

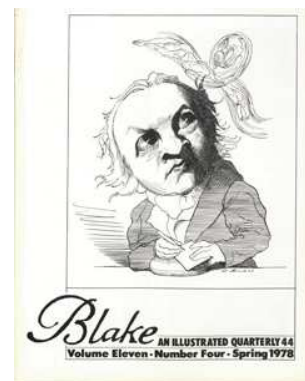
# AN ILLUSTRATED QUARTERLY BLAKE

R E V I E W

Joan Dolmetsch, *Rebellion and Reconciliation*;  
Gary Kelly, *The English Jacobin Novel 1780-1805*

Ronald Paulson

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**Joan D. Dolmetsch. *Rebellion and Reconciliation: Satirical Prints on the Revolution at Williamsburg.***

Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1976. Pp. vii + 221. 101 black-on-white plates. \$12.95.

**Gary Kelly. *The English Jacobin Novel 1780-1805.*** Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976. Pp. xi + 291. \$21.00.

**Reviewed by Ronald Paulson**

THE ENGLISH  
JACOBIN NOVEL  
1780-1805

GARY KELLY

OXFORD  
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS  
1976

I think of sailing for America, where I may aid the struggles of liberty, may freely publish all which the efforts of reason can teach me, and at the same time may form a society of savages, who seem in consequence of their very ignorance to have a less quantity of error, and therefore to be less liable to repel truth than those whose information is more multifarious.

**F**ranks Henley's project for fleeing the England depicted in Holcroft's *Anna St. Ives* (1792) sums up what America meant to defenders of the French Revolution. America was the successful revolutionary society; the open society in which censorship and suspension of habeas corpus were unknown; the locus of innocence and noble savages, free of all the forms (primogeniture and the rest) that curb and corrupt. Robert Bage, in *Hermesprong, or Man As He Is Not* (1796), invented a Frank Henley who had been brought up in America, sent him to France during the Revolution, and then dropped him down like Voltaire's Huron in England of the Pittite repression. Hermesprong is like Blake's allegories of the American Revolution in that he can also act energetically when action is called for. He has soon discomfited and defeated the flabby aristocrats, and for good measure (being among other things a descendent of Tom Jones) shown them to be usurpers of his own rightful patrimony in England.

What continues to surprise me is the fact that this image of the American Revolution as fiery Orc

was primary an English one, promulgated by sympathetic English propagandists in the 1770s and in the 1790s. Even Burke, who was to find these qualities noxious in the French revolutionaries, praised the Americans' active, energetic, youthful course of action, which he contrasted with "the listlessness that has fallen upon almost all" Englishmen. The Americans are "savage . . . uncouth," but "animated with the first glow and activity of juvenile heart." But of course Burke was also defending America's loss of ancient traditional rights against the innovative commercial policies of the English government.

In 1975 M. W. Jones' *Cartoon History of the American Revolution* appeared, and in the year of the centennial Joan Dolmetsch published a selection of the American Revolution cartoons (or to be historically accurate, satiric prints) from the Colonial Williamsburg collection. This is a more elegant, better produced (and reproduced) volume than Jones', which had the format and general appearance of newsprint. Jones supplied a racy running text with chronological lists and suggestive juxtapositions of prints (three or four to a page) of the sort one associates with a *Time-Life* educational series. Dolmetsch supplies catalogue entries with complete bibliographical information, description, and citations from the *British Museum Catalogue of Satiric Prints and Drawings*. Yet for cartoons whose artistic quality is almost nil but whose context is of great interest, Jones' tabloid format may have been more appropriate as well as more informative.



The satiric prints were almost entirely English and continental. America seems to have produced very few other than copies of the English ones: a fact which may help to explain the dearth of fiery Orc-figures. The two powerful images produced on the American side are omitted from Dolmetsch's collection, probably because technically they are not satiric prints. One is *The Boston Massacre* of 1770, the essential image as the American propagandists wanted it seen: helpless Bostonians being shot down by British soldiers lined up to resemble a firing squad. This was the image that stimulated the colonists to revolt and secured sympathy from the English Opposition (and was later adapted by Goya for his *Third of May*). The other image was a representation of the overturning of George III's statue in New York City on 4 July 1776 (the newspaper blockprint of the scene followed within days; the elaborate engraving some years later). Here are the Orc overtones so noticeably missing in earlier American propaganda. Indians are even present in the crowd, as a sort of reference to one sturdy aspect of the Americans (as Frank Henley's remarks show, "American" meant equally Indian and "savage" to eighteenth-century Englishmen), and perhaps also to the Boston Tea Party, where Bostonians disguised as Indians to carry out an un-English act. There is even present that ubiquitous eighteenth-century symbol of dissent and natural subversion, a dog.

