BAILLIE, DICKENS, AND THE THEATER OF SURVEILLANCE

by

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(Under the Direction of Richard Menke)

ABSTRACT

As a result of the anxiety induced in the British mind by the terrors of the French Revolution, playwright Joanna Baillie deals with the Revolutionary theatricality by creating a theatrical observation machine. Using specifically physically and visually based, interpretive dramaturgy, Baillie encourages audiences to focus on minute details in order to analyze the psychology of her characters, and then encourages them to turn that gaze toward each other, creating a method of surveillance to combat anxiety, which, in turn, produces anxiety. In contrast, Charles Dickens, in dealing with the subject of the French Revolution in *A Tale of Two Cities*, shows the damaging results of unsympathetic curiosity, the dehumanization and paranoia of surveillance, and through the direction of gazes throughout the novel, emphasizes the importance of the privacy of the individual.

INDEX WORDS: French Revolution, Eighteenth-century Theater, Surveillance, Paranoia, Anxiety, Stage Direction, Gaze
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To Max.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The French Revolution

In 1790, eye-witness Helen Maria Williams described the Festival of Federation in France as “the most sublime spectacle, which, perhaps, was ever represented on the theatre of earth” (Letters Written in France 63). In the same year, Edmund Burke described the storming of the Bastille as an “atrocious spectacle” and characterized the French King and Queen as victims in a tragic melodrama (Reflections 69). Mary Wollstonecraft soon criticized Burke for this blatant theatricality, writing that “even the Ladies, Sir, may repeat your sprightly sallies, and retail in theatrical attitudes many of your sentimental exclamations” (Vindication 8). By 1790, France had certainly become the “theatre of the earth” despite Wollstonecraft’s dislike of the sentimentalism attached to the term. Much of Europe became the captive and anxious audience of the French National Assembly, watching the burgeoning republic’s struggle to achieve stability. The surveillance of France by the British created a powerful fear that a similar revolutionary fervor might leap the channel and overturn British government and social structure. As Charles Dickens observes in A Tale of Two Cities, an audience member engrossed in watching “any strongly marked expression of the face on the part of a chief actor in scene of great interest” will find the same expression reflected on his or her own face (65). During the French Revolution, the British spectator was in danger of contracting revolutionary passion by watching the spectacles and expressions displayed by the French radicals. Yet this British anxiety about French revolutionary fervor contains the basis for another current of argument in the late eighteenth century: a current that unites Scottish Calvinist philosophy of the passions with cutting-edge dramaturgy, political discourse with an experimental push in an emerging artistic social movement, and which finds its appropriate symbol on the scaffold of the public execution.
The general British reaction to the Revolution was mixed: many rejoiced at its birth in 1789, but as Marilyn Butler reminds us, by 1795 William Pitt instituted “measures to stop the spread of radicalism through the printed and spoken word” (Revolutionary Controversy i). The British government, in an attempt to control the populace, decided upon a relatively unorthodox method of social control. Rather than turning to physical means of enforcement, the government made an effort to reach the laboring classes by way of printed argument. However, this method opened a more radical discourse between the upper and lower classes than the loyalists had ever intended. In a fascinating study of conservative propaganda, in particular cheap repository tracts and dialogues, Mark Phillip shows that “in subsequently developing a literature designed for the lower orders, loyalists breached the traditional boundaries of the political nation and thereby advanced a process of mass participation which they had come into existence to prevent” (“Vulgar Conservatism” 45). By creating tracts specifically designed to persuade the lower orders to embrace conservatism, loyalists were unwittingly inviting the commons into the political and social debate, creating a “vulgar conservatism” that sought to maintain the status quo while simultaneously crossing class boundaries in order to do so. In their pursuit of effective propaganda and methods of persuasion, loyalist writers soon realized that the majority of their intended audience was unable to understand their essays and arguments, and preferred ballads and songs to long explanations of loyalist political positions (Phillip 99). In an effort to address this problem, loyalist writers added songs and tracts to their repertoire of pamphlets and handbills, and they also embarked on a precarious process of developing dialogues that would “find a voice of the representative of the laboring classes which would be both credible and compliant” (Phillip 61). As Phillip points out, the lower classes needed “some classification of them with which they could identify positively and which did not simply replicate their sense of
subjugation”; in other words, they needed material that, though it still subjugated the lower classes, made advances in appealing to and understanding the laboring class (61). However, though loyalists used dialogues (essentially very short scenes between two players) to influence the teeming passions of the lower classes and to protect England's peace, it is important to remember that these dialogues were written to be read (perhaps aloud due to the general illiteracy of their audience), but not enacted. Though loyalists had caught on to the drama's ability to engage and interest, it is surprising that they generally overlooked the legitimate theater as a possibility of conservative social influence.

Because of heavy censorship of the British stage, by 1760 there were only three legitimate Royal theaters in London (Drury Lane, Convent Garden, and Haymarket), and only three more in Bath, Liverpool, and Bristol by 1788. This made legitimately producing new plays very difficult and all but impossible for plays dealing overtly with the French Revolution in the 1790s. As George Taylor notes, “censorship of the British stage meant that dramatic metaphors [relating to the Revolution] had to remain opaque”; therefore, any playwright wishing to reflect on the Revolution had to do so in such a way that only the audience (excluding the censor) might understand the metaphor (The French Revolution 84). An obvious Revolutionary theme was class differences, and by the 1800s, plays increasingly involved middle-class or industrial heroes triumphing over their aristocratic rivals (such as George Colman's John Bull, or the Englishman's Fireside and Joanna Baillie’s The Election). However, these plays typically portrayed not an incendiary revolutionary, but a pragmatic, cheeky tradesman: the typical British Bulldog.

Furthermore, theater did not contribute, in historian Marc Baer's words, “to social and political transformation” in England as it did in France before the Revolution (Theater and Disorder 13). Rather, Baer believes British theater actually helped to “maintain the status quo” by creating an
enclosed, safe arena wherein discontents could use the theater's unique collaborative space to act out their frustrations, instead of engaging in open political rebellion (13). In contrast, Taylor suggests that the Gothic romance and, “ultimately melodrama, gave greater scope for extravagant passion and aberrant behavior” in their metaphorical examinations of the Reign of Terror because the two genres evoked the “emotional identification” and “distancing technique” necessary for exploring the “panic induced” by rumors of Revolutionary ruthlessness (103-4). Reading Taylor beside Baer, we see that eighteenth-century British theater was politically and ideologically multifaceted in its theatricalization of the French Revolution. In tracing the tremors of the French Revolution through two specific artists and social reformers, this work will examine the eighteenth-century discourse on the passions and its influence on the development of British ideas of artistic social reform from approximately 1790 to 1859. It will specifically focus on the connection between representations of public executions and punishment and artistic explorations of their associative passions in the works of Joanna Baillie and Charles Dickens.

By attempting to understand the importance of the passions and their theatricalized presentation in relation to the French Revolution, this study combines a close reading of Romantic playwright Joanna Baillie’s “Introductory Discourse” to the *Plays on the Passions* in concert with her Scottish contemporary David Hume’s views on the passions and universal sympathy in order to understand Baillie’s complex dramaturgical system. A close reading of the “Introductory Discourse” reveals the work’s subversive radical sympathies, and dissects Baillie’s more conservative theatrical model of social control: surveillance of the individual, or what she calls “sympathetic curiosity.” I will also analyze the apparent inconsistencies between Baillie’s “Discourse” and *De Monfort* by showing that the true theme of the play is the anxiety of misinterpreted gestures and the consequential isolation of the individual because of “sympathetic
curiosity” or the sympathetic gaze. As Taylor notes, the “inexorable mechanism” of the tremendous political and economic upheaval experienced in France and England during the French Revolution led to the “repression, reaction and disengagement” of the people and the withdrawal of the individual into “angst and spiritual introspection” (2). I argue that this social isolation is the result, in part, of the failure of surveillance and that it is actually Charles Dickens who finally makes sense of Baillie’s “sympathetic curiosity” in *A Tale of Two Cities* in which he advocates for the importance of the privacy of the individual over universal sympathy by showing the dangerous and dehumanizing power of the curious gaze.

First, in an effort to clarify the terms of this project, I use the words “theatrical” and “theatricalize” to mean several specific things in relation to the passions which are not necessarily related to the words' traditional meanings. By “theatricalize,” I mean the process of reproducing some object, person, character, passion, or event in an embodied manner; in other words, when I call a work “theatrical,” I mean that it is specifically designed to be seen, regardless of its existence as a written text, in the physical theater or in the theater of the mind. I also mean that this visual emphasis is not upon a static object but rather one that moves and changes, in order to differentiate the “theatrical” from the purely visual. By “theatrical” I also mean to imply that the moving images created by Baillie and Dickens are open to audience interpretation; they both allow and encourage audience members to direct their gazes to any part of the action and to notice the interplay of characters within an action (though I do not mean to imply that there is no authorial direction of the audience's gaze). Finally, my use of the theatrical analogy applies mainly to small gestures and directions of gaze, but also includes elements of spectacle such as frozen pictures (or tableaux) and special effects. I consider these theatrical elements separate from action but no less necessary to the authors as ways of communicating
ideas or passions across vast physical, emotional, and class-based distances. I link this to the importance of the public execution as a form of spectacle as well as mass communication. I want to make clear that I am not in any way concerned with any particular type of theater; I refer to melodrama and tragedy, but I do not specifically focus on them. My overall objective in using theater as a lens for examining Revolutionary passion is to understand the importance of visible action and the formulations of these two authors' attempts to translate inner passion through outward visual signs.

I examine the progression of Baillie’s innovations in the physical expression of passion combined with psychological analysis and the manner in which this innovation relates to Dickens’s return to a more terrifying version of the Revolution through the use of directed vision. Ultimately, I present an analysis of the theatrical embodiment of Revolutionary passion in the works of Baillie and Dickens in order to trace some of the aftershocks of the French Revolution in the British imagination and to find connections between the Romantic and Victorian discourse of fear and surveillance with our current “age of paranoia.”
“Introductory Discourse” and the Sympathetic Gaze

As Alan Richardson explains in “A Neural Theater,” Joanna Baillie’s dramatic theory proposes that the natural passions are “largely invariant” and that “their physiological expression takes universally recognizable forms,” meaning that all humans ought to be able to understand inward emotions from their outward forms by sight and practice (133). A theatrical (in this case, staged and therefore physical) interpretation of such passions ought to be publicly accessible and, by extension, universally instructive. In Richardson’s view, Baillie’s plays focus on the outward physical expressions of inward psychological turmoil, expressing these emotions by subtle gesture. According to Richardson, the “interpenetration and mutual interaction of the mind and body” is the primary concern of Baillie’s dramatic theory as set forth in her “Introductory Discourse” to *Plays on the Passions* (132). As Richardson shows, this theory encompasses much of the contemporary medical and scientific thought on the relationship between the mind and the body, and through these borrowed concepts Baillie fashions a psychological approach to understanding other human beings that both reflects and refutes Aristotle’s idea of catharsis as the purpose of tragedy and blazes a new path in terms of methods by which to physically present instructive theater.

In her discourse, Baillie explains her theory through the example of the public execution. She examines “the sympathetic propensity of our minds” through this public spectacle, noting that:

> It cannot be any pleasure we receive from the sufferings of a fellow creature which attracts such multitudes of people [...], though it is the horror we conceive
for such a spectacle that keeps so many more away. To see a human being bearing himself up under such circumstances, or struggling with the terrible apprehensions which such a situation impresses, must be the powerful incentive that makes us press forward to behold what we shrink from, and wait with trembling expectation what we dread. (11)

The “sympathetic propensity of our minds” is the “universal” ability Baillie suggests all humans (who are not “deficient in intellect”) possess and which enables us to sympathize with each other to some degree, whether or not we are conscious of this sympathy (10). According to Victoria Meyers, Baillie’s theory is shown to temper the potential cruelty of impersonal curiosity by combining it with sympathy or “fellow-feeling,” which avoids turning the observer into a “relentless” pursuer of the knowledge of others' passions (90). In analyzing the example of the execution, Baillie is trying to address the question of why and how tragedies are morally affective while negotiating the treacherously fine line between sympathetic observer and curious voyeur. The problem of the public execution, of choosing to watch a fellow being suffer, is complicated by its theatrical representation. In such a setting, the victim is not actually guilty and the entire scenario is fabricated; there has been no true crime nor is there real punishment or suffering on the part of the criminal, but the audience's fascination with the imitation of the action of punishment remains. To understand the role of the audience in such a spectacle, Aristotle theorized that the point of tragedy was to bring about a healing catharsis that would cleanse the emotions of the audience (Poetics 7). In opposition to what F.L. Luchas’s describes as Aristotelian tragedy’s ability to purge the human soul of its “excessive passions,” Baillie argues for tragedy's ability to stir the passion of sympathy, while using that one passion to control other passions, not to evacuate them from the soul (Tragedy 24).
In contrast to this, Michel Foucault examines the reactions of audiences in real scenes of punishment, writing that “the role of the people was an ambiguous one” at the gallows, this “scene of terror,” going on to explain that people were called upon to act as witnesses and spectators of public executions in order to be terrorized and taught (Discipline 58). He also notes that they were necessary participants with the power to punish by way of inflicting violence and judgment upon the condemned. For Foucault, the experience of the gallows (again, real versus an imitation) does not necessarily inspire sympathy, but does offer a kind of instruction through terrorizing its audience, intimidating them. In contrast to Foucault’s interpretation of the punishment of the gallows experience, Baillie asserts:

> [Sympathetic curiosity] is our best and most powerful instructor [....]With limbs untorn, with head unsmitten, with senses unimpaired by despair, we know what we ourselves might have been on the rack, on the scaffold, and in the most afflicting circumstances of distress. Unless when accompanied by passions of the dark and malevolent kind, we cannot well exercise this disposition without becoming more just, more compassionate. (12)

For Baillie, the public spectacle of the imitation of a tragic action engages the audience through sympathetic curiosity which then allows the tragedy to become a learning experience that transforms the watcher into a more compassionate human being. This centers around what Baillie admits to be a necessarily narcissistic attitude on the audience's part; “nothing has become so much an object of man's curiosity as man himself” (2). Seeing oneself on the scaffold by proxy allows one to psychologically experience the pangs of suffering and death, creating a sense of sympathy between the watcher and the performer.

