can easily stand in for an earlier feminine version; rather, the Futurist aesthetic seeks to fill the gap of sexual difference, valorizing not a traditionally gendered body, but something more closely related to the "Nietzschean desire for a transcendence of the 'merely' human" ("Futurism" 203). The subject suggested by the Futurist aesthetic inhabits a body that is not clearly gendered, a body which is dispersed outward into constantly moving, sensational relationships with the material world, *pace* Severini's *Red Cross Train.*

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values of the age" (182). Richards's claim to uniformity leads to an overly simplified version of history in which "the old organic culture" was "fragment[ed] under the impact of modernism" (183), a claim that seems not to account for the absence of uniformity exhibited by the many art movements even within England. It seems nonetheless accurate to ascribe these beliefs to a dominant ideology of the period, and traces of that ideology are retained in Futurism. Certainly the Futurists would not have claimed that their art was meant to uplift of ennoble, but just as certainly, they *do* claim that their art reflects dominant values of the age. Those values may not be spiritual in the religious sense, but as they are expressed in the manifestoes they retain a particular fervor and even a kind of bullying attempt at conversion through their aggressive insistence on "new" truths.

What creates the Futurist subject in relation (proximate or distant) to gender is sensation: the Futurist aesthetic sets bodies in motion with and against each other—or rather, recognizes that constant (and even colliding) motility is fundamental to modernity—and attempts to create art that does justice to this new mode of being. This new ontology is not built upon the fundamental oppositions that create traditional notions of gender or gendered language (male/female) or even the subject (self/other). Although the manifestoes variously invoke oppositions, they do so in order to undermine oppositionality as they argue *for* the union of material bodies and sensation, a unity found through motion.

As I will argue, this unity dismantles the binary oppositions that might be used to construct the Futurist subject's gendered body.[99] But such a dismantling only becomes visible through an examination of how unity is created and functions within the Futurist aesthetic. In my analysis of the manifestoes, I argue that unity is created through what the Futurists call "dynamic sensation," a "new style of motion" that will enable the Futurists to "determine completely new laws for artist and viewer (TM 27; ExP 46). Dynamic sensation is representable through the Futurists' concept of force lines. In modernized life, the Futurists argue, force lines radiate off all bodies and objects, creating

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[99] The binary constructions that are undermined by the way the Futurists construct the gendered body might also equally undermine the national body. Schnapp demonstrates the rhetorical function of Marinetti's first manifesto in establishing national borders, as it builds from generalized third-person plural statements to a final pronouncement that claims the manifesto's "we" for a new-born Italy. See "Forwarding Address" 61. Moreover, a substantial body of literature exists addressing various aspects of Futurism's relationship to Fascism, which is beyond the scope of this chapter. See Falasca-Zamponi, "The Artist to Power? Futurism, Fascism, and the Avant-Garde"; Gentile, "The Conquest of Modernity: From Modernist Nationalism to Fascism"; Orban, "Women, Futurism, and Fascism"; Hewitt, "Fascist Modernism, Futurism, and 'Post-Modernity'"; Davies, "The Futures Market: Marinetti and the Fascists of Milan"; and Dashwood, "Futurism and Fascism."

collisions, intersections and layerings of bodies that the inattentive (or "unmodernized") eye still sees as separate. The Futurists also argue that in modernized life bodies are continually in motion, and so the force lines that radiate off of them are also always moving, always changing, always crossing the paths of other moving bodies and *their* force lines. In this way, force lines charge and change the atmosphere, effectively filling what would otherwise be considered empty space. The manifestoes make clear that, for the Futurists, the by-product of this pervasive motion is an affective, bodily response, a response linked directly back to the force lines and the unions they insistently effect. In the manifestoes, the filled atmosphere serves to create an aesthetic theory based on the emotional laws inherent in motion—the atmosphere necessitates new modes of art creation as well as new modes of viewing—but as the aesthetic theory is extended to life more generally, it also suggests a new theory of the subject produced through this new mode of being. Ultimately, it is a complicated absence of separation—the insistence on physical, material unity created through dispersed bodies which continually create new unions—that marks the Futurist spectator as a sensational subject. It is the e/motion of force lines that puts this subject in the center of Futurist pictures.

I begin to trace the Futurists argument for sensational motion with "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism." In this manifesto Marinetti emphasizes movement by juxtaposing "old" world and "new." He narrates an evening when he and his friends have been "up all night" talking "under hanging mosque lamps" which shone with the "radiance of electric hearts"; in the course of their philosophizing, they have paced "rich oriental rugs" and "blacken[ed] many reams of paper with [their] frenzied scribbling" (FMF 19). Taking

pleasure from their nocturnal, and primarily internal, solitude—solitude that suggests the psychological, ritualized world of Symbolism described by Drucker—the friends happily keep metaphoric company with isolated denizens of the modern night: with "stokers feeding the hellish fires of great ships" and "black spectres who grope in the red-hot bellies of locomotives" (19). Suddenly, the group is startled out of the night's silence by the jangle of modern technology, the "mighty noise of the huge double-decker trams that rumbled by outside, ablaze with coloured lights, like villages on holiday suddenly struck and uprooted by the flooding Po and dragged over falls and through gorges to the sea" (19). The trams rumble on, the stillness of the early hours returns, and the friends are quietly listening "to the old canal muttering its feeble prayers and the creaking bones of sickly palaces above their damp green beards," when they are roused into action by "the famished roar of automobiles" (19-20). Dashing outside to the cars, the three men begin the car-chase which will land Marinetti in a factory ditch, "smeared with good factory muck" and gulping its sludge (21). The motion in this passage of the manifesto has moved the narrator and his friends from an internal, confined philosophizing outward into a world full of human and technological movement, which ultimately collide.

In the manifesto, the relationship of internal solitude to external movement is parallel to the relationship of intellectualism to action. At the narrative's beginning the apartment embodies the tension of these oppositions: Marinetti and his friends inhabit a closed world of luxury and decadence that privileges the internal, philosophizing mind, yet they are illuminated by modern progress in the external form of electric lamps; they compare themselves—men in a quiet, secluded apartment whose only labors are pacing

and writing—to men who perform intense physical labors for a public, men whose bodily exertions power large technological machines (coal-fed trains and ships). The "old" world, domesticized through immobility and inaction, is juxtaposed with the "new" world of public spaces, bright with light and active with laboring, sweaty bodies.

Yet in these juxtapositions remain traces of both Symbolist and Realist aesthetics. Marinetti's highly imagistic language seeks to represent "Ideas," or internal emotions, through images. The muttering canal and the old palaces draped in damp green beards represent not only the weakness and decay of aging and traditional technologies, but also convey Marinetti's disgust and impatience with their decrepitude. The automobile is shark-like (Marinetti caresses its fins) and lion-like (it roars), suggesting the predatory and ineluctable nature of the machine brought into a sick and dying world. Other images are brushed in in Realist strokes: some of Marinetti's descriptions echo The Spectator's descriptions of Frith's painting, especially the "globular glass lamps," "the textures" of silk, the "rich Indian shawl" and the "worn velveteen suits" worn by porters. It is easy to visualize the narrator and his friends in such suits, surrounded by lush textiles and hanging lamps. Even as this passage recalls Drucker's description of symbolism's "dreamy world" with its "organic metaphors of smoke ritualized transcendence, and esoteric alchemy," the characters are ready to burst forth from the apartment to be transformed—modernized—by very real twentieth-century technologies.

And this is, of course, what happens. Swept from the confines of the apartment into the streets by a Symbolist-inflected "raging broom of madness" (20), the friends in their roaring automobiles force a collision of old world and new. While the literal

collision (between Marinetti in his car and the two wobbling cyclists) is avoided when Marinetti spins off the road into a ditch,[100] the metaphoric collision of that older, slower form of technology with the newer and faster form functions as the moment of Futurist birth. Having avoided contact with the bicycles, bodily submerged in the fetid wastes of technology, his car likewise covered in slime and filth, Marinetti emerges from the ditch only to celebrate and memorialize the speed which landed him in the muck and grime of nascent technology:

> O maternal ditch, almost full of muddy water! Fair factory drain! I gulped down your nourishing sludge; and I remembered the blessed black breast of my Sudanese nurse. ... When I came up—torn, filthy, and stinking—from under the capsized car, I felt the white-hot iron of joy pass deliciously through my heart! (21)[101]

When Marinetti emerges, reborn through the ditch and nourished by its pabulum, he is able to "revive" his car with nothing more than "a caress." This moment of sensual union between man and machine functions as a double birth: not only is "modernized" man born through an affective connection to technology, but Futurism itself, a movement grounded in technology-as-experienced-through speed, comes to life:

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[100] Orban relates this autobiographical note: "In 1908, Marinetti received a driver's license, and promptly had a car accident from which he simply walked away, abandoning his vehicle on the side of the road. Although he decided never again to own a car, this experience with the speed of machines probably inspired Marinetti to create a movement that had, as a central tenet, the glorification of motion" (Culture 29).

[101] This passage, too, rings with autobiographical references. Poggi writes, "This tale draws on Marinetti's memories of his childhood in Egypt, the breast providing the muddy water reminding him of his Sudanese nurse" (25). Likewise, Schnapp describes Marinetti's participation in the Brescia Air Meet of September 1909, where, "[d]uring ten days of accident-prone races," Marinetti was "only one among a number of poets to hitch [airplane] rides, however brief, around the field" (156).

> And so, faces smeared with good factory muck—plastered with metallic waste, with senseless sweat, with celestial soot—we, bruised, our arms in slings, but unafraid, declared our high intentions to all the *living* of the earth:
>
> [The] Manifesto of Futurism. (21)

The juxtapositions of old and new vanish, as reason (the car's "heavy framework of good sense") and decadence ("its soft upholstery of comfort") are left behind, sunken on the bottom of the ditch. In place of these signifiers of the past—the reason of the Enlightenment, the decadence of Symbolism—stands a new vision of the world, a vision of speed and love of motion.

Born from the racing, catastrophic, and ultimately triumphant motion of the car-chase, Futurism is christened as an intellectual and aesthetic movement *about* movement.[102] Each one of the originary eleven statements that "manifest" Futurism emphasizes the importance of aggressive, physical movement while condemning all that is traditional and static. In these eleven pronouncements, Marinetti offers up his vision of

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[102] Initially, this revolution of movement is addressed directly to literature, and most explicitly to poetry. Nonetheless, while many of the originary eleven statements speak to the act of writing (making direct reference to poetry, the poet, and literature), it is clear that even the first manifesto speaks to a world beyond the written. This revolutionary call to arms for a new literature that expresses a new *zeitgeist* (the assertion is Marinetti's—see next note) explicitly shapes the content of the pronouncements. For example, the third statement begins with the literary-specific assertion "Up to now literature has exalted a pensive immobility, ecstasy, and sleep," and is immediately followed by a broader assertion of the Futurist vision for a less pensive, immobile world: "We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and the slap" (21). More than an energy to revolutionize writing and reading, this *zeitgeist* directs the evolution of Futurism's early pronouncements towards an aesthetic theory that unites physical action and intellectual development. And as the manifesto's eleventh statement indicates, it is a movement that will ultimately be based on the relationship between motion and its inherent sensations.

a new *zeitgeist*[103]—"aggressive action"—to replace the old—"pensive immobility" (21). Vibrant youth and revolutionary fervor[104] are intoned in this *zeitgeist*, which celebrates movement's place in modern life. A significant aspect of the manifesto's celebratory tone is its ability to link motion to sensation.

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[103] In Bürger's Theory of the Avant-Garde, especially the beginning of chapter two wherein he discusses the historicization of aesthetic categories, he discourages the use of a historical perspective that produces the idea of a zeitgeist. He argues against historicizing an aesthetic theory through a historicist perspective, "which understands all the phenomena of a period wholly as expressions of that period and then creates an ideal contemporaneity among the individual periods"; similarly, he argues against viewing "all previous theories" as simply "steps leading up to one's own" (15). It is the logic of the former perspective that encourages the expression of a theory as a *zeitgeist* (16). I do not mean here to suggest that I take the Futurist moment as a *zeitgeist*, although as I discuss above, many scholars note that Futurism is the crystallization of a pervasive spirit of the times. It is evident from the manifestoes, however, that Marinetti and other Futurists believed that Futurism was, or at least could be, a *zeitgeist.* It is the in the spirit of the manifestoes themselves that I continue to use the term here.

[104] Antliff discusses the relationship between Futurist aesthetics and revolution in "The Fourth Dimension and Futurism: A Politicized Space."

and intellectual development, and will eventually include painting, sculpture, architecture, music, photography, the cinema...or, in Balla's words, an entire "Futurist universe" (FU 219).

In their broad assertions about the connections among literature, art, and life, these eleven pronouncements describe motion in sensational language. Marinetti makes use of emotionally resonant adjectives to intensify his nouns: "immobility" is described as "pensive," while "fervour" is intensified through the adjective "enthusiastic" (21). More broadly, though, Marinetti uses provocative language, language which, even if it doesn't describe "actual" emotional states, builds up the emotional energy of the passage into the culminating climactic eleventh statement. The energy built in this way is combined enthusiasm and motion. This is especially evident in such sentences as "We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and slap" (21): the adjectives "aggressive" and "feverish" bring particularly physical qualities to the nouns "action" and "insomnia," while the sentence builds on the momentum of those two phrases and ends with enthusiastic actions: "the mortal leap, the punch and slap."

This energy continues throughout the following pronouncements: the car isn't simply moving, it is "racing" and "roaring"; the man at the wheel does not simply travel, he "hurls" his spirit forward; speed is not merely an option of modernized life, it is "eternal" and "omnipresent" (21-2). In the final pronouncement Marinetti's enthusiasm swells into an excess of almost unimaginable color, noise, and motion: "multicoloured, polyphonic tides of revolution"; "vibrant nightly fervour"; "violent electric moons";

"greedy" and "devour[ing] railway stations"; bridges that "stride...like giant gymnasts"; trains that "paw the tracks"; airplanes with "chatter[ing] propellers" (22). Verbs such as "devour," "stride," "paw," and "chatter" may not explicitly indicate an emotional state, but strung together in Marinetti's lengthy, adjective-laden descriptions, they create a sense of urgency, energy and excitement. The energy is doubly moving: individually, the verbs are active and suggest movement; taken together, they suggest a cacophony of sound and sight, on overwhelming sensational experience. Through its excess, this language describes modern, sensational life in such a way that it creates a heightened sensory experience. This passage suggests the extent to which movement for the Futurists *is* sensational.

In addition to setting the groundwork for the interrelation of motion and sensation, these eleven pronouncements provide a structural foundation for the manifestoes that follow. The statements begin with a focus on the literary: "We want to hymn the man at the wheel," and "Poetry must be conceived as violent attack on unknown forces" (20). But they become increasingly broad, eventually extending, in the eleventh statement, into a grand vision of modernized, sensational life that includes noisy crowds and blazing arsenals and shipyards, as well as bridges, factories, trains, steamers, automobiles and airplanes that fill the landscape. The overall effect of this movement is to direct us away from an individual in motion (the Romantic hero, the poet, "the man at the wheel") toward technological motion that moves the masses ("greedy railway stations," "adventurous steamers," "deep-chested locomotives" and sleek "[air]planes"). This movement from an individual in motion to mass motion sets the groundwork for the

later, more broadly-based expression of the roles and rules of motion, and the attendant sensations movement produces for culture at large.

These rules and the roles—how they work and how they can be manipulated—dominate the aesthetic theories articulated by the following manifestoes. The year after the publication of "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," a group of artists join Marinetti's movement, sustaining his original emphasis on movement and sensation as key to new artistic expressions. Like Marinetti, the Futurist artists describe their vision of Futurism through the language of motion. They commit themselves to an intellectual movement which they claim will "[d]estroy the cult of the past, the obsession with the ancients, pedantry and academic formalism" (MFP 26), and they describe this commitment actively, using metaphors of movement: they pledge to use their "enthusiastic adherence to Futurism" to "sweep the whole field of art clean of all themes and subjects which have been used in the past" (MFP 26). The sweeping metaphor recalls Marinetti's "raging broom of madness" (FMF 20); now, however, the "broom" not only drives action (Marinetti writes that it "swept us out of ourselves and drove us through the streets" [FMF 20]), it makes refuse of everything that gets in its way. For the Futurists, this includes the nude, landscapes in the spirit of "country holidays" (MFP 26), and other traditional themes and subjects that promote "imitation," the "tyranny" of terms such as "harmony" and "good taste," and other works validated by critics and academics (MFP 26; TM 28). In place of this "traditional" work, the Futurists promise to take up *movement itself* as their subject matter—their own movements as they sweep away

tradition, as well as the movement they see around themselves as part of daily modernized life.

Just as Marinetti's first manifesto embeds sensation within motion, that relationship continues to operate as an organizing principle of the Futurist aesthetic theories at large. The "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters" opens with a rallying call based on sensation: "The cry of rebellion which we utter associates our ideals with those of the Futurist poets. [....These ideals] are the expression of a violent desire which boils in the veins of every creative artist today" (24). Here again the language of the manifestoes links movement to sensation; in this case, sensation itself is the motivation behind the Futurist movement itself.

Even as sensational movement functions throughout the Futurist manifestoes as the centripetal force of their aesthetic theory, the locus of that force shifts. Whereas Marinetti's first manifesto valorizes motion for its figurative ability to trample the dead past or ascend new intellectual promontories, other manifestoes foreground the material implications of bodily movement:

> Living art draws its life from the surrounding environment. Our forebears drew their artistic inspiration from a religious atmosphere which fed their souls; in the same way we must breathe in the tangible miracles of contemporary life—the iron network of speedy communications which envelops the earth, the transatlantic liners, the dreadnoughts, those marvellous flights which furrow our skies, the profound courage of our submarine navigators and the spasmodic

> struggle to conquer the unknown. How can we remain insensible to the frenetic life of our great cities. . . .? (MFP 25)

Clearly the Futurist artists draw upon the frenzied movement that Marinetti highlights in the founding manifesto in their assertion that "living art" must be fed by the speed and the bodily encounters with speed that constitute modern life. Here, however, that frenzy ranges from the evocative to the concrete, linking materiality and motion to sensation: "our submarine navigators," the "flights which furrow our skies," "the dreadnoughts," and "the transatlantic lines," are all referents to material realities, to technologies that contribute to modern movement. In addition, they work much like Marinetti's eleventh pronouncement in his first manifesto: they create a chain of motion that creates a cumulative sensational effect. As representatives of an "iron network of speedy communications," these new technologies contribute to "the frenetic life" of modern cities, and so to those new sensations which are the natural result of new movement and new ways of living. Relatively more concrete than Marinetti's earlier metaphoric imagery, these references do more than provoke moments of epiphany, or provide metaphors for motion: they ground Futurism's purpose in oceanic, airborne, and intercontinental movement. In doing so, they not only create the trans-continental atmosphere of Futurist art, but they implicate bodies—sensationally human (i.e., the courageous submarine navigators, the breathing in of tangible miracles) as well as

machine (the technological miracles themselves)—in the material reality grounding that art.[105]

As the Futurist painters continue to articulate their aesthetic theories, they more fully explore some of the articulations and implications of their insistence that art draw upon sensational movement. For example, they describe the "detritus" they aim to sweep away: not only "the examples of Greeks and the Old Masters" (ExP 46), but also their avant-garde contemporaries. Listing "the Post-impressionists, Synthetists and Cubists of France," especially their leaders, the "masters Picasso, Braque, Derain, Metzinger, Le Fauconnier, Gleizes, Léger, Lhote, etc." the Futurists assert an absolute opposition to these artists' work, claiming that they "obstinately continue to paint objects motionless, frozen, and all the static aspects of Nature...ageing [sic] and petrifying their art with an obstinate attachment to the past" (ExP 45-6). This "obstinacy" is counter to the Futurists' own "growing need for truth" which cannot be "satisfied with Form and Colour as they have been understood hitherto" (FPTM 27).[106] Instead of traditional form, the Futurists

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[105] Perloff notes that "the [Trans-Siberian] railway line linking western Russia to the Pacific Coast, was completed in 1905. Together with [...] the Trans-African and the Trans-Andine [...], these new long-distance rail lines did much to shrink the world. [...] Between 1909 and 1914, the world witnessed the first successful expeditions to both the North and South Poles [...], the first extended airplane run [...], the first flight across the English channel [...] and—ominously—the first use of airplanes in the conduct of war [...]." She also notes that "with the increasing availability of the telegraph and telephone, [and] the multiplication of automobiles [...], one had the sense of being everywhere at once" (13). This sense of simultaneity is central to the Futurists' conception of the sensational effects of motion.

[106] This "break" from the ancient and classical past, as well as from contemporary avant-garde movements, is more complicated than the Futurists' bellicose language suggests. On the one hand, the Futurists acknowledge their own relationship to other avant-gardes, and suggest that they have followed a path that is "different" from but "parallel" to the "European movement in painting," of which the Post-impressionists, Synthetists and Cubists are a part (FPTM 27). This difference in the two paths is what the Futurists focus on. Yet Futurism is allied with Cubism in significant ways, and has some roots in other avant-garde movements as well. Arnason makes this clear, writing that much "nonobjective art" in early twentieth-century Europe—including Futurism—would be "unthinkable" without Cubism's influence (181). He notes that Severini, who "was for several years more closely associated with the growth of Cubism than the

seek form that "render[s] the whole of [the object's] surrounding atmosphere"; instead of traditional color, the Futurists seek the "truth" of modern color. For example, they write that more than "brown tints" course "beneath our skin," and that they see instead the "truth" of skin color: that in skin "yellow shines, [...] red blazes, and [...] green blue and violet dance upon it with untold charms, voluptuous and caressing" (FPTM 28-9). Even here the language of "truth" draws upon motion and sensation: colors actively shine, blaze, dance and caress, voluptuous and seductive.