But aside from that one blockprint in a New York newspaper none of the ritual crowd action (from Baltimore to Boston) following the Declaration of Independence was recorded in graphic imagery; any more than the active image of the Boston Tea Party of two years earlier was exploited by the Americans. The colonists did in fact react by casting tea in Boston Harbor, by tarring and feathering Tories, and by forcing customs officers to drink large quantities of tea (in one case in toasts to a large variety of subversive subjects, reminiscent of the Wilkite crowd action of the 1770s). But these scenes were portrayed for propaganda purposes only by English sympathizers of the colonists in London.

It is possible to trace the origin of the graphic image. In April 1774 there was *The Whitehall Pump* (Dolmetsch, no. 23), a satiric print showing Lord North pumping water over and into the mouth of a prone Britannia to revive her. She has collapsed on top of the prone Indian brave who represents America. In *The Able Doctor or America swallowing the Bitter Draught* (p. 7), published in the May *London Magazine*, the female figure has been turned into an American. Lord North is forcing the Boston tea down the throat of this bare-breasted Indian maiden, held by Lord Mansfield, with Lord Sandwich (notorious womanizer that he was) securing her legs and peering up her skirt. Britannia, standing by, covers her eyes in shame. Even here, however, America is shown gallantly spitting the tea back in Lord North's face. By June this image of America in the role of patient corresponding to the Americans of *The Boston Massacre* was copied by Paul Revere for *The Royal American Magazine*. In October the roles were reversed in a series of English mezzotint prints (nos. 25-27): the active American colonists are now forcing tea down the

throat of, and tarring and feathering, English customs officers. Then, not reproduced by Dolmetsch (reproduced by Jones, p. 49), is the atrocity print, *Hancock's Warehouse for Tarring & Feathering*, where the party being mishandled by the patriots has become a pretty semi-nude English woman.

There is no indication that the prints in which the Americans are the aggressors were copied in America, though they were probably imported. Another in the English mezzotint series is *The Patriotic Barber of New York* (no. 32), which shows the barber chasing a Tory out of his shop, razor at the ready. Especially interesting is the rearing horse of *A Political Lesson* (no. 25) in which the vigorous American horse is casting off his English master. These show precisely the graphic image the Americans repressed.

The difference between the internal and external images is, I suppose, that the Americans initially saw themselves as the underdog and oppressed victim. They did not want to associate themselves officially with the kind of Wilkite insubordination upon which in many ways they actually modelled their actions. Accordingly the paradigm that stirred souls was the Boston Massacre until the Declaration of Independence, when the really mythic image appeared in the destruction of the statue of George III, with its echoes of the primal horde dismembering the Father/King, which Paine had already adumbrated--in effect had called for--in *Common Sense* a few months before.

It was at this time that the "Don't Tread on Me" flag, showing the coiled rattlesnake, came into temporary use. (The image of the divided snake of the disunited colonies--"Join or Die"--goes back to the French-Indian War but reemerged as a patriotic image in the Stamp Act Crisis.) By the 1780s the rattlesnake of the flag had become the property of English cartoonists (Dolmetsch, nos. 79, 84; Jones, pp. 158, 177). The image is shunned by American artists, and appears to have been quickly swept under the carpet. But it is possible to conclude that in pre-revolutionary times when the colonists felt oppressed the figure invoked was passive or female; in the revolutionary moment when they were the aggressor, the figure represented a male principle. The aggressive maleness of the statue-breakers and of the snake was the aspect developed by Blake in his serpentine Orc.