The concept of universal human sympathy reveals a political and social argument that
had been developing in Britain for over two centuries. As John Morrillo makes clear in Uneasy Feelings, any eighteenth-century British discussion of the passions is a discussion about class politics. Similar to the manner in which the loyalist propaganda invited the lower classes into British political discussion, so did the ongoing debate on the passions, by insisting on their universality, contribute to the breaking of old class distinctions based on differences inherent in human nature. “The passions,” writes Morrillo, “made Britons uneasy” because they “evince a universal human nature with the potential to level social distinctions” (3), so that the appeal to universal sympathy itself is a potentially radical one. Further complicating this concept worked out by Dennis, Locke, and Hobbes, Hume dismisses all notions of separating reason from passion by showing the reliance of reason upon passions. According to Hume’s theories, reason cannot produce action unaided by passion; the will is dependent upon passion alone. The importance of Hume’s observation, when considered alongside common eighteenth-century discussions of passion, is immediately apparent. Reason is reserved for the intellectually superior classes and is a masculine attribute; passion (particularly enthusiasm) is associated with unruly, lower class mobs, the French Revolution, democracy, women's intelligence, and radical religious movements (Morrillo 46). By privileging passion over reason, and inferring that all people are necessarily subject to passion, Hume levels class and gender while privileging the marginalized groups connected with the passions. Hume makes passion absolutely necessary to human existence; he makes clear that without passion there can be no change (or, in other words, no revolution, and as a result, no counterrevolution). Though Hume argues that pure reason can influence the passions and in turn the will (such as in the case of “unreasonable passion” [267 par. 7], when either the passion is founded on an untruth which is then discovered or when the object of the passion is pursued by insufficient methods), still passion, not reason, remains the
necessary governor of human action and therefore any attempt to change human behavior must appeal to the passions directly. The loyalist approach to suppressing sedition in the lower classes by appealing to them with reasoned arguments was, according to Hume’s theory, useless if it failed to ignite a counter passion in the masses, or persuade their passion directly.

Joanna Baillie’s insistence on affecting the passions through shared theatrical experience attempts to address the problem of social reform (or social control) by persuading the passions through affecting spectacle rather than reasoned argument. Significantly, this passionate approach held radical overtones as loyalists tended to associate rhetorical pathos with radicals, “atheists, incendiaries, French subversives and evil men” (Phillip 59). Yet, Baillie manages to balance a scientific, rational approach to passions, depending in part on her unacknowledged predecessors Hume and Adam Smith, with an appeal to the passions that comes from an intimate understanding of them and a willingness to explore their effects in the collaborative medium of the stage. In some ways, this was a dangerous approach; passions, especially the darker passion of hatred, might inflame the lower classes and lead to unpredictable reactions; if nothing else, claiming that there was such a thing as universal sympathy leveled class as a matter of course.

Her further insistence on the importance of the audience's role in the theater experience invites the audience to engage directly with the spectacle on an individual basis and to apply the lessons learned there, of which more will be said in the following chapter. But in focusing in particular on the physical representations of passion rather than reason alone, Baillie creates theater that attempts to mitigate problems of physical barriers to the populace (i.e. the distance between audience and performer), and in doing so, further empowers the spectators. The public execution at once inspires fear (as a means of control) and gives over control to the masses. Foucault tells us “that the people, drawn to the spectacle intended to terrorize it, could express its
rejection of the punitive power and sometimes revolt,” leading to the crowd rescuing victims it felt to be unjustly accused, with such examples occurring, according to Foucault, as late as 1786 in France (59).

The public execution invests specific power in its spectators (much like the theater) and gives the crowd violent means to punish or to rescue, to enforce the official judgment or to resist it, and either way to become a necessary accessory to justice by authorizing it. Therefore, the guillotine, while making each execution equal and precise, also made executions more difficult to observe than the gallows had, taking away the crowd’s right to witness fully and to bear witness to the event, reducing, if not its physical power, its social right by removing part of sight of the execution from the general public (Foucault 58). To extend the theatrical analogy, this limitation of sight echoes similar problems faced by the audiences of the three legitimate British playhouses in the 1790s; their size made it nearly impossible for many audience members to witness the plays, which, besides making for a frustrating evening, took away the audience's right to participate and approve the spectacle. Such a loss had been circumvented in ancient times by the structure of Greek amphitheaters, built to allow easy viewing and amplified sound, but the theaters of the late eighteenth century lacked such accommodations. It is not unusual, then, for Baillie to use the analogy of the scaffold to illustrate the physical playing space of the eighteenth-century theater. The scaffold represents the public playhouse because it provides a clear view of an event without clear sound, except for those in close proximity. Baillie shows the power of the view afforded by the scaffold in her analogy:

For though few at such a spectacle can get near enough to distinguish the expression of a face, or the minuter parts of a criminal's behavior, yet from a considerable distance will they eagerly mark whether he steps firmly; whether the
motions of his body denote agitation or calmness, and if the wind does but ruffle his garment, they will, even from that change upon the outline of his distant figure, read some expression connected with his dreadful situation. (6)

Despite the difficulty of distance, there are signs to be read for any audience member, any spectator of an execution. Witnessing even the change of the victim's outline allows the audience to draw conclusions about the accused's state of mind and emotions, and because the focus of the spectacle is passion instead of reason, it is possible to close physical distance. Even in the vast public playhouses, as long as the audience witnesses the playing out of a character's passions in a spectacle rather than trying to hear an overly solemn verse-speech delivered by an orator, physical distance will not prove as much of a barrier to understanding as it normally could in eighteenth-century theaters. Baillie writes of this difficulty in contrast with Greek tragedy which, as she notes, was able to make use of beautiful speeches (that could actually be heard), and stories and characters already familiar to the audience (27). The Greeks had the leisure to focus on long speeches and “tender and affecting sentiments,” connected in Baillie’s mind with the power to “reason, to refine and exalt,” whereas, in her brief hypothetical digression, had the drama been the product of a “less cultivated nation,” it might have more of “action and passion,” might have become more “irregular, more imperfect, more varied, more interesting” (27-28).

There is more to be done with the visual, she seems to argue, than with beautiful words.

Baillie also submits to the eighteenth-century prejudice of linking cultivation with reason and ignorance with passion, but more importantly she, like Hume, still privileges passion over reason. Passion produces more “interesting” drama, and Baillie supposes that, had drama evolved on its own terms without an established class of poets to draw on, more originality and inclusiveness might have been possible. A physically expressive, passion fueled-drama is the
only aesthetic capable of bridging the physical and emotional removal of the spectator from the spectacle. The heroes of Greek tragedy, though availing themselves of better theatrical conditions, could not hope to make strong emotional connections because of the overly reasoned, classical format of their dramas; the audience was removed from the main character by birth, circumstance, language, formality, and feeling. Through a more democratic and passionate approach to tragedy, Baillie invents a way to close physical and emotional distance between the character and the audience, thereby attempting to solve both distance problems, emotional and physical, at once. Using techniques already in place in real spectacles of public execution such as death speeches and testimonials, Baillie focuses on the minor details of the hero's life and their progression to the crime, tracing his emotion through logical yet familiar steps, showing the great man in his “secret closet” and uncovering his passions in full view of the audience (31). “To Tragedy,” she writes, “it belongs to lead [heroes] forward to our nearer regard”; tragedy, by detailing the passionate progress and including all “weakness and peculiarity” of the great man's life, closes the distance between the great man and ourselves (31). We come to know him through these small details, which are visible in his manner of speech and gesture, so that anyone watching will be able to interpret and understand the smallest gesture and to guess at the hero's emotional state.

By making the hero accessible, Baillie not only makes possible the emotional progression necessary for the individual spectator to project him or herself on the main character, she also makes tragedy include the different social classes of spectators. As with her contemporaries Wordsworth and Coleridge, Baillie’s dedication to presenting tragedy without stilted versification makes the drama at once more realistic and accessible to classes that Baillie defines as “the publik”: the middle and lower classes (20). Admitting that subject matter intended for “the more
refined part of society” is lovely, she declares that such sentimental materials “have never been able to cope in the publik opinion” with what she calls “works which most strongly characterize human nature in the middling and lower classes of society” (20). Baillie is concerned that the “tears of the simple, the applause of the young and untaught have been wanting” from the theater as the result of the preference for sentimental and stylized tragedy (33). Her support of the middle-class (to which she belonged) and a portion of the lower classes (with which she had grown up associating on a daily basis) clearly informs her opinion as to why sentimental or classical tragedy was ultimately ineffective: it did not address the concerns of its true public. This was a public that had changed dramatically over the course of a century, especially in the seven years between Baillie’s conception of *A Series of Plays on the Passions* (which she dates as 1791) and the first publication of *A Series* in 1798. In that short span of time, the French monarchy had been overthrown, the king and queen publicly executed, and the stage set for the ascension of Napoleon only a few years later. Loyalists were doling out propaganda as fast as possible, and new ways of reaching the lowest classes (feared the most by those above them) had changed the desires and nature of the reading and viewing public. The upper classes were now writing for lower class consumption. Baillie understood this and created a dramaturgy that would specifically cater to a wider range of audience members.

Yet, Baillie was certainly not immune to either the fear of revolutionary influence or the comfort of traditional social hierarchy. Part of her complexity as a playwright lies in her political ambiguity. Though many aspects of her dramaturgy evince semi-radical notions of class equality and the importance of the individual, Baillie was more often politically moderate. Even in the “Introductory Discourse,” she admits the dangers of the influence of passions on the lower classes. Of the drama, Baillie writes, “its lessons reach not, indeed, to the lowest classes of the
labouring [sic] people, who are the broad foundation of society, which can never be generally moved without endangering everything that is constructed upon it” (56-7) and whom she goes on to identify as the main consumers of ballads (in other words, the prime targets of vulgar conservatism). The drama has the potential danger of stirring the passions of the masses, a danger superseded by the drama's appeal to “the classes next in order to them [...] who will always have over them no inconsiderable influence” (58). Looking back to Phillip's assertions about loyalist propaganda, we find that while Baillie's dramaturgy crosses class boundaries, it also primarily acts as a warning to the middle classes to exert their “influence” over the masses rather than attempting to influence the volatile masses directly (a course of action too dangerous to attempt). But what is the nature of this influence? As already hinted, the shared experience of the spectacle unites spectators into one body and allows them to express judgments in a concerted, powerful effort. If the mind of that body, or the influencing reason, is the middle class, and if “the impressions made by it are communicated, at the same instant of time, to a greater number of individuals” then those correct impressions (or reactions) are “strengthened in every spectator, by observing their effects on those who surround him” (Baillie 58). The lower classes, through shared theatrical experience (most specifically by surveillance of their betters), will be influenced and controlled by their perception of middle-class impressions.

But the instruction Baillie has in mind for her audience is more than one based in simple impressions. On sympathetic curiosity, she notes that our ability to read others is “our best and most powerful instructor” (14). By watching (and correctly interpreting) other people's suffering, we can be prepared for similar trials, but, more importantly, we can gain an unparalleled understanding of ourselves. As Baillie states, “In examining others we know ourselves” (14). The ability to read another’s body language in order to interpret the course of his or her passions so
that we may learn something of ourselves from that example (and consequently create a shared
experience) is an ability that everyone possesses, but, as Baillie points out, it isn't one that
everyone has developed. “Though a native trait of character or passion is obvious to [the
generality of mankind] as well as to the sage,” she writes, “yet to their minds it is but the visitor
of the moment; they look upon it singly and unconnected,” whereas the man who develops this
ability and who makes an effort to find connections between outward actions and hidden
passions, as well as between the passions themselves, benefits from the “instruction” and
eventually sees in the “caprices of men [...] nothing but what is natural and accountable” (15).
Therefore, development of “sympathetic curiosity” allows a person to understand not only the
present actions of another, or his own feelings, but also the connections between past and present
actions and passions; it gives the more discerning interpreter a rare ability to predict the future
actions of others.

Baillie is quick to add that even those who do not naturally develop their faculties can be
taught to do so, and of course “there is no mode of instruction which they will so eagerly pursue,
as that which lays open before them, in a more enlarged and connected view than their individual
observations are capable of supplying – the varieties of the human mind” (15). We infer that one
of the best examples of an enlarged and connected view of observable human passion as well as
the varieties of the human mind is that afforded by the theater. Baillie’s ultimate purpose in
urging the development of sympathetic curiosity is, however, more than self-improvement. “To
be well exercised in this study,” she states, “will fit a man more particularly for the most
important situations in life. He will prove for it the better Judge, the better Magistrate, the better
Advocate” (15). Thus Baillie is aiming not for simple individual rehabilitation, but mass social
change on an individual basis.
In arriving at this final and most crucial part of Baillie’s dramaturgical system of the passions, we find that Baillie’s didactic ideas on audience surveillance and influence only reveal the surface details of the potentially society-changing machine she constructs inside her dramaturgical theories. Returning once more to Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish*, we find that “The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power” (171). In his chapter “The Means of Correct Training,” Foucault explains that observatories, both actual and ideological, create a new form of discipline or power over those who would be disciplined, isolating the individual by way of a hidden but ever present gaze. The “mechanism” for ensuring self-discipline is the “observation machine”; essentially it is any structure that specifically directs gazes in order to “permit an internal, detailed, and articulated control – to render visible those who are inside it [...] to transform individuals” (172 emphasis mine). An “infinitely scrupulous concern with surveillance” is the key to social control of the individual, and by means of the individual, the masses. Foucault lists military camps, observation schools, and, of course, prisons as models of observation machines, and Baillie’s theater functions as another complicated type of observation machine. Baillie’s direction of the spectator’s gaze to the minute gestures of the character (played by the actor) and the further direction of that gaze to other spectators isolates individuals in their personal identification with the character's passions through sympathetic curiosity and, in Foucault’s words, “alter[s] them” through the influence of other spectators and by the didactic nature of Baillie’s theory put into practice (172). For Baillie, the drama's main function is moral instruction; drama improves audiences by honing their propensity for sympathetic curiosity into a sophisticated skill of interpreting hidden passion through the observation of gestures.
In the first step of her theory, Baillie figuratively places the character into a *camera obscura*\(^1\) or simulated closet to be observed by the spectator. “If invisible,” she writes, “would we not follow him into his lonely haunts, into his closet, into the midnight silence of his chamber?” (11). Foucault describes Bentham’s *panopticon*\(^2\) as having cells like “so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible” (200). But inside Baillie’s created closets, the actor is also upon the world’s stage, and viewed not by one observer (though initially each observation was an individual experience), but by an entire audience. In Jonathan Crary’s opinion, Foucault’s analysis of the spectacle is really “an explanation for how the masses are ‘controlled’ or ‘duped’ by media images” (*Techniques of the Observer* 18). However, Crary rejects Foucault’s perceived disdain for spectacle, writing that “Foucault’s opposition of surveillance and spectacle seems to overlook how the effects of these two regimes of power can coincide” (18). Crary believes that spectacle and surveillance are not mutually exclusive, but rather work together to organize mass culture into a homogeneous entity through the methods Foucault attributes solely to surveillance (18). Crary focuses on the *camera obscura*, showing its progression from a tool of observation to a site “from which vision can be conceived or represented” (38). Like Baillie’s attempt to set up a site that demonstrates passion and compassion (that shows passion in action while it explains how to understand that passion), the *camera obscura*, according to Crary, is both a way of seeing and an explanation of seeing.