It is hardly accidental that the Futurists focus on the body and descriptions of it as they argue for a motion-based, sensational revolution in painting (indeed, in world-view), for the body is the locus of the sensations experienced via modernized motion. This makes the nude, in painting, a natural source of comparison and critique throughout the manifestoes. The painters devalue the static qualities of traditional forms of, and perspectives on, the body, especially in their claims that old perspectives in art are incompatible with new modern visual perspectives. Complaining of the nude's treatment in painting, the Futurists write that "to lend an allegorical significance to an ordinary nude figure, deriving the meaning of the picture from the objects held by the model or from those which are arranged about him, is to our mind the evidence of a traditional and

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other Futurists," introduced both Carrà and Boccioni to Picasso and in the Fall of 1911 (218-9). But he also points out that Futurism is indebted to "the unified color patterns of the Impressionists" as well as to "the Divisionist techniques of the Neo-Impressionists," and that Balla himself had been "a leading Italian exponent of Neo-Impressionism" (218).

In this context, the chart drawn by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., which was used as the dust jacket for the exhibition catalog of the 1936 exhibition "Cubism and Abstract Art," is especially illuminating. Drawn like a flow chart, it positions Futurism as coming from Seurat's Neo-Impressionism, Cubism (which is also charted as coming from Seurat, as well as from other sources), and from the Machine Esthetic. In this chart, Cubism has the most arrows pointing outward toward other movements, giving credence to Arnason's assertion, above. (See Macleod 196.)

academic mentality"; this method of arranging figures and employing perspective is, they claim, "very similar to that employed by the Greeks, by Raphael, by Titian, by Veronese," and so "must necessarily displease" the ultra-Modern Futurists (ExP 47).

It is illuminating to contemplate the Futurists' claims in light of Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, a painting that draws upon older academic forms in order to ironize them. *Déjeuner* depicts two men—dressed as artists or students—lunching with a seated nude female in the foreground and a bending, half-clad female in the background. Although "based on respectable academic precedents" from the Renaissance[107]—Manet's piece nonetheless "flouted accepted social convention" by recasting a "respectable" scene in modern and contemporary terms.[108] It was not only Manet's ironic use of subject matter that caused a critical outcry, however: his use of paint, brushstrokes, and "his treatment of the figures as silhouettes rather than carefully modeled volumes" effectively asserted "the nature of the canvas as a two-dimensional surface," techniques which also "infuriated the professional critics" (Arnason 46-7). Manet's painting may have relied on "traditional academic" perspective—indeed, we see the Renaissance horizon and vanishing point in the figure of the bent woman behind the group of three figures in the foreground—but the subject matter and the technique stand against outright acceptance or imitation of older forms and styles. Clearly Manet's work, forty years before the

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[107] According to Arnason, these precedents are "Giorgione's *Pastoral Concert* (1510) and a detail from an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi of *The Judgment of Paris* (c. 1520)" (Arnason 46-7). Kleiner et. al. suggest that the precedents of *Déjeuner* are not so easily decided.

[108] In this respect, writes Arnason, Manet followed the exhortations of his friend and supporter Baudelaire (47).

Futurists', anticipated some of their efforts to recast the plastic arts, just as clearly, the Futurists vehemently reject it and its efforts.

I do not mean to claim that the Futurists invoke *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*—or any other particular work of art that they do not name—in their arguments against uses of the nude. Nonetheless, Manet's efforts to shift subject matter and style illustrate just how central motion is to the Futurists' conception of art, and how fully and vehemently the Futurists reject works by calling them, even wrongly, "traditional." Manet certainly recast the nude in contemporary terms, but his efforts are insufficient for the Futurists because they don't capture modern motion in the way they believe it should be captured. That is to say, while Manet's techniques and use of subject matter made a particular statement *against* traditional academic forms of painting, the bodies are nonetheless traditional because, according to the Futurist aesthetic, they are static.

We see the Futurists' disavowal of stasis throughout the manifestoes, as they use the traditional form of the nude as a counterpoint to their motion-based perspective:

> We see no difference between one of those nude figures commonly called *artistic* and an anatomical plate. There is, on the other hand, an enormous difference between one of these nude figures and our Futurist conception of the human body. (ExP 47)

Recognizing the value of the body in art and vision, the Futurists ground the differences between traditional nudes and their own "conception of the human body" in perception and comprehension of movement, explaining that their essential "knowledge of paths traced by bodies in action and of their transformation in motion will be indispensable for

the painter of movement" (FPh 41). While Manet's figures, for example, may have modernized qualities—they are painted with significantly different techniques and situated in a contemporary setting—for the Futurists they would clearly remain too academic, would retain too much of "the static qualities of the old masters" (PD 94), for the painting lacks any representation of the body in motion. Instead, it offers static qualities (a woman bent, a man reclining on one elbow), qualities that defy the laws of universal motion and lack "dynamic sensation." Without attention to this quality of motion, claim the Futurists, representations of bodies are "far more arbitrary" and so far less compelling as representations of contemporary life, and out of step with their own ideas of "dynamic continuity" (PD 94).

Dynamic continuity applies not only to nudes, but to all bodies, for all bodies are subject to the same laws of motion:

> The reader should imagine this method of study applied to life, to the infinite combinations of light and forms in the animal, mineral and vegetable, as well as mechanical, worlds, and then he will begin to grasp the thrills, the visions of plastic poetry [...] which are the prerogative of Futurist painters and future generations. (AM 152)

The same manifesto goes on to clarify how this method applies to modern bodies, mechanical or human:

> In order to depict a wheel in motion, it no longer occurs to anyone to observe it at rest, counting the number of spokes and measuring its curves, and then draw it in movement. This would be impossible. Nevertheless,

> the very same procedure, while obviously absurd for a wheel, is still used for the human body which lives through the movements of its arms and legs and the whole of its being. (AM 152)

Thus the Futurists reinforce their key relationship between motion and sensation. Their argument that the human body lives "the whole of its being" through "the movements of its arms and legs" is presented here as an argument in favor of the "thrills" of motion.[109] Such a representation captures physical sensations of the object—metaphorically "its breathing or its heartbeat"—but is also "interpret[ed]" by the artist "through a sensation which is infinitely refined and superior to those of past times" (AM 151). Thus the picture comes to represent the artist and his refined sensations as well as the object and its living motions.

Moreover, this idea of a body—any object, really—that lives "the whole of its being" through its movements is a concise distillation of the Futurist application of motion: motion is both the ontological and the epistemological basis of modern life. By understanding and presenting this principle in relation to actual bodies—either to the literal anatomy of the human body or the metaphoric anatomy of non-human objects (such as a wheel, or the Severini's *Red Cross Train*)—the Futurist artists theorize, and try to produce in their art, that which is bodily, sensationally, experienced in the material world.

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[109] Clearly seeking to distinguish their work from other avant-gardes, most notably the Cubists, the Futurists here write that a "traditional" pictorial representation of such motion "presents the *appearance* of an object," which is more than a "narrative or episodic representation" and, moreover, is "far removed from the intellectual schemas of the Cubists" (AM 150-51).

As their presentation of the shared characteristics of all bodies and objects suggests, the manifestoes argue that truly modern renditions of the material world call for representing objects in their movements. But the Futurists also seek to understand and represent the ways in which motion works upon objects to change them. This is more than observation, dissection, or transposition into pictorial terms of physical objects (PF 90); it is more than "narrative or episodic representation." Instead, this interactive relationship is what the Futurists call *dynamism*, or movement that can be "interpreted in the infinite manifestations of the relativity. . .between the environment and the object which come together to form the appearance of a whole." In the form of an equation, it works out thus: "*environment* + *object*" = dynamism (PD 92). Thus it is that dynamism becomes the foundation of the Futurist movement, "*the one single form which produces continuity in space*" (PD 93, italics in original). The principle of dynamism, for example, reveals Severini's train not as a dissected or episodic representation of a train moving through a natural landscape, but as a vision of simultaneity, of continuity in space, where the irradiating lines create an image of "environment + object."

Dynamism is the principle that "all things move, all things run, all things are rapidly changing." In describing how dynamism works, the Futurists write that "the gesture which we would reproduce on canvas shall no longer be a fixed *moment* in universal dynamism. It shall simply be the *dynamic sensation* itself" (FPTM 27). Dynamism is the principle that the Futurists use to separate themselves from other avant-garde, or even more traditional, "specialists," from other movements that draw from developments in aesthetics and technology to capture movement by reducing it to a

moment (i.e., a static moment in landscape painting, a body painted or sculpted in a single moment of movement such as a kick or a throw, or even the static re-placement of planes in Cubism). But to make use of the "dynamic sensation" that they recognize as fundamental to modern life, and to do so without resorting to any aesthetic movements of the past, the Futurists must give dynamic sensation shape and materiality. They find this shape and materiality through force lines.

Force Lines = Environment + Object = Emotional Laws

Force lines are the tool the Futurists use to "create the atmosphere" (PF 88). In the manifestoes, the Futurists discard a traditional understanding of the atmosphere as invisible and intangible in favor of a more radical conception:

> Instead of making [the atmosphere] float overhead like a puff of air (because culture taught me that atmosphere is intangible and made of gas, etc.), I feel it, seek it, seize hold of it and emphasize it by using all the various effects which light, shadows and streams of energy have upon it. (PF 88)

This tangible, mutable atmosphere changes "what formerly appeared to be empty space," creating instead an atmosphere that is material, graspable, workable. Space is understood not as empty but as "continuing materials of different intensities." This "new reality," write the Futurists, "is one of the bases of our painting and sculpture" (PF 89). And this "new reality" is made visible through force lines, "an infinity of lines and currents" that "emanate from [the Futurists'] objects, making them live in the environment which has been created by their vibrations (PF 88-89). This "infinity of lines and currents"—force

lines—is described as "visible lines which do not correspond to any photographic truth" (PF 89). The effect of force lines is to render the spaces between objects not as empty space but as *continuously full* space, redefining that space as "continuing materials of different intensities" (PF 89). But force lines do more than simply eliminate empty space; as they fill space, they connect bodies, effectively rendering impossible the complete separation of coexisting objects. Force lines, in other words, take bodies that in previous traditions looked separate (for instance, the body of the train and the apparatuses that hold it—wheels, railway stations, bridges, hills, etc.) and represent them in a modernized unity.

Yet this unity is complicated, for it includes objects that appear to be fractured and fragmented—dispersed—rather than unified. Through their connective power, force lines illustrate the Futurists' visions of bodies as both unified and dispersed, as seen in Severini's ostensibly fragmented train. The body of the train and the billowing smoke above it are sliced by shafts of light, sections of steel girder, and other objects and shapes. Yet these "fragments" of the train represent a unity of disparate objects, the conjoining of train, rural landscape, trestle and building, of care for the body (the Red Cross symbol) and technological development (the train cutting through the countryside). As the visible materiality of dynamic sensation, force lines give meaning to the Futurists' argument that dynamism is "the one single form which produces continuity in space"; it is this continuity that re-shapes and animates modern bodies. Thus, to see Severini's train as fragmented is to view it according to traditional artistic perspectives; to see it as unified with the living, vibrating and moving objects around it is to see it according to the

Futurists' paradigm of force lines as producing spatial continuity, rather than the dispersal of bodies.

In the Futurist paradigm, neither Severini's train nor his landscape are broken or destroyed by their "collision" with each other; instead, they are shaped into something new. This re-shaping serves to illustrate the manifestoes' argument that force lines create "continuity in space," a continuity that replicates Marinetti's figurative rebirth from industrial sludge. The train seems to stand as an example of the Futurists' goal to "show the living object in its dynamic growth: i.e. provide a synthesis of those transformations undergone by an object" in motion (PF 90). So, too, does Marinetti's collision of car, man and ditch—a collision which provides synthesis in the physical and ideological forms of Futurism. These unions demonstrate the characteristic reality of modern life as experienced, ubiquitously, through motion:

> The sixteen people around you in a rolling motor bus are in turn and at the same time one, ten, four, three; they are motionless and they change places; they come and go, bound into the street, are suddenly swallowed up by the sunshine, then come back and sit before you, like persistent symbols of universal vibration.
>
> How often have we not seen upon the cheek of the person with whom we are talking the horse which passes at the end of the street.
>
> Our bodies penetrate the sofas upon which we sit, and the sofas penetrate our bodies. The motor bus rushes into the houses which it

> passes, and in their turn the houses throw themselves upon the motor bus and are blended with it. (FPTM 28)

Force lines make possible such collisions (the houses and motor buses) and layerings of visual experiences (the horse on the cheek, the sunshine swallowing the pedestrians) in art.[110] We see them too *Red Cross Train*, as smoke, train, hills, trestle and more meet and merge together. In these ways, force lines express the Futurists' vision of reality in modern life: the perceptible, felt convergence and dispersal of bodies through motion.

Aesthetically, this moving, tangible, connected atmosphere represented by force-lines is the basis for Futurist art because it is "the total antithesis of all static perspective" (PP 92) which the Futurists attribute to traditional art. The distinction between "static perspective" and the Futurists' perspective is discernible in a comparison of the atmosphere of Monet's *Arrival of a Train* and Severini's *Red Cross Train*. The former creates a "modernized" atmosphere in the traditional sense—it presents pictures of modernity, and the air is heavy with smoke and dank with soot—but the perspective has traditional components. Smoke billows in the foreground, the roof to the station is in the background, and the trains extend uninterrupted through the space of the station. The latter creates a modernized atmosphere by presenting the spaces between objects as full of the movement of other objects: the smoke is in the foreground and background, in a moving relationship with hills and houses; the train extends its full length in one plane,

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[110] This idea that force lines can represent motion appears in other innovative work of the time. For example, Frank B. Gilbreth used timed exposures to produce what he called "cyclographs"—the movement of a continuous line in space. Doane gives these examples of his work: "one photograph, titled 'Cyclograph of an Expert Surgeon Tying a Knot' (1914), represents the operation as several intersecting curved lines of light against the background of the stable figures of doctor and nurse. In 'Girl Folding a Handkerchief,' however, the girl has completely disappeared, and only the movement's progress is registered as curves of light" (Emergence 6).

and meets and merges with its own smoke, as well as with the natural and industrial landscapes it encounters. By representing the unity of objects as they are dispersed through the frame of the picture, force lines clarify how motion functions within the Futurist aesthetic: it is ideological, but it is also, in a very real sense, the Futurists' subject matter. Force lines "characterize the object and enable [the Futurists] to see it as a whole," by replacing the "form" that an object might have "in itself" (PF 90) with a fuller image. *Red Cross Train* becomes not an image of a train crossing the countryside, but an image of all the kinds of motion and relationships inherent in that movement.

As *Red Cross Train* demonstrates, seeing the "object as a whole" involves seeing more than an object and its potential movements. It also involves seeing the interactions between one object and all the other objects whose path(s) of force lines it crosses. Giving the lie to empty space as well as the "opacity of bodies" (FPTM 28), force lines make visible the relationships among bodies set together in motion. They show how "every object [...] would resolve itself were it to follow the tendencies of its forces" (ExP 48); they also "render the invisible which stirs and lives beyond intervening obstacles, what we have on the right, on the left, and behind us, and not merely the small square life artificially compressed, as it were, by the wings of the stage" (ExP 47). These invisible interactions render the "*dynamic sensation,*" or "the particular rhythm of each object, its inclination, its movement, [...] its interior force" (ExP 47). While this rhythm addresses "dynamism," force lines also reveal "sensation," an object's "calmness or frenzy, sadness or gaiety," emotions which "lend to the lines of which they are formed a sense and character of weighty stability or of aerial lightness" (ExP 47).

The link between sensation and motion, as exemplified by force lines, is forged of two kinds of value. A force-line "reveals the relationship between the object's weight (quantity) and its expansion (quality)" (PF 90). Quantitative value is derived from "the measuring of objects and of the atmospheric forms which they create and in which they are contained" (PF 88)—in other words, the shape, the weight, the material reality—or the "object-ness"—of the object. Qualitative value is less empirical; it is derived from the "perceptive faculties" of the artists' intuition (PF 88), and can best be described as the "impulse of the object" (PF 88)—in other words, the directions or lines the object would follow if it were free to move without the interference of other objects and the interpenetration of other force lines. For the Futurists, qualitative value is equivalent to motion. Through a traditional (i.e., non-Futurist) visual perspective, that motion would either be real (an object moving) or merely potential; for the Futurists, however, there is no such thing as potential motion—there is simply motion. The Futurists describe this motion, the motion beyond the confines of "real" versus "potential," as "a quality and, in [the Futurist] sculptural aesthetic, quality equals feeling" (PF 88). In these descriptions of objects' values, the Futurists clearly link an object's tangible value—based in its materiality—to the intangible—based on its production and representation of feeling. By arguing that both kinds of value co-exist, the Futurists propose that sensation is not separable from the object, but rather is intrinsic to it: that is, sensation is part of the material quality of the object itself.

These definitions of value are broken down into two further categories: absolute and relative. Identified as "a dynamic law inherent in all objects," (AM 150) and as "the

motion characteristic of an object" (PD 92), absolute motion describes the internal force(s) impinging on objects when they move. Absolute motion is "...[t]he plastic power which the object contains within itself, closely bound up with its own organic substance, determined by its particular characteristics: colour, temperature, consistency, form...etc." (AM 150). Conceptually linked to quantitative value, which also describes an object's "organic substance," absolute motion suggests a kind of natural force to the relationship of objects' movements and materiality. This is not to say, however, that absolute motion is separate from rest; in the Futurist aesthetic rest is "merely relative, a matter of appearance" (AM 150), for, as force lines make clear, all objects are continually moving and are moving in relationship to other objects.

Absolute motion is never independent; it must always be paired with relative motion. For the Futurists, relative motion is "a dynamic law which depends on the object's movement" (AM 152), or "the transformation which the object undergoes in relation to its mobile and immobile environment" (PD 92). Relative motion, then, makes quick work of any "absolute" in absolute motion: an object's natural tendencies and organic substance are, when in motion, always in flux, always shifting in response to other objects in motion. While maintaining the definitional distinction between absolute and relative motion, the Futurists downplay the utility of this difference:

> [i]t is quite incidental whether we are talking about moving objects or the relationship between moving objects and non-moving objects. In fact, there is no such thing as a non-moving object in our modern perception of life. (AM 152)

Force lines do the work of representing these relationships among qualitative and quantitative value, and absolute and relative motion. In the ways they are used to represent relationships among objects, they are meant to convey the collisions and layerings of interacting bodies.

The applications of this perspective affect the representation of all objects—from landscape to animals to technological developments to people. Just as the Futurists distinguish between a traditional nude drawn from an anatomical plate and their own vision of the mobile human body, they also distinguish between "a horse in movement" and "a motionless horse which is moving," between "a wheel in motion" and a wheel seen "at rest...and then draw[n...] in movement" (AM 152). An object "at rest" is subject to absolute motion, or its own internal forces, while a moving object is subject to the relationship between absolute and relative motions, or the relationship between its own internal forces and the way those forces shift in response to other objects' movement. For the Futurists, the traditional anatomical plate is wrong because it does not allow for relative movement, while their vision of the mobile human body is interacting, via force lines, with all objects in its vicinity. Likewise a Futurist "wheel [...] in motion" will capture the vitality of the wheel in its moving environment, while a traditional wheel seen "at rest [...] and then draw[n...] in movement" will only take the traditionally static properties of the wheel and transpose them into a wheel that appears to be moving.

It might seem that this sense of value and motion is primarily an artistic fetish, but the Futurists doggedly connect their vision of art to their vision of the modern world. They belligerently criticize the blindness and cowardice of previous artists, for whom

"the concept of motion in the study and representation of life has always remained outside art proper" (AM 153), and argue that their artistic study of "the infinite combinations of light and forms in the animal, mineral and vegetable, as well as mechanical, worlds" (AM 152) belongs to the world at large. Future generations are the natural heritors of this vision, for they will live in a world newly defined by motion, speed, and sensation. Force lines are part of the Futurists effort to "find a new form which will be able to express [...] speed, which any true modern spirit cannot ignore" (AM 152).

Expressions of speed are, by extension, expressions of sensation, since the Futurists equate sensation with motion. The Futurists claim their focus on motion and sensation make them "the primitives of a new and completely transformed sensitivity" (PD 94), a sensitivity that will demolish cloistered intellectualism in art through its attention to raw, movement-based feeling. But the Futurists recognize the difficulty for spectators in achieving this kind of emotional involvement. Declaring "that there can be no modern painting without the starting point of an absolutely modern sensation, and none can contradict us when we state that *painting* and *sensation* are two inseparable words" (ExP 46), the Futurists warn that "those who believe [...] in some of our statements about a new plastic translation of reality, are wrong to try to experience emotions from our canvases by approaching them with the old state of mind" —for "in Futurist art," they insist, "the viewpoint has completely changed" (PF 90). Accordingly, the perspective of the spectator must alter to accommodate this newness:

> In order to conceive and understand the novel beauties of a Futurist picture, the soul must be purified; the eye must be freed from its veil of atavism and culture, so that it may at last look upon Nature and not upon the museum as the one and only standard. (FPTM 29)

The goal of this purification is intensified union of art and viewer: only a spectator who is free to see the new relationships in Futurist art will achieve the full sensorial experiences that are the foundational principles behind the creation of the art:

> The public must also be convinced that in order to understand aesthetic sensations to which one is not accustomed, it is necessary to forget entirely one's intellectual culture, not in order to *assimilate* the work of art, but to *deliver one's self up* to it heart and soul. (ExP 49)

It is not only the artist and his perception, as Marinetti's founding manifesto suggests, but also the spectator, who must break from the bonds of tradition and establish a new modern perspective.[111] It is only this perspective which permits—even insists upon—an appraisal of *Red Cross Train* as an image that represents not merely the fragmentation of nature and technology, but rather the unity of bodies set in motion with and against each other.