But by that time the official American image (with a Federalist government in power) had been painted by John Trumbull, who on the eve of the Revolution in France was representing the successful American Revolution in terms of the Boston Massacre. Only faintly does he reflect the youth-age conflict, so powerful in Paine and Blake. In *Bunker Hill* the British tend to be fairly elderly and jowled, while the central American figures are young. Something like the British Oak appears in the battle scenes that follow, decaying from painting to painting until it has fallen to the ground in *The Surrender of General Burgoyne*, where a luxuriantly leafy tree first appears, a Liberty Tree of the sort seen in the background of the prints in which Americans tar and feather British customs officers. These are



peripheral details. Trumbull's central imagery is of passivity in the hands of a benign providence. His paintings alternate scenes of defeat or dying generals with images of such covenants as an enemy general's surrender, the Declaration of Independence, and Washington resigning his commission as general of the army.

What we see are two different responses, competing by the 1790s, but by then one of them advocated most strongly by Americans, the other by the Englishmen Paine and Blake. The images summed up by Trumbull probably represent the fact that Americans considered their relationship with the king as contractual and indeed believed all political authority to be based on compact. But they also reflect the position of John Adams and the Boston Presbyterians who still drew on a belief in election for an elite and government by covenant, its model ultimately the covenant of the Chosen People with God. Naturally Trumbull used images of providential suffering and martyrdom as preparation for the victory he knew was to follow. Paine and Blake shared the same roots and traditions of English working-class radicalism, which kept alive the heresies of the Ranters and Levellers. They believed not in election for an elite but in election for all, not in government by covenant and passivity in the hands of God but in active energetic attack--indeed attack on the Father Himself and on all figures of authority. It is understandable that Trumbull represented the covenant as the essence of the American Revolution; it was Paine's purpose to destroy this idea, and he exploited the subliminal feelings of the colonists for the paternal relationship, which they as earnestly repressed. It should have surprised no one that Paine went on to demystify the Father in Heaven Himself in his *Age of Reason*, or that the American government was in no hurry to acknowledge him as one of themselves by seeking his release from prison during the Terror.

One view of English literary history in the 1790s is expressed by Howard Mumford Jones in *Revolution and Romanticism*: a shift in epistemology, from empiricism to Kantian idealism, explains the difference between the behavior of a Washington or Jefferson and a Danton or Robespierre--and, I suppose we could add, between a Diderot and David, Wilkes and Cobbett, or Gray and Blake. Melvin J. Lasky in *Utopia and Revolution* argues that the uninterrupted continuation of the empiricist tradition in England (characteristically English, he implies) saved England from the rationalist excesses of the French Revolution. Carl Woodring in *Politics and English Romantic Poetry* argues that the rationalist emphasis on natural law and the empirical concern with individual experience explain the whole phenomenon of the French Revolution, and also the early sympathy of the Romantic poets, as well as the later conflict that developed between their liberal tenets and their growing faith in imaginative perception and organic wholeness. In effect, the

conjunction of the empirical-liberal tradition and the French Revolution created Romanticism. Woodring avoids Jones' determinism (the rise of Kantian idealism produced a state of mind that conditioned Robespierre or allowed him to do the outrageous things he did) along with Lasky's confident anglophilia, and explains the human conflict lacking in the pre-Romantic writers and artists, which sets off the poems of Blake, Wordsworth, and Coleridge.

Gary Kelly's subject is the Jacobin novel--also sometimes called the radical or reform novel, since "Jacobin" was a term applied by the unsympathetic to writing that had been largely shaped before the French Revolution began by writers some of whom were sometimes Jacobins. The paradox of Kelly's thesis concerning these novels is how little they were affected by the events of 1789 and following. The best of them, however, do seem to have required that injection of historical violence on the scale and at the distance of the French Revolution. The Revolution, in other words, may account for the difference between Charlotte Smith's *Emmeline* (1788) and Holcroft's *Anna St. Ives* (1792), and above all between these and Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, the one undeniably major work of the Jacobin novel genre. *Anna St. Ives*, a granddaughter of Clarissa, is still the object of genteel attempted rape, but Godwin's hero is locked in a master-slave relationship which involves broader forms of social violence and destroys both parties (as happened in *Clarissa* but not in *Anna St. Ives*).