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\(^1\) Latin for “dark room,” the *camera obscura* was a box or room with one small hole which allowed light from an outside source to be projected against a screen or surface inside the box or room, and, through the help of mirrors (an 18\(^{th}\) century addition), the projected image could be made right-side-up. It was used for entertainment and also as a drawing aid, and led to the production of the first photographic cameras.

\(^2\) Foucault: “We know the principle on which it was based; at the periphery, an annular building; at the center, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the perpheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on the inside, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other , on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shit up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. By the effect of backlighting, one can observe form the tower, standing out precisely against the light, the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery.” (200)
And similar to Baillie’s insistence on the individual experience of sympathetic curiosity, Crary tells us that the *camera obscura* “necessarily defines an observer as isolated, enclosed, and autonomous within its dark confines” impelling a “withdrawal from the world” (39). Thus in many ways, the *camera obscura* is the exact opposite of the panopticon, and yet both observation machines characterize Baillie’s theater; it is here that we finally begin to see the full complexity inherent in her dramatic theory.

Baillie’s theory of the theater of passion places the character in his own *camera obscura*, observing the outside world (which is the world of the play) but isolated from other characters and outside influences in terms of the course of his passions. At the same time, he is observed by other characters in the play, so that he is within the *play's* panopticon. However, the character is also in a cell, observable by an audience member in the panopticon of the *theater*. This audience member detects the course of passions by observing the character within his cell, but also resides within the *camera obscura* of her own sympathetic experience, individualized and isolated from the rest of the audience. As Baillie’s play unfolds and the audience as a whole is taught by example how to interpret or read the passions of others, they focus their attention on one another, and by way of Baillie’s lesson, they enter the panopticon of the *world*, making the chain of surveillance complete when they leave the theater to watch each other. While audience members may develop their faculties of observation, they are also encouraged to turn these faculties upon each other, creating surveillance with the ultimate purpose of predicting outbreaks of passion in the manner of pathologists predicting outbreaks of disease.

Baillie accomplishes two important goals through her scientific dramaturgy of the passions. She formulates a method for teaching individual spectators how to sympathize and through sympathy how to survey and interpret their fellow human beings, leading to a
humanitarian and sophisticated method of social control (by predicting passionate outbreaks). At
the same time, her methodical explanation exposes the mechanism of passions in a demonstrable
manner, so that by embodying the passions she is able to show how they work while the
audience experiences them by proxy. A contemporary audience watching Baillie’s play would
benefit from the lesson in a variety of ways, not the least of which would be a reassurance that
heretofore inexplicable passions (recently magnified by the display of the French Revolution)
could be explained, not just by philosophers, but by the most popular performers of the day. One
could see passion function, understand its source, and predict its outcome.

In analyzing Baillie’s combination of a theatrical with a pedagogical exploration of
passions, Victoria Myers poses this question: “Will [Baillie’s] training of the moral being occur
by teaching about the feelings, [...] or will it occur by teaching the feelings [...]?” (90).
Ultimately, Myers comes to the same conclusion that this study does: Baillie’s theory teaches the
passions rather than teaching about them. However, Myers concludes that Baillie’s “teaching to
feel” method opens “spectators to frightening aspects of themselves” and that this means to self-
control is really a “movement of identification with cruelty” (106). In other words, Meyers
proposes that Baillie was part of the eighteenth-century revival of primitivism (which Meyers
paradoxically links with progressivism). In addition, Jeffrey Cox’s analysis, “Staging Baillie,”
proposes that Baillie’s use of violence and brutality (connected to Antonin Artaud’s theater of
cruelty) is actually an affirmation of the importance of spectacle in theatrical works and its
ability to capture our attention while simultaneously reminding us that everything is for show
(151-152). Spectators are allowed a certain detachment so that they can judge the moral of the
action they have witnessed (Cox 152). Cox’s conclusions on this head are that Baillie’s attempts
to present a moral tragedy through spectacle and violence were ultimately overshadowed by
actual production, in which the collaboration with actors and audience subverted the “ambiguities at the heart of Baillie’s plays” (164). Ironically, Alan Richardson concludes in his analysis of Baillie’s *Basil* (in line with Catherine Burroughs’s assertions in *Closet Stages*) that Baillie creates a form of theater that rejects the mechanical, unnatural contemporary stage gimmicks in favor of an “embodied psychology”: a subtle and natural physical rendering of the passions that could be seen and understood by audiences (145). Cox argues that Baillie meant at least some of her plays to be produced for the popular stage - embracing spectacle - while Richardson and Burroughs take the view that Baillie attempts to reform the stage itself or to re-create closet theater to introduce more natural, unstilted drama. However, Richardson highlights Baillie’s combination of mental theater with public theater, pointing out that in *Basil*, the protagonist ultimately isolates “himself in a theatre of the mind due to his reaction to the imagined voices of the public” (145). According to Richardson, Baillie’s detailed physical embodiment of passion is really embodied psychology which frees the play from mechanical representations and allows the audience to participate in psychological analysis, but when Baillie’s lesson is applied to the character himself, the result is an inevitable withdrawal into the mind, at least in Basil’s case (and, as I will argue, in De Monfort’s).

This withdrawal from the physical world is due, in part, to the anxiety that Baillie’s dramaturgy is capable of producing. However in consideration of Foucault’s and Crary’s critiques of observation machines, and of the influences of the French Revolution and the ongoing discourse of passion, I see Baillie’s theory as being closer to what Remy Rousetzki terms the “theater of anxiety” or to what Jonathan Goldberg calls “theater of conscience.” In his analysis of Shelley’s *The Cenci* and Alfred de Musset’s *Lorenzaccio*, Rousetzki conflates the idea of anxiety as the expectation or apprehension of “no-thing” with the Romantic notion of the
Sublime as the “failure of language” to express the “inexpressible real” (9). The theater of anxiety focuses on the inward action of the character's psyche, rather than outward action's influence upon him, and while it attempts to shock through the theatricalization of obscene and immoral contents (the psyche's horrors), its failures to fully “represent” these horrors are its most important aspect, as these create the crucial anxiety communicated to audiences through sympathy with the characters (1). This is partially applicable to Baillie's neglect of plot over character and her emphasis on the inward progression of a passion, which, because the most important physical moments are never shown (for example, the murder of Rezenvelt in De Monfort or Basil's suicide), communicates some sense of anxiety to the audience. However, I do not think that Baillie’s dramaturgy is wholly comparable to Roussetzki's theater of anxiety. By insisting upon the importance of physical embodiment and educating the feelings, Baillie does more than portray the mind's inner passions to produce the unease we feel when encountering the sublime; she turns the inward gaze outward again, and in doing so, she links herself with the theater of conscience.

Goldberg's analysis of the “player king” as a recurring symbol in the writing of King James I shows that when a human being is made a spectacle, regardless of the motives of the observers, the human spectacle experiences an uneasy self-division. Goldberg finds that though “the person offered to public sight is an index to the private,” the public spectacle of the king is “obfuscating and opaque” until time can prove otherwise, and his actions and gestures (his “public person”) will be continually “misread by his audience” (379). Whether the king's outer gestures belie his inner feelings, or whether the discrepancy is attributable to the faultiness of the audience's perception, between the private and the public person lie the possibilities for misinterpretations. Misinterpretation of gesture is something Baillie curiously does not consider.
in her theory, yet it pervades her drama *De Monfort*. The implication for self-division underlies her dramaturgy. By encouraging each spectator to use the methods of observation through sympathetic curiosity, Baillie is also forcing each audience member to become an object of observation. The flip-side of the observation coin is that while we watch others, they are watching us. As explained before in the analogy of the *camera obscura* and the panopticon, Baillie’s theory turns the outward gaze inward (on the passions of the private person made public) and again outward (on fellow audience members). Unlike the fictional character who is unaware that he is being watched, the individual becomes aware of the gaze of others, which causes him to monitor his or her behavior accordingly, as Foucault shows, leading to misinterpretation if we expect gestures to tell us the truth about a human being's inward state.

The final complication, as Myers notes, is that of the inevitable imprisonment of the mind within the body. Despite Baillie’s optimistic assertion of the possibilities of sympathy, in analyzing Hume's influence on Baillie, Myers concludes that “spectators give their own reality to what they see, [...] and only thus validate exterior reality” (91). Though Myers reasons that this “involvement of spectators through lending their own ideas of themselves” allows Baillie a “psychological rationale” (91) for conflating sympathy with curiosity, this same “involvement” can also be seen as the natural imprisonment of the individual mind, the inability to fully sympathize with others or break away from one's own experience.

While it may appear that I am arguing against the practicality of Baillie’s idea of universal sympathetic curiosity, I only mean to expose the underlying social and historical implications which complicate her seemingly simple theory and which are, in their understated concern with the isolation of the individual, surprisingly modern. Baillie’s concern with spectators, observations, spectacles, and voyeurism lends itself to a reading that focuses on the
power of gesture and the effects of gazes on a post-Revolutionary audience. For instance, in
occupying the majority of her dramaturgy with the interpretation of inward passions through
outward gestures, it seems to me that Baillie exhibits a sensitivity to the anxiety about real and
false gesture exhibited in the theatricalization of the French Revolution (recalling
Wollstonecraft’s disapproval of Burke’s theatricality and Burke’s own concerns about the
sincerity of his emotional responses). Baillie’s isolation of the individual within the *camera
obscura* of experience coincides with Dickens’s descriptions of para-revolutionaries in *A Tale of
Two Cities* as “dead” to each other because of their inevitable isolation within the “graves” of
their own minds (9). Both authors are concerned about the isolation of the individual, but as
Baillie encloses individual audience members inside observation machines (connecting them
with each other through surveillance), Dickens insists that surveillance (sympathetic curiosity)
can never breach the natural isolation of the human existence.

In putting forward these ideas, I draw heavily on Richardson’s analysis of *Basil* in “A
Neural Theater,” in which he develops a reading of the play based on the focus Baillie gives to
the physical, the actions, the tableaux and pageants (spectacle), and the descriptions of physical
changes of the characters themselves. Richardson hints that Baillie’s emphasis on the body's
connection to the mind is the most important or most interesting aspect of the play. However, I
find one of his earlier insights, lightly touched on throughout his analysis, to be more interesting
when considering Baillie’s dramas: namely, that her characters are often caught up in reading and
misreading physical signs. Baillie’s most interesting use of drama is to teach her audience how to
read the passions through physical signs, and through that lesson in reading, her audiences are at
once socially leveled and transformed into potential producers of social control. Through reading
others' passions and reasoning through their progression, viewers physically engage with each
other while remaining removed from one another, making the world itself into a potential theater and each individual into an observer inside his or her own *camera obscura*. 
CHAPTER 2  

_De Monfort:_ The Sympathetic Gaze in Practice

Baillie’s dramaturgical theory proposes a view of theater that moves beyond spectacle's ability to entertain or amaze and demands that the drama be pedagogical, as she feels it was originally in the hands of the classical playwrights. By placing an audience within a theatrical observation machine, Baillie intends to turn the investigating lens inward, improving each individual audience member through his or her sympathy with the characters and with each other. Baillie’s methods of instruction through drama return to the physical and to the importance of interpreting or reading signs of passion correctly from the play's beginning to its culminating crisis. To do this Baillie combines dramatic approaches that suit both the closet and the legitimate stage, both spectacle and small gestures, passion and reason, mind and body. As she knows, people are always attracted to signs of “the unquiet mind,” whether they are manifested in “violent agitations of passion” or much subtler forms such as, “the restless eye, the muttering lip, the half-checked exclamation and the hasty start” (“Introductory Discourse” 13). No gesture is too large or too small to be important; as Baillie emphasizes, when a person demonstrates a passion, “how minutely shall we endeavor to remember every circumstance of his past behavior!” (13). Cataloging each gesture is crucial, as each small sign points to the trail of the passion Baillie insists we must understand.