Once the spectator's intellectual deliverance of self is achieved, the art (by virtue of its emotive force lines) can engage the spectator in a sensational experience. Viewing

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[111] Like the artist and the spectator of Futurist painting and sculpture, the reader of Futurist poetry must undergo similar transformations. Orban writes of Marinetti's long poem *Zang Tumb Tumb* that it is "poetry for all the senses at once, a virtual explosion of the senses" (Culture 43), that although the poem "is no 'lyrical' as we normally understand the word," it is highly "sensorial [...]. It remains external poetry, which bombards the senses, but provides few poetic images to stimulate reflection" (54). In this way, Marinetti's poetry can be seen as breaking not only with the Symbolist past that helped to shape him, but also with that aspect of the Romantic past, *pace* Wordsworth, that values contemplation through reflection.

a picture of a riot, the spectator "shall not be present at, but [shall] participate in the action" (ExP 48). The riot itself will be represented through force lines:

> the crowd bustling with uplifted fists and the noisy onslaughts of cavalry are translated upon the canvas" not through traditional pictures of people with upraised fists, but through force lines which "correspond[] with all the conflicting forces [and] follow[] the general law [...] of the picture. (ExP 48)

Force lines, as replacements for individual people, engage the spectator: "[t]hese force lines must encircle and involve the spectator so that he will in a manner be forced to struggle himself with the persons in the picture" (ExP48). In this way, the Futurists are able to achieve their ultimate aim with their art-forms: by "intensify[ing] the aesthetic emotions by blending. . .the painted canvas with the soul of the spectator," they put the spectator, emotively and figuratively, "in the centre of the picture" (ExP 48).

The Futurist Subject: the Spectator in the Center of the Picture

> 'We shall put the spectator in the centre of the picture'[. . .]. It is a valid principle, not only for the manifesto [sic] in which it is found [. . .] but also for our entire concept of Futurism. It is valid in the sense that, even if it may have seemed incomprehensible at the time, it is now the pivot of all contemporary artistic activity, no matter in what form it is carried out.
>
> —Umbro Apollonio

Throughout the manifestoes, the Futurists insist that the spectator can be put in the center of the picture as a direct result of sensational involvement. The previous section establishes the epistemological foundation for this shift in spectatorial perspective by articulating how movement is linked to sensation, as well as how force lines create emotional involvement for the spectator who is captured in unification of moving objects, in the frenzied whirl of force lines as they "encircle and involve" her in the activity of viewing. This mode of viewing, posited as a mode of modernized being, becomes a model for the Futurist subject. This kind of subjectivity significantly deviates from the Cartesian model where the self is identifiably separate from the other. It also begins to break away from the necessity of the individual, the intuitive and individuated Romantic hero. Individuality is not a key feature in the Futurist model, for that would suggest that there is an "I," a representable object, that is identifiable as separate from other objects. Instead, the Futurists' model is based upon unity and simultaneity. Simultaneity, "a plastic manifestation of [...]speed" (FPS 178), becomes key short-hand in the Futurists' theory:

> Simultaneity is a condition in which the various elements which constitute *dynamism* are present. It is therefore an effect of that great cause which is *universal dynamism*. It is the lyrical manifestation of modern ways of looking at life, based upon speed and contemporaneity in knowledge and communication. (FPS 178)

As a dynamic condition, simultaneity becomes the operative short-hand term for inter-related concepts such as relative and absolute motion, and qualitative and quantitative

value.[112] These concepts, in turn, rely upon modernized affect and spectatorial engagement, which contribute to the spectator's involvement in the art-world she sees.

But this involvement is not limited to viewing art, as the Futurists make clear throughout the manifestoes. Certainly their argument revolves around their own artistic productions and the atavistic viewer they wish to destroy. But throughout the manifestoes the Futurists clearly emphasize that their break from the past involves a more general *zeitgeist*, not just a new perspective on art-viewing or artistic production. From Marinetti's promises in "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism 1909" to destroy museums, libraries, universities and cities, to Giacomo Balla's juxtapositions of art exhibitions and daily life in "Futurist Universe 1918," the Futurists persistently argue for the centrality of their ideas within modernized life. In other words, the aesthetic theorizations that frame their art are no more confined to the realm of "art" than are the traditions they promise to raze. Instead, their theorizations promise to break boundaries, to themselves "interpenetrate," as do the force lines of tangible objects.

Simultaneity is a key feature in the extension from art to life of the Futurists' theories.[113] Expressed in numerous ways throughout the manifestoes, it conceptually

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[112] Simultaneity also has a role in Marinetti's *Zang Tumb Tumb*. Discussing the innovation of the poem's typography, Orban argues that "another essential characteristic of white spaces is their function as silence [...]. The white spaces are lack of visual stimuli, but interestingly, Marinetti transforms them into images which have the semantic weight of space and time, the physical parameters of this voyage through simultaneity" (Culture, 45). Marinetti's careful arrangement of text on the page recalls Collins's efforts to control his readers' responses through careful structure of textual spacing. See Winter 326.

[113] Simultaneity is, of course, a key feature for other avant-gardistes as well, in media that include but extend beyond the visual arts. For example, Barzun, Cendrars and others worked to create a poetry of simultaneity: Barzun believed that simultaneity produced a "multiple lyricism" that "render[ed] the multiplicity of modern life" (Kern 72), while Cendrars ran a journal with the goal of publishing works that adhered to his ideas of simultaneity (Gevirtz 41). Together, Cendrars and Delaunay published "the first simultaneous book," which was a "formal manifestation of the new simultaneous experiences of convergence and fragmentation characteristic of the turn of the century (Gevirtz 41). Notably, this book,

draws together the act of looking, the affect of looking, and the thing being looked at. The triadic relationship invoked by simultaneity is expressed in "Futurist Photodynamism 1911" where Bragaglia writes that

> *The picture can therefore be invaded and pervaded by the essence of the subject.* It can be *obsessed by the subject to the extent that it energetically invades and obsesses the public with its own values.* It will not exist as a passive object over which an unconcerned public can take control for its own enjoyment. It will be an active thing that imposes its own extremely free essence on the public, though this will not be graspable with the insipid facility common to all images that are too faithful to ordinary reality....
>
> [A]t the moment we are studying the trajectory, the synthesis of action, that which exerts a fascination over our senses, the vertiginous lyrical expression of life, the lively invoker of the magnificent dynamic feeling with which the universe incessantly vibrates. (44-5, italics in original)

Simultaneity points to a kind of agency that enlivens and liberates those who have been 'modernized' (that is, those who have "delivered themselves up to the work of art"), but which remains inaccessible to the 'unconcerned public' (those whose eyes are not "freed from the veil of atavism and culture"). This is a liberating agency, one that frees the spectator from the traditional, material boundaries between viewer and viewed and

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La prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Johanne de France, was a simultaneous "record" of Cendrars' trip from Moscow to Harbin on the Trans-Siberian railway.

replaces those static boundaries with permeable materiality. It is also highly sensational, as its "vertiginous [...] expression" and "magnificent dynamic feeling" creates a sense of unity, "the synthesis of action" that "exerts a fascination over our senses." Thus freed, the modernized spectator is capable of bodily experiences that promote sensational unity rather than separation or difference. In Futurism, subjectivity is grounded in a sense of flow and convergence, a sense of unity and fusion, effected by the affective movement of interpenetrating objects.

Futurist subjectivity has broader implications than the manifestoes themselves argue for, implications that destabilize the foundation of the individuated "subject." The Futurist subject is derived from the aesthetic theories, which use force lines to change the texture of the atmosphere by "filling" all empty space with sensationally-based connections among bodies and objects. As force lines represent the layerings and collisions of bodies in modern life, they also shift the notion of difference: while bodies are dispersed through time and space, they are also unified with other bodies that they encounter through that dispersal. No longer different from objects external to themselves, Futurist bodies merge and shift according to the encounters that come from sensation and movement.

Thus sensation and force lines represent the ontological and epistemological basis of modern life; as such, they characterize the Futurist subject. At its most basic level the Futurist subject emerges from the sensational unity produced by force lines, and so is not a

"subject" that can be distinguished from an "object."[114] The Futurists are adamant about the possibility—even necessity—of this kind of modern (or modernized) ontology, and argue for this ontological status through force lines. But the nature of this ontology must necessarily reconfigure any analysis of how the Futurist subject is, or can be, constructed through language. The Futurists make their case for this ontological status via art; I turn now to the extension of their case in "life"—in the implications of their gendered rhetoric for the construction of this unified, sensational subject.

The Futurists' Gendered Subject

I return here, briefly, to Marinetti's first manifesto and to *Red Cross Train*, for both reveal the ontological status of the subject and its existence across the barrier between "art" and "life"—a barrier that the Futurists break down again and again. Marinetti's famous description of the automobile collision and the narrator's subsequent emergence from the ditch bears analogy to *Red Cross Train*. In the manifesto, the human body meets technology and is transformed into a body not only stronger and more assertive, but highly sensational—ready, even, to burst into song ("we intend to sing the love of danger," "we will sing of great crowds excited by work, by pleasure, by riot; we will sing of the multicoloured, polyphonic tides of revolution," "we will sing of [...] vibrant fervour," etc.). In the painting, the train meets nature as well as other man-made technologies and is transformed into the emotional center of the picture, from which all objects radiate, and with which all objects connect. Both of these transformations generate sensation through their creation of a Futurist atmosphere: the "tangible miracles

[114] Here I take "object" as the Futurists use it to describe any "thing" in the world, and extrapolate that the human subject identifies itself because it recognizes separation from those things in the world.

of contemporary life" are not merely the technological innovations that produce movement (the car, "the transatlantic liners, the dreadnoughts, those marvellous flights which furrow [the] skies" the hospital train crossing a war-time landscape), but the *dynamic sensation* produced by those innovations. And those sensations are not simply the excitement, frenzy and exhaustion of travel that they were for Robert Audley and his contemporaries in *The Railway Station*; they are the sensations produced by the motion of interpenetration, collision, and layerings of Futurist material bodies.

These many tiers of representation and experience—the conceptual, the rhetorical, the phenomenological and the material—meet in the subject's *body*. Given this aggregate, the Futurist subject appears to be grounded in paradox: it is the non-material made material through the real and imagined bodies of the spectator-as-subject. But it is also a body that exists, at least rhetorically, in the Futurist atmosphere, an atmosphere composed of filled, non-empty space. If we consider the aesthetic promoted by the manifestoes within the context of the subject's location in this atmosphere, we can begin to grasp how *dynamic sensation* might fill the gaps of sexual (and other) differences. *Red Cross Train* effectively shows a world without these gaps; the manifestoes, I argue, describe what this world might look like for the subject and its body. It is to this body that I turn next.

As fashioned by the manifestoes, the subject's body is constructed of, and is always in relationship to, others bodies' force lines. The collision suggests that this body is both permeable—capable of being penetrated— and bounded—capable of penetrating. Furthermore, this body is grounded in Italy—born from an Italian spirit and intentionally placed within Italy's geographic confines—but also capable of becoming air-borne,

ocean-bound, or rail-conducted, easily able to fly or race away. Thus the subject and its body are constructed as strong, resilient, stable and aggressive, but also are cast, in relationship to art and matter, as necessarily fluid, elastic, highly mobile and receptive.

Rooted in these paradoxes, the Futurist subject continually emerges within late 20th century criticism about the Futurists' work.[115] Troubling contradictions are often located in the Futurists' language as well as their art, and are often noted as examples of the Futurists' misogyny or, at least, Futurism's hyper-masculine character. Consequently, the Futurists' language—and the art that visually represents the materiality of their language—is often used to maintain the Futurists' ostensibly rigid use of gender and gendered constructions.

This kind of analysis is exemplified by Carolyn Daly and Christine Poggi. Daly, for example, bases her argument in the assumption that the Futurists' gendered rhetoric relies upon binary constructions of the body and gender: male/female, or masculine/ feminine. Further, she argues that the complications of this rhetoric situate the Futurist subject as impossibly both masculine and feminine. "Marinetti's forward-looking nationalism reveals its roots in a conservatively gendered political rhetoric," Daly argues, one that imagines "a virile, militant masculinity for [the Futurists] and for the nation" (65, 73). Yet she points out that in their brand of chauvinism, the Futurists "undermine that masculinity by emphasizing its performative and ornamental nature," a nature which Daly categorizes as feminine (73); for Daly, this complexity refuses the gendered "identities of

[115] Re makes this point both about the Futurists' work in a global, as well as a specific, way, when she writes, "As in almost every aspect of its aesthetic and ideology, the futurist vision of 'the woman question' as well as the sporadic participation of women in this essentially male-dominated movement are characterized by paradox and contradiction" (253).

both the Futurist and the Italian...[an] essence" (69). In Daly's analysis, the masculinity of the Futurist subject is diminished by its own penetrability, evidenced as war-time wounds which are incurred in a physical sacrifice for the wholeness of *la patria*, the ambiguously gendered homeland (which Daly refers to as the "Phallic Mother"). Locating the Futurist subject within these rigidly traditional lines of masculine/feminine, Daly finds the subject with an essentially gendered-less body ("essentially" so, she argues, because gender is constructed for the Futurist subject from the outside in, in a highly performative manner) in an ambiguously gendered country (the masculinized and feminized *la patria*). Daly's use of essentialism and performativity are insightful lines of interrogation into the construction of the Futurist subject, which might seem to be, according to the rhetoric of the manifestoes, both highly constructed but also "essentially" modern. Yet the manifestoes do not lend themselves to an analysis of gender along these lines. As I will argue shortly, gender in the manifestoes blends radically new and regressively traditional concepts, a blend which—like the construction of the subject itself—ultimately belies, and perhaps even obviates, conventional gender binaries.

Like Daly, Poggi argues that the Futurist subject is constructed from the outside in. Locating the Futurist subject's emergence from the Futurists' rhetoric as well as their art, Poggi suggests that Boccioni's work, in particular, demonstrates that "the boundary between the interior and the public domain is breached, so that all becomes exteriority, and consciousness is constructed from without" (39). Literally built from the outside in, the Futurist subject is, for Poggi, a cyborg: she describes Marinetti's dream of "male autogenesis," the human-machine born from Futurist man, not from a heterosexual

coupling. She cites Marinetti's descriptions of machines as "...truly mysterious.... [having] whims, unexpected fantasies...[and] personalities, souls, or wills" (20), in order to suggest that "[o]nce fused with the machine, with wings sprouting from his very flesh, the new Futurist male will be able to externalize his will without resistance, achieving each of his desires while reigning over space and time" (21). In this view of the Futurist subject, the body becomes "metallized flesh" capable of conquering the whims and fancies of technology; and because this flesh lacks the "feminine" in the form of either women or nature, it is also hyper-masculinized.[116]

It is significant that while Poggi's analysis depends upon binaries such as masculine/feminine, presence/lack, and machine/nature, she points to Marinetti's own eschewal of rigid binary constructions:

> Marinetti's emphasis on the 'life' of matter was intended to obliterate traditional distinctions between the organic and the inorganic, between sentient beings and the physical and mechanical world. He sought, in poetry but also in art and politics, to open a new field in which a chiasmic exchange of properties and attributes might occur. (20)[117]

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[116] It is arguable that technology is here feminized, given submissive characteristics such as having "whims and unexpected fantasies," and clearly capable of being tamed, or conquered, by the Futurist male. In support of Poggi, I offer two observations that undermine this line of argument. In the first place, technology is not, throughout the manifestoes, presented as weak or passive; rather, it provides access to mobility. In the second place, Marinetti's "metallized flesh" is not so much a conquering of technology as it a subsuming—a taking into itself, in a kind of cyborgian "chiasmic exchange." This chiasmic exchange produces the Futurist body that emerges from the sludgy ditch, and even offers an organizing principle through which to view Severini's interpenetrating technology and nature in *Red Cross Train*.

[117] Poggi's attention to Marinetti's emphasis might well refute Morgan's observation that the Futurists are continuing the work done by the Impressionists. In support of this observation, Morgan cites the Impressionists' attention to the shared luminous characteristics of interdependent objects; Marinetti goes (at least) one step further, suggesting not that objects are interdependent, but capable of a "chiasmic exchange

Although Poggi argues that this creates a "sexual ambiguity" for the Futurist subject and its body, I would argue that in identifying Marinetti's desire to articulate and create "chiasmic exchanges," Poggi has located the key to the manifestoes and their construction of the Futurist subject. Her insistence on maintaining the ambiguities of gender is merely a hold-over from an analysis which is itself grounded in binary constructions.

Not all critics analyze gender in the manifestoes according to binarized logic. For example, Adamson and Nicholls argue for differently nuanced constructions and uses of gender throughout the Futurists' work, constructions that interrogate the function and utility of binary gender terms. Adamson focuses on the relationship between Futurism's appeal to women and its involvement in mass culture, arguing that women's interest in Futurism "increased during World War I as the rapid social changes it imposed created new opportunities and expectations for women" (89).[118] He cites two women who contributed to the Futurist movement, Eva Kühn Amendola (who wrote under the pen name Magamal), and Valentine Saint-Point, author of "The Futurist Manifesto of Lust." According to Adamson, both women take up the founding manifesto's "'scorn woman' injunction" by deriding what "woman" had come to stand for: "[t]he reign of the 'eternal feminine,' with all its Puccinian perfumes and softness" (Magamal), as well as that which women had allowed themselves to become—sentimental, fearful creatures "who are octopuses of the hearth, whose tentacles bleed men dry and make their children anemic"

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of properties and attributes." Shared characteristics require that each object retain its internal integrity; for the Futurists, that integrity is reconfigured through every unifying experience of colliding force lines.

(Saint Point) (104). Adamson cites Amendola and Saint-Point to make a case for the Futurist use of "woman" as a discursive, rather than a biological, category, thereby suggesting that the misogynist nature of the manifesto's rhetoric is mis-called. In this analysis, the Futurists are neither virulently anti-woman nor anti-feminine. They are, put simply, against the traditional use of feminine, against the traditional value and roles inscribed for women. At the very least, Adamson writes, Marinetti recognized "that the demand of Futurist women for inclusion in the modern world on equal terms with men was both consistent with the democratic ethos of modernity and, from the point of view of society as a whole, desirable" (106). In this formulation, the Futurists' position vis-à-vis "woman" is merely—but not misogynistically[119]—part and parcel of their larger agenda to disavow the lethargy and sentimentality of past traditions and energetically push forward into the future.

Nicholls echoes Adamson in his assertion that "[t]he Futurist 'scorn for woman' was...rather more complicated than it has often seemed..." ("Futurism" 203). Nicholls argues that

> [a]lthough Marinetti's fantasy of a new heroic existence amounted to a dream of supermasculinity, it thrived on the 'paradox' that the lack and inadequacy which it aimed to abolish were the entailments not merely of traditional femininity but of sexual difference itself. Something more complicated than a conventional chauvinism was involved, which perhaps

[119] Or at least, not wholly misogynistically. Even Adamson concedes that Marinetti "undoubtedly would not have minded had some men been drawn to Futurism because they misunderstood it" to be based upon a sexist denigration of women (103).

> explains why Marinetti was actually prepared to retract the manifesto's derogatory reference to woman [later in the same year it was published]. (203-4)

Like Adamson, Nicholls locates the Futurists' appeal to, or value for, Woman and women, in the early 20th century market and the logics and technologies that drove it. For Nicholls, these logics are partly based upon a repudiation of "that decadent legacy which connected sexual and linguistic excess with social decline and the unsettling of the gender divide" (206).

When the "gender divide" is less settled, it is most marked by the decadent hermaphrodite, the effeminized male who lolls in the sensual pleasures of language. In this context, Nicholls tells us, "we can see how Futurism's preoccupation with speed and simultaneity derived not simply from an obsession with technology, but from a need to find aesthetic means by which to deny linguistic materiality as the province of 'feminine' inwardness" (207). The Futurist subject emerges in this analysis as based not in "lack and division," but on an "exteriorize[d]...self" that is "dispers[ed]...within the flow of modern experience" (208). Here Nicholls is at least partly right: the self is exteriorized and dispersed with the flow of modern speed and experience, but that exteriorization and dispersal function to create new unities, newly conceived Futurist, modern bodies.

The language of the manifestoes suggests that it is not the Futurists' goal to move away from the pleasures of sensation, but rather to re-root those pleasures in terms that, if they are gendered, are non-debilitating. The relationship between atmosphere and subject becomes even more clear here: dynamic sensation fills the gap of difference in the spaces

between bodies, and can do so specifically because the bodies are not constructed along binary oppositions. Both the aesthetic theory and the subject that emerges from it are developed on non-binarized principles. Daly and Poggi come close to this understanding when they discuss the subject's construction-from-without, as do Adamson and Nicholls when they interrogate what "woman" (or "Woman") signifies within the manifestoes.

I would argue for understanding the Futurist construction of the affective body by tracing the gendered language of the manifestoes in order to demonstrate not that this subject is ambiguously gendered, but rather that it is clearly gendered in potentially—at least traditionally—inaccessible terms. That is, the Futurists rely on gendered language and referents in the manifestoes, but the effect of this language is not to make gender ambiguous; it is to undermine, in an attempt to do without altogether, conventional understandings of gender. In this way, the language itself serves to contain the body that promises to transcend its own physical boundaries.

In "Exhibitors to the Public 1912," the Futurist painters write that "it is impossible to react against Impressionism by surpassing it. Nothing is more absurd than to fight it by adopting the pictural laws which preceded it" (47). The notion that "reacting against" previous traditions is not the same thing as "surpassing them" illuminates much of the manifestoes' gendered rhetoric. If we understand the fundamental nature of the Futurist subject to be built upon this principle—that a simple reaction against something is not the same thing as improving upon it—then we understand the principle that the Futurist subject can be constructed without the traditional distinction between "masculine" and "feminine." That is, we can read the manifestoes as reacting against traditional ideas of

gender without simply trying to surpass those ideas, a rhetorical act that might produce, for example, new definitions of existing terms. Instead of locating the rhetorical act of "surpassing" in language that produces ambiguities (Daly), we can locate that act in the Futurists' articulation of what Nicholls calls the "exteriorized" subject. Yet, whereas Nicholls and Adamson locate that subject in the cultural and historical context of the manifestoes (i.e., WWI and the emergent capitalist market of the early twentieth century), I locate it in the exteriority and unified dispersal of the sensationalized modern body that the manifestoes describe. In this context, it is especially illuminating to revisit the first manifesto, where the language so often cited as evidence of the Futurists' misogyny can now be seen as functioning to destroy the very notion of misogyny by doing away with traditionally gendered categories.