Kelly's study of the Jacobin novelists is welcome. The available books on the French Revolution and the English poets, novelists, and playwrights are uniformly antiquated and limited to biography and plot summary. Kelly offers the first serious attempt to define radical fiction of the 1780s and 90s and assess its importance. He carries with him some traces of the earlier approach and of the doctoral dissertation. So few of these novels are now read that an extreme circumstantiality of treatment is required for the general reader (which includes Kelly's *TLS* reviewer, who seems to have read only *Caleb Williams*). A reader becomes a little impatient with the equally emphatic coverage of one item after another, and annoyed to find words, phrases, and sentences repeated verbatim sometimes only a few pages apart. Nevertheless, Kelly's treatment of the subject is both intelligent and sensitive, often stimulating, and here and there adventurous (as in his treatment of names as historical allegory). Given its scope, the book is extremely informative. Its limits are Inchbald, Bage, Holcroft, and Godwin. The chapter on Godwin is easily the most impressive thing in the book. Kelly has written his equally good Wollstonecraft chapter as introduction to his edition of *Mary and Maria* in the Oxford English Novel series.

I will try to place Kelly's findings in context. One's first literary referent in any revolutionary period is the drama--the danger spot most closely scrutinized by politicians; witness Walpole's Licensing Act and Corby Morris' supporting opinion that it is far more difficult



to efface the impression of what is seen and heard than what is merely read. It is therefore no surprise to find the dramatic response to the French Revolution in operatic entertainments. The plays that went seriously, though clumsily, at the real issues and took sides were prohibited and never performed. Even so, the surviving texts show that they generally took the allegorical way out, through parallels in earlier English history or in Roman or Swiss history (just as the French were doing across the Channel). A few attempted to dramatize the current events in Paris, with Charlotte Corday or Robespierre as protagonist.

Scholars examining this material tend to look for specific references to France or liberty or rebellion, and have overlooked the area of greatest literary interest: the analogical plots developed by writers who could not, or did not wish to, express their feelings directly. We are told that Holcroft's play *Love's Frailties* (1794) was hissed off the stage for the line "I was bred to the most useless, and often the most worthless of all professions; that of a gentleman." Such a sentence was one sign of Jacobin sentiment. But what distinguishes *Love's Frailties* is its modification of the *Marriage of Figaro* plot, brought into the revolutionary period (Holcroft also made an expurgated translation of Beaumarchais' play). The English version of the *droit de seigneur* is an uncle who controls the marriages of his charges--siblings, each of whom is in love with an unsuitable person, a soldier for her and a painter's daughter for him. The old guardian who prohibits these matches pursues young girls himself, and the plot is an animated version of a Rowlandson situation with the old guardian, the young girl he pursues, and her young lover (who, of course, turns out to be the old man's charge). On the one hand the young folk rebel and marry as they please, and on the other the old man is thwarted in his personal designs on the young girl. Love, it is made clear, is both the great leveller and the great catalyst for rebellious action, and the battle is between generations (whether the participants are called father-son-daughter or guardian-brother-sister).

As Kelly's examples document, the situation of domestic tyranny was already present in novels of the 1780s as a paradigm of repression and rebellion. As early as *Mount Heneth* (1782) Bage was using his characters' speeches to make the analogy between domestic and national tyranny; and what is implicit in the 80s becomes explicit in the 90s in references to the situation with Hastings in India and the lost colonies of America (*Man As He Is*, 1792). Bage is the least representative of these novelists, because he remains fairly well confined within the comic tradition of Fielding and Smollett. Kelly thinks, with good reason, that his covert and overt domestic analogies fit politically into the rationalist and empirical opposition to Filmer's patriarchal monarchy. But the question of continuum or interruption haunts Kelly's book. There is a chasm between the emphasis domestic tyranny receives in the 1780s, let alone the 90s, and in *Tom Jones* and *Marriage à la Mode*, where it is also an integral part. Intervening--though

Kelly does not mention the fact--are the intensifying phenomena of Wilkes and the Gordon Riots, as well as the American Revolution and Burke's attack on Hastings. There is the question whether, as Kelly says, "events had turned one of Bage's favourite themes into a piece of provocative radicalism" or whether as a result of the possibilities loosed by the Wilkite propaganda and the American Revolution, some literature itself was turning in this more radical and provocative direction.