Though _De Monfort_ shows the inner working of passion through gesture, in Frederick Burwick's words, it also “thematizes the act of watching” (_Spheres_ 173). Through my analysis of Baillie’s stage directions, I will endeavor to show the physical progression of passion in her characters, but I will also examine _De Monfort’s_ painful exposure of the inscrutable isolation of
the human existence through the misinterpretation of gesture. A close reading of *De Monfort* reveals Baillie’s emphasis on the importance of noticing details, interpreting physical signs, and decoding past signs in order to understand a violent outbreak of passion. But the play also closes with a public death (more or less public depending on the version) which is the direct result of a steady progression of passion. This pathway to the scaffold (or in De Monfort’s case, the convent cell staged for the public theater) will be echoed again by Charles Dickens in his *Tale of Two Cities* as we watch another conflicted man's path to the guillotine, showing that uncontrollable passion is, in many ways, the journey of the private individual to the scaffold of public watchfulness.

In beginning her tragedy on the passion of hatred, Baillie returns to her model of the scaffold. Her tragedies, unlike their classical predecessors, take for their heroes not virtuous men brought low by circumstances, but somewhat ordinary men (still middle to upper class) who will become criminals. For Baillie, the analogy of the execution is never far from tragedy; much like detective fiction, both *Basil* and *De Monfort* depict the progression of a crime rather than the playing out of a well-known myth. Basil and De Monfort are criminals: one is a deserner, the other a murderer. What Baillie is most interested in then is the passion that leads to the act of terror, and the seeds of that passion, the psychological motivation behind terrible acts. *De Monfort* embodies the progression of a passion, revealing the inner workings of that passion so that spectators not only sympathize with each other but also understand the mechanics of passion itself. A reading of the play focusing on the physical development of this passion reveals Baillie’s most enduring symbol: the path to the scaffold. As previously discussed, both Baillie and Dickens choose the public execution very particularly because it is, as Foucault shows, a site laden with meaning for both the actor and spectators. However, what concerns both writers is not
what happens on the scaffold (though that is the climactic moment) but rather what brings a man
there, what turns him into a symbol and his death into an event. Until the moment he steps onto
the scaffold, the tragic hero is not yet a lesson to mankind.

Though Baillie admits in her “Introductory Discourse” that she could not tell the full
story of her leading men because of the impracticality of staging such a long narrative, she does
provide clues to the back story throughout the play and shows the germination of the seeds of De
Monfort’s hatred of Rezenvelt. Regardless of the nature of that passion or true emotional source
of that hatred (Catherine Burroughs posits an interesting and convincing homoerotic theory), De
Monfort contracts the passion when he and Rezenvelt are playmates. “I loath’d thee when a boy,”
he says upon first hearing that Rezenvelt has returned (1.1.206). Later he explains to Jane (as the
stage directions read: “his hand on his breast”):

I’ve lodged it

Here too long:

With my first cares I felt its rankling touch;

I loath’d him when a boy. (2.2.104-7)

The repetition of this phrase, coupled with the knowledge that one of his first recalled
feelings was hate, emphasize the singular intensity of De Monfort’s passion. Hatred for
Rezenvelt, whether it was so when it first began, has become through long practice a steady fact
of existence for De Monfort; he has formulated it into that single repeated phrase which is almost
but not quite an excuse for his lack of control over it now. Significantly, Baillie provides no other
reason for De Monfort’s hatred than that he and Rezenvelt (in De Monfort’s view) are
“instinctively reverse[d]” to one another; it is natural for him to hate Rezenvelt, and this natural
hatred is compounded by what he perceives as Rezenvelt’s class-inspired jealousy and contempt
of his social betters (2.2.110). Though it is tempting to read the struggle between De Monfort and Rezenvelt as solely the struggle of the bourgeoisie against the aristocrat (as Daniel Watkins has done in *A Materialist Critique*), the politics of passion seem to argue against this reading. De Monfort is an aristocrat, and should therefore be the less passionate and more reasonable of the pair, whereas Rezenvelt, having a lower social origin, ought to be less in control of himself.

However, Baillie plays with these conventions by mixing the traditional ideas of passion and reason. De Monfort has aristocratic reserve but hides a proletariat-like passion. Rezenvelt has no such passion, but also lacks reserve; he is often “too early gay” and willing to make scathing remarks about other members of the aristocracy that hint at bitterness or at least an aversion for false dealings and social facades while he himself wears facades quite easily. The discourse of the passions is too mixed in these men to clearly define one as representative of rational, aristocratic stability and the other of passionate, lower-class mobility. The strangling or smothering of the middle-class upstart by the oppressive upper class as a fitting ending to the play also seems strange in consideration of Baillie’s own middle-class status and contemporary political events. Rather, it seems more reasonable to assume that Baillie is showing, through the pettiness of the quarrel, the curious nature of passion that Hume had already remarked on: that of its ability to appear and subsist on almost nothing.

Instead of anchoring the passion to one specific inciting incident in their childhoods, Baillie develops the half-formed emotion from a jumble of interpretations and misinterpretations rooted partly in cross-class antipathies, but without a definite starting place. This shows that her goal is not to point at the exact scientific source of passions (a fruitless endeavor), but rather to learn how best to react once passion appears. For this purpose she is very well able, indeed, she is required to dwell in uncertainties, even in her attempt to explain passion and make it tractable.
Baillie acknowledges that passion is overwhelming and uncontrollable: “we cannot, [...] amidst its wild uproar, listen to the voice of reason, and save ourselves from the coming destruction” (“Introductory Discourse” 43). Instead, Baillie asserts that we can “forsee its coming, mark its rising signs, we can know the situations that will expose us to its rage, and we can shelter our heads from the coming blast” (43). The implication is that one cannot always prevent a passion from appearing, but one can always prevent its growth. The ramifications of this method of prediction in terms of global outbreaks of passion, specifically passions that lead to terror, have already been touched on, but the observation is philosophically sound as well in light of Hume's insistence on the necessity of passions. It is right for Baillie to withhold from advocating complete emotional suppression since, as Hume proves, passions are necessary for action. Action because of passion, even terrifying action, is inevitable; our only recourse is to weather the storm. The only way to prevent future passionate tempests is by individual self-surveillance, and Baillie counsels this constant self-scrutiny as a way of limiting passions from growing into storms of frenzy: “In checking and subduing those visitations of the soul, whose cause and effects we are aware of, everyone may make considerable progress, if he is not completely successful” (“Introductory Discourse” 43). It is because De Monfort has strictly refused to perform such self-surveillance that he has become unable to control himself, not because he suffers from the passion in the first place. It is not the original wound (however it was inflicted) that leads to his demise, but rather the festering infection that eventually disables him from being able to correctly survey passions in others, making him a living model of the progression of the disease of uncontrolled passion.

The progression of De Monfort’s passion is not difficult for the audience to follow, yet as it unfolds Baillie allows the audience to engage in the play by forcing them to begin “reading”
the gestures and judging the conclusions of the characters (who are also caught up in their own “readings” of each other). Though it is important to establish the (anti) hero's character with the audience immediately, Baillie allows the audience a chance to engage in the experiment by forcing them to make their own judgments about De Monfort at the very beginning of the play. She does this by allowing other characters to introduce him before allowing him onto the stage, and introducing the problem of the play in the first scene. In the first scene of *De Monfort* the audience is given several signs of De Monfort’s past behavior. We learn from the exchange between two of De Monfort’s servants that the Marquis has changed significantly from what he was in the past. Once “quiet and lib’ral” he is now only “lib’ral” and has grown suspicious and secretive to the point of paranoia with regard to the treatment of his servants, at once spurning them and then showering them with gratitude (1.1.16). As his servant Manuel relates to De Monfort’s housekeeper, Jerome, Manuel has been considering leaving the Marquis because he is “So difficult, capricious, and distrustful” (1.1.27). To this Jerome relates the story of how De Monfort almost fired him for some erroneously perceived offense for which he was later proved innocent, though De Monfort offered no apology. Jerome and Manuel marvel over De Monfort’s strange moodiness, not understanding his sudden “bursts of natural goodness” (1.1.52). Already the audience notes that De Monfort’s disposition is oddly capricious, and without explanation. While the audience makes these judgments even in the first few minutes of the play, they are also being presented with two models of readers in the servants Jerome and Manuel. These characters seem to belong to the “generality of mankind”: they are readers who retain what they see but who cannot infer connections between the signs.

But even though Jerome and Manuel cannot make sense of their observations of De Monfort, they can use their knowledge of passions to rule out causes of his distemper. Jerome
suggests that love causes the disturbance, but Manuel, the sharper reader, rejects this hypothesis, describing a lord he once served who was “love-blasted” and who exhibited very different physical signs from De Monfort. Manuel's former master's “pale face such gentle sadness wore / As mov'd a kindly heart to pity him,” but De Monfort, “even in his calmest hour, / still bears the gloomy sternness in his eye” (1.1.75, 78). The impression of De Monfort as a capricious person is darkened by the dismissal of a lighter explanation of that moodiness. Love is a passion most can readily understand, but Baillie quickly eliminates that option, ensuring that no audience member is allowed an easier reading. Here Baillie encourages her audience to apply individual knowledge and experience of passion to De Monfort’s physical expressions, setting up a model for analyzing passions by comparing them with other passions and by being aware of the representative physical signs so that no false conclusion is reached. Soon De Monfort enters, “throwing himself into a chair” (as the stage-directions describe), and the audience is left to draw their own conclusions from De Monfort’s “thoughtful posture” and to decide whether Manuel is a reliable judge of passion. Jerome, approaching De Monfort softly at the behest of Manuel, sees the Marquis's face and at once exclaims on his altered appearance. In contrast with his former comeliness, De Monfort is now hollow-eyed and pale, and this in conjunction with the next clues seem to align De Monfort more with the description of Manuel's love-blasted master, despite Manuel's protestations.

Soon, after hearing of the faithfulness of Jerome's wife, De Monfort “walks across the stage and wipes his eyes,” signifying to the audience and Jerome that he is touched by this display, which would seem to contradict Manuel's harsh depiction of him, just as De Monfort's welcoming of Jerome's presence contradicts Manuel's predictions of De Monfort's bad mood. Manuel seems to be an apt observer, but either De Monfort’s passion is too difficult for him to
predict, or he is not as astute a reader as he may seem. The audience watching may at first feel reassured by De Monfort’s solemn yet quiet behavior. But when there is a knock at the door, De Monfort’s subsequent reaction proves that Manuel's suspicions are well-founded after all. “What fool comes here, at such untimely hours, / To make this cursed noise,” De Monfort demands, predicting that some drunken pranksters are playing a joke on him. From this reaction the audience can now be somewhat certain that Manuel's diagnosis is trustworthy (1.1.129-130). De Monfort exhibits signs of paranoia, and since love has been ruled out (if we are to believe Manuel again) the audience begins searching for some other explanation.

Upon his entrance, our next reader and model of reading, Count Freberg, at once embraces De Monfort. The audience may form the impression that Freberg, in contrast to De Monfort, is open and affectionate in his partiality for the Marquis, though there is the slight indication of falseness even at this early point, in his wife’s entering with a “mask in her hand,” signifying both that they have just come from a masked party, and that they may both have some connection (Lady Freberg more so than her husband) with social facades. Freberg boldly yet playfully questions De Monfort on his absence and secrecy, to which De Monfort gives an odd answer:

O! Many varied thoughts do cross our brain
Which touch the will but leave the memory trackless;
And yet a strange compound motive make,
Wherefore a man should bend his evening walk
To th' east or west, the forest or the field.
Is it not often so? (1.1.149-154)

In his conversation with Freberg, De Monfort highlights the main point of Baillie’s philosophy
by telling the audience that actions will show, in retrospect, the “strange compound motive” of the mysterious passions (“varied thoughts”) that dictate them by influencing the will, though Baillie also insinuates here that actions are not always clear indicators of their preceding passions. De Monfort seeks to make light of his motive: to avoid Rezenvelt, most likely because the examination of that motive leads to the examination and publication of his hatred, which itself has no clearly defined motive and is instead some “strange compound” no one can explain.

After establishing the importance of watching the action, Baillie emphasizes the importance of sight itself, especially regarding facial recognition. Here we see that Lady Freberg is a more discerning reader of faces than her husband, possibly because as a counterfeiter herself, she has a general sensitivity to counterfeit in others. She notes De Monfort’s fatigue, which Freberg only then notices, saying, “My friend, your face is pale; have you been ill?” (1.1.170). De Monfort denies this in another odd answer, “I think I have been well” (1.1.171); one wonders why he only thinks so? De Monfort goes on to imply that to him life is a long and sad existence out of which only a few minutes are extracted as enjoyable, like “fair sunny spots on a wild waste” (1.1.182). His likening of his life to a wasteland, with only a meager cloud break, signifies to the audience several clues as to his distemper. The passion controlling his life is of a long-established despair that causes a relatively young man (De Monfort is somewhat younger than his middle-aged sister) to become haggard and depressed beyond his years and to see no hope for any kind of future. Also, the wasteland metaphor reveals a rather modern sense of isolation and disillusionment. Without love as an option, or even loneliness since he has family and friends, the mystery of his depression reminds us very much of Hamlet’s. With similar shifts in emotion, similar inexplicable depression, and similar diagnosis by those observing him, De Monfort’s character would certainly call up this reference in the minds of readers and audience
members and these associations might include Hamlet's hatred of his uncle, to be mirrored, in a strangely distorted manner, by De Monfort’s hatred of Rezenvelt.