The opening scenes of the first manifesto begin by troubling, almost immediately, the notion of rigidly maintainable boundaries between masculine and feminine, undercutting such divisions at almost every opportunity. The male friends who had "stayed up all night...arguing up to the last confines of logic and blackening many reams of paper with [their] frenzied scribbling" (19) are both masculinized and feminized: They are feminized through their decadent surroundings which hearken to the passéist excesses of Symbolism (they pace on "rich oriental rugs" which hang under "mosque lamps with domes of filigreed brass"), even as they engage in masculinized acts of reason ("arguing up to the last confines of logic"). More explicitly, reason is cast as a reaction against their Symbolist surroundings, for the friends trample their "atavistic ennui" into the "rich oriental rugs" that figuratively produce it. The first paragraph opens by setting

up boundaries which appear stable and conventional—we can locate that which is masculine and that which is feminine, as well as that which is active and that which is passive—but the bodies that inhabit those spaces are less clearly categorizable.

This conflicted sense of a gendered split continues when the partially feminized, intellectualized tramplers of rugs are juxtaposed with the outwardly masculinized strong bodies that feed nascent technology: the "stokers feeding the hellish fires of great ships" and the "black spectres who grope in the hellish hot bellies of locomotives" (19). But here, too, the ostensibly masculinized images are not purely masculine; in fact, at this moment, when Marinetti seems to benefit (rhetorically) from drawing upon masculinized, technological images, he fails to fully maintain the rigidity of those images.

The stokers in the "great ships" are the most clearly masculinized: the manifesto draws upon images of strong male bodies capable of long hours of difficult physical toil, and the ships which they power are barely mentioned. But the "black spectres" in the next sentence are more problematic. Feeding the fires in the locomotives, they are responsible for powering a kind of technology, for "launch[ing it] down [its] crazy course[]." The locomotives, emblems of technology and speed but also incapable of a straight and reasoned course, now replace "black spectres" in the rhetorical work of helping to erase traditional gender lines: the trains themselves (the bodies of metal) replace their stokers (the bodies of flesh) as figures analogous to the friends who are trampling their atavistic ennui (the men who were earlier "making tracks" away from the past). In this re-reading, the fleshly bodies do not simply emerge as masculinized—even metallized—from a feminized past, although this is the narrative trajectory articulated by

the manifesto and so often noted by critics such as Drucker and Nicholls.[120] Just as the locomotives' movements are described as following an unreasoned, non-linear "crazy course," so too are the sleepless friends reduced to "frenzied scribbling" (where frenzy is reason's excess, the writing un-containable), the effect of being restricted by the "confines of logic" (which literally and figuratively mark their intellectual progress as burdened by reason). By this point in the manifesto, technology—and the friends in the apartment—are detached from reason as well as from intentional progress.

The movement away from absolutely-gendered language is most clear in the third analogy in this sentence: the drunkards "reeling like wounded birds" outside the city wall. Rhetorically, the drunkards do the same work as the stokers and spectres of the first two instances; but figuratively, the drunkards are neither linked, nor analogous, to any technological apparatus. In fact, their movements ("reeling like wounded birds") clearly invoke both fleshly bodies and nature, while simultaneously drawing upon the rhetorical accumulation that has just connected technology to non-linear craziness and severed it from reason (the drunkards are "reeling"). Here we see Marinetti, only two paragraphs into the 5 1/2 page manifesto, eradicating traditional notions of gender by displacing conventional expectations and analogies.

The manifesto continues to juxtapose technology and nature, preserving the disintegration of traditionally gendered language and imagery. The friends are startled by "the mighty noise of the huge double-decker trams that rumbled by outside, ablaze with coloured lights," but the technology of the trams and their lights are analogous to

[120] For more thorough discussions of how fleshly bodies are "metallized," see Poggi, "Dreams of Metallized Flesh," and Schnapp, "Propeller Talk."

torrential, un-reasonable, and unbound nature: the movements of the tram and the intentions of the tram's riders are likened to "the flooding Po" which figuratively "uproots" them, drags them "over falls and through gorges" before dumping them "in the sea" (19). In part, this is a typical example of the Futurist separation of old from new, of modern visions of technological advance and triumph. But it is more than that: like the locomotives, the friends in the apartment, and nature, these technologies are also subject to non-reason. The traditional boundaries of technology/nature and reason/unreason—structurally analogous to the masculine/feminine binary—are undermined by these opening scenes, where the cumulative effect produces a technology that is both masculine and feminine, bodies that are both fleshly and metallized, and where technology, nature and the body are thrust into a modernized movement that abuts the boundaries of reason and logic.

The manifesto uses nature to continue undermining traditional gender expectations. The "old canal muttering its feeble prayers" (19) and "the creaking bones of sickly palaces above their damp green beards" (19-20) both combine products of human work with nature through personification. Representative of nature channeled by old forms of human technology, the old canal speaks, but only feebly; the palaces, built by human hands, wear masculinized traces of their aging in the form of nature (the "damp green beards"). Here, then, where the canal and the palaces represent older, less modern forms of human technology, they are also rhetorically inseparable from nature,

undercutting the idea that nature and technology are separable, and suggesting that even the tradition(s) from which the Futurists want to break are not clearly established upon absolute difference.

The following passage reiterates the rhetorical refusal to clearly gender nature, human bodies, and technology. When the friends are swept from the apartment into the streets by the "raging broom of madness," the narrator exclaims,

> "Mythology and the Mystic Ideal are defeated at last. We're about to see the Centaur's birth and, soon after, the first flight of Angels! [. . .] Let's go! Look there, on the earth, the very first dawn! There's nothing to match the splendour of the sun's red sword, slashing for the first time through our millennial gloom!" (20)

Here, the masculinization of nature that appeared in the "damp green beards" is continued and celebrated: the Centaur, a mythical image of man and beast, is about to be born (necessarily calling upon images of the laboring female), and the sun itself, if not masculinized explicitly, is valorized as assertive and bellicose.

Technology, or more specifically, cars, become even more present in the following image, and now the tables are figuratively turned: technology is both feminized and eroticized, and its thrill is part eros—the thrill of the chase—and part thanatos—the pleasure of impending death. The friends "lay amorous hands upon [the automobiles'] torrid breasts," and the narrator stretches himself "like a corpse on its bier" atop his own car (20). The revival of this corpse is effected through the car's steering wheel, feminized death in the form of "a guillotine blade" that threatens his stomach. (20). But

even as the cars are feminized and eroticized technology, they are also cast in the language of nature: they are "snorting beasts" for whom "the scent is enough" to keep them powered in the hunt after anthropomorphized death; the narrator's car is a "dark pelt blotched with pale crosses as it escaped down the vast violet living and throbbing sky" (20), which later is "domesticated [. . .,] gracefully holding out a paw, or [. . .] making velvety caressing eyes at [the narrator] from every turn" (20). As for the muse driving these friends towards this death? She is no "ideal Mistress raising her divine form to the clouds, nor any cruel Queen" to whom the friends could offer their bodies, but only the "wish to be free at last from the weight of [their] courage" (20). The traditionally feminine muse is here replaced by a courage which is masculinized, aggressive and grounded in technology, while simultaneously feminized, eroticized and grounded in nature.

These elements are more tightly woven together in the famous crash scene, where Marinetti collides with the two bicycles and tumbles into the sludgy ditch. He spins his car with "the frenzy of a dog trying to bite its tail" when he is confronted by two arguing cyclists who, "shaking their firsts, [and] wobbling like two equally convincing but nevertheless contradictory arguments," block his way with their "stupid dilemma" (20). The spinning car's "frenzy" recalls the friends' earlier scribbling "frenzy" against the confines of logic, as well as the crazed movements of the locomotives, but in more clearly complicated terms. Here, "frenzy" is neither rooted in the intellectual work of writing nor in the technological work, or motion, of trains. Instead, it is animal, grounded in nature: it is a dog trying to bite its tail. Here it is precursor both to the limits and the

excesses of logic and movement: the cyclists, with whom Marinetti collides as a result of his own car's frenzy, are, in their own kind of frenzy, "equally convincing but nevertheless contradictory arguments" (20). Thus "frenzy" returns at a strategically rhetorical point: it points to the inextricable relations of technology and nature as well as reason and unreason. In so doing, it undermines the stability of the traditional gendered associations readers might bring to the text.

In this context, the oft-cited description of the "maternal ditch" bears special reconsideration, for what has typically been read as the Futurists' hatred of the feminine, of female bodies and all that they stand for, can now be read as the Futurists' denial of conventional boundaries:

> O maternal ditch, almost full of muddy water! Fair factory drain! I gulped down your nourishing sludge; and I remembered the blessed black breast of my Sudanese nurse. . . .When I came up—torn, filthy, and stinking—from under the capsized car, I felt the white-hot iron of joy pass deliciously through my heart! (21)

In this passage, the dreck of the drain is valued for its feminine qualities: it is maternal, it is life-giving, it recalls the pleasures of nursing. It is also valued for its filth, for being the toxic run-off of technology. Together, the feminine and the filth of technology are eros and thanatos, embodied best in the penetrating "white-hot iron of joy" which passes sensuously, murderously through Marinetti's heart.

To ensure the complete erasure of clear gendered distinctions, Marinetti frees the rescued car from its gendered baggage: "Up it came from the ditch, slowly, leaving in

the bottom, like scales, its heavy framework of good sense and its soft upholstery of comfort" (21). The rescued car leaves behind both its "framework of good sense," or its connection to reason, and its "soft upholstery of comfort," or its connection to decadent luxuriousness. This physical and metaphorical detritus signifies the car's link to nature (its parts sink like the scales of a fish) as well as the car's link to difference (the scales suggesting literal scales, which weigh equal but different items—in this case, reason and comfort), while suggesting a break from those associations as well.

Eros and thanatos revive the car, now shorn of its links to nature, reason and comfort; in so doing, they reinvigorate technology in its animal state: the car appeared "dead [...] but a caress [...] was enough to revive it; and there it was, alive again, running on its powerful fins!" (21). As for the driver and his friends? They too are revived, reborn from their intellectualized and un-reasoned ennui into a messier, more lively physicality: Their "faces [are] smeared with good factory muck—plastered with metallic waste, with senseless sweat, with celestial soot"; their bodies are "bruised, [their] arms in slings." Still, they are steadfastly "unafraid" (21). Like the car, which is nature and not-nature, technology and not-technology, and gendered and not-gendered, the Futurists-to-be promise the future of a non-binarized space: they are human bodies dressed in technological waste, they are covered in soot which comes from the earth but is celestial, ready to pronounce Futurism to the world. And from this context emerges the Futurists' sensational subject, a body subject to its own sensations, always in relation to other bodies and *their* sensations, but also a body contained by the language that constructs its very liberation.

It is one thing to offer, in rhetoric and in art, such a sensationally-based materiality as an ontological framework for existing in the world; it is another thing altogether to enable such a transformation. Indeed, most of our bodily experiences suggest to us that we do not have such permeable boundaries, that we do not share interpenetrating and layering collisions with other material bodies, that we are not without physical and physiological limits. But the Futurists are not alone in proposing that modern technology can create such an ontology, even early in the twentieth century; writings about early cinema and cinematic spectatorship offer similar potential. To discuss this potential I turn now to an examination of Dorothy Richardson's writings in Close Up, where her ideas about spectatorial engagement in British cinemas after World War I serve to illustrate some of the reconceptions of the subject suggested by the Futurist manifestoes.

Chapter Three:

Connective Tissue in "Continuous Performance"

Connecting with *Close Up*

The Futurists' force-lines represent a certain kind of subjective unity, one that holds out the promise of unity among discrete bodies that, given the forces of speed and technologies, appear to be outwardly dispersed. The Futurists' theories and art forms that describe and represent their model are often critiqued as aggressive and violent, threatening to unify the body through penetration, damage, pain, even death. Indeed, there is something threatening about the idea of bodies that are unified through collision and interpenetration, something that threatens to leave the body no longer whole, somehow "less" complete than it was as a single unity, even if this body is only figurative or imagined. But as I have discussed in chapters one and two, it is possible to imagine the body as unified with objects external to it—even if this consideration is metaphorical or transcendental, as opposed to literal and physical—without resort to violence, aggression or injury. Just as the Futurists and the mid-Victorians constructed their experiences with new technologies and modernization as affective and unifying, so does Dorothy Richardson construct the responses of cinema viewers, in her film writing in *Close Up*.

Dorothy Richardson contributed to *Close Up* for the full span of its run, from 1927 until 1933. An avant-garde film journal run by Bryher, Kenneth Macpherson, and H.D, *Close Up* first appeared in July of 1927, an important year for visual and cinematic culture: it was the year Siegfried Kracauer wrote the essays "The Mass Ornament" and

"Photography," the year that Walter Benjamin began his now-famous project on the Paris Arcades, and the year that *The Jazz Singer* opened in the United States (Donald, Friedberg, and Marcus 4, 80). *Close Up* ended its run in 1933, another important moment for visual culture and its attendant politics: the Weimar Republic was on the wane and Hitler was about to take power (Friedberg, Close Up, 4). The coincidence of these dates suggests something of *Close Up*'s liminal nature: it was poised between the silent film and the advent of the "talkies"; it crossed the boundary between two decades that were important politically as well as aesthetically; and it came to life in conjunction with explorations of the cinema as an aesthetic, as well as a technological, presence (Donald, Friedberg, and Marcus, 26, 80). Richardson was an important contributor to *Close Up*, often taking as her topics the very questions the journal itself made apparent, including the role of sound in film, and the aesthetics and politics of film technology.

Close Up began as a little magazine and was published monthly until 1931, when it became a quarterly. It was "the first English-language journal devoted entirely to the 'art of film,'" but it had an international presence: it was printed in France, edited in Switzerland, and had correspondents "in Moscow, Berlin, Paris, Geneva, London, New York and Los Angeles," which were also the cities to which copies of the journal were distributed (Friedberg, Close Up, 10). The journal's international presence helped it represent "the established geography of modernism in an almost electoral manner, covering as it did the cinematic 'beat' in the cities" where its correspondents wrote about, and viewed, movies (Friedberg 10). And yet the journal resisted the Euro-centrism of both cinema and its own existence, devoting "special issues to Russian, Japanese and

'Aframerican' cinema" and actively encouraging "articles about Indian, Spanish, Argentinian and other cinemas" (10).[121] Just as *Close Up* overran geographic boundaries, it transgressed aesthetic and political boundaries, especially those "between literary prose and theoretical writing, between avant-garde manifesto and journalistic *feuilleton*, [and] between film production and literary modernism" (3). Indeed, very little about *Close Up* is easy to categorize.

This was clearly intentional. As the editors of *Close Up*, Bryher, Macpherson and H.D. were much more interested in exploring the possibilities of film as a medium and genre, and in publishing a multiplicity of genres within the journal, than in focusing on film reviews or the works and ideas of filmmakers. Hearkening back to the Symbolists' insistence on art for art's sake, Close Up promoted 'the film for the film's sake,' and was hostile towards mainstream films and commercial illusionism (Donald, Friedberg, and Marcus, 3, vii).[122] And although Macpherson, Bryher and H.D. would act in and produce

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[121] *Close Up* explicitly promised a wide scope and lofty goals. An early advertisement—placed before *Close Up* hit the stands—reads: "CLOSE UP, a monthly magazine to begin battle for film art. Beginning July. The first periodical to approach films from any angle but the commonplace. To encourage experimental workers, and amateurs. Will keep in touch with every country, and watch everything. Contributions on Japanese, Negro viewpoints and problems, etc. Some of the most interesting personages of the day will write" (Close Up 9). The cover of the October 1928 volume announces that *Close Up* is "the only magazine devoted to films as an art," that it carries "interesting and exclusive illustrations," and that it includes "theory and analysis" but "no gossip."

[122] Writes Friedberg: "*Close Up* became the model for a certain type of writing about film—writing that was theoretically astute, politically incisive, critical of films that were simply 'entertainment'. For six and a half years, *Close Up* maintained a forum for a broad variety of ideas about the cinema; it never advocated a single direction of development, but rather posed alternatives to existing modes of production, consumption, and film style" (3). Indeed, this focus on alternatives is key to much of Richardson's writing in "Continuous Performance," as I argue in the final section of this chapter in my discussion of Richardson's notion of the "third lion."

several films under the aegis of the journal's parent company POOL, *Close Up* was not simply a vehicle for promoting any one film style, producer, or aesthetic.[123]

Dorothy Richardson made a substantial contribution to both the body and spirit of the journal. Like *Close Up*'s editors, Richardson sought to interrogate the possibilities inherent in film and film spectatorship. She also shared their commitment to the unusual, the unpredictable, and the non-commercial in cinema. Richardson contributed upwards of twenty articles to *Close Up*, making her presence felt most consistently through the regular column "Continuous Performance"; in these articles, she ruminates on the nature and effects of film spectatorship, with a consistent focus on the relationships among affect, spectatorship, and gender. In "Continuous Performance" Richardson develops the metaphor of "connective tissue" to express the affective relationship between viewer and viewed. Much like force-lines for the Futurists, connective tissue works for Richardson to link bodies that are otherwise disparate. For Richardson, however, the links have more particular boundaries than they do for the Futurists: whereas force-lines connect all bodies, "connective tissue" links only the affective body of the spectator with the images playing across the film-house screen. Connective tissue thus promotes another version of spectatorial union, one created through the affect involved in cinematic looking.

In this chapter I examine Richardson's metaphor of connective tissue as she uses it throughout "Continuous Performance." As with the Futurist manifestoes, I read

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[123] POOL began, notes Friedberg, "as a publisher of books, a producer of films and the publisher of [...] *Close Up*"; in the first two years of *Close Up*'s (and POOL's) existence, POOL "published [...] two novels by Macpherson, one memoir by Bryher, one memoir by her younger brother, and four film-related books" (9); in the first three years, it produced "three short films (*Wing Beat*, *Foothills*, *Monkey's Moon*) and one feature (*Borderline*)" (19). The fact that none of these films were well received contributed to Bryher and Macpherson's strident indignation "about the British film sensibility" (19).

Richardson's essays thematically, examining the formulations and implications of her metaphor of connective tissue and its relationship to the affective body, gender, and visual activities. I argue that her metaphor of connective tissue creates two kinds of bodies: the connective body, or the unified body of the individual viewer and the cinema screen, and the audience-as-body, the unification of all individual viewers sharing the space of the film theater while they watch a film. The connective tissue bonding these bodies is created by the viewers' affective responses to the film, sensations which come from seeing, but which also rely on reading or hearing. Throughout "Continuous Performance," Richardson links affect to the visible and the audible, in part because she is writing during a time when movie goers see silent films (which often intersperse visual images with narrative placards) as well as "Talkies," or other films with sound. The use of these different technologies allows audiences both to see and hear language, so language becomes as important a component as the visual images playing across the screen. Because of these circumstances and Richardson's responses to them, "Continuous Performance" can be seen as a natural extension of the observers of visual shows of the 19th century and readers of sensation fiction as well as of the Futurists work of the early twentieth century.

To make these arguments, I look first at Richardson's approach to writing, then at her construction of a sensational spectator, and finally at the implications of gender on such a spectator. In the first section, "Writing for the Cinema, Cinematic Writing," I situate my approach to reading "Continuous Performance"—as a gestalt of the experiences of cinematic spectatorship—within a wider body of Richardson scholarship,

much of which proceeds by examining relationships among Richardson's very diverse writings and publications. In the following section, "The Body and Its Sensations," I turn to an analysis of the sensational body created through Richardson's essays, examining the kinds of sensational experiences that contribute to connective tissue, as well as the kinds of bodies produced by connective tissue. I turn next to an examination of "The Sensational Body 'At Home,'" in particular to look at Richardson's ideas about how to contain the connective body produced by her theory of spectatorship. This notion of containment is crucial to the chapter's final section, "Gender, Language and Connective Tissue," in which I suggest that Richardson's argument that cinema produces a "world-wide conversation" creates a kind of transcendent space for the bodies produced via connective tissue. The sensationally-affective body is a body "at home" in the safe space of the film theater, but that space is, ironically, a non-limiting space where bodies can transcend the limits language might impose on them.

Writing for the Cinema, Cinematic Writing

> "*Dawn's Left Hand* begins (as perhaps films should) in a railway carriage."
>
> —Bryher, in a review of Dawn's Left Hand, the tenth volume of Dorothy Richardson's Pilgrimage

Bryher's review of Dawn's Left Hand appears in the December 1931 issue of Close Up. In her review, Bryher pronounces the railway carriage a fit locality for the volume's opening, suggesting that the mobility the train provides is both unusual and mundane: Miriam's life in London "goes by" over the course of a year during which

"apparently nothing happens," while "underneath the surface an epoch of life, of civilization, changes." This ordinariness speaks to the cinematic qualities of Dawn's Left Hand: "in each page," writes Bryher, "an aspect of London is created that like an image from a film, substitutes itself for memory, to revolve before the eyes as we read" (*Close Up*, Vol VIII, no.4).

A number of Richardson scholars have followed the path suggested by Bryher's review; it is not an unusual practice in Richardson scholarship to read a number of her texts alongside each other.[124] Hanscombe argues that all of Richardson's writing shares a particular context, positing that "the whole corpus of [Richardson's] writing," is based on the conflicting "demands made upon her as a woman, first by life, and secondly, by art" (27).[125] Bluemel examines this relationship between art and life by reading Richardson's writings on dentistry through the lens of Miriam's adventures as a dental secretary. In her essay, Bluemel makes a strong case for the consistency of Richardson's world view, even in the context of the unlikely marriage of dental hygiene and imperialism. Thorn, in an essay that focuses most closely on Pilgrimage, argues for aesthetic and conceptual aspects of Pilgrimage that can be easily linked to cinema. For example, she argues that in

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[124] The utility of taking into account Richardson's world view as evidenced by a number of her texts, even when analyzing only one aspect of her writing, is illustrated not only by critics who do this work, but also by those who don't. For example, in Egger's insightful analysis of "Continuous Performance," she argues that Richardson presents film spectatorship as an "epistemology of not-knowing," wherein the spectator is primarily constructed through forgetfulness and loss of self, both of which are induced by film-viewing. Egger's analysis provides a useful starting point for interrogating Richardson's place in the family tree of feminist film theory; it is also lucid and persuasive, but only if the essays are considered on their own, for it fails to convince in the larger context of Richardson's work. Richardson's writings, which illuminate her ideas about the relationships among art and knowledge, suggest that an "epistemology of not-knowing' would be anathema, especially a "not-knowing" that undervalues the capacities of both mind and body.