Some questions remain. Why does Bage--admittedly an imitator of Fielding--have to go to Montesquieu (as Kelly has him do) for his stress on "virtuous living rather than the mere outward forms of religion"? The theme was an old one in England, present in the works of Bishop Hoadly as well as Fielding, long before Bage began to write. How do we distinguish the image of the villainous titled aristocrat as a phenomenon of the 1780s (the dividing line, Kelly notes, seems to have been baronet/baron)? Richardson's Lovelace was *not* an aristocrat in the later sense. When and why does the break occur with the older and more conservative convention of attacking not higher orders but "fashion" and the middleclass "desire to ape a higher level of society"? "Luxury" too was essentially a topos used by the upperclass to criticize the lower orders. Why then in the 1780s does it become attached, as Kelly shows it does, to the titled aristocrat?

The convention that could probably bear most investigation is the arranged/forced marriage, already present in Hogarth's *Marriage à la Mode* and Richardson's *Clarissa*. Here the question is less the rape of an innocent than the forced marriage from which *Clarissa* escapes into rape. A story can often be dated by its solution to the problem of how to overthrow this tyranny. In *Marriage à la Mode* overthrow is effected by natural forces after the marriage; in *Clarissa* by the daughter's willful action before the marriage takes place, but with equally terrible consequences for all. In the Gothic novels out of Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* the defiance precedes marriage--as in the old romances--by mere flight. The literary aspect of the change in the 1780s turns on the conventions of the Gothic, which transform the situation of domestic tyranny into a more extreme situation with ruined castles serving as implicit trappings of royal tyranny (on the decline). One other factor only glancingly mentioned by Kelly is the women novelists of the Gothic who preceded Inchbald, in particular Charlotte Smith. The Gothic charge was picked up by a novelist like Smith, who found therein a vehicle for expressing her own feelings in the figure of a Gothic heroine--feelings the male novelist simply did not share, did not even have much reason to feel or notice in her novels.

The woman's experience, like that of the black slave, was a model standing ready for use when the Revolution erupted in 1789. The experience of the female chattel, of oppression with no recourse to law, of sexual pursuit and assault upon body and mind, all provided the woman novelist (who had also read *Clarissa* and *Otranto*) with the experience



and the point for a revolutionary novel--or an anticipation of one--which could be adapted by Holcroft and Godwin when the moment was ripe. The emphasis might be on the wife's feelings of guilt, but at its best in Inchbald's *Simple Story* (1791) the scenario ends in the increasingly censorious and dictatorial husband against whom his wife can only rebel in adultery. Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Maria* are only the discursive and melodramatic extremes of this plot.

In the 1780s and into the 90s Charlotte Smith's women remain peripheral, the marital horrors and the adultery taking place off stage, and usually to secondary characters. The emphasis is on the virtue of the heroine who remains faithful to her worthless husband, but the strength of the novel lies in its portrayal of the husband. Then in *Desmond* (1792) the characters talk about the Revolution in France, underline the parallel between the French and English situations, and shift our admiration from the wife's virtue to her brave behavior in a situation of tyranny.

What sets apart Kelly's main protagonists, Inchbald, Holcroft, and Godwin, is their adherence to the rational strain of literary-political-philosophical theorizing. This is present not only in the dialogues on philosophical issues in their novels but in the theoretical basis for the formal structure that sets their best novels above other English fiction of the 1790s. This was the search for "unity of design" which Holcroft was advocating in the preface to *Alwyn* as early as 1780--and so "the simplicity which is requisite" (taken up in the title of Inchbald's *Simple Story*). Unity and simplicity also derived from the integration of plot and character through the "doctrine of necessity," the belief that "The characters of men originate in their external circumstances." The formal result at its best was a remarkable union of character and incident.