However, Baillie defers the full revelation of the true object of De Monfort’s passion until later; unlike Shakespeare, Baillie gives her audience ample opportunity to conjecture and does not reveal all of the main character's secrets just yet. Breaking the solemn mood, and in order, as he says, to “banish pain,” Freberg attempts to divert De Monfort by intimating that he has met an acquaintance of De Monfort’s, but when the Marquis asks for a name, Freberg replies, “I will surprise thee with a welcome face” (1.1.198). Before that face is revealed, the first “closet” scene occurs after Freberg and his lady exit, leaving De Monfort alone to utter:

I know not how it is, my heart stands back,
And meets not this man's love. - Friends! rarest friends!
Rather than share his undiscerning praise
With every table-wit and book-form'd sage,
And paltry poet puling to the moon,
I'd court from him proscription, yea abuse,
And think it proud distinction. (1.1.214-220)

The admission reveals several of Baillie’s points from the “Introductory Discourse.” De Monfort does not understand his own heart which, like his body, “stands back” from engaging in affection. De Monfort’s lack of understanding indicates the decay of his mind and his disconnectedness from himself as a symptom of his disconnectedness from humanity. His perverted withdrawing has gone so far as to become a twisted yearning for the opposite demonstration: abuse on a criminal (“proscriptive”) level. The inversion of sympathy and friendship, the desire for signs of anger rather than compassion, is an interesting psychological
conundrum of De Monfort’s character. It is unclear at this point in the play whether De Monfort’s feelings stem from a suppressed guilt and desire for punishment (the shame of his hidden hatred) or whether they indicate that every facet of his social life has been tainted by his hatred of Rezenvelt. Since the audience is as yet unaware of De Monfort’s hatred, the effect of this speech at the end of the first act is likely to confuse more than offer any clues, though perhaps Baillie intends this confusion to engender nothing more than interest at present. As in a mystery novel but in a less sensational manner, by the end of the first scene Baillie succeeds in capturing the audience's attention, directing that attention to physical details as they reveal the underlying psychological interplay, and, most importantly, encourages the half sympathetic, half deductive approach necessary for her didactic purposes.

In the following scene of the first act, Baillie reveals the mystery of De Monfort’s depression through a continuous barrage of physical signs. The scene opens with a reiteration of the importance of physical gesture. After an agitated exchange with Jerome involving many starts and stops, De Monfort says, “We mark the hollow eye, the / Wasted frame, / The gait disturb'd of wealthy honored men” describing, in essence, himself, “and do not know the cause” (1.2.23-26). The audience, however, is about to learn the cause. When De Monfort’s servant first reports that Rezenvelt is waiting to see him, the Marquis starts “from his seat and let[s] the cup fall from his hand” only to make a mess of the room when his servant repeats the news. De Monfort then tells him that he has mistaken a “passing stranger” with a “hideous likeness” for Rezenvelt, but the servant replies, “No other stranger could deceive my sight” (1.2.43-4). Taking the words against their meaning, it is interesting to note that Rezenvelt will prove to be one of the characters who does deceive sight through masking his emotions. After a short bout of pacing, giving “all the fury of gesture,” De Monfort receives Freberg, who instantly comments
on De Monfort’s face, judging from it that he has not had a restful night and that the cause must be great. De Monfort’s reply indicates that he thinks that because Freberg associates only with fops and vapid socialites (and possibly is one himself), he cannot understand a man whose “secret soul” possesses dark passions (1.2.95). This goes against Baillie’s assertion that all human beings share the capacity for the same sorts of passions, so that we may (as advocates of the “Discourse,” at least) doubt De Monfort’s claim that he is somehow essentially different from Freberg. Throughout their brief conversation De Monfort cannot stop himself from shrinking from Freberg’s grasp and demonstrating his aversion every time he hears Rezenvelt’s name, yet he continually attempts to deny his actions with his words, to no avail. Neither Freberg, nor Rezenvelt, is deceived. Despite his efforts to appear calm, De Monfort cannot control his face, which almost always betrays his true feelings, unlike Rezenvelt who, as we will see, can control both body and face to belie emotion.

Upon his entrance Rezenvelt, like Freberg before him, “runs freely up” to De Monfort, exuding good will. He bows “gaily” to De Monfort, and from Freberg’s later comment (“You are too early gay” [1.2.173]) we can suspect this bow is overdone on purpose. The exchange between the two enemies quickly grows sarcastic and bellicose:

De Monfort: I thank you, sir; you do me too much honor. [proudly]

Rezenvelt: Nay, say not so; not too much honor, surely,

Unless, indeed, 'tis more than pleases you.

De Monfort: [confused] Having no previous notice of your coming,

I look'd not for it.

Rezenvelt: Ay, true indeed; when I approach you next,
I'll send a herald to proclaim my coming,  
And bow to you by sound of trumpet, marquis. (1.2.139-146)

Rezenvelt’s turn for sarcastic phrases outwits De Monfort and confuses him and fools even Freberg. Since this is the first example of Rezenvelt’s duplicity, it is still unclear whether Rezenvelt is merely joking or whether his banter hides something more pointed. His later condemnation of women at the ball shows that his seeming good will, exemplified by his perpetual smile (noted throughout the play in his blocking notes), is merely a mask he wears for company and that his wit is only too ready to pierce through the facades of others. His later admission to Freberg of his true feelings toward De Monfort confirms this social duplicity. Even at the ball in the second act, Rezenvelt and De Monfort demonstrate Baillie’s concept of facial reading by conversing on the power of a smile in a manner which indicates their extreme dislike for one another. After criticizing the ladies, Rezenvelt turns his sharp tongue and soft smile on De Monfort, wondering why De Monfort has “so widely from his native self” swerved as to “grace my folly with a smile of his,” to which De Monfort replies “There is a smile, / A smile of nature too which I can spare,” after which the stage directions indicate that De Monfort “smiles contemptuously” (2.1.170-174). By this we can see that the face gives full meaning to the words, but De Monfort’s stress that his smile is natural also emphasizes that the face often lies. This complicates the position of the spectator (the reader of physicality). Spectators must rely on facial expressions to understand the passion underneath the words, but must also refrain from relying too heavily on facial expression as they may only serve, like words, to belie true intentions.

Though De Monfort is difficult for the other characters to read, he is not so out of design. While Rezenvelt admittedly hides his contempt for those around him as well as his anger with
De Monfort beneath a mask of civility, De Monfort cannot force himself to similarly deceive his enemy or his friends. Throughout the awkward meeting between the two Marquises, Freberg continues to act as referee, watching both Rezenvelt, whose actions imply that he is fully at ease, and De Monfort, who is clearly agitated. It is in this scene that Rezenvelt and De Monfort reveal how minutely they notice and interpret each other’s actions, down to the smallest detail. After Rezenvelt leaves, De Monfort recalls Rezenvelt’s appearance as “the side glance of that detested eye! / That conscious smile! That full insulting lip!” (1.2.197-198), having been able several times before this to detect Rezenvelt’s very step. In her analysis of this hyper-attentiveness, Jane Stabler proposes that this is Baillie’s way of showing De Monfort’s extreme psychological sensitivity, similar to Anne Elliot's recognizing Captain Wentworth's footsteps in *Persuasion* (*Burke to Byron* 59). Stabler extends this connection, writing that De Monfort’s sensitivity to Rezenvelt’s footfall is “appallingly close to a lover's acute awareness”; this links her study with Burroughs’s analysis of Rezenvelt and De Monfort’s relationship as a suppressed homosexual attraction (60). Whether the relationship reads as homosexual or fanatical, Baillie’s ability to dramatically depict suppressed passion is convincing between these two characters, and the very ambiguity of the passion argues her sophistication in depicting hatred realistically (recall the “fine line”). But the acute sensitivity is not all on De Monfort’s side. During their meeting, Rezenvelt produces a witty barb in describing De Monfort ironically as one who “laughs not, and therefore he is wise / He never frowns on [fools] with sullen brow / Contemptuous...” (1.2. 167-169). Because he reads De Monfort’s emotions correctly, Rezenvelt is able to irritate him very precisely, purposefully misunderstanding his emotions in order to rouse his anger. In the reconciliation scene, De Monfort finally offers his hand to Rezenvelt, and when the other goes to embrace him (something he does often throughout the play) De Monfort refuses the embrace but
still offers his hand, stating that his “nature is of a temperature too cold” to admit an unprepared-for embrace (3.2. 199). Rezenvelt immediately makes light of the insult, but proceeds maliciously to taunt De Monfort to anger.

The irony of the antagonists’ relationship lies in their mutual inability to read each other’s true personalities correctly, despite the familiarity between them. Rezenvelt knows how to provoke De Monfort because he recognizes De Monfort’s anger, but he does not know how to soothe him because he does not understand all facets of De Monfort’s personality, nor is he willing to try. Similarly, though some of Rezenvelt’s attempts at reconciliation are sincere (if we may take him at his word), De Monfort persists in misreading all of them as being provocative. Baillie shows this in the fourth act when, through the agency of false report, De Monfort has been led to suspect that Jane and Rezenvelt are lovers. Each of the couple’s gestures is immediately interpreted as a sign of affection. “Hark that courteous motion of his arm!” cries De Monfort, nearly going mad over Rezenvelt holding his sister's hand (4.2.148). Their actions prove to be innocent, but the lesson is already clear; through the misreadings between De Monfort and Rezenvelt, Baillie shows not only how hate can distort vision, but also how persisting in misinterpretation can become deadly. De Monfort’s inability to read Rezenvelt correctly acts as a catalyst for his consuming hatred while it inhibits his ability to read himself. It seems that the inverse of Baillie’s assertion that through the knowledge of others we come to know ourselves is also true: when we fail to read others correctly, we fail to understand ourselves. From the beginning of the play it is made very clear that part of De Monfort’s affliction is that he cannot completely understand his own emotions, nor is he fully aware of his body and his actions. In the scene just mentioned, while watching Jane and Rezenvelt speaking together, De Monfort has to be informed by Jerome that he is trembling, and even after this
information he still asks for confirmation.

It is only after he has murdered Rezenvelt that he can see with any clarity and that his body seems to be under his control once more. The removal of the hated gaze brings relief to the spectator made spectacle; he is no longer imprisoned by it and can think freely again, even as he remains in the audience's objectifying gaze. Upon keeping her from entering the chamber where Rezenvelt’s dead body lies, De Monfort is surprised by Jane’s comparative coolness, and by this discovers that his suspicions of her love for Rezenvelt are completely unfounded. He lets out a groan. Jane questions, “What means this heavy groan?”, to which he simply replies, “It hath a meaning” (5.4.118-19). Jane and the audience are left to interpret the groan, which is arguably a more powerful and emotionally effective choice than if De Monfort had delivered a passionate soliloquy to the same effect, but which also emphasizes that De Monfort is still incapable of expressing himself correctly. It is almost as if he does not understand his own groan; his body responds to the emotions he feels but he is still incapable of understanding himself. But withholding spoken information not only makes De Monfort more of a puzzle, it also allows the audience to participate in understanding the character's emotions through reading his gestures. The simple dialogue between brother and sister repeats Baillie’s original premise that outward expressions convey the complexity of the passions they arise from, if only the characters (and the audience) could read these expressions correctly.

To make this reading a bit easier, Baillie provides two reading guides; the first is a point of reference within the play (or a character we can rely on and identify with) and the second is a model to emulate. Jane De Monfort accomplishes the former function, as early as her first offstage introduction to the audience through other characters. In the second act, a page enters to announce that there is a visitor arrived who is “so queenly, so commanding, so noble” that he is,
in Lady Freberg’s words, “be'witched” by her (2.1.20, 29). In desiring to know the lady's appearance, Lady Freberg receives the information that she is “so stately, so graceful” that at first the page thinks her stature “gigantic” (2.1.29-30). This description is enough for Freberg to deduce that the visitor is Jane De Monfort, while his wife either cannot or will not read the description correctly and denies this possibility. While the characters read Jane correctly (in Freberg’s case) or incorrectly (in his wife’s) depending on their attitudes toward Jane, the audience is introduced to a physical idea of Jane many times before actually seeing her. This creates a sense of anticipation and allows the audience to form conceptions of her that must influence how they continue to interpret Jane’s character throughout the rest of the play. For no other character is there such an elaborate set-up, not even Rezenvelt. And for the actress playing Jane (the part having been written for the impressive Sarah Siddons), there is very clear direction on how to present the part.

The distinction exists because Baillie wants the audience to have no trouble reading Jane, and as a consequence we have a clear idea of Jane’s personality before she ever sets foot on stage. Of course, since this is a collaborative art, any production of the play could have toyed with this particular facet; an actress might choose to play against Baillie’s description. But I believe that Baillie wants us to have no questions when it comes to Jane De Monfort’s character. That the audience is meant to identify with Jane is further evidenced by her lack of skill as a reader of physicality. Though she is quite rational and doesn't judge actions as harshly as her paranoid brother does, she is blinded by affection and cannot read De Monfort well enough to predict his actions, nor is she aware of Rezenvelt’s polite mask. Much of this has to do with the fact that the characters tend to be on their best behavior around her, but at the same time her sometimes faulty ability to read other characters (hindered, no doubt, by her willingness to
believe the best of everyone) allows the “generality of mankind,” who, according to Baillie, are not sophisticated readers, to identify and discover along with Jane, or, even better, slightly ahead of her. It is her slight deficiencies as a reader that encourage audiences to sympathize with and become interested in her.

However, we cannot rely upon Jane De Monfort’s seeming guilelessness as a purely positive character attribute as the protective veil covering her face also denies her individual representation. Having first invited her audience to watch the progression of a passion and carefully analyze the physicality with which it is conveyed on stage in the first act, Baillie then reveals the facades of physical gesture and facial expression, challenging her spectators to sharpen their sympathetic gazes. In a surprising twist, Baillie finally takes away the face completely, forcing the audience and her characters to read body movements alone. During the second act, Jane De Monfort enters the stage wearing a veil that disguises her face completely, forcing the characters and the audience (readers of physicality) to listen to tone of voice, and, most importantly, to read gesture in order to interpret her. Her “noble air” indicates to all that she must be beautiful (2.1.187). Everyone believes that her face has to match her body's gestures, though, as we have already observed and as Jane tries to fool them all into believing, the face does not always match the body, nor do gestures always match inward feelings.