[125] Indeed, Fromm's selection of Richardson's letters bears this out: her relationship to, and ideas about, gender and art pervade her personal correspondence as much as what she wrote during her life for publication and/or profit.

Pilgrimage Richardson creates "feminine time," discarding "the traditional notion of time as continuous, linear and quantitative" in favor of a representation of time as "discontinuous and impressionistic," more "subtle and complex" and experienced "subjectively" (215). Without explicitly mentioning film as either a subject or a medium, Thorn goes on to note that Richardson creates this sense of time through the metaphors of "light" and the "tunnel"; these metaphors suggest the film projector's beam of light conveying images and ideas to the spectator. "In the tunnel," writes Thorn, "[...] past and future meet in the present moment. As through a tunnel we move backwards, viewing the past, while the future casts its light from behind and through us, illuminating both past and present" (215). Thorn's description is suggestive of the cinematic viewing experience, with the light illuminating the spectator from behind while conveying divergent experiences of time (the past of the film's creation, the future of the film as it is recast in the spectator's memory, and the present moment of the actual viewing).

Like Hanscombe, Watts reads Pilgrimage in the context of Richardson's other writing; she goes further, however, than either Hanscombe or Thorn by specifically linking Pilgrimage to "Continuous Performance." In her analysis of Pilgrimage, Watts demonstrates that Richardson's ideas about cinema, and the artistic techniques it makes possible, emerge clearly and consistently throughout the novel. Specifically, Watts notes that Pilgrimage, particularly the volume Oberland, bears traces of cinematic techniques. Watts agrees with Bryher's assertion that Pilgrimage is "the real English film for which so many are waiting" (58).

Gevirtz more intentionally and explicitly links film with Pilgrimage by analyzing the relationship between them. She postulates that "the cinema posed many of the same questions that [Richardson] asked about reading and writing" (8), and so suggests that Pilgrimage and "Continuous Performance" can be read as "critical articulations of, and performances of, the ideas each contains" (61). Gevirtz suggests that the "cinema provided Richardson with a spatialized model [...] of the reading and writing technique that she employs in the novels," a model that aligns "the reader's eye" with "the camera lens" and so requires "a reading of images and words in motion" that creates "a sensation of travel and disrupted sequential time" (7). Even more, Gevirtz argues that "just as the form of the *Pilgrimage* novels mimed the shape of Miriam's consciousness, the 'Continuous Performance' columns mimed, to some extent, the filmic experience as [Richardson] believed it occurred" (48).

Like Thorn, Gevirtz notes Richardson's use of metaphors of light and illumination throughout "Continuous Performance." Citing a passage from Deadlock, Gevirtz links light as the source of Miriam's energy to light as the source of Richardson's energy as a cinema-goer and commentator. In Deadlock, Richardson writes:

> The years that had passed were a single short interval leading to the restoration of that first moment. Everything they contained centred there; her passage through them, the desperate graspings and droppings, had been a coming back. Nothing would matter now that the paper-scattered lamplit circle was established as the center of life. Everything would be an everlastingly various joyful coming back.

> Held up by this secret place, drawing her energy from it, any sort of life would do that left this room and its little table free and untouched. (133-34)

Gevirtz notes that Miriam's "paper-scattered lamplit circle" is analogous to Richardson's "circle of the film projector" in Close Up: both circles of light are "secret" and personal, private places, and both are "scene[s] always about writing and always provoking writing about writing" (47). Here Gevirtz draws on the same imagery of tunnels and light as did Thorn, linking them not only to cinema but to writing itself.

Miriam's and Richardson's circles of light recall earlier images of illumination and knowledge, including Marinetti's scribbling friends who are illuminated by "hanging mosque lamps" shining with the "radiance of electric hearts" and the spectators of early optical shows such as panoramas, magic lanterns, and peepshows, shows that present visual scenes by illuminating them via beams of light directed from above, behind, or in front of the spectator. Like these earlier scenes, Richardson's metaphors of light and tunnel invoke the spectator's bodily senses, especially sight and the sense of movement. But they also create a particular spatial relationship between viewer and screen, a relationship that Richardson gives close attention throughout "Continuous Performance." Film spectatorship, as presented in "Continuous Performance," offers a physically-based gestalt of cinematic spectatorship, one that uses the body and its sensations to illuminate relationships among spectatorship, language, and gender. In "Continuous Performance" Richardson argues that viewing films produces for the onlooker an affective engagement—engagement experienced primarily as bodily sensations—that is physically manifested through Richardson's metaphor of "connective tissue." Furthermore, this

connective tissue is born from the onlooker's "creative consciousness," or "creative collaboration" with the film.

In the next section I examine the metaphor of connective tissue as it is developed in "Continuous Performance," taking my cue from Richardson's approach to writing Pilgrimage. Of the novel, Hanscombe notes "[t]here is...a central point rather than a starting point; there is expansion and dissolution, but not development; and there is reiteration, but not a deductively reasoned conclusion (28).[126] If Pilgrimage can be read as Richardson's attempt to "record the gestalt of her life," so too can "Continuous Performance" be read as a "gestalt" of cinematic spectatorship, a gestalt expressed as a generally representative sample of the macrocosm of film goers.

The Body and Its Sensations

Put briefly, "Continuous Performance" presents film spectatorship as a techno-visual experience that provokes a bodily involvement of both the mind and the bodily senses. This response is both unconscious and conscious; the various extents to which film is able to activate these responses are the measure, for Richardson, of its success. But "Continuous Performance" is not a series of film reviews, wherein Richardson reveals her personal taste (or distaste) for, or even necessarily her personal responses to, individual movies. Instead, what Richardson evokes is an overall sense of what it means

[126] Such a "gestalt" is suggested by Richardson herself in her introduction to Pilgrimage, as she describes dismissing "masculine realism" and finding it substituted with "a stranger in the form of contemplated reality having for the first time in her experience its own say," a stranger who takes the guise, "whencesoever focused, of a hundred faces" who direct and shape the writer's "own thoughts and beliefs" (Foreward 10).

to go the cinema and to be affectively, creatively, and consciously engaged with the images on the screen. Richardson describes the viewer's physical connection to the screen literally as well as figuratively. She writes literally of actual physical responses to film, responses that primarily focus around the body and its senses. But she also writes metaphorically of responses to film, responses that focus on the body ("connective tissue") as well as on the mind (the "creative consciousness" or the "collaborating consciousness").

Richardson's interest in onlookers' responses to film is grounded in the physical experiences of spectatorship. Throughout "Continuous Performance," Richardson writes of this experience in synaesthetic terms: film, experienced rightly, engages simultaneous affective responses in the viewer. At a time in film history when movies were viewed neither in color nor with sound tracks,[127] Richardson writes that "[m]usic is essential" to affective spectatorship, for only music can turn what is otherwise merely a "moving photograph" into a full-fledged affective experience: "Without music there is neither light nor colour, and the test of this is that one remembers musically accompanied films *in colour* and those unaccompanied by music as colourless" (CP 37). Implicit in Richardson's use of "light" and "colour" is a suggestion that these ostensibly visual cues—light and dark, color and lack of color—induce a full range of sensory experiences including not only the visible but also the audible and memorable. In other words, Richardson here argues that vision, sound and memory combine as the primary

[127] At least, not sound-tracks as we know them. Before the Talkies, film-based sound (as opposed to external musical accompaniment) was primarily an "experiment," and included individual sounds—i.e., a gun-shot, or a bomb falling—rather than sound that ran continuous with the film. See "A Thousand Pities" and "Almost Persuaded."

constituents of cinematic spectatorship; in so arguing, she builds an epistemology grounded in the body and its senses, a synaesthetic epistemology not unlike that experienced by mid-Victorian observers and the Futurist subject. For Richardson, color and light come to stand for more than merely shade and tone and hue; they imply a more generally full, affective sense of the experience of film-watching, one made possible only through the proper balance of visual and audible cues.

Just as Richardson measures the success of the experience of viewing a film by the attendant musical accompaniment, so does she measure the success of that musical accompaniment by its ability to enable the audience's affective responses. It is key to Richardson's theory of film spectatorship that the audience not be overly aware of the source of the music; in other words, music should serve to connect the viewer with the film without emphasizing the work involved in enabling that connection. "If music and film proceed at cross purposes," she points out, "the audience is distracted by a half-conscious effort to unite them" (MA 61). To illustrate her point, Richardson compares a single improvising pianist with a full-fledged orchestra. The pianist plays music continuous with the film in sound and in spirit, enhancing what is on the screen through his interpretation and emotional attention. The "miniature orchestra," on the other hand, while clearly practiced and obviously skilled, is nonetheless "conspicuous in dress clothes and with lights and music stands and scores between the audience and the screen, playing set pieces, for each scene a piece" (MA 59). The orchestra effectively destroys "the relationship between onlookers and film" (MA 60) by playing music that is pre-determined and emotionally vacant, thereby disabling the viewer's connection to the film.

Furthermore, the orchestra is visibly in the way, as it conspicuously occupies the space between viewer and screen. The audience is denied the cinematic synaesthetic experience as long as the orchestra stands (or sits) and plays in the way.[128] The single pianist, on the other hand, creates the right circumstances for this synaesthesia: "As long as [the pianist] remained with us," Richardson writes, "music and picture were one" (MA 59). By uniting music and picture, the single, improvising pianist is able to create the color and light necessary to the onlooker' s synaesthetic experience. In the presence of the skilled accompanist, the audience is not required to try, "half-conscious[ly]" to unite music and film; the unity is inherent, and the viewer's "creative collaboration" remains intact.

This is not to say that orchestras will always fail, or that single pianists—no matter their skill—will always succeed. What matters is that the music "helps [the audience] to create the film and gives the film both colour and sound" by allowing the onlookers to "manufacture [their] own realit[ies]" (MA 61). This effect can be created both by "an orchestra, that has rehearsed, with the film, music written or arranged for that film until the two are one" as well as by " the single player at his best" (MA 62). But musical accompaniment can only work its charms if it be "both continuous and flexible," thereby leaving undisturbed "the continuity of surrounding conditions" that enable the "stillness and concentration" (MA 61) necessary to the cinematic spectator.

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[128] This may also suggest, if music and picture can be one, that the musicians are perhaps not only enablers of this new kind of audience-consciousness, but a part of it themselves. In addition, it suggests that the individual pianist is able to be present and participatory in a way that the full orchestra, which must be mindful of itself as an orchestra else fall into discord and disharmony, can never be.

Richardson describes such a natural, spontaneous viewing experience in her discussion of "The Transformation Scene"[129] in an unnamed movie. In praise of the film's soundless link with the onlookers, Richardson writes that "[i]f any part of it had broken into sound, its link with us would have been snapped, its spell broken," (ATP 62).[130] Her praise of the Transformation Scene rings with the pleasing union of musical accompaniment and sensory experience:

> Taking part in [the performance] we had been everything by turns, keyed up to the limit of our green faculties, living rapidly, thinking thoughts, going beyond ourselves, moving now here now there, loving and hating, laughing, shrieking aloud at need. But the appeal of the Transformation Scene was not to single faculties in turn but to all at once....(ATP 61-2).

The Transformation scene produces such synaesthesia because it blends the visual and the musically audible with its appropriate musical accompaniment and silence from the screen, producing the right atmosphere for the onlooker to fully and affectively participate in what is seen.

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[129] I imagine here that Richardson did not arbitrarily name this scene, but that the title of the scene comes from a placard that preceded the scene itself.

[130] We know by this soundlessness she means that the film itself has no sound-track, not that there was silence in the theater, for she has already lamented the unpleasant experience of watching a musically unaccompanied film that was "silent...lifeless and colourless," save for the "sound of intermittent talking [in the audience] and the continuous faint hiss and creak of the apparatus" (MA 60). Furthermore, she argues that "if music be there, the screen must more or less be silent," (AP 32), which suggests that the silent screen of the Transformation Scene was indeed musically accompanied. And as Donald notes, even silent films were not "silent": "You would always have heard a musical accompaniment [...] a lecturer commenting on the film and guiding audience reactions, a manager filling in while reels were changed, or simply the whir of the projector and the conversation and noisiness of other people. The objection was specifically to synchronized *speech*, and the increased reliance on the spoken word it implied (80).

When facing a film that forces her to consider the use of sound-tracks, Richardson confesses that she is swayed by films that "unify[] sound and spectacle," that successfully employ "all the subtleties made possible by the composing of sound" by directors who use "sound like a musical score" (AP 35). Thus, although she "hug[s] more closely than ever [her] prejudice in favor of musical accompaniment," (AP 32), what she appears to hug closely is her sense of the function of sound in cinema. She writes,

> So we could mark time more than happily through Herr Meisel's certainties as to the marriage he is arranging between film and music and give full rein to our glee over his inclusion of the tinkling cottage piano which once we heard to some excellent sound-imagery in single notes for a Chaplin grotesque.
>
> The sound-film then, and music-drama, and, moreover, the stereoscopically three-dimensional sound....
>
> For these we are almost persuaded we would abandon our silent screen. In spite of the risks. (AP 35-6)

Here, Richardson admits to the pleasures of sound in film when it is used in ways that echo her own early-found pleasures in "proper" musical accompaniment (i.e., the "cottage piano" which produces "excellent sound-imagery in single notes"); but she is also willing to abandon the silent screen for more progressive kinds of sound in film...which will ultimately, as she knows well, lead to the talkies.[131] What Richardson wants is for sound—either musical accompaniment or a film's sound-track—to be

[131] "Almost Persuaded" begins with Richardson's assertion that she has never experienced a "Talkie," and continues for a few paragraphs to discuss the care with which she has avoided seeing one.

"continuous performance": rather than interspersed aural possibilities, (various sounds, such as a bomb falling or a motor horn, playing occasionally from the film), she seeks sounds that, like musical accompaniment, are "as continuous as the performance and blending with it" (CP 37). This continuity—this union of onlooker and screen—is of utmost importance for Richardson, who "hesitates" before abandoning the silent screen, who is only "almost persuaded" of the use of sound in film. She expresses her hesitation in the form of questions: "Is it that the interference between seer and seen is to be too complete? The expressionism, the information, the informatory hint altogether too much of it? The onlooker too overwhelmingly conducted?" (CP 36). Clearly, not all directors will use "sound like a musical score," and so the risk of abandoning the silent screen and the lively cottage piano are, for the cinematic spectator, quite high.

The most potent of these risks—that the "onlooker" will be "too overwhelmingly conducted" by the film's sound—leads Richardson to suggest that sound, as a sense, should be subordinated to sight. Richardson emends her contention that "without musical accompaniment films have neither colour nor sound" in order to devise "a new theorem": "it is impossible both to hear and to see, to the limit of our power of using these faculties, at one and the same time" (TFL 199-200). At its best, then, musical accompaniment creates a synaesthetic experience for the onlooker who is not "overwhelming[ly] conducted" by sound precisely because sound is not the overwhelming sense involved in spectatorship. In other words, musical accompaniment (along with other cinema-sounds) succeeds, when it does, because it is a successful secondary characteristic. The visual power of film is primary, and strong enough to engage the viewers' other faculties.

Sound coming from a conspicuous orchestra interferes on an emotional level as well as on a sensorial level: the music produced gets too much in the way.

Experience through the years with various experiments in sound[132] leads Richardson to the certainty that the synaesthetic experience she privileges is evoked through primarily visual means. Music is essential, but not primary. "The two eloquences," she writes, "the appeal to the eye and the appeal to the ear, however well fused [sic], however completely they seem to attain their objective—the spectator-auditor—with the effect of a single aesthetic whole, must, in reality, remain distinct" (TFL 198). She suggests that intense auditory experiences—"an intense concentration on listening"—will encourage the listener to close her eyes, and that the equally intense visual experience—a "work of art, beloved person, or effectively beautiful person" will make the observer "instinctively desire silence" (198). Based on this comparison, she asks the reader to "agree that the secret of [the silent film's] power lies in its undiluted appeal to a single faculty," the faculty of sight (198). While she concedes that "in daily life...the faculty of hearing takes precedence of the faculty of sight," she insists that "on the screen the conditions are exactly reversed" (199). The power of sight is such that it can induce in the seer a more full range of emotive responses.[133]

Thus Richardson's desired synaesthetic-cinematic experience is foremost a visual experience, and the synaesthesia she prizes comes from the act of looking, specifically

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[132] These are described in "Musical Accompaniment," "A Thousand Pities," "Almost Persuaded," "Dialogue in Dixie," and "The Film Gone Male."

[133] Richardson makes this case by using the examples of deaf and blind spectators: While watching a film, she argues, "the deaf spectator of a silent film...is raised to the level of the happy, skilful blind exactly because his missing faculty is perfectly compensated. Because what he sees is complete without sound, he is as one who hears. But take a blind man to a never so perfect sound-film and he will see but little of the whole" (TFL 199).

the particular kind of looking that "rouses [the onlooker's] collaborating creative consciousness" (TFL 199), by making a "personal demand of the onlooker" (MA 61). Music—indeed all sound—emerges to play an essential role: although subservient to vision, it helps to create an epistemology that demands a reciprocal knowing, a "personal demand" that both comes from and informs the cinematic spectator. In their continuity, music, cinema and viewer cooperatively create the cinematic experience that is the unified spectacle.

Richardson's cinematic epistemology relegates all other senses to vision and privileges emotive, bodily responses; thus she argues that language—requiring as it does sight (in silent films) as well as sound (in the Talkies)—has both a primary and a secondary role. Language is present in silent films, but it is written, rather than spoken language. Richardson exhibits a certain fondness for the language in silent films, which takes the form of placards that contribute to the story, just as she applauds music judiciously and sensitively used. But language, like music, must contribute to affective involvement without overwhelmingly conducting the spectator. She is consistent in her celebration of the unmediated visual experience—and by mediated I mean not one that involves no senses but sight, but rather one that combines other senses into a synaesthetic experience that *feels* unmediated, as in the Transformation Scene—one that makes "personal demands" on the viewer's awareness and participation. Both the opening and closing lines of "Captions" recall this commitment: "Experience has taught us to disregard placards," Richardson begins (52), for placards so often interfere with the viewing experience by forcing the reader to consciously connect language with scene,

forcing the audience to distraction with their "half-conscious effort to unite them" (MA 61). But like music, placards have their proper place, for they can be invisible to the audience as long as they do not "linger[] too long upon the screen" (Ca 56). What she suggests here is that the utility of language depends upon the involvement it elicits from the onlookers. The audience can not have the right experience if it has to work to create connections between what it reads (or hears) and what it sees. On the other hand, Richardson does not argue that the film audience makes no effort. Instead, she argues that the work onlookers do must be naturalized. Viewers are "not [stupidly] waiting for everything to be done for [them]" (Ca 54-55), and do not need the presence of captions in order to make intellectual or physical sense of the movie. Rather, captions rightly used, just as music rightly used in "continuous performance" with the screen—enables the viewers to succeed in Richardson's epistemology.

Just as sound can evoke emotional responses to the film, so too can placards; also like sound, however, language (even written) can overwhelm and destroy the viewer's creative collaboration. Early on, cinema halls are filled with "eager silence" while the audience reads the opening captions that will "launch [them] on their journey" (Ca 53) into the film and its experiences. And early cinema audiences sit patiently through the overabundance of information provided by early captions: "the names of author, adapter, producer, art-director, photographer and designer come on in curly lettering and singly, each lingering," are followed by "a screenful of names, the parts and their players, also lingering and perhaps to be followed by further information" including "the censor's

permit,"[134] and then finally, "the first caption" (Ca 53). By this time, according to Richardson, the audience has had too much, and no longer wants to read. It finds itself compelled to do so, however, precisely because language is so overwhelming; for all the wrong reasons, the audience finds itself unable to "turn away from the screen" (Ca 53).

However, when placards work successfully, they offer "a hint" for the audience, enough of a starting point to create creative collaboration, rather than an explicitly written narrative that creates disengagement. Later cinema audiences have only to sit through the preliminaries of "title, name of author, of a star or so, official permission, each hurrying by" (Ca 53) in order to get to the launching moment: "a screenful of psychology, history, or description of period and locality," appearing in the form of an "oblong of clear print...: 'Throughout the ages mankind has—' or 'Avarice is the cruellest—' or 'In a remote village of the Pyrenees, far from—'" (Ca 53-4). Written language in the cinema is best used as only a starting point. "The test of the caption is its relative invisibility" (56), Richardson writes in "Captions," suggesting that language is meant to be only a starting point for viewers, and should not be an interference with their affective engagement. Language needs to be invisible, even though sight is the primary sense involved in Richardson's synaesthetic epistemology, because it can be too directive, too much of a "conductor" for the direction of the onlookers' responses.

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[134] This is an early signal of a later cause Richardson will take up: the cause of film censorship. Although she refers obliquely to problems of censorship throughout "Continuous Performance", she devotes an entire essay—not a "Continuous Performance" piece—to the "Censorship Petition," for which the *Close Up* editors thank her for her tireless energy in starting and circulating the petition. For more on *Close Up*'s engagement with issues of censorship, see Donald, Friedberg and Marcus.