The special kind of novel that was produced had as its object, in Holcroft's words, to "develop the emotions that preceded and the causes that produced the passion, and, afterward, trace it through all its consequences." The action was, in short, a passion--a relationship or entanglement, with its emotions and causes as well as its consequences analyzed in some depth; and the form the passion took was one involving love and compulsion, rape of one sort or another, and mastery, based on the model of *Clarissa*. The line of transmission was from the *Clarissa*-Lovelace symplemma which ends in mutual destruction, a consequence of his need to subjugate and hers to maintain her freedom; to Rousseau's *Julie* and Mackenzie's *Julia de Rouvigné*, where the situation becomes a triangle involving an impossible love for a younger man and a marriage with an older (in *Julia*'s case the husband's jealousy leads to her murder). Thus we arrive at Inchbald's *Simple Story*. On one level its two parts, contrasting Miss Milner with the wrong education and Matilda with the right one, merely correspond to the two protagonists of her later novel *Nature and Art* (1796). This is not, however, the simple *Industry and Idleness* or *Sanford and Merton* plot that

surfaces in Inchbald's less inspired work. For on another level the two parts correspond to two versions, in two generations, of the power struggle between an older father-lover and the young girl. (She also uses the January-May theme, with its personal as well as political motivations, in her play *The Child of Nature*, 1788.) Dorriforth is guardian, Catholic priest, moralist, Miss Milner's dead father's substitute, eventually (ennobled as Lord Elmwood) a titled aristocrat, and Matilda's actual but invisible father. Inchbald manages to get in all the oppressive relationships that materialize in the imagery of Burke and Paine after the outbreak of the Revolution. Against this authority figure appears natural, untutored, giddy, freedom-loving Miss Milner. She loves Dorriforth and he her, but the love includes subjugation (and self-subjugation) and is tested by her rebellion and his subsequent tyranny, with its effects on the next generation and its finally ameliorist solution (a corrective to Miss Milner's revolutionary one). Inchbald projects a world of Dorriforth's house which is strangely like the Garden of Eden with its tempter God in Blake's "Poison Tree," suggesting as it does the repetition of the struggle for each new generation.

What makes *A Simple Story* so attractive is that the situation it dramatizes is remarkably appropriate to the time, without being in any way allegorically or analogically related to what was happening (or even was about to happen, since it was largely written before 1789) in France. Kelly has it exactly right when he sums up the strength of the novel as Inchbald's portrayal of "the repression and the force of powerful but natural feelings." His remarks are illuminating on the subject: "Dorriforth, Miss Milner, Sandford [the clergyman friend of Dorriforth], are all locked in a moral and psychological bastille built by reason and pride, and since words are the language of this super-ego, only gestures can elude the censorship of conscience to tell the story of the heart's imprisonment." Although "bastille" is his own metaphor, Kelly is uncovering the strand connecting *A Simple Story* to Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, and even to *Joseph Andrews*. It is still part of the sentimental tradition, where the inauthenticity of words was an essential ingredient. ("But how unimportant, how weak, how ineffectual are words in conversation," we read in *A Simple Story*, "--looks and manners alone express--.") But *A Simple Story* also shows how these assumptions can become Jacobin, either by placing Sterne's caged starling, or even Rousseau's, in a context of the fall of the Bastille, or by intensifying the feeling and the symbolism of the situation by adding, however implicitly, a political dimension.

*A Simple Story* is the work without which *Anna St. Ives* and *Caleb Williams* would have been inconceivable. If one theme, as Holcroft states his aim in *Anna St. Ives*, is "teaching fortitude to females," and this fortitude is in the face of a guardian or husband, another that follows is the conflict of the generations. Here it is the old Sir Arthur St. Ives and Abimilech Henley against young Anna and Frank, and the relationship of the oppressive or foolish parents and the rebellious



children joins the Jacobin thesis that education and changing circumstances affect character ("the virtuous children can make reparation for the errors of their parents," in Kelly's words). There is also, carried over from *A Simple Story*, "the conflict between [Anna's] rational intentions and her unconscious yearnings and fears" (cf. Inchbald's "showing the force of feeling by the force necessary to suppress it"). In her terms, her love for Frank conflicts with her duty to Sir Arthur as passion conflicts with reason: "Indeed indeed, Frank, it is not my heart that refuses you; it is my understanding; it is principle; it is a determination not to do that which my reason cannot justify. . . ." But of the real problem, she says: "I cannot encounter the malediction of a father!--What! Behold him in an agony of cursing his child!--I cannot!--I cannot!--It must not be!" ". . . because," says Frank, "this wise world has decreed that to abhor, reprove, and avoid vice in a father, instead of being the performance of a duty, is offensive to all moral feeling."