Jane also presents us with a lesson in reading gesture. Once facial recognition is removed, there is a simultaneous freedom and entrapment for the masquerader. It is through the “friendly cover of this shade” (2.1.200) that Jane can speak with her brother naturally because while masking disguises identity, it also protects inward emotional privacy by hiding facial expressions. Yet her hidden face almost causes violence between Rezenvelt and De Monfort, the former protecting her right to disguise herself while the later insisting that she unveil and reveal
her identity. Though both of their interpretations of her (sans-face) are respectful, De Monfort’s and Rezenvelt’s language is couched in terms that emphasize their desire to know her beauty, not her identity. Throughout the play, Jane is constantly described by others (usually men) through the repetition of her physical attractions. Jane has been masked from the audience by the playwright, who forces the audience to rely on the other characters for information. After Jane masks herself, the other characters have nothing on which to rely except for her body language and her voice. This masking illustrates that Jane is a woman without a face, without identity, excepting that which her body and her voice inspire others to create in their own minds. Her very blankness, or facelessness, produces a character we can easily supply with our faces (if we want to read through her), but this convention denies Jane power except as a conduit for other people's emotions and interpretations. Baillie gives us a fixed point to use as a reference in judging our perceptions of other character's actions, but she also deprives us of a strong character who is reduced to making her body into a piece of stage business or even part of the scenery. In the play's final tableau, we find a representation of Jane that resembles not so much the Angel in the House as a stone saint. It is only in the last scene (which Baillie, in her notes, admits she would like to cut from future productions) that Jane, exhibiting her first display of uncontrollable feelings, bursts into tears after De Monfort’s death. The other remaining characters, including the monks and nuns, “gather round her, with looks of sympathy” while Freberg supports her, Manuel embraces her knees, and Jerome holds a part of her robe. The tableau vivant shows Jane resisting becoming a hysterical victim of passion, but at the same time transforms her into a cold statue, making it difficult to empathize with her. This spectacle forces one to admire Jane as something set apart: a symbol rather than a human being.

In light of this deficiency, it is surprising to note the contemporary reactions to Jane De
Monfort from women audience members, readers, and players. Sarah Siddons is famously quoted as requesting Baillie to “make for me more Jane De Monforts” while Mary Berry writes to her friend Mrs. Chomley after having read the volume in 1799, “no man could or would draw such noble, such dignified representations of the female mind as the Countess Albini and Jane de Mountfort [sic]. They often make us clever, captivating, heroic, but never rationally superior” (qtd Ellen Donkin 163). Stabler characterizes Jane as “a rejection of the usual positioning of the female as mindless romantic love-object,” which would explain Jane’s appeal to women as centering less on empowerment through action and more on her refusal to act like a typical damsel in distress (57). Burroughs sees Jane’s rationality and insistence on “normal” social behaviors as suppressing her brother’s abnormal passion and possible homosexuality (Closet Stages 120). Combining both ideas, somewhat, I see Jane’s character as both repressive and liberating within the course of the play.

Burroughs interprets Jane as the guardian of her brother’s public persona. Jane is constantly on hand to deliver explanations and excuses for De Monfort’s behavior, in one instance implying to Freburg that De Monfort has “only been masking his true identity” (119), while in another delivering a monologue that exonerates her brother after his death. Burroughs sees these moments as examples of Jane’s repression of her passions as well as De Monfort’s; however, I interpret them as more examples of the play’s concern with facades, public faces, and social acting. Jane’s “oppression” of De Monfort is really her attempt to preserve his public persona since he seems incapable of protecting himself through dissembling. Jane attempts to use her natural rationalism to temper her brother’s passion. The brother and sister also fit into the philosophical discourse of the passions as respective representations of passion and reason. This representation is contrary to the popular delineation (excluding Wollstonecraft) of those epithets.
In *De Monfort* we have a male representing passion and a female representing reason. Baillie’s careful rendering of Jane De Monfort throughout the play as cool, modest, and lacking in either physical action or decisive assertiveness all fit neatly with Hume's idea of reason as the moderator of passion, but not the catalyst of action. “We shall not part,” she tells De Monfort, in her attempt to reason him out of his black mood, “Till I have turn'd thy soul” (2.2.205). As has already been noted, Hume's privileging of passion as necessary to the will unites it with masculine agency, while reason's inaction can be more closely identified with traditional feminine retirement, and Baillie, whether consciously or not, realigns these connections.

In the final scene, Hume's theory of reason's primary function (to redirect an unreasonable passion by clearing up misunderstanding) plays out when Jane unconsciously reveals information that disproves the reasoning behind De Monfort’s impetus to action: his misinterpretation of Jane’s relationship with Rezenvelt. Jane acts just as Hume predicts reason does, by setting right an incorrect assumption of fact. It is only at that point that De Monfort (all passion) can redirect the action of the play. Though this alliance with reason still withholds complete agency from Jane, it does give us a different kind of tragic heroine from what most audiences were used to. Dispelling eighteenth-century notions of pathetic feminine beauty in distress, Baillie creates a tragic heroine who affects the action of the play through her rational influence over its players.

Jane’s tableau also incorporates Baillie’s ideas of gesture and facial expression as it first magnifies, then freezes such expressions in order to make them more powerful. If we consider Baillie’s acknowledgment that the contemporary stage was so large as to preclude the audience from catching the actors' words, then this stage-business appeals greatly to the need to *see* (read) language and meaning physically, rather than to hear it. Like the more mechanical spectacles
(special effects) used on the large stages, Baillie’s tableau impresses by appealing to the senses. In this case, the spectacle of the tableau expresses emotion by physically compressing the emotive figures into an embrace, their shared feelings expressed through their physical contact, like a photograph of emotional expression for the audience to study. This physical representation gives us, as Jeffrey Cox argues, both “immersion and distance” (155); we can still identify and be affected by the emotion so prominently displayed, but we remain distanced by the artificiality of the tableau. This artificiality reminds us that Baillie’s greater goal is to teach a lesson to her audience, both through allowing them to feel (and read) along with the characters and to maintain distance by using some of the characters as examples of how to read human expression.

Ferberg is the one character who does seem to learn how to read correctly in order to predict, like Baillie’s sage, the outcome of a hidden passion, and, therefore, he is the character we are to emulate. After the botched reconciliation attempt in act three, Freberg has already learned to put the signs together. He recounts to Rezenvelt that he has noticed: “such looks, such words, such tones, such untold things” pass between the two men, and after Rezenvelt recalls De Monfort’s childhood pride and coldness, Freberg concludes rightly that De Monfort’s past and present actions indicate future violence (4.1.6). Caught between two proud men who persist in misreading each other, Freberg has been forced by the reticence of one and the nonchalance of the other to read the situation almost on appearances alone. In this he does a much better job than anyone else in the play, predicting the end result of Rezenvelt’s baiting and De Monfort’s pride: murder. And though Rezenvelt would seem to be the better reader, at least where De Monfort is concerned, it is actually Freberg who has fit the pieces of De Monfort’s actions together to understand his character, and to predict his future actions. However, Freberg’s abilities are not without exceptions. In dealing with his wife, Freberg’s perception is somewhat skewed, and he is
guilty of misreadings or misinterpretations.

In act two, scene one, Freberg and his wife argue over her dress, echoing the previous argument they had about Jane De Monfort’s appearance. We can see in the second argument that Freberg correctly understands his wife’s ostentatious display as a sign of her shallow and attention-loving nature (proven by her later attempts to slander Jane) and that he can also read her displeasure (“Nay, do not frown; I spoke but in haste” [2.1.118]), though he cannot see the full extent of it nor predict that it will lead to vindictive actions against Jane. In other words, though Freberg reads his wife’s personality correctly through her actions, he does not understand that her frown denotes not only displeasure but also jealousy. This inability to read her fully is further evidenced when Lady Freberg’s servant Theresa asks for books from Freberg, who does not intend to fetch them until he learns they are really for Jane. When Theresa upbraids him for this partial behavior, he asks rhetorically, “thinkst thou [Lady Freberg] is a fool” in believing herself capable of matching “what is matchless,” yet these words are perfectly true. Lady Freberg is foolish enough to believe that she ought to match as highly in Freberg’s esteem as Jane De Monfort (3.1.63, 66). Freberg sees her clearly, but not clearly enough. A few lines later she pretends to faint (a puzzling bit of stage action, to pretend to pretend to faint) and completely fools Freberg. These two characters, arguably the only romantic couple in the play, and including the play’s best reader of physicality, present a picture of blurred signs and misunderstood actions that counter their closeness as husband and wife. Considering Freberg and his wife alongside Rezenvelt and De Monfort, it would seem that another lesson we can glean from Baillie’s play is that reading often goes wrong in those we observe most frequently or with the most attention.

The curious lesson makes more sense if we relate it back to the idea of detachment. Not only is detachment necessary in order to experience the play correctly (both as entertainment and
as a lesson or experiment in reading), but it is also necessary when we try to read relationships outside of the theater. Throughout *De Monfort* there are several instances of proximity leading to unclear readings. Rezenvelt and De Monfort, arguably from their childhoods, have paid such strict attention to each other, noting the change of an eyelid or lip, that they have lost all sense of perspective in judging one another’s motives by actions. Similarly, though Freberg and his wife appear to pay little attention to one another, they are adept at reading each other’s smallest expressions. The problem for both couples comes from their inability to detach themselves in order to judge physical expressions without bias. The husband and wife’s knowledge of each other colors their readings. Freberg knows his wife is shallow, yet believes she isn't a fool, and is in his turn fooled by her fainting fit, not understanding that she is artificial not only in her dress, but also in her actions toward him. He cannot separate one set of actions from another when he reads, but tries to apply the same reading (or impression) to all of her actions. Similarly, De Monfort can conceive of only one way to read the entirety of Rezenvelt’s actions (as contemptuous) and reads Rezenvelt’s former actions incorrectly, while he correctly interprets the later actions (Rezenvelt is grown, by this time, genuinely contemptuous of De Monfort’s pride).

Baillie shows that a certain distance from the observed object is necessary, but also that one must put distance between actions. In other words, though Baillie’s sage can add up the actions he observes in order to predict future outbursts of passion, he must also be able to set aside bias and judge each action separately first, without applying a preconceived meaning to all of them indiscriminately.

Throughout the course of the play, the audience interprets De Monfort’s actions and speeches in order to track the progression of his passion to the actual murder. Though this path abounds with misreadings, facades, veils, and false gestures, the passion's progress is
comparatively clear thanks to the specific closet scenes Baillie provides. De Monfort confesses his hatred of Rezenvelt at least once in each act, and each confession amplifies the emotion related in the last. In the first scene of the first act, as we have seen, De Monfort reveals his distaste for happy company and his mysterious melancholy; in the second scene he gives full vent to his hatred, cursing Rezenvelt in a passionate monologue (1.1.193-211). At Jane’s bidding, De Monfort confesses his hatred and details the story of its growth from childhood, revealing (to the audience, though Jane is already aware of it) his past duel with Rezenvelt and his subsequent defeat. Though Jane begs him to reform his mind, giving him (characteristic of her rationalism) books to read on the subject, De Monfort confesses that he cannot “now so school” his mind though he will attempt a “tamed countenance” (2.2.31, 43). Baillie shows that the rational approach of improving literature fails to halt the progress of De Monfort’s passions; reasoned arguments do not affect the passions (the true manipulators of the will). Though De Monfort attempts to disguise his emotions, his social facade and the reconciliation fail; Jane and Rezenvelt arrange to meet to discuss De Monfort, but because of the machinations of an ingratiating man (Conrad), De Monfort believes the two are in love and carrying on a secret liaison. His hatred, dangerously roused, causes him to express his passion in a gesture so explosive it inadvertently injures Jerome. Instead of an apology, De Monfort tells Jerome to “whine within” the house and then “comes forward to the front of the stage and makes a long pause expressive of great agony of mind” (2.4. 159). He then delivers a monologue convincing himself of Jane’s love for his enemy and the hopelessness of his situation, ultimately forcing himself to a frenzy in order to eliminate Rezenvelt despite his urge to recoil from the act. Rezenvelt appears at this moment, and De Monfort rushes at him. Rezenvelt disarms him then leaves him, very civilly (and without a trace of his former mockery), promising to return the
sword the following day. Instead of launching into another tirade, De Monfort stands dumbstruck for “some time” until his servant informs him that Rezenvelt is walking alone that night to hear the solemn music of a nearby convent. It is obvious (even a bit melodramatic) that De Monfort will act on this knowledge, and he now premeditates the murder. The progression of his passion from a hidden wound to a slowly spreading infection, staved off for a few hours by Jane’s attentions, presents a realistic and feeling portrayal of a man struggling with feelings beyond his control until there is no other way to express such emotions except through violence. As his murderous intent grows, Baillie employs Gothic conventions to heighten the terrifying mood and to foreshadow the terrible act.

“How hollow groans the earth beneath my tread!” De Monfort cries that night, with his ear to the ground of the forest, listening: “Is there an echo here? Methinks it sounds / As though some heavy footstep followed me” (4.3.1-3). The footstep motif returns (it will be suffused throughout A Tale of Two Cities) and brings with it the idea of an indefatigable pursuer. Echoing footsteps have associations with Revolutionary mobs, with unseen, irrepressible masses, but what is most interesting about this motif is not what the footsteps may symbolize to the audience, but what they signify to the individual hearer. Dickens makes this clear in Tale when each character presents his or her explanation of the echoing footsteps; to Lucie they are the footsteps of people yet to come into her life, to Carton they are a great crowd “fast, fierce, and furious” (93). The individual responses are prophetic, just as they are with De Monfort. But while the steps foreshadow each character's fate, underneath the device's simplicity lies a psychoanalytic symbol of the time. Part of the Revolutionary atmosphere is a constant feeling of being pursued. The tone of Revolutionary times is an anxious one, almost paranoid; one hears footsteps everywhere, real or imagined, and one interprets them into self-fulfilling prophecies. For De
Monfort, the footsteps are not really foreshadowing so much as an indication of his frenzied state of mind, and, by extension, of the frenzied atmosphere of the scene. If the audience employs sympathetic curiosity at this moment, the theater itself will grow anxious. With these symbols and developing mood leading up to an act of terror (a murder), it is surprising that Baillie does not show the murder, but rather skips immediately to a scene set in a convent. This avoidance of the actual physical deed could be a concession to Greek models of tragedy, which required all violent action to take place offstage, or it could be in keeping with theatre of anxiety, in which, in order to heighten anxiety in the audience, the sublime (terrifying) act remains unrevealed. Of course, censorship also plays a part in this, but Baillie’s refusal to show the death scene allows the audience to imagine the scene to any degree they choose, once they are assured of Rezenvelt’s murder.