Just as musical accompaniment works "continuously" with the film, so too must the captions work "continuously" with the visible action on the screen. The "journey" promised by the opening caption can be easily destroyed "by [actors] whose one means of expressing emotion is a vexed frown, or [actors] whose pulpy rouged mouths are forever at work pouting, folding, parting in a smile that laboriously reveals both rows of teeth. These people," Richardson laments, "interminably interfering with the scenery, drive us to our despair" (Ca 54). They are, in fact, as likely to induce despair as the over-working captions are likely to induce compulsory, overly-conscious viewing. In making this point about over-acting, Richardson links the excessive information offered by too many captions with the excessive information offered by the players' over-acting. Film-audiences, Richardson suggests again and again, do not need to be directed or maneuvered so overtly, for they have great creative capacity:

> For the present we take captions for granted. But we are ready to try doing without them. Now and again a film gathers us in without any clear hint beyond the title. This we love. We love the challenge. We are prepared to go without a hint even in the title. We are prepared for anything. Somewhere sooner or later there will be a hint. Or something of which we can make one, each for himself. The absence of any hint is a hint we are ready to take. (55)

The audience is clearly capable of confronting the cinema screen and experiencing what it offers, especially when their participation is not a mandatory sentence. "Sometimes," Richardson complains, " we are too much upset [by the explicitness of over-acting and

frequent placards] to battle our way to indifference and see, missing what is supposed to be seen, anything and everything according to our mood" (Ca54). Yet judiciously used language can move the onlooker past anything, for a "hint" is all the viewer needs to make sense of, and respond to, the film. In other words, sound and vision in film can function together, producing visual experience, aural experience, intellectual experience and emotional experience with synaesthetic unity. And this unity derives as much from the audience as it does from the mechanics of the film, as suggested by Richardson's comment that the overacting actors and interrupting placards can ruin the viewers' experience of the film as it is "supposed" to be seen, resulting in an audience who sees "anything and everything according to [its] mood."

The synaesthetic response that Richardson argues for literally, in terms of bodily senses, she argues for metaphorically as well. Her figurative language creates two metaphorical bodies from the film-going experience: the first comprises viewer, screen, and the connective tissue that holds them together; the second is what I call the audience-as-body, and comprises all the (ostensibly) individual bodies linked to the screen by connective tissue.

Richardson introduces the phrase "connective tissue" in the first "Continuous Performance" when she connects the film, the individual spectator, and the audience as an entity; she continues to develop and argue for the necessity of connective tissue throughout the duration of "Continuous Performance." Initially, connective tissue is created and strengthened via the right kind of music: the successful, improvising single pianist creates "connective tissue" between onlooker and screen because he creates,

rather than interferes with, the viewer's synaesthetic response. The conspicuous orchestra, on the other hand, ruptures any connective tissue because it so flagrantly inhabits the space between seer and screen. In other words, the conspicuous orchestra, "with lights and music stands and scores between the audience and screen," is a physical presence which disrupts literally *and* figuratively: the orchestra is physically in the viewer's way, and by so placing itself, it renders impossible the figurative bodily connection between viewer and screen. Thus the orchestra fails for Richardson not only because it fails to create and maintain connective tissue, but because it makes connective tissue itself impossible: the onlooker cannot experience the fully unified, synaesthetic experience the film could otherwise offer as long as the orchestra stands (or sits) and plays in the way. Her argument that "[i]f music and film proceed at cross purposes the audience is distracted by a half-conscious effort to unite them" (MA 61), now additionally implies that the film experience itself is a kind of unity, and that the creative consciousness central to synaesthesia is destroyed by the distraction inherent in trying to re-claim unity that has been disrupted by an outside force.

A necessary implication of Richardson's argument is that the musicians themselves may be susceptible to connective tissue: the individual, improvising pianist is able to be present and participatory in a way that the full orchestra, which must be mindful of itself as an orchestra else fall into discord and disharmony, can never be. It may very well be that the musicians, as much as the viewing audience, must be "stilled to forgetfulness" of itself as such.

One of the powers musical accompaniment has in "Continuous Performance" is to link not only individual people to the screen via connective tissue, but to create what I call the audience-as-body: a body comprising the individual onlookers, all metaphorically linked to the screen via connective tissue. Richardson conceives of the audience as a single unity, even as the single body—writ large—that she suggests by the metaphor of connective tissue. In one sense, connective tissue links individual film viewers to the images playing across the screen: each audience member inhabits a discrete space comprising the two end-points of film-house seat and cinema screen, with the viewer's synaesthetic perception functioning to connect the two. In another sense, however, connective tissue links the audience-as-body to the images on the screen.[135] The theater full of "whole small spirit[s] gathered at home in [them]selves" (ATP 62) suggests a larger body, the audience-as-body. From the localized, individual bodies whose epistemologies are grounded in cinematic experience, extends a more encompassing audience-as-body whose epistemology is similarly, if more largely, grounded. For individual viewers, the microcosmic epistemology allows for differences as varied as the experiences that fill the darkened film-house seats; yet for the audience-as-body, the macrocosmic epistemology suggests that these differences can be erased, de-faced through the glare of cinematic exposure. Composed of individual bodies smaller than itself, the audience-as-body- subsumes these bodies into itself, thereby extinguishing the features that are illuminated as the film splays across the screen, as light and dark play across the spectators' bodies and faces. In this way, the audience-as-body renders

[135] This construction as the audience-as-one is the basis, I believe, for Egger's contention that Richardson white-washes her audience in a supremely colonialist way.

invisible the differences inherent in the construction of the single body joined to the screen via connective tissue.

Richardson moves fluidly from implications that the audience is a single unit, to descriptions of the audience acting or responding singly, to an outright assertion that the audience can be considered unified. One of the ways Richardson implicitly presents the audience as a unified being is to describe it in terms of its growth and development.[136] In the first "Continuous Performance," she describes "a new audience, born within the last few months" (35); throughout the run of *Close Up* Richardson's readers see this new audience grow, mature and develop under Richardson's watchful eye.[137] The audience begins as a group of women—notably, mothers—"tired women" whose "faces [are] sheened with toil," who are present with their "small children" (35). Thus the audience begins at early stages of development, literally (the young children), but primarily metaphorically (the weary, new-to-the-cinema mothers, on whom Richardson focuses). In another essay the audience is explicitly infantilized, both by Richardson and by an unnamed critic to whom she is responding. In this representation of the audience, Richardson draws distinctions between two kinds of infanitilization: one in which film-audiences are infantile because they seek an activity that provokes flights of fantasy

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[136] Clearly, the metaphor of growth and development implies linearity and perhaps even telos, both of which Richardson in general resisted. But it's clear that Richardson saw the audience developing in time as it become more familiar with movie-going as an activity, and these changes had due effect on her ideas about what cinematic spectatorship could and should be.

[137] It is significant that the audience is conceived of, and described, as would be a child—new-born, then growing and developing. H.G. Wells apparently told Richardson that she needed to make both a child and a book, and much has been made of the relationships among Richardson's childlessness, her maternal posture towards Alan Odle, and her work as a writer. See Hanscombe, The Art of Life.

rather than mental stimulation, and the other kind, in which film-audiences are infantile because they are sweetly trusting. Her comments are worth quoting at length:

> Much has been said, by those who dislike the pictures, of their value as evidence of infantilism. It is claimed that the people who flock to the movies do so because they love to lose themselves in the excitements of a dream-world, a world that bears no relationship to life as they know it, that makes no demand upon the intelligence, acts like a drug, and is altogether demoralising and devitalising.
>
> Such people obviously know very little about the movies. But even if they did...it is hardly likely that they would lose their apparent inability to distinguish between childishness...[or] infantilism, and childlikeness, which is quite another thing. The child trusts its world, and those who cannot rid themselves of a child-like trust are by no means to be confused with those who shirk problems and responsibilities and remain ego-centrically within a dream-world that bears no relation to reality. (PF 57)

Thus for Richardson, to infantilize the audience by noting its childishness is impermissible, while to infantilize it by noting its child-like qualities, which implicitly include not only trust but also the ability to take on responsibility and to function in the world non-egocentrically.

As the audience-as-body develops it moves through fairly predictable cultural and social stages. Film-viewing bestows on this audience many of the same educative gifts

ostensibly proffered by family, school, church or travel: "social gifts" such as "the insensibly learned awareness of alien people and alien ways" as well as the "awakening of the imaginative power, the gift of expansion, of moving, ever so little, into a new dimension of consciousness" (SFG 307). This new dimension of consciousness elevates the adolescent and uneducated "yokel" and "dairymaid" to "youths and maidens" who "becom[e] world citizens," more worldly and knowledgeable, able to take part in "the world-wide conversations now increasingly upon us in which the cinema may play, amongst its numerous other rôles, so powerful a part" (CIA 57).[138] The childlike qualities that draw viewers to film are rewarded and developed, much as a young child would be rewarded and helped to develop by an attentive parent.

When she discusses the development of the unified audience, Richardson is particularly attentive to the "front-rowers" because they afford her material to discuss the development of the audience's affect co-extensively with film's development as a technology and as a genre. Front-rowers are particularly useful in this analysis not only because they are often children, but because their affective responses reveal the quality and nature of any particular film. Richardson calls "the front rowers of all ages" the "[a]ll-out responsive pit and gallery of the cinema" (FR62), and notes their "development...their growth in critical grace" as viewers (FR 63). The response of the front-rowers indicates both the quality or originality of the film, as well as their own

[138] Silent film was generally considered, at least by the writers in *Close Up*, to enable "world-wide conversations" precisely because it didn't pose a language barrier. Friedberg notes that *Close Up* "aspired to an internationalism—it was not primarily English, Swiss, German or French." She continues: "As the first English-language journal devoted entirely to the 'art of film,' *Close Up* aspired to do for English-language film writing and for the dissemination of film theory what the silent cinema did for the spectator: to transcend the boundaries of language and of nation" (Close Up, 10).

development as film-goers. In good films, the front-rowers engage in cooperative, creative collaboration; they "see, possibly not all that is intended, but if quality is there, they see and assist" (FR 63-4). On the other hand, if the film is "stock," or even only "goodish to good" in quality, then the front-rowers respond not with collaborative affect, but with more conscious emotions, those grounded in the film's predictability and that border on impatience. The front rowers "come level-headed and serenely talking through drama that a year ago would have held them dizzy and breathless" (FR 63), suggesting that affective responses have developed alongside, even if not necessarily in pace with, film and screen-writing. Richardson describes this development in evocatively affective terms:

> It is not only that today's front rowers recognise all the stock characters at a glance and can predict developments. It is that the quality of the attention and collaboration that almost any stock drama can still command has changed. For although attention never wavers and collaboration is still hearty...the front rows are no longer thrilled quite as they were in their earlier silent days by all the hocus-pocus. (63)

The nature of the creative collaboration remains untouched, but the extent of the collaboration shifts in response to the quality of the film.

Thus the front rowers afford Richardson a concrete example through which to test her hypotheses about the role of vision and sound for cinematic spectatorship, especially spectatorship for the audience as a unified body. Believing that the success of film is based in its ability to "compel the co-operation of the creative consciousness of the

audience" (CP 36), and that this compulsion is only successful when "the audience is...stilled to forgetfulness of itself as an audience" (36), Richardson shows these premises at work in audiences as they come to recognize tropes that become standard and so lose their power to thrill. Stock and cliché films render impossible the necessary "stilled forgetfulness," for they foreground the audience's role: the simple recognition of plot and character are enough to call forth individual viewer's memories, jolting each viewer out of the continuous present into a sense of the past. In this context, the front rowers make visible the ways that film can (and can fail to) "still" its audience, for they judiciously "attend [to the film], refuse to be puzzled, watch for the working out" (FR 64). They have come to learn that in film, things indeed will be worked out; as the novelty of the technology begins to wear off, the film as a genre must work harder to engage its audience. And yet, ironically, it is the ability of any individual front rower to be jolted into the present by a personal memory that complicates the possibility of the audience-as-body. Such a unified audience can only ever be, literally, a group of individual people, feeling and seeing and hearing and experiencing *individually*. The metaphoric audience-as-body, which works in a way like Richardson's own third-lion as an alternative representation of film spectators, is always threatened by the literalness—the physicality, the *realness*—of the actual people actually viewing films.

It is perhaps this gap between a theory of cinematic spectatorship and the material realities of early 20th-century film-goers that causes Richardson to emphasize the democratizing force underlying the audience-as-body. She describes the general make-up of a film audience by noting that "[a]nyone may be there. Anyone *is* there and

everyone, and not segregated..." (TIC 62). This "everyone" comprises numerous categories beyond "weary women," "small children" and the front rowers; it includes categories such as the "starveling," the "pleasant intellectual," the "happy youth," "sensitives," "elders," the "stone deaf," and the "charming girl" (TIC 64).

Richardson's audience-as-body is a complex body: she acknowledges the physical necessities of recognizing individuals within that body, but maintains the metaphor regardless. This multiply-constructed vision of the audience bears the traces of her own assertion about interpretations—that there are always alternatives, even unseen options waiting to be discovered. The list that includes "everyone" and "anyone" is a list of individual types, and Richardson uses this sense of individuality to complicate her metaphor, especially when describing slow motion films.

Writing of the audience's response to slow-motion film, Richardson describes the audience erupting in an "avalanche of laughter" at the sight of runners "advancing as if through resistant air" toward the finish line, displaying "a sharp touch of the grotesque...[with] arms arched, and rigid, air-clutching fingers, [and] slowly, goose-steppingly lifted leaden limbs" [139] (SM 56). Even the beautiful, slow-motion images of horses running a steeple-chase, about which "there was nothing that could even remotely appeal to the eye on the look-out for pretexts of mirth," produces from the audience much laughter for, if nothing else, "the slowness [and] the anomaly" (SM 56) of the sight. When the audience finally responds differently to yet a third slow-motion picture, it is

[139] In light of Close Up's chronological position between the Weimar Republic and Hitler's rise to power, it is fascinating to note that Richardson's description of an athletic movement in slow-motion would evoke the movements of an army marching.

because "all lesser emotions were submerged in that of stupefaction at the sheer marvel of [the] levitation" of a man completing a high jump (SM 57). In both cases—when the audience bursts into "hysterical laughter" (SM 54) at the racers, human and horse, as well as when it responds reverently to the "imperious demands" of the "beauty and wonder" of the high jump—Richardson foregrounds affective responses as a unifying feature of film audiences. Whether the audience laughs at the "freakish incidental" of the steeple-chase or the "comic possibilities of the film" provided by the vision of three men running the "last lap of a mile race," (56) Richardson notes that sensational response has the effect of unifying the audience. She writes that "the result [of the audience response], *regarding the audience as one person*, was, as before, registration of a freakish incidental of the new entertainment" (SM 57, italics mine).

Richardson recognizes in this audience-as-body a necessary individuation—the body's broken-ness—but notes that it can be "healed," as it were, by the wonders of technology and the ways in which technology can forge connections for the audience. Noting the fractured nature of the audience she has constructed, Richardson admits that it is not necessarily appropriate to "regard[] the audience as one person," for not everyone shared the same affective response: "there must have been incidents," she writes. "Indignant people must have hushed the gigglers. Sensitive people must have cried out in ecstatic appreciation and produced wonder that upon the next opportunity turned to attention hopeful of discovering the hidden charm" (SM 55). Yet these fractures within the audience-as-body are healed by the slow-motion vision of "Mr. Jones winning the high jump":

> We [saw] Mr. Jones run and lightly leap and clear and reach the ground in an athletic sprawl. And then again there were the high posts and the bar and the relatively small man held to earth by a pointed toe, who rose as if dreaming, slowly through the air upon which as he cleared the bar he lay sideways in repose, on his face the look of blissful concentration given in religious art to saints whose battles are won, indolently stretching one limb to slant downwards beyond the bar and brings its fellow following and the whole elastic body to move posed in the air upon the outstretched toe that sought and lightly found the earth. Perfect silence greeted this revelation of the miraculous commonplace. It won. Was bound to win. Its beauty and its wonder were imperious demands, overwhelming. (SM 57)

It is not only the supreme achievement of the high-jumping Mr. Jones that is "overwhelming." It is the technological vision of his body—athletic, elastic and relatively small— performing the "miraculous commonplace" with "beauty and wonder" that affect the audience so that "all lesser emotions were submerged" to their awe, their "stupefaction" and "marvel" (SM 57). But the vision that re-unifies the audience in spite of the fracturing nature of slow-motion film is not only of Mr. Jones's body performing this miraculous feat; it is also of his "blissful" face, a face that comes to represent the face of the audience-as-body. Richardson suggests this metaphoric connection when she writes that "the revelation bestowed by the ecstatic face, of the spirit withdrawn, within the body it was operating, to the point of perfect concentration, showing this business of athletic achievement as one with every kind of human achievement, with that of the

thinker, the artist and the saint, is one of the most priceless offerings to date of the film considered as a vehicle for revealing to mankind that in man which is unbounded" (SM 57-8). That technology allows the audience to bear witness to an event—visible on the face—bringing together all "human achievement[s]" is yet further evidence of technology's democratizing force, and the way that such democratization, which includes "anyone" and "everyone," plays out across the body.

As her description of slow-motion film and audience response to it demonstrates, Richardson is both explicit and complex in her analysis of the audience-as-body, simultaneously acknowledging the impossibility *and* the necessity of such a construction. She writes of film as a medium that is valuable for its ability to reflect "the customary" to us, and to restore to the customary "its essential quality." That essential quality can be seen in Mr. Jones's high jump, where he makes miraculous (by sheer feat of the duration and height of his levitation) the very customary and ordinary act of leaving, if only for a few seconds, the ground. It is this ability to restore the customary that gives to film its universalizing presence. So, Richardson asks,

> [M]ust we not, today, emerge from our small individual existences and from narcissistic contemplation thereof? Learn that we are infinitesimal parts of a vast whole? Labour and collaborate to find salvation for a world now paying the prices of various kinds of self-seeking? And, for the re-education of humanity, is any single instrument more powerful than the film that is here offered merely as a provider of private benefits? (Na 183)

Within the film-house, as elsewhere, are individuals engaged in self-seeking, individuals who narcissistically contemplate their own small "individual existences." But Richardson insists that the film-house gives individuals the chance to participate in a collectivity, a collectivity that is ultimately good: "the everlasting WE who is to accomplish all this [change] remains amidst all change and growth *a single individual*" (183, my italics). While Richardson admits here that she is "moralising" (Na 183), this moralizing lecture is partly designed to construct the readers' conception of the audience; by extension, it constructs many film-goers' conceptions of the audience, and of the work that audience can do.

Much of the way that Richardson argues explicitly for the unified audience-as-body—the "ecstatic face" of the high jumping Mr. Jones, the "everlasting WE" of the human collective, the "saints" and artists and thinkers who join "Everyman"—marks her religiously-inflected language throughout "Continuous Performance." Religiously inflected language enters Richardson's discourse on a variety of issues, including film-palace architecture, film audiences, and the cinema's place in the early 20th century debate about highbrow and lowbrow art. Richardson moves fluidly between religious and secular language throughout "Continuous Performance," using religious language most frequently to converge around ideas of "home" and what it means to be "at home." By invoking a connection between "home" and religion, Richardson effectively maintains the chasteness of the audience-as-body. Indeed, the metaphor of the audience-as-body, held together by connective tissue, calls forth another set of metaphors: metaphors of protection and containment. Whereas language of the body—language of

affect—is likely to carry with it connotations of an excited and excitable nervous body that threatens to resist containment, surrounding this body in religious discourse and grounding it "at home" helps to mitigate against outside contamination, as well as against bodies that might transgress their bounds.

The Sensational Body "At Home"

One of the more dominant metaphors of safe containment for the film audience is the "little bethel," a phrase that recurs throughout "Continuous Performance" when Richardson refers to "home" as a communal locale. Film viewers who are loyal to their own "little bethel" find themselves immediately "at home," able to choose from among "a multitude of good seatings" in a film-house that is somewhat crudely "shaped like a garage" but which offers "a nave" as well as "two aisles with three seats deep" (NPLH 45). Richardson uses the idea of collectivity—a neighborhood gathering spot—to introduce the analogy of going to the film palace and going to a house of worship. "Bethel" has delimiting connotations as well: these viewers are at home in their own little bethel precisely because they are not "full citizens of the spirit, free from the tyranny of circumstance," (44); connected to their own community and not, in fact, free to leave it, they are not yet "always and everywhere perfectly at home" (44). And the audience will be rewarded for its chaste obedience: if it stays at home and refrains from "go[ing] a-whoring after novelties," it will find in the "little bethel...plain miraculous food...served to feed [its] souls" (45). Happily at home in their local cinema shaped like a garage, "the faithful" find themselves well-situated for the kind of synaesthetic experience that Richardson ascribes to film-going, an experience made proper through the architecture of

the film-house itself. The ecstasy accompanying the movie viewers may be bodily but it is far from bawdy: it is infused with a kind of reverent grace, turned from mere "meditation" into a more sacred experience through the conflation of film-house with house of worship.

Such a conflation effectively blurs distinctions among film-house, church and home. It is the "good bishop" who advises "Everyman" to "select" (and hold fast to) his own church rather than go "a-whoring after novelties," helping to maintain the local cinema as "the best testing-ground" for new advances in film technology. Richardson uses the term "Everyman" throughout "Continuous Performance," generally referring to the people. In particular, however, the choice of "Everyman" for the democratized audience-as-body moves the level of religious discourse outside of architecture, referring as it does to both a body and a soul. Language like this suggests that the local film-house is a place of chastity, a place not to be desecrated. As Richardson suggests, the thirst for novelties should be quenched, but at the discretion of the church: the "truly good bishop" will of course arrange that "the best, selected novelties shall circulate from time to time" (NPLH 44). Thus the trust for Everyman's soul—the soul of the audience-as-body—is granted to film-house managers, who should ensure the circulation of quality films.