The lesson of these rather fine though minor novels is that the important precursors of *Caleb Williams* (or *Things as They Are*, or *the Adventures of Caleb Williams*, Godwin's first, Jacobin title) are not the overt radical novels but some granddaughters of *Clarissa*. What Godwin does is to change the sex, making it man against man, father against son, instead of the father (husband) against the daughter (wife) of Inchbald and Holcroft. He does not omit the sexual nexus of the Caleb-Falkland relationship, but now it introduces the Oedipal dimension which had been displaced heretofore to the daughter. And he ruthlessly carries out in both of his endings the implications elided by his fellow Jacobin novelists. His revised ending is not very satisfactorily explained by Kelly as Godwin's wanting an optimistic ending which mitigates Caleb's triumph with remorse. Rather the fact that Caleb has in effect become the murderer Falkland, the slave and master changing roles, reflects the central problem, which Godwin shared with his contemporary Blake, of whether history is a closed structure as the MS. ending suggests; one involving irreversible change; or merely cyclic and repetitive.

If we put aside the Godwin model for a "Jacobin novel" embodied in this succession of novels, we are left with a number of more traditional models. These are masked by the tendency to call Jacobin fiction (plays as well as novels) *Such Things Are* or *Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are* (Inchbald, 1787 and 1797), *Man as He Is*, *Things as They Are*, *Elinor*, or *The World As It Is* (Mary J. Hanaway, 1798), and *What Has Been* (Mrs. Mathews, 1803). These titles, usually disingenuous, do express the attempt to get out from behind the conventions of fiction and show conditions as they were. The greatest and most successful case was Goya's *Desastres* with the inscriptions "Can such things be?" or "Such things are," or "I saw this myself." But in England these titles expressed an ideal rather than an accomplishment.

We can imagine a writer asking himself: how does one write a revolutionary novel (overt or covert) in the 1790s in England? The novelistic alternatives seem to have been to portray a hero who goes out into the world and learns how corruptly society operates, and is disillusioned; or to portray a hero who, once he has learned this, goes around setting things straight. The first was Holcroft's strategy in *Hugh Trevor* (1794-97), which is hardly an advance on *Roderick Random*. The second solution was followed by Bage in *Hermesprong, or Man as He Is Not* (1796). An American, an echo of the Huron in Voltaire's *L'Ingenu*, with no clear past, enters and disrupts the remote, over-conventionalized society of Grondale. He talks about the French Revolution and the clamp-down of Freedom of speech and thought in England, seeing from the vantage of an American who has come to England by way of France.

It is no surprise to find a great many children either disowned or cut off by their fathers. (Hugh Trevor has the same sort of relationship with his grandfather.) In *Hermesprong* Glen's father will not acknowledge him; Miss Campinet's will barely acknowledge her, sending her off to live with an aunt; Miss Fluart's father has died, turning her over to a lawyer-guardian. Bage takes up Burke's panegyric on primogeniture and aristocratic chivalry and gives us appalling examples in Lord Grondale and Sir Philip Chestrum, with Dr. Blick their toady clergyman. A sprightly dialogue between Miss Campinet and Miss Fluart replays the argument between Anna and Frank Henley on the loyalty to a father, concluding that a tie of blood is not sufficient sanction for tyranny. Hermesprong is lucky enough to have no such ties. Asked where the "price" of custom "is not paid," he answers Miss Campinet: "Amongst the aborigines of America, Miss Campinet. There . . . I was born a savage." "I am a young American, without father or mother; but with a fortune that sets me above the necessity of employment." Thus he operates as an Orc figure who shatters the image of the decadent, self-indulgent aristocracy (Bage's image of leading-strings recalls Goya's *Capricho* No. 4). Having assumed their inherited role as protector in emergencies when they are absent or unable to act, he proceeds to defeat their strategies to discredit him, and at the end reveals himself to be the rightful heir to the land and title which Lord Grondale has usurped.

His being himself an aristocrat is a convention which keeps the novel safe. Another is Bage's denouement. After preparing for an uprising of Lord Grondale's miners, with his fiefdom collapsing around his ears and this English Louis XVI even planning a "flight to Varennes," Bage has the revolt fail to materialize when Hermesprong dissuades the miners, using arguments of an almost Pittite hue.