After a substantial delay (a full two scenes set in the convent with no familiar characters), Baillie finally produces a blood-covered De Monfort in the hands of a monk as he answers for his crimes before the Church (later doing the same thing before the Law). At first De Monfort cannot speak, but once the body is produced he finds his voice and begs for the body to be covered; he can't stand the sight of it, in particular Rezenvelt’s dead gaze. Though he sought to destroy this gaze by destroying the gazer, De Monfort finds that he is still a prisoner of it; the power of Rezenvelt’s gaze somehow remains, perhaps, as a manifestation of the paranoia of De Monfort’s withdrawal into the theater of the mind. He is summarily left in the cell with the now covered body of Rezenvelt, but interestingly, the cover seems worse than Rezenvelt’s staring face. Hiding the gaze creates tension and anxiety for De Monfort, which causes him to fantasize that the body is still able to move. This anxiety over a veiled face echoes the earlier scene of Jane’s veiling; both scenes express De Monfort’s unease with countenances he cannot read,
despite, or in this case, because of what he fears lies underneath. De Monfort slowly becomes convinced that the body still lives and tears off the covering, only to find it motionless. In a fit of despair, he begs to be made mad, then runs against a wall in an attempt to dash his brains out. The paranoia that once infected his ability to see others has now finally infected his brain, that theater of the mind in which De Monfort’s psyche creates visions that are more terrifying than the physical vision of Rezenvelt’s dead gaze, and which drive De Monfort to end them by ending his own sight, or the production place of his visions.

But his passion and terror will not remain unsuppressed for long. Jane, Freberg, and the servants arrive at the convent and are apprised of the news of the murder. In his cell, now recovered, De Monfort muses over his identity: “What am I now?” (5.4.12). He returns to earlier imagery of madness, darkness, idiocy, storms, and oceans that recalls the madness of King Lear, but instead of feeling moral shame for his former actions, he tells his sister that “Disgrace and public shame abide me now” and that he is “a disgraced and public criminal” (5.4.55-8 italics mine). It seems that his new identity as a socially shamed man is more powerful than any feelings of guilt or private disgust at what he has done. This strange preoccupation with publicity brings us back to the scaffold, back to the idea of public shame and spectacle. “In thy dark prison house; / In the terrific face of the armed law; / Yea, on the scaffold,” Jane declares, “I will never forsake thee” (5.4. 69-72). De Monfort takes comfort in Jane’s promise, and her words that he is “noble still” (5.4.89) seem to buoy him up once more. His pride, his desperation that his “end” will be not be blotted (another parallel between him and Sydney Carton), seems the more pressing concern. The Church and the Law have little power over De Monfort; it is rather the Public that condemns him most. When the officers of the law arrive to take him away in irons, Jane at first questions the legality of their actions. “A stranger uncondem'd? This cannot be,” she
states, to which the law officer admits that De Monfort is not formally charged, but “is so far condemn'd by circumstance” that he might as well be lawfully condemned (5.4.124-5). This is public power manifested as common law. “Condemn'd by circumstance” implies Foucault’s insistence on the audience's responsibility for judgment and it is the public, not the Law or the Church, who condemn De Monfort; the monks, Jane, and the nuns are the witnesses of his guilt, and the case rests on their judgment of the circumstances. What others have seen of his circumstances weighs more in justice than any character references that his sister can provide.

De Monfort loses public approval when he loses his control over passions and allows fear and hate to take control of him, leading him to shut down Rezenvelt’s gaze permanently. On the authority of the monks who found him and the clergy who examine him, De Monfort is condemned, though there has been no trial, nor any eye-witness testimony, because the public (like the audience, who has also been deprived of actually witnessing the murder) has condemned him. De Monfort is so conscious of the Public that even in irons he forbids his sister to kneel to the law officers to beg on his behalf, encouraging her rather to remember their “native dignity” and never to bend. His horror of Public ridicule and censure spurs him to act like a Sydney Carton on the scaffold of public opinion; his reputation, if not his life, is about to be taken from him by his pending imprisonment, and his response is to adopt a “noble” pose, however hypocritical it may seem to his audience.

We see that Baillie’s drama, despite its didactic and moral purpose, details the struggle of a man dealing not only with hatred and depression, but most significantly, with having to conform to the social conventions and public pressures of a world he no longer understands. Every major character in the play, including Jane when she dons the veil, practices some sort of social masking, except Freberg and De Monfort. Of the two, Freberg is far more comfortable in
the social sphere, but De Monfort, further burdened by his debilitating hatred, is easily confused and unable to produce a convincing facade or be anything other than what he is. His simplicity may not be a part of his status as a two-dimensional character, but rather an indication of his complexity. As much as he unfathomably hates Rezenvelt, to the same degree he fears bad public opinion and ridicule. This is deeply tied to his hatred of Rezenvelt, which revolves around the latter's refusal to recognize De Monfort’s position and by his insistence on treating De Monfort’s pride lightly and at times mocking him. The shame of the scaffold is the ultimate punishment for De Monfort because he has destroyed his one prized possession, his pride, with his own hands in destroying Rezenvelt and making his hatred known: by fully embodying his passion, he has made a spectacle of himself.

According to Baillie’s footnote in the Larpent version of the play (a later version Baillie tailored for production), she meant all other acted versions to end here; however, the edition published by Gilroy and Hanley (based on several versions, including the Larpent) presents the rest of act five, which details De Monfort’s sudden death due to his body’s submission to the destruction of the spirit. The later scenes also include Jane’s reaction to his death, her shouldering of the role of protector toward De Monfort’s servants and Freberg, and her biased eulogy of De Monfort’s good qualities, which Baillie herself warns us not to take literally but only as a realistic representation of an affectionate sister. However, I prefer Baillie’s intended ending, in which Jane “lets her head sink on her breast” while De Monfort crosses his hands “over his breast, and endeavors to suppress his feelings.” Perhaps more so if it this were strictly a closet drama, the final staged tableau highlights theme of the entire play: the suppression of powerful feelings. This shows us the main discrepancy between Baillie’s dramaturgical goals and their practical application. While she advocates monitoring inward passions and understanding
others' passions through sympathy, in *De Monfort*, Baillie actually argues for the suppression of emotion through deception, which necessarily disconnects and isolates individuals.

While *De Monfort* is primarily concerned with the progression of hatred, it is also the story of a man who is continually isolated from his peers. In her introduction to *Six Gothic Dramas*, Christine A. Colón mentions the disapproval of one of Baillie’s contemporaries, writer Mary Ann Stodart, who critiques Baillie’s plays for their focus on only one passion and who is “appalled that Baillie expects the audience of *De Monfort* to sympathize with a murderer” (xv). Yet, Baillie does expect us to sympathize with De Monfort, regardless of his unnatural pride, murderous passion, and paranoia. In *De Monfort*’s progression we find more than simple hatred. Mixed with it are depression, jealousy, envy, and feelings of social inferiority and paranoia. *De Monfort* is a tragedy about hatred, but it is just as much a tragedy about the struggle to feel at home in one's social role. Burroughs acknowledges this theme in her argument that the De Monfort siblings struggle with fitting into what they perceive to be the “ideal” version of each other’s “gendered person” (“Out of the Pale” 224). The only acceptable way for De Monfort to enter that social world is to assume a mask, as Jane continually encourages him to do, and we may sympathize with his inability and unwillingness to suppress his emotions. We do not need to go as far as Burroughs in interpreting this as the suppression of an unacceptable passion (homosexuality) in order to pity De Monfort for being requested over and over again to hide his feelings (whatever they may be). Essentially to be other than who he is because others are watching and judging his actions is reason enough to feel sympathy for his situation.

Gilroy and Hanely observe “[*De Monfort*] is attempting the work of disciplinary control at the same time as it enters sympathetically in the appalling human predicament” (xxvi). While disciplinary control is only one of the outcomes of Baillie’s theories, and while we must
remember that she sought to be a transformative social reformer rather than a strict disciplinarian, Baillie’s theories in practice reveal an overwhelming anxiety about the sincerity of performance. De Monfort, the only character incapable of manufacturing pleasant emotions, is designed to be easy to read for the audience’s sake, but the other characters constantly mask or misrepresent their true feelings. The references to disguising intentions and masking feelings may not have been something Baillie was aware of in her work, but the anxiety of being constantly watched, combined with the anxiety of never knowing whether or not the object of observations honestly embodies his or her emotions, is a clear echo of the uneasiness caused by the theatricalization of the French Revolution. Baillie’s unwitting answer to this anxiety is control through surveillance, but as she shows in her observation machine of the theater, surveillance is not a foolproof solution. I believe this discrepancy does not mean that Baillie’s plays fail to live up to the promises of her “Introductory Discourse”; rather, it is because they go beyond the “Discourse” that they show the full potential of her philosophy of the sympathetic gaze.
CHAPTER 3

*A Tale of Two Cities: The Anxious Gaze and the Reflective Gaze*

In *Dickens, Novel Reading, and The Victorian Popular Theatre*, Deborah Vlock insists that we must “imagine the novel reader not as isolated, curled up on a window seat in the privacy of the sitting room...but sitting in a theatre, the imagination's playhouse, with a book in one hand and an eye and an ear on the stage” (192). Her argument that Dickens’s novels were read out loud, enacted for fellow readers, and a theatrical experience more than a private one, is supported by the immense popularity of Dickens’s reading tours as well as his own writing process, including his habit of acting-out his characters before writing them. The audience who read Dickens was a theatrically aware audience, steeped in nineteenth-century theater traditions that pervaded melodramatic and picturesque novels. “These readers, brought up on theatre, could visualize the 'picture' or *tableau* which so often concluded each act,” Vlock tells us, for Victorian life was really a “semiotics of theatre and social life” (23). The physicality of Dickens’s writing points to this; many of his scenes are almost like the descriptive blocking of George Bernard Shaw. According to Michael Goldberg in “Dickens and the Early Modern Theater,” Shaw saw in Dickens an ally against the “brittle professionalism of contemporary stage directors,” going so far as to prove his point in favor of descriptive (almost photographic) stage directions by reducing, in a small exercise, the scene of Nancy's murder in *Oliver Twist* into several abrupt and mechanically rendered movements and one line of dialogue (172). The effect is to show that what Dickens produced was description that combined the eloquence of expressive gesture with pithy authorial direction. The reader, performer, and eventually the audience knew not only when a character gestured, but how and why and with what feeling, down to the last detail, because of
Dickens’s extended physical descriptions.

Vlock's insistence on the theatricality of the experience of reading Dickens makes it clear that for the reader of *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens’s scenes present a physical, shared experience. However, unlike the symbols of the *camera obscura* and panopticon lurking in Joanna Baillie’s dramaturgy, it is difficult to identify the precise nature of the machinery at work in Dickens’s public/private Revolutionary novel. The story is neither purely panoramic nor purely picturesque, though both approaches are present in the text and have been steadily remarked on by recent criticism. Also unlike Baillie’s play and introduction, Dickens’s novel is watched while being performed by the same person. In other words, whereas Baillie’s audience is separate from the actors portraying the spectacle, Dickens’s readers are reading for themselves (seeing the action of the novel unfold – a silent performance) and performing in company (reading aloud) at the same time. Thus there may be more distancing in Baillie’s plays or in the experience of them than there might be in the experience of reading Dickens’s novel. Concern with the minute details of gesture is something that Baillie and Dickens share, but his stage directions in *Tale* are less concerned with the typical Dickensian idiosyncrasies of gesture than those of most of his other novels. *Tale*’s lack of idiosyncratic gestures as character markers allows it to draw the reader’s focus (gaze) to a smaller number of stage directions and tableaux, narrowing what the reader/audience is allowed to read/see, but also widening the significance of those gestures, in much the same manner that a film director controls the “eye” of the audience through selective use of the camera lens.

Before he wrote *Tale*, Dickens was already narrowing his focus on fewer, simpler gestures and the subtle direction of gazes. A *Times* article, printed July 13, 1857, details Dickens’s performance in the role of Richard Wardour (a man who sacrifices his life to save his
rival in love) in Wilkie Collins's *The Frozen Deep*:

We feel that if Mr. Dickens had had to describe in narrative form the situations of the *Frozen Deep*, instead of acting them, he would have covered whole pages in recording those manifestations of emotion, which, not having his pen in hand, he now makes by the minutest variations of voice and gesture [...] (qtd. Slater 419)

Dickens was so inspired by the role that he wrote *A Tale of Two Cities* in order to extend that exploration of the Wardour character; however, he did not do so by covering “whole pages” with his pen, but rather by penning the “manifestations of emotion” in the “minutest gestures” of his characters. This unexpected change in style signals *Tale’s* focus on theatrical modes of expression, on a more subtle physical adaptation of emotion. In contrast with his other works, there is a greater emphasis on the direction and focus of gazes, in particular. In this manner, Dickens is more like a film director than a theater director; his concern, surprisingly, is on directing our gaze through the gazes of others and on conveying a complicated analysis of the passion (and experience) of Terror through directed gazing. This study seeks to illuminate and analyze the direction and significance of gazes and to understand them in relation to the passions of French Revolutionary terror, as well as that terror’s significance to the Victorian age and our own.

Above all, Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities* is a novel obsessed with moments of vision and watchfulness. The word “spectacle” is used six times, variations of “watch” thirty-five times, variations of “observe” forty-nine times, “look” one-hundred and twelve times, variations of “see” three-hundred and forty-eight times, and “sight” thirty-nine times, including chapter two of the second book, entitled “A Sight.” In order to understand the underlying importance of Dickens’s use of seeing to re-create the atmosphere of the French Revolution, we turn to the
preface to the first edition. After explaining his intense desire to *embody* the main idea of the story, he writes, “I traced out in my fancy, the state of mind of which it would necessitate the presentation to an observant spectator, with particular care and interest” (v). Clearly the reader's ability to *see* the action of the book is imperative and is built into the story through physical details, much like the blocking of a play. This is a visual novel, meant to be seen. But the novel is more than an exercise in the picturesque, a rough draft of a script, a collection of illustrations, or an allegorical photo-album. The emphasis on gazing reveals the minute level of detail concerned with the power of a look on the human psyche.