The local film-house can appease other needs as well; Richardson attributes to the "little bethel" miraculous food—film—come like manna to "feed our souls," preparing film-goers for "the finer things that soon no doubt will be raising the level all round" (NPLH 45). Lest we worry over the quality of film-fare offered, Richardson again invokes religious language, suggesting that "consolation [may be drawn] from the

knowledge that, in matters of feeding, the feeder and the how and the where are as important as the what" (NPLH 45). Here her metaphor evokes New Testament miracles, most notably Jesus feeding the thousands from a few loaves and fishes. Coarse fare, Richardson intones, is not a barrier to the soul's ascension; nor is it to blame for the film-goer's failure to achieve rapturous transport: "Perfection, of part or of whole, we shall rarely see, but there is *no limit to vision* and if we return quite empty-handed we shall know whose is the fault. The miracle works, some part of its works and gets home" (NPLH 46, italics mine). Richardson links her foundational theory about vision and spectatorship to the language of "home" and the sanctity provided therein, for home here suggests a multitude of places: the seat (in the nave or aisle) in which the spectator sits while experiencing the synaesthetic miracle that is the film; the film-palace in which such synaesthesia takes place; the community sponsoring "the little bethel," a community from which many of the viewers are drawn; and the individual homes to which the viewers will return after their night at the movies.

Given the range of connotations invoked by "home," it is hardly surprising that Richardson praises the local cinema for its comforting church-like qualities: "for the local…cinema the garage shape is the right shape because in it the faithful are side by side confronting the screen and not as in some super-cinemas in a semi-circle whose sides confront each other and get the screen sideways" (NPLH 46-7). Comfortably at home in the cinema palace, the faithful find that the screen of the film-house, like a good preacher, will "dominate. That is the prime necessity….The screen should dominate, and its dominating screen is one of the many points scored by the small local cinema" (NPLH

47). With its dominating screen and no side-views, the local cinema can "remain reasonably in tune with the common feelings of common humanity both in its films and in its music," thus assuring that it will find "a welcome waiting in every parish" for it (NPLH 47).

Notably, the welcome waiting in every parish comes from "Everyman," who is cautioned to stay "at home" but also, by virtue of staying home and seeing local cinema, is both "educated" and made "at home in a new world" outside of his immediate surroundings.[140] Like going to church, going to the cinema is open to all, offering an "all embracing" and "universal hospitality" like that found "in an ever-open church" (TIC 64); also like church, the cinema "offers as many kinds of salvation as all previous enterprises [in popular entertainment] combined" (CIS 61). And going to the cinema, like going to church, also helps to ensure the development of the audience-as-body, which finds its education—secular and sacred—in the small "garage" with its "nave" and preacher-like dominating screen.

Richardson's religious language derives from her belief that film has a democratizing influence, and allows her to counter the contention that "the cinema offers nothing to [anybody] save spiritual degradation" (CIS 61). All viewers have access to the powers and influence—individual, social, secular and spiritual—inherent in film. To make her case for film's power, Richardson describes film in one of the most historically

[140] Thus it is that the cinema serves a missionary function for Richardson, one not unlike British Imperialism in its efforts to combine civilizing with educating influences. Richardson is at times explicit about this. In "The Spoon-Fed Generation," she writes: "Is it possible to deny...that [film] supplies to the bookless, thoughtless multitude the majority of whom do not make even that amount of unconscious contact with aesthetic and moral beauty that is implied in going to church, a civilising influence more potent and direct than any other form of entertainment available in their leisure hours, and sufficiently attractive to draw them in large numbers?" (307).

a-typical British ways: as a leveler of class distinctions. During the "London season," activities revolve around conspicuous social events. But during the past London season, Richardson writes in "The Increasing Congregation," conspicuous social events have taken on a new cast. Now cinema has assumed some of the glamour of a night at the theatre, where one goes to be seen as much as to see. Initially "[g]oing to the cinema [was] a relatively humble, simple business," where one could wear not only one's "old ulster," but could go "direct, just as one is" (NPLH 46). In other words, the cinema was entertainment for the poor or working class, for those who engage in "simple business," for those who have an "old ulster." As film takes on more prominence as a social event, Richardson describes film-viewers treating the cinema as they would the theatre, for now they are able to "emerge [and] glitter for a moment in the brilliant light of the new flamboyant foyer....Such illumination as there will be, for moments of the familiar sense of the visible audience, of purposefully being somewhere" (TIC 62).

But the cinema never fully takes on the social standing of the theatre for a night out; it remains, in part, the place where one can go "direct, just as one is," regardless of the social posturing of other attendees, for film-palaces remain highly democratic spaces. Unlike the theatre, which "is a rarity, to be selected with care, anticipated, experienced, discussed at great length, long remembered," a film "more or less is neither here nor there" (TIC 62). Richardson makes this case as she mimics "Everyman's" language:

> There's pictures going on all over London always making something to do whenever you want to go out specially those big new ones with orchestras. Splendid. Its [sic] the next best thing to a dance and sure to be good you

> can get a nice meal at a restaurant and decide while you're there and if the one you choose is full up there's another round the corner nothing to fix up and worry about. And it's all so nice nothing poky and those fine great entrance halls everything smart and just right and waiting there for friends you feel in society like anybody else if your hat's all right and your things and my word the ready-mades are so cheap nowadays you need never go shabby and the commissionnaires and all those smart people about makes you *feel* smart. It's as good an evening as you can have and time for a nice bit of supper afterwards. (TIC 62-3)

Here Richardson conveys a kind of naturalness and simplicity via stream-of-consciousness technique. The speaker is both aware of and able to dismiss class differences because the film-house's "universal hospitality" (64) equalizes England's social strata. The cheapness of "ready-mades" may in fact mean that one *doesn't* have to go the cinema in one's "old ulster," but at the cinema both the old ulster and machine-made clothing—both class markers—are acceptable, and promise the excitement of "feel[ing] in society like anybody else."

Going to the cinema, then, is certainly not mere recapitulation of going to the theatre, minus the "worry." In the film house, unlike in the theatre, "[a]nyone may be there. Anyone *is* there and everyone, and not segregated in a tier-quenched background nor packed away up under the roof. During the brief interval we behold not massed splendours...but everyone, filling the larger space..." (TIC 62). Going to the cinema is a much more democratic—perhaps even pedestrian—pastime than going to the theatre,

where one goes in part to be seen, in part to talk and reflect. Going to the cinema, like going to church, is open to all, "and so," writes Richardson, "here we all are. All over London, all over England, all over the world. Together in this strange hospice risen overnight, rough and provisional but guerdon none the less of a world in the making. All can seek refuge in the cinema's democratizing, secular and spiritual space; all are welcome to use it, whether as "refuge, trysting-place, village pump, stimulant, shelter," whether film-goers go for "instruction," "[p]eeps behind scenes" or "sermons"; the film palace can be "school, salon, brothel, bethel, newspaper, art science [sic], religion, philosophy, commerce, sport, adventure," providing "flashes of beauty of all sorts." It is the "only anything and everything," and it draws everyone together (TIC 64-5).

Why does the film-house function in this way? Richardson suggests throughout "Continuous Performance" that the cinema offers a sanctuary from daily life, a democratic sense of entitlement to beauty and wonder, as well as witness to technology. The future of all of this is never clear, however. When Richardson writes in the closing lines of "The Increasing Congregation" "And here we all are, as never before. What will it do with us?" (65), she articulates a question that runs, implicitly and explicitly, throughout the essays. In one sense, the lines hearken to Richardson's religious discourse, suggesting the multitudes going to hear Jesus preach: What miracles will we see this time? What will we learn, see or hear? To what will we bear witness? But these lines also clearly invoke technology and architecture, as the film-goers enter a building that houses all democratically (provided one can save the pence required to get in), that

provides democratic seating, and that makes its material available to all simply through the pleasures of looking, the connective tissue forged between viewer and screen.

Throughout "Continuous Performance," film's democratizing influence is akin to missionary work, a link made implicitly through Richardson's use of religious language, but explicitly in various essays. In a subtle critique of missionary work, Richardson discusses England's slums and the charitable missionary work done in them. She notes that England's slums contribute the bulk of "disease and crime and the endless procession of half-starved labourers of all ages and both sexes available," as well as being possibly a "biological problem" that needs to be cured.[141] She also hints at her own ambivalence toward the charitable work done in slums: "Slumming," she writes, "add[s] meaning to the lives of the charitable unemployed and bands of devoted people weaving a network of settlements, missions, and institutions of all kinds over those areas of the larger cities that hitherto had been left undisturbed, save for an occasional forced raid" (CIS 59). She continues, asserting that all work done from without on behalf of the people in the slums is "tainted more or less, not always hopelessly, but always tainted, by the motive of interest," that those who do good, work alongside the "numbers of pitying souls who would be left at a loss if there were no one to rescue" (60). But she is not blind to the contradictory state of the slums, noting both that there are now fewer children "haunting the by-ways [than there were] even twenty years ago" and yet, still "a vast army living...in a state of mental and moral constriction, pressed upon and paralysed by circumstance" (59). This critique suggests Richardson's discomfort with the abstract

[141] Note the overtones to sensation fiction critics here.

ideas of imperialism, with the idea of entering a place, uninvited and unwanted, with the intent of improving the place's inhabitants.

Yet Richardson is not fully uncomfortable with the idea of imperialism; she expresses a certain comfort at good works done, not in the abstract, but in coincidence with her own values. The social good works Richardson notes in the slums—good works better left undone, she seems to suggest—are nothing compared to what the cinema can do: of the cinema, Richardson writes "there has materialised a presence subsuming all these others and, by reason of its freedom from any ulterior motive beyond that of its own need to survive, immeasurably more powerful as a civilising agent than any one of them" (CIS 60). The language of civility enters here, ostensibly to replace the language of religious missionary work; but the two do not remain unentangled. Unsullied by good intentions, the cinema exists for itself and is driven by profit, yet it "offers as many kinds of salvation as all previous [social entertainment] enterprises combined and offers them impersonally, more impersonally than even the printed page" (CIS 61). Even the Bible, then, the über-printed page, must take second seat to the cinema, because the cinema makes an impersonal offering in the form of pictures. The cinema, Richardson writes, "illustrates. And its illustrations are encountered innocently, unguardedly, in silence and alone" (CIS 61). That is, the civilizing, missionary work done by the cinema is unmediated, in a sense that charitable works in the slum is not. The cinema exists only for itself, and converts others only to assure its very earthly survival.

At the same time, Richardson argues that the cinema offers salvation precisely *not* because of what it shows across the screen. She writes,

> It is said that the cinema offers nothing to nobody save spiritual degradation. There are clamourings too, and secret whisperings of the enormous power of the film rightly used, used that is to say according to the speaker's idea of what is right. But both these claims ignore what is inherent in pictures, ignore that which exerts its influence apart from the intention of what is portrayed. (CIS 61)

Richardson here links the missionary work done by those who work to save themselves rather than others, with the critics who complain that film *could* be used for the greater good that they themselves believe in. Instead, Richardson suggests, it is the *experience* of cinema-viewing that offers salvation in the form of civilization: "[E]ven the irreducible minimum of whatever kind of goodness there is in any kind of pictures not deliberately vicious, is civilisation working unawares" (CIS 62). Film, by general means of its existence and visibility, exerts a civilizing influence, albeit one that is underwritten by religious discourse.

What Richardson means by this kind of salvation, this kind of civilization, is best understood in the context of her argument for how film-viewing works. She has already set the groundwork for a film viewer who engages physiologically with the film—who responds synaesthetically with a full range of emotional and physical sensations that are literal and figurative. In this context, Richardson's assertions that the film viewers from the slums are changed by film spectatorship, that "[i]magination fails in attempting to realise all that is implied for cramped lives in the mere coming into communication with the general life [provided by film], all that results from the extension of cramped

consciousness" (CIS 61) should neither offer merely the interpretation that "those who are condemned with no prospect of change to a living death are lifted for a while into a sort of life," nor the contrary one that they are "insensibly living new lives. Growing. Gathering spontaneously and unsuspecting before even the poorest pictures" (61-2). Instead, Richardson complicates her readers' understanding of the work film can do by pointing out the complexities involved in film spectatorship itself. It neither purely saves nor purely civilizes; it does not change the full nature of onlookers' material, intellectual or spiritual circumstances. But it *does* enable complicated shifts among these states.

In a larger way, one that extends beyond the bounds of any particular essay, Richardson argues that the kind of unifying, synaesthetic experience promoted by the cinema and experienced by the film spectator is itself a kind of civilizing experience—that there is something about one-ness, about the stilled, contemplative consciousness that film invokes, that is both spiritually uplifting and fundamentally civilizing. And just as these characteristics offer a kind of salvation, they offer the body two forms of protection: one is the protection of the little bethel, the film-house holding the audience-as-body; the other is the containment of the connective body, the body always exceeding its own boundaries. And it is at this point, where the bodily audience confronts spiritual uplift and a civilizing influence as forms of protection or containment, that gender comes to play a key role in Richardson's theory of cinematic spectatorship.

Gender, Language and Connective Tissue

The metaphoric bodies fashioned by connective tissue is similar to the metaphoric bodies created by Futurist force-lines. In chapter two, I argued that the Futurist

manifestoes fashion a body that is always constructed of, and in relationship to, other bodies' force-lines; I further argue that this body is shaped in ways that make it both permeable and bounded, stable but fluid and elastic, grounded and yet mobile. Similarly, the bodies constructed through connective tissue are always located in relationship to the film images playing across the screen as well as the other bodies in the film theater. Like the body emerging from the manifestoes, the body emerging from "Continuous Performance" is stable but fluid, grounded and yet mobile. And like the Futurists, Richardson's language and uses of gender informs the body of the subject. Indeed, this body is constructed through language itself. I do not mean simply that language is the vehicle for Richardson's descriptions and analysis of the connective body, or the audience-as-body, although this is obviously the case. More particularly, I mean that Richardson argues that language itself constructs these kinds of bodies.

Because language is central to Richardson's subject, it bears a direct relationship to how the subject's body is gendered. In the following section I use Richardson's descriptions and characterizations of language to suggest two points: the first is that her connective tissue is created through "world-wide conversations"; the second is that her ideas about what language is and how it functions necessitate a particular understanding of just what a world-wide conversation is, or might be. A thematic reading of the "Continuous Performance" essays suggests that Richardson's world-wide conversations are not limited to—indeed perhaps not even primarily based on—language, but are more complex and multi-dimensional. Particularly, I argue in this final section that Richardson's ideas about sound, dialogue, music and silence in cinema—all of which

contribute to the "world-wide conversations" she discusses—suggest that Richardson's metaphoric bodies, created through language-based connective tissue, transcend the traditional boundaries of gender dichotomies.

The term a "world-wide conversation" emerges most particularly in "The Cinema in Arcady," but the idea itself can be used as an organizing feature for film's social functions. Richardson suggests that film spectatorship meets the "fundamental needs" of social experiences that cinema-goers bring with them into the film-house. These experiences are grounded predominantly in the need for collective experiences and unification, and can be met wherever people have access to cinema, whether in urban or rural spaces. In cities and towns, film-goers are pulled into association with a "garage" full of strangers, who offer a collective, an alternative to the solitude of urban life. Conversely, in rural areas the film itself, as much as the experience of film-going, allows its viewers a break from the "ceaseless association" with all one's neighbors, a ceaselessness that distinguishes small town, or rural, life from urban life. Writes Richardson:

> And whereas in the towns those who frequent the cinema may obtain together with its other gifts admission to a generalized social life, a thing unknown in slum and tenement, lodging-house and the smaller and poorer villadom, these people of village and hamlet...find in the cinema together with all else it has to offer them, their only escape from ceaseless association, their only solitude, the solitude that is said to be possible only

> in the cities. They become for a while citizens of a world whose every face is that of a stranger. (CIA 55)

While the urban film house unites its viewers in "a generalized social life" that is otherwise unavailable to them because of the scope and variety of city life (a variety which Richardson suggests keeps people separate and allows solitude even within the crush of urban experiences), the rural film house releases its viewers from "ceaseless association" with their neighbors by ushering them into this wider world of solitude where "every face is that of a stranger." Thus it is that even the "yokel" and the "dairymaid" are transformed into "youths and maidens" who, in "becoming world citizens, in getting into communication with the unknown, become also recruits available...for the world-wide conversations now increasingly upon us in which the cinema may play ...so powerful a part" (CIA 57). Such a conversation requires, according to Richardson's formulation, both separation and unity: separation from the familiar elements of one's daily life, and unity with the "world" that is created for film viewers. For Richardson as well as for others during her time, the film—especially the silent film—is just the vehicle for this dual experience of separation and unity.

These world-wide conversations are not restricted to spoken conversations among fellow film spectators. In fact, speech is not even a necessary component to these conversations, either speech that comes from the film itself (in sound or in the form of placards) or speech that results of people talking about film, as Richardson "talks cinema" to waiters at cafes. Indeed, these conversations seem to be more akin to experience than to speech: Richardson proposes that the cinema—and, as I argue in the

previous section, the power of cinema's connective tissue to create both the connective body and the audience-as-body—pulls people out of their mundane routines and disperses them into shared experience of cinema spectatorship made cohesive through connective tissue, and protected through new architecture made possible by film. It is this continued experience, rather than any verbal message from or about a particular film, that creates a world-wide conversation, that helps the "yokel" and "dairymaid" become "youths and maidens" who are "world citizens" (CIA 56). Thus it is that language—standing as a kind of knowledge—unifies cinematic spectators.

In Richardson's formulation for a viewing subject that is separate and unified, she bears a striking analogy to the Futurists. Her argument that the cinema can provide a unifying experience by drawing viewers away from their familiar world and immersing them in world that is both new and widely shared, offers an affective experience similar to the Futurists' bodily experiences of dispersal and unification. The Futurists set forth an argument based on the subject's ability to be dispersed in space, even as that dispersal creates unity via force lines. And just as the Futurists argue that their wide world of affective experience had an international scope, so too does Richardson suggest that the cinema enables something "world-wide." For the Futurists the international experience came via technologies such as railway, planes, and war; for Richardson, this international experience is a "world-wide conversation." In both cases, the experience is dependent upon a viewer's affective engagement with the world she sees and feels around her. Yet unlike the Futurist artists who were primarily interested in the affective visual experience, Richardson is interested in the affective visual experience *as it is mediated by language.*

To create this mediation, Richardson embeds affect and language into the visual experience, constructing a spectator who sees, feels, and hears or reads all at once. In a way, Richardson creates a potential conclusion for the visual and affective logics that, I've argued, were put forth by sensation fiction and Futurist art: from Mansel's concern that sensation fiction "preaches to the nerves" (which would require either reading or hearing the sermon preached) and Collins's attempts to "conduct the reader" by carefully constructing the words on the page, through the Futurists efforts to depict force-lines which both represent, and *are*, the pull on the spectator into "the center of the picture," and to Richardson's connective tissue which makes "the onlooker part of the spectacle" (AI 55), we can trace a line whereby affective spectatorship is imagined actively, and affectively, constructing the world in which spectators live.

While the Futurists' force-lines and Richardson's connective tissue similarly link the spectator to that which she views and the world in which she lives, there is an important distinction: unlike force-lines, connective tissue relies on language.[142] Ample proof exists for the language-based nature of Richardson's world-wide conversation: the existence of *Close Up* itself, the ideological and geographical range of contributors to it, its international readership, much of what Richardson wrote in her contributions to it, and even Richardson's love for "talking cinema" to her friends, acquaintances, and waiters at cafes and restaurants. Yet Richardson's own contributions to *Close Up*, written as they are, also argue for silence. And it is the silent film, in its ability to cross language

[142] Certainly language is crucial to the Marinetti's Futurist agenda; but it is not the focus of the visual impulse to put the spectator in the center of the picture, nor is it the focus of this dissertation's previous chapter. For more on Marinetti and his use of language, see, in particular, Orban.

barriers and borders, that creates the conditions necessary for an international conversation.[143]

Richardson suggests that language, broadly conceived, produces the necessary conditions for transcending gender boundaries through her use of the "third lion," a metaphoric construction she uses to argue against binary logic. The third lion is the invisible, "so far unperceived" alternative that is blocked from view by dichotomous logic. In "A Note on Household Economy," the essay in which the "third lion" appears, Richardson argues that the film as an aesthetic form requires a new kind of structure that will accommodate it; this new architecture, she suggests, will remain unconceived (and so unbuilt) so long as we think of the film and stage-plays—and the buildings that house them—as analogous. As soon as the problem isn't conceived of in terms of that pairing, the third lion will appear: a new consideration, a new way to contemplate the problem.

Although Richardson's logic about binaries and alternatives is most explicit in "A Note on Household Economy," I would suggest that the logic she provides here is a good starting point from which to examine her position on the relationships among language, gender and spectatorship. Throughout "Continuous Performance," Richardson insists that we examine the third lion of gender constructions, an alternative to traditional

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[143] Donald notes that, for many of Close Up's contributors, "the objection was specifically to synchronized *speech*, and the increased reliance on the spoken word it implied. The emphasis on language, it was argued, would inevitably be bought at the expense of the inner speech that was supposedly invoked and conveyed by the art of silent montage. [....] And because synchronized speech would mean synchronized national language, talkies would destroy the universality of silent cinema, and so its internationalism" (79). Ernest Betts says as much, in "Why 'Talkies' are Unsound": "To have a running vocal commentary from the characters in a full-length film will utterly destroy its real eloquence, which lies in its silence. The moment a film actor speaks he is placing a limitation on his own medium, which is movement. If he is able to express himself in words, will he not diminish by so much verbal force all that he might accomplish by mime and gesture?" (Close Up, 89).

alignments of masculine/feminine. I do not mean to imply here that Richardson proposes a third sex; rather, she constructs gender in such a way as to skew traditional gender dichotomies, shifting the ground on which we understand and align "masculine" and "feminine" traits as natural, essential, or performative. She achieves this shift by suggesting that there are, in fact, essential gendered characteristics, which can be attributed both to people and to concepts—such as the film, or conversation. But in the face of this suggestion, she undermines the stability of these alignments. She disassociates them from specifically gendered bodies, and associates them instead with connective tissue forged from a world-wide conversation. In this way, Richardson's connective tissue moves beyond the binary logic of gender dichotomies by creating bodies—the connective body and the audience-as-body—that defy traditional gender categorizations. Instead, connective tissue bonds, or unifies, gender characteristics that would otherwise be dispersed across disparate bodies, a unification that becomes visible when splits such as masculine/feminine are obviated.