Kelly sees these novelists as somewhat more original than I do. He argues for various kinds of revision, or what he calls Jacobinizing, of the conventional forms, both social and fictional. The Jacobinization of the Smollettian picaresque in *Hugh Trevor* involves making the "impetuosity" of



the picaro reflect the French, supposedly regarded by the English as impetuous, and moreso in their catastrophically over-zealous revolution. Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison, the perfect Christian hero, is Jacobinized by Godwin into Ferdinando Falkland. It emerges that Jacobinization means allegorizing, or re-allegorizing, conventional forms or topoi. Kelly's chief contribution, I believe, lies in his drawing attention to these revolutionary reformulations, though (as in the case of "impetuosity") I do not always find myself convinced in particular cases.

Coke Clifton, the potential Lovelace of *Anna St. Ives*, undoubtedly carries with him Burkean overtones of chivalry, to be seen in their "true colors." The Chateau of Villebrun appears to be a translation of Brunswick and the count who has read the Provençal poets and romancers "till he has made himself a kind of Don Quixote" evokes, of course, Paine's name for Burke. One thinks of Erdman's interpretation of Blake's *Europe*, with its allusions to Gillray caricatures of Burke and Pitt, when Kelly argues that Sir Barnard Bray and Falkland (and to some extent St. Leon) are all portraits of Burke; as Dr. Blick, the fat Bishop in *Hugh Trevor*, and other bad clergymen are portraits of Bishop Horsley; Lord Idford alludes to the Duke of Portland; and *Bryan Perdue* contains references to the "English Pit" and to pitfalls. All of these--most of them probable--at the very least provide annotation not to be found in the volumes of the Oxford English Novel series.

Kelly is also right to detect allegorical formulations in *Anna St. Ives*. A general allegory of class is set up in Sir Arthur's mania for improvement and his factotum Abimelech Henley's exploitation of this mania, and the central triangle of Coke Clifton, Anna, and Frank represents values of chivalry, reform, and perhaps nature--"a paradigm of the political situation of the 1790s," says Kelly. Kelly's most interesting point is that allegorical resonance is achieved by the play on names. He gives us elaborate sources for Coke Clifton and other Holcroft names, but settles down to business with *Caleb Williams*. Falkland's name is meant to recall the Lord Falkland of the Civil War (down to the fact that he fought a

celebrated duel) and Ferdinando is a particular reference to the "heroic and chivalric King of Spain." We can at least accept Ferdinando as a generally chivalric name, and certainly Godwin, like many of his contemporaries, brought the present conflict into the context of the English Civil War.

I become less easy when I read that Falkland therefore equals *ancien-régime* France, and Caleb equals the early moderate reformers of the Revolution--Lafayette and the Girondists, and in particular General Dumouriez, who was "faced with the agonizing decision of having to join France's enemies and seek her downfall, or leaving the national distemper to run its course." Kelly's argument gains plausibility from the existence of Dumouriez' *Memoirs*, translated by a friend of Godwin's in 1794. "By attempting to root out the evil of the old feudal regime," writes Kelly, "Caleb Williams, and the French moderates, found they had helped to destroy the whole fabric." This may or may not be; but Kelly's main points about topicality are convincing, especially as regards the agencies of Pittite oppression finding their reflection in "the kind of social and semi-legal persecution Caleb Williams had to endure for daring to question the integrity of Falkland his employer."

There is only confirmation in the fact that Goodwin's fictions after *Caleb Williams* become ever more allegorical, or that even Inchbald retreats into fable in that "Satire upon the Times" which became *Nature and Art*, where she translates Pope's "And wretches hang that jurymen may dine" into the literal scene of William passing sentence of death on his ex-mistress Agnes, who swoons "while he adjourned court to go to dinner." The circumstances that produced *A Simple Story* and *Caleb Williams* were unrepeatable, and both writers returned to easier and more conventional ways of dealing with political issues, which themselves became increasingly fuzzy. It is the accomplishment of Kelly's *English Jacobin Novel* that we can now see these high points in a clearer relation to contemporary run-of-the-mill novels and plays, to their predecessors, and to the various alternative ways of dealing with the Jacobin experience in fiction.