George Orwell writes, “It is a strange thing that Dickens, much more in sympathy with the ideas of the Revolution than most Britishmen of his time, should have played a part in creating” the impression of the French Revolution as “no more than a pyramid of severed heads” (100). Yet Dickens’s main object in creating such a visceral impression of the event may have more to do with attempting to understand the emotional atmosphere of the Revolution, rather than with leaving a lasting negative impression of it. His methods of investigation into this atmosphere are necessarily visual. Seeing is everywhere throughout the book; visions of the past bleed through onto the present, while the book's main visionary (Sydney Carton) proclaims the end he “sees” in store for those he leaves behind. Many times within the book a crowd gathers to watch a particular spectacle, from the breaking of the wine casket in chapter five of the first book, to the spectacles of the three trials, to the battle of gazes between Madame Defarge and Miss Pross in the book's penultimate chapter. In the beginning of the book, the French peasants watch the aristocracy with hungry, rat-like faces; Sydney Carton and Charles Darnay watch Lucie Manette through three trials, looking to her for the strength she exhibits through the spectacle of her facial expressions, and Charles watches her even while imprisoned in La Force.
And, of course, there is the most ominous of the book's references to vision, the villainous Madame Defarge, introduced as “a stout woman [...] with a watchful eye that seldom seemed to look at anything” and who continues to watch the action without speaking a word until more than one-hundred pages later. What accounts for the emphasis on vision, on characters constantly observing each other, and often staring each other down? Dickens' revolutionary gaze is not the comforting gaze of sympathy touted by Baillie, nor is it the complicated gaze that teaches the viewer compassion; rather, the gazes of *A Tale of Two Cities* are paranoid and mistrusting. They reflect the uneasiness resulting from the overthrow of human sympathy, when the sympathetic gaze fails to encourage or instruct, when reason fails to redirect passion, when passion is embodied by mob-rule and becomes a quasi-supernatural power capable of acts of terror. Unlike Baillie, who uses observation to transform a terrible phenomenon (the passion of a single man) into a merely pitiable, understandable event, Dickens seeks, in *A Tale of Two Cities*, to reinstate the terror of the French Revolution, to restore passion to its rightful place by way of the anxious gaze.

Dickens opens with a panoramic view of the times that begins by directing the reader's gaze. In the famous opening lines, he details the dichotomous nature of the age, already mimicking the back and forth play of our eyes between two cities and creating a sort of thaumatrope\(^3\) of the cities (as well as Victorian Britain), ultimately to form a image of both “Light” and “Darkness” (1) that our eyes will continually have to adjust to, and, finally, he gives us on the next page the story of the young man burned alive because he did not do obeisance to monks who passed “within his view” (2). The monks were fifty-yards away, but vision is costly in this book, and short-sightedness is clearly not rewarded or excused. In the following chapter,

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\(^3\) A Victorian amusement composed of a circular card with two images, one on each side, that when flipped rapidly by the attached strings, produces the illusion of a single image that is a combination of both.
Dickens lays the scene by describing a fog that makes “its slow way through the air in ripples that visibly followed and overspread one another” like ocean waves, hinting at the unreliability of vision and the overlapping of visions, past, present, and future, soon to occur (4). We encounter the occupants of the midnight carriage ride, each of them unsure if the other is a highwayman himself, each unable to identify the other by sight because each is hidden from “the eyes of the mind, as from the eyes of the body” in physical and metaphysical wrappers (4). Distrust and paranoia pervade the novel; there is a distinct need to hide from the gazes of others, physically and mentally. Soon after the carriage is hailed in the darkness by an as yet disembodied voice, the men perform the first of many chains of gazing: “they all looked from the coachman to the guard, and from the guard to the coachman [...] the coachman looked back, and the guard looked back, and even the emphatic leader pricked up his ears and looked back” (6). Dickens uses a technique of shifting gazes to show us the direction of mistrust: each passenger mistrusts every other passenger; as a group, they mistrust the stranger. Paranoia builds from within, from the eyes of the mind, to the physical body, to the insulated social group, to the group's antagonism toward the stranger. This is a neat model of the paranoia of the nation once the Revolution is underway; no gaze can be trusted, especially an unfamiliar gaze, and all gazes, even when gathered into a collective gaze, are still splintered into individual factions.

In case his elaborate stage setting fails to get the point across, Dickens loses no chance to point out the message. “A wonderful fact to relate upon,” he writes in one of his comparatively few assertions of narrative voice, “that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery to every other,” going on to elaborate the point by peppering the reader's imagination with “darkly clustered houses” enclosing each “its own secret” and following the chain of relations down to the solitary human heart, like a set of Russian nesting dolls (9). “A
multitude of people,” says Charles Darnay, later listening to the infamous footsteps, “and yet a solitude!” (93). (The isolation of the individual was a main focus of Wilkie Collins's *The Frozen Deep.*) As Michael Slater recounts, the struggle of the protagonist, Richard Wardour, “will not only be against forces of external nature but also against those dark forces within himself that have frozen his humanity” (417). The concern with “frozen humanity” courses throughout the book, and not only in the anti-hero Sydney Carton. In pre-Revolutionary France (and even more so after the Revolution), every man is an island, protected by facades and deflecting gazes, hidden eyes and hidden faces, while each person wonders what dangerous thoughts lie in the inscrutable hearts of his fellow man. This withdrawal from the confusion and distrust of Revolutionary times is embodied in the second to last scene of the novel by Miss Pross who, when she is left alone in the house after the Darnays have fled, sees “half-imagined faces peeping behind every open door” which haunt and watch her in her mind's eye (342).

Anxiety was present before the Revolution as well as after it, as historian Clive Emsley notes: “British francophobia had centered on an absolutist, Catholic regime with an omnipresent police force forever spying on the population” (1). Contrasted with Joanna Baillie’s insistence on the sympathetic gaze, which engenders understanding in the hearts of those who share it and brings about self-knowledge, the result of constant, unsympathetic surveillance is terror because it creates an uncontrollable, imminently dangerous living condition for the object of surveillance. The closest we come to Baillie’s idea of individual observation (or camera obscura) is Defarge’s curious arrangement of allowing the three men to peep at Dr. Manette through holes in the wall. “Do you make a show of Monsieur Manette?” asks Mr. Lorry, much offended; Defarge replies that the “sight is likely to do [them] good” (33). The sight of Dr. Manette, still imprisoned in his own mind, emotionally affects the three Jacques by igniting their further rage and hatred against
the aristocracy (a reverse of Baillie’s purpose of watching the “great man” in his closet). Also, unlike Bentham's panopticon, which we borrowed as an example of the implied effect of Baillie’s theory on audience, the observed French peasant cannot know who is a spy and who is not (unless, like the Defarges, he or she is well informed), and because of the multiplicity of possibilities of spying gazes (as contrasted with Bentham's one watchman), the effect of the spying gaze is not just to normalize behavior or induce the individual to police himself, but to provoke constant fear that renders the object mentally imprisoned from his fellow man. In other words, the very slight distinction lies in the fact that, unlike in Bentham's panopticon, here any prisoner may look at any other prisoner at any time, and all may be suspected of being watchmen in disguise. Therefore, one not only polices one's thoughts because of constant surveillance: one also learns to distrust every gaze encountered.

In some ways the extension of this imprisonment resembles D. A. Miller's assertion that many of Dickens’s novels, *Bleak House* in particular, show that the discipline “confined to the carceral,” or the idea of discipline confined to prisons, necessarily confines those in “free spaces” by the threat of incarceration should they fail to follow the regulations of the domestic space (*Novel* 60). In other words, the discipline of the prison infiltrates and defines “the space outside” the prison, the domestic space, simply by existing in opposition to it (*Novel* 60). Imprisonment pervades every space: domestic, carceral, outward, and inward. The synopticon (as opposed to the panopticon, it uses the many to watch the few) is an example of the self-imprisonment of anxiety and as Richard Ericson and Kevin Haggerty explain, is similar to the after-effects of 9/11 in which “the many also watch the many” (*New Politics* 38). By turning the observing gaze into one of mass suspicion, each person becomes at once a watchman and an object of watchfulness. But unlike Baillie’s use of this technique, Dickens’s portrays the loss of individuality and
connection due to the creation of mass anxiety, rendering each gazer a complete prisoner - body, mind, and soul - from every other gazer.

But there is a way to break out of the paranoia of solitary confinement. To find it we must turn to tracking the golden thread of the gaze through the novel. Lucie Manette is the first gazer, or model of gazing, offered for our consideration. Mr. Lorry first meets her in a dimly lit room through a cloud of obscurity; Lucie is fronted by two tall candles and flanked by the fire, surrounded by light, yet in darkness. Lucie’s importance, like Jane De Monfort’s before her, lies in her beauty, specifically in her face. Her “blue eyes” meet Mr. Lorry’s own “with an inquiring look,” and we are told she has

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\text{a forehead with a singular capacity...of lifting and knitting itself into an expression that was not quite one of perplexity, or wonder, or alarm, or merely of a bright fixed attention, though it included all the four expressions. (17)}
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The expressiveness of Lucie’s face illuminates her emotions; she hides nothing because her face is completely clear, like a stage set to display each passion as it passes through her mind and heart. It is this singular capacity that allows Lucie to become the fixed object of attention throughout the novel, and her ability to be an object of attention constitutes her power. Lucie is aware of gazes but unafraid to meet them. Everyone looks at Lucie, and by looking at her, each individual's emotions become clearer and each gazer is strengthened. For Dr. Manette at his release from Defarge’s winery, Lucie is the “Light of Freedom shining upon him”; she connects him to his past and present through her resemblance to her mother, and encourages him through the “light of her face” (41, 71). Her face is the mainstay of Charles Darnay, and it is her expression that causes both him and Sydney Carton to fall in love with her during the Old Bailey trial. But Lucie is not just an object of their gazes; she draws the eyes of the crowd, even in the
Old Bailey. “Her forehead had been strikingly expressive of an engrossing terror and compassion [...] this had been so very noticeable, so very powerfully and naturally shown, that starers who had no pity for him were touched by her” (57 emphasis mine). Lucie’s power is to impart compassion to others, to appeal to pity through the clarity of her expressions. By communicating her emotions in such an affecting way as to stir sympathetic curiosity in the dullest of spectators, Lucie demonstrates Joanna Baillie’s theory of sympathetic curiosity’s universal effect. But Lucie’s power not only draws gazes, it also allows the gazer a relief (albeit, an illusionary one) from the constant gaze of the crowd. When called as a witness at the Old Bailey, Lucie faces Charles Darnay with “such pity,” “earnest youth and beauty” that she causes him to fantasize that they are standing apart “on the edge of his grave” (63). In keeping with Dickens’s earlier allusion to the privacy of the mind being like the privacy of the grave, we might gather that Lucie’s gaze somehow transverses the privacy of solitary human existence, without even the aid of a resurrection man. Her semi-supernatural ability, an admittedly fantastic rendering of her more ordinary power over human connection, is strengthened by the many times she is called a ghost or a spirit throughout the text. Lucie seems to have the power to link images and illusions together in the eyes of those who look on her.

Lucie’s ability to induce visions in others also makes her a sort of magic lantern, or producer of special effects in the minds of others. In one of the strangest passages of the novel, Dr. Manette recounts to Lucie his treasured fantasies of her while in prison. His fantasies include various versions of Lucie’s life, her imagined marriage and the births of her children, all hinging on whether she remembers him or not (a foreshadowing of Sydney’s claim to her remembrance as well). The fantasy does not remain a fantasy, however; like the overlapping fog, images of pretend Lucie and the real Lucie overlap each other, creating a convergence of three images in
the moonlight of Dr. Manette’s mind. Yet, these are not only stable, projected images that are superimposed on each other like the thaumatrope; these images simulate movement. The first imaginary Lucie grows, moves, and knows nothing of him, while the second imaginary Lucie is a static image: it stands before the doctor’s “disturbed sense of sight, but it never move[s]” (175). Dr. Manette admits that the images are the result of enforced solitude and can probably only be understood by fellow prisoners, and while Lucie accepts this exclusion she also inserts herself back into his conscious by asserting that she hopes she is “that child,” the living, changeable child rather than the stationary image. This three-dimensional picture of Lucie, two moving pictures (real and imagined) and one stationary, situates the object of our gaze (Lucie) back into the theater of solitude as a living Lucie, a ghost Lucie, and a photograph of Lucie, and gives us an insight into the complexity of solitude's effects on the mind's internal vision. Dr. Manette’s experience is the direct result of solitary confinement, and his projections of Lucie’s image, moving and stationary, show us the mind's propensity to hold a fixed image (what would normally be perhaps a primary impression) while at the same time changing and manipulating the impression according to its whim. If our observance of each other is tantamount to our understanding ourselves, it is interesting to note that our observations, as a result of the enforced solitary confinement of the human condition, are never uncolored or entirely true to life; thus the mind can become a magic lantern to itself, accepting the image of images rather than the originals. This may be applied to the many bizarre images of the Revolution.

The direct descendants of the magic lantern⁴, the “lantern of fright,” or a projector of ghostly images for theatrical display, was at the height of its popularity in the late 1770s. If we

⁴ A device, first used in early 1600s, in which a light source placed behind a concave mirror reflected a slide with a painted image against a wall, making the image appear like a phantom or ghost to the observer. Later variations on the device included the stereoscope. When several images were added, the device gave the illusion of movement.
recall the resulting mental imprisonment of constant surveillance of the many by the many, the magic lantern of the mind that also arises as a result of solitude may make clear the persistence of visions and ghosts throughout the novel. For instance, the road mender's vision of the man under the Marquis's carriage (though not imagined) is still infused with supernatural elements in the telling. Likewise, his story of the imprisonment and hanging of the Marquis's assassin bears theatrical and otherworldly modifications. He