Richardson's treatment of masculine and feminine characteristics seem to be particularly clear-cut in the essays "The Film Gone Male" and "Continuous Performance VIII," (hereafter referred to by its subtitle, *"Animal impudens"*). In "The Film Gone Male," Richardson offers an explicit description of gendered subjectivity: she writes that women have an "awareness of being," while men have an "awareness of becoming" (36). She posits feminine consciousness as an ontology, a fixed awareness of *being* that is vulnerable, exposed, impossible to situate (it is "nowhere") and yet pervasive and infinite ("it is everywhere") (37). In their ontological status of *being*, women are "humanity's

silent half," distrusting speech "as a medium of communication," whereas men have "absolute faith" in speech as a medium (36). Cementing the suggesting that these are diametrically opposed positions, Richardson writes that women who trust have speech have "abdicated," and now "represent the men's camp" (36).[144]

This is not to say that Richardson believes women don't—or shouldn't—talk. Rather, Richardson elucidates what women actually *do* when they talk. In what sounds at first like a contradiction, Richardson writes that though women "may talk incessantly from the cradle onwards," and may "chatter, chatter, chatter, as men say," they are nonetheless, generally "silent as the grave" (36). For Richardson, women's silence and women's talk are not opposed: they are manifestations of the same state of being. Women, Richardson argues, are so aware of the center, their "being," that they use language "to cover either their own palpitating spiritual nakedness or that of another" (37) only when they are "confronted; for women, speech is a medium of defense, and so is "always [...] a façade" (37). It is not an essential component of the "core" of Woman, but is instead a performative, external element. Women may talk, gossip, even "chatter, chatter, chatter," but it is a front, a method of diversionary defense; women's more genuine modes of communication come through silence.

Thus Richardson argues that "the film, regarded a medium of communication [...] in the day of its innocence [i.e., in the day of silent films] was essentially feminine,"

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[144] One of the many reasons that "The Film Gone Male" works so well in positioning Richardson in the genealogy of feminist film criticism is that this essay reiterates positions Richardson takes vis-à-vis gender in other texts—most notably Pilgrimage. Miriam's relationship with Hypo Wilson gives Richardson many opportunities to articulate her beliefs about being versus becoming, as well as the marked differences between the ways Miriam and Wilson use and value language.

representing "the changeless being at the heart of all becoming" (37). With the coming of sound and more particularly the Talkies, film has changed: "In becoming audible and particularly in becoming a medium of propaganda, it is doubtless fulfilling its destiny. But it is a masculine destiny. The destiny of planful becoming rather than of purposeful being" (38). Over time, Richardson notes, film's feminine *being* can influence its "destiny," its masculine *becoming*: she argues that the film "is a medium" for communication "at the disposal of all parties," and can help turn "the world into a vast council-chamber," where battles will rage over "rival patterns, plans, [and] ideologies"; within this council-chamber, "as with none of the preceding councils of mankind, is the unconquerable, unchangeable eternal feminine. Influential." (38).

In a conflation of gendered characteristics and film as a technological medium, Richardson offers a vision of "masculine" and "feminine" that is not constrained by the traditional strictures of gender. True, masculine and feminine are clearly delineated, and each looks like the other's opposite: masculine characteristics include logic that governs plans toward the purpose of becoming something, while feminine characteristics include silent pleasure in the fact of being. This line of argument is often used as evidence for Richardson's proto-feminism, a feminism that separates masculine from feminine logic, and masculine from feminine being or subjectivity.[145] But if we examine this line of argument by seeking a third lion, we see other alternatives: we see that even though Richardson aligns feminine being, silence, and silent films against masculine becoming, talking, and talkies, she unites them through the cinematic spectator's body. Thus united,

[145] In particular, see part II of Gevirtz's "Narrative's Journeys," and Egger, "Deaf Ears and Dark Continents."

the spectator's body can be afforded both the protection and the containment of the little bethel.

In "*Animal impudens*," the third lion emerges in the shape of a generalized "young woman" in the film audience, counterpoint to "the silent, stellar radiance" glowing from the surface of the screen in the form of a young female screen star. The young woman in the audience is "released in full power" (52)—a power marked by contrasting traits. She is "self-centered and serenely self-expressive," talking about herself and her perceptions incessantly through the film; her behavior is "flagrant" in its failure to adhere to the unwritten "code of manners" for film viewing (52). For Richardson, these characteristics suggest that this young woman is so busy "becoming"—and performing that becoming to the irritation of all around her—that she is unable to enjoy the simplicity of being, the mode that Richardson associates with femininity. Richardson clearly aligns this young woman with characteristics she elsewhere associates with masculinity. But at the same time, this young woman "place[s] the frail edifice of [Richardson's] faith in woman at last upon a secure foundation" (52) by "refusing the illusions of art to come to the assistance of her own sense of existing" (55). That is, she is "centered": "not all the wiles of the most perfect art can shift her from the centre where she dwells" (55). For the young woman this "centre" is balanced but fluid, rather than firmly grounded, and she successfully "maintains a balance" between herself and what she sees (55). Yet this balance puts her in a potentially precarious position, for as long as the young woman maintains a distinction between herself and what she sees, "she must [...] insist that she is not unduly moved, or if she be moved must assert herself as part of

that which moves her" (55). In this way, the young woman—the third lion—is both being and becoming, both feminine and masculine.

Taken together, however, "*Animal impudens*" complicates Richardson's position in "The Film Gone Male." In the former essay, silence equals good manners, and so the highly verbal young woman is unquestionably exhibiting bad manners. Even worse, in her verbosity she "conducts" the other spectators, hearkening to Richardson's early complaints in the first "Continuous Performance" essay that sound "too overwhelmingly conduct[s]" the spectator (CP 36). Like music or sound used wrongly, the young woman creates a distracting, disruptive soundtrack by which to watch the film. If the young woman is disappointed, "we all hear of it. If she is pleased we learn how and why. If her casual glance discovers stock characters engrossed in a typical incident of an average film, well known to her [...] her conversation proceeds uninterrupted" (54). Thus the silent film—the "feminine" film of "The Film Gone Male"—appears to be "masculinized" by the verbal accompaniment of the young female spectator.

On the face of it, it may appear that the "masculinization" of film by a female spectator is a kind of deconstruction of gender identities, whereby the dichotomy of masculine/feminine is destroyed by the young woman's participation in masculine logic. Or less optimistically, it may be that the young woman's verbal soundtrack is nothing but "chatter, chatter, chatter," that it is a performative façade when the female spectator is confronted by her mirror image in the form of the silent film star on the screen. I would argue, however, that these are not the most powerful of Richardson's points. That is, Dorothy Richardson does not simply set out terms that are clearly gendered only to show

that women participate in some and men in others (although she does follow this logic in various "Continuous Performance" essays). Instead, her larger purpose is to effect a more fundamental shift. The "feminine" terms of the film and the "masculine" behavior of the young woman do not simply displace the gendered terms; they overturn those terms by producing a spectator who participates in the logic of both.

Richardson's young female spectator has access both to language and to a gaze, a gaze that demonstrates her knowledge about the film as a medium, as well as knowledge about herself.[146] And it is this knowledge that allows her to locate herself in relation to—as part of—the spectacle. For Richardson, this is a powerful point, and she makes it twice at the essay's end: once when she writes that if the young woman is moved [i.e., decentered] by the film, "she must assert herself as part of that which moves her," and again in the essay's closing line, when Richardson writes that the woman testifies "that life goes on, art or no art and that the onlooker is part of the spectacle" (55). The young woman is not denied access to a gaze and so, in turn, access to herself; and while her access is performed through the medium of language and so may appear masculinized, this same access confirms the stability of her being, the centeredness which allows her to balance herself by accommodating, by becoming part of, "that which moves her." The role of the onlooker who is part of the spectacle is neither purely masculine nor purely feminine. Nor is the role masculine with aspects of the feminine, or feminine with aspects of the masculine (as are, say, the women who have "abdicated" in "The Film

[146] Egger argues that Richardson produces, throughout *Close Up,* an "epistemology of not-knowing." I would suggest the contrary: that Richardson produces an epistemology based soundly upon knowledge; this knowledge, however, is not structured according to the strictures of gendered binary logic.

Gone Male"). Rather than rely on binary constructions here, or rather even than undermine them by showing how the characteristics on one side of the binary migrate to the other side, Richardson modifies the ground on which the terms are constructed. Moreover, in Richardson's formulation, the onlooker's experience is not a privileged aesthetic experience. It is naturalized, mundane—"for life goes on, art or no art"; it is a quotidian experience. We can imagine that the young woman's "chatter" is not a diversion, not a defensive response to the threat of the screen in front of her. Instead, it is a manifestation of the same centered "being" as would be her silence.

Richardson's position about gender and language becomes clearer when examined in light of "Dialogue in Dixie." This essay takes as its text the effects of a "talkie" called "Hearts in Dixie," a film that Richardson applauds for its use of sound and disparages for its use of language.[147] As I suggested earlier in the chapter, Richardson's argument against the talkies is not the presence of sound in the film theater. More disturbing for Richardson are those aspects of sound that disrupt the continuity that creates connective tissue. In "Dialogue in Dixie" those disruptions do not come in the form of any human sound, but come specifically from spoken language. Laughter, Richardson tells us, as well as singing, can be lush and rich, and can successfully

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[147] Richardson's comments about sound and language are most immediately linked to race: she finds most pleasurable the images of "sambos and mammies at work, piccaninnies at play" (213) the "rich Negro-laughter, Negro-dancing" (214) and "the voices of cotton-gatherers in song" (213); these racialized elements maintain the connective tissue of the film. But this "pure film" alternates with moments of dialogue, with "annihilating speech" that fully disrupts the sensory experiences that come from moments when nobody is speaking. While it would be interesting to pursue the connections Richardson makes among race and other issues, such as primitivism and musicality, such an analysis moves beyond the scope of this chapter. While I am mindful of Richardson's treatment of race in this essay, I focus on her analysis of the function of spoken speech versus other sounds from the "talkie." For an insightful and more thorough analysis of Richardson on issues of race, see Egger.

contribute to the "visual continuity" (217) of the moving picture. But dialogue breaks the power of the connection, making the observer, who watches the actors' mouths "open[...] upon their words widely, like those of fish, like those of ventriloquists' dummies" all too aware of an effort to vocalize that is "slow, enunciatory, monstrous" (213-14). Even if the technical difficulties that necessitate monstrously slow and awkward enunciation are overcome, ultimately, Richardson pronounces, dialogue in film will always be "disastrous. No spoken film will ever be able to hold a candle to silent drama, will be ever so 'speaking'" (216). Here Richardson reiterates her position that silence is an effective means of communication, that silence can "speak."

In "Dialogue in Dixie," dialogue interrupts the continuity between the visual aspects of cinematography and the affective experience of film viewing. Describing the first jarring cuts among the expositive narrator, the singing black characters, and the cinematic photography, Richardson writes:

> The singing ceased, giving place to a *dead* silence and the photography of a cotton-field. The gap, suddenly yawning between ourselves—flung back into such a seat of such a cinema on such a date—and the instantly flattened, colourless moving photograph, featured the subdued hissing of the projector. Apparatus rampant: the theatre, ourselves, the screen, the mechanisms, *all fallen apart* into *competitive singleness*. (214, my italics)

In this description, Richardson points to two disruptive qualities of the film: the first is the discordant relationship among exposition, singing, and "dead silence"; the second is

the function of the singing cotton-gatherers. In the first case, Richardson suggests that the cinematic shifts are too visible—they are not fluid enough. The visibility of the apparatus extends from an awareness of the film's visible seams to an awareness of the self watching a film. Gone is the connective tissue bonding the viewer and screen. In the second case, the singing actors help restore film "to its senses" through music, and while this music is pleasing, it is not sufficient for connective tissue. It is most certainly "musical accompaniment,"—indeed is "music utterly lovely"—but it does not possess "the power [...] to unify seer and seen and give to what is portrayed both colour and sound" (213). Whether the fault lies with dialogue, song, or other sound, "Dialogue in Dixie" fails to compel the creative consciousness that is essential for the affective spectator to be formed through connective tissue. Moreover, in failing to forge connective tissue, the movie individuates its viewers: they are left stranded where they are flung by the film's abrupt reminders of the cinema-viewing experience. This abrupt awareness of the rampant apparatus seems to be at the heart of Richardson's renunciation of sound and dialogue in films: they destroy both the connective body and the audience-as-body.

Yet in Richardson's epistemology, there is no need for these bodies to be destroyed, for there is no need of the sound that threatens them. Rather, the technology that eschews sound and so creates connective tissue offers these bodies forms of protection: the silent film in the little bethel allows both the connective-body and the audience-as-body to exist for the duration of the visual experience, whole and wholly sensational, able to transcend its own physical boundaries but in a controlled and

contained way. In the film writings of Richardson, the affective body has most truly found its home.

Conclusion:

Affect, Reloaded

As I write this conclusion, The Matrix Reloaded has just hit the cinema theaters. The Matrix movies promise virtual reality in its ultimate form: the plot is predicated upon the possibility that the world in which we live is nothing more than a visual apparatus through which we move. The movies' central premise is that it is difficult to distinguish what we see from what we feel to be true; according to the movies, most of us fail to make this crucial distinction. Thus the need for the character Neo, the chosen one who must shoulder the responsibility of recasting the sensational relationship between seeing and knowing. Certainly the movies are an imaginative culmination of the technologies surrounding us, especially those virtual realities that enable us to participate in activities otherwise beyond our reach and scope.

The world in which we live—a world that we live "virtually" as we experience and participate in versions of virtual reality—pulls together the dominant metaphors of this dissertation: it preaches to the nerves, to our own eagerness for physical sensation; it does so by promising to put us in the center of the picture, to make us the central point of our own visual experiences; and it connects us, both through the filaments of the world-wide web, and through the gadgetry behind virtual reality devices, to bodies that share our virtual space. This world continues along the trajectory I suggest in this dissertation: by the time that cinema was popularized, affective responses to visual culture were less shocking than they had been during the era when observers visited the panorama. Today, in terms of pure technological development (rather than in terms of the content made

visible by those developments), our affective responses to optical technologies rarely shock us. We have learned that what we see cannot be trusted to be "true," in part because recent academic enquiry has taught us to question the very notion of truth itself. But the question of truth is often not even an issue in contemporary visual culture. Affective spectatorship, especially when grounded in intensely imaginative visual experiences (such is the basis for most summer blockbusters at the movie theaters), has become in our time even more desirable than it was in Oliphant's, Marinetti's, or Richardson's. And while we have inherited the legacy of technologies of motion that were new in the mid-Victorian and Modern eras (such as trains, planes, and automobiles), we have other technologies that more explicitly merge motion, vision and affect, creating even more intense and imaginative visual experiences.

Virtual reality has created, at the turn into the twenty-first century, the same kind of visual experiences that I discuss in this dissertation. Throughout this dissertation I suggested a double trajectory in the development of a mode of spectatorship that produces a sensational body through the convergence of technologies of motion and vision. The first line of this trajectory follows the level of explicit attention given to this convergence—that is, it asks how explicitly are technologies of motion and vision linked by critics of affective spectatorship. The second line of this trajectory follows the reception of the possibilities created by this convergence. Further, I hoped to demonstrate that these two trajectories can be seen as responses to two competing cultural tensions: the simultaneous desires to conjoin the body with the object of observation through its sensational responses, and to contain the body's affect by

delimiting the extent of bodily union with objects external to it. The technologies that produced these trajectories and tensions between 1863 and 1933 are much changed (and in some cases, all but disappeared); but the trajectories and tensions themselves remain.

Virtual reality creates, in our time, what the panorama, sensation novels, Futurist art, and early cinema created in theirs: immersion in a visual field that creates a sense of presence and involvement in that technologically-enabled world. The language describing virtual reality echoes some of the words and ideas I have reported throughout this dissertation: Thomas Frognall Dibdin's, the panorama visitor who longed to be leaping crags and "halooing his men on to victory"; sensation fiction critics', who reported that the novels left them "spell-bound," feeling as if they had "been existing in a world of impossible incidents; the Futurist artists', who struggled to articulate and represent the artistic spectator "in the center of the picture"; and Dorothy Richardson's, who argued for connective tissue linking the cinema spectator with the cinema screen. Today, virtual reality is described as "immersive," putting the user "in the middle of the action" so that the user feels "like [...] a participant, no longer a spectator":

> The technology of immersive virtual reality makes this amazing scenario possible. While video games allow you to explore a football play by looking at a computer's monitor, immersive virtual reality provides a much different and unrivaled experience. You are fully surrounded by the virtual players on the field, the players are presented in full scale and in

stereo. It seems you can touch them. You can look and walk around, hover over the quarterback, or even fly to cover distances quickly.[148]

This affective, visual experience is the conceptual descendent of, and technological improvement upon, the sensational sights that comprise this dissertation.

Just as sensational seeing infiltrated numerous fields of cultural encounters, it continues to influence contemporary technological and cultural experiences. We are able to use virtual reality headgear to train football players; to play computerized games; to pursue research;[149] even to teach interdisciplinary courses at the university level.[150] On the web (of course) we can join the Virtual Reality Society (VRS), and subscribe (and even submit) to the VRS journal, which has "multidisciplinary" interests including "technology and software systems," "human factors," and "philosophical and ethical issues."[151] Developments like these suggest strong temporal and conceptual connections from Dibdin's time to our own, even as literary periodization suggests that we see these moments in time through breaks and differences. But across three literary-historical periods (mid-Victorian, modern, and post-modern), the responses to affective, visual activities suggest continuity more than disruption. Furthermore, these continuities work

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[148] Fittingly, this information is quite easy to find on the world wide web. See "The Virtual Football Trainer" at http:// www -vrl.umich.edu/project/football/. Accessed June 8 2003.

[149] A 1997 advertisement in the Commerce Business Daily Issue (May 9) sought "virtual reality headgear, gloves and software" to be used for "cognitive neuroscience research" in the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. http://www.fbodaily.com/cbd/archive/1997/05(May)/09-May-1997/Asol006.htm. Accessed June 8 2003.

[150] Professor Randy Pausch teaches a course at Carnegie Mellon called "Building Virtual Worlds," where virtual reality is the medium to encourage interdisciplinary work and "flexible thinking." http://www. Post-gazette.com/localnews/2002105oneworld1015p5.asp. Accessed June 8 2003.

[151] http://www.vrs.org/uk/public/journal/html. Accessed June 8, 2003.

much like the technologies themselves: to create sympathetic, sensational responses to new sights.

It will certainly be no less true of our era than it was of earlier ones that metaphors will dominate our expressions of experiences, especially those experiences that are new and perhaps contentious. The metaphors I discuss in this dissertation focus on the body, moving from the idea of infiltration and contamination (as in sensation fiction), through emotional, politicized and gendered involvement (in the Futurist manifestoes), to social, emotional and physiological connections (in "Continuous Performance"). Each of these metaphors operates both to suggest that bodies can be conjoined with what they see, and that bodies in their efforts to be united must be simultaneously contained. Thus the reader of (or character in) a sensation novel, finding herself too jolted into a new reality, is contained by some of the very apparatuses (such as the train) that enabled those jolts in the first place. The spectator in Futurist art, enwrapped in the sensational experience of the Futurists' force-lines, is fluidly united with other, outwardly-dispersed bodies even as those bodies are re-contained by the language that constructs them. The cinematic viewer in Richardson's essays, connected to myriad bodies sitting in the theater and playing across the screen, is nonetheless "kept" safe "at home" through the socializing and civilizing work enacted by the cinema. How we develop and use our own metaphors for virtual reality will reveal the complex natures of our relationships to the technologies that shape us and our sensational responses to the material (and non-material) world.

List of Abbreviations

Chapter Two:

FMF—The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism 1909

FPa—Futurist Painters 1910

FPTM—Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto 1910

FPh—Futurist Photodynamism 1911

ExP—Exhibitors to the Public 1912

TMFS—Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture

PF—The Plastic Foundations of Futurist Sculpture and Painting 1913

PP—Plastic Planes as Spherical Expansions in Space 1913

PD—Plastic Dynamism 1913

PAD—The Plastic Analogies of Dynamism—Futurist Manifesto 1913

SFP—The Subject in Futurist Painting 1914

AM—Absolute Motion + Relative Motion = Dynamism

FPS—Futurist Painting and Sculpture (extracts) 1914

Chapter Three:

CP1—"Continuous Performance." July 1927.

MA—"Continuous Performance II: Muiscal Accompaniment." Aug 1927.

Ca—"Continuous Performance III: Captions." Sep 1927.

ATP—"Continuous Performance IV: A Thousand Pities." Oct 1927.

NPLH—"Continuous Performance V: There's No Place Like Home." Nov 1992.

TIC—"Continuous Performance VI: The Increasing Congregation." Dec 1927.

FR—"Continuous Performance VII: The Front Rows." Jan 1928.

AI—"Continuous Performance VIII: (*Animal Impudens*)." Mar 1928.

TPF—"Continuous Performance IX: The Thoroughly Popular Film." Apr 1928.

CIS—"Continuous Performance X: The Cinema in the Slums." May 1928.

SM—"Continuous Performance XI: Slow Motion." June 1928.

CIA—"Continuous Performance XII: The Cinema in Arcady." July 1928.

PF—"Continuous Performance: Pictures and Films." Jan 1929.

AP—"Continuous Performance: Almost Persuaded." June 1929.

DD—"Continuous Performance: Dialogue in Dixie." Sep 1929.

TFL—"Continuous Performance: A Tear for Lycidas." Sep 1930.

Na—"Continuous Performance: Narcissus." Sep 1931.

SFG—"Continuous Performance: The Spoon-Fed Generation?" Dec 1931.

FGM—"Continuous Performance: The Film Gone Male." Mar 1932.

CP2—"Continuous Performance." June 1933.

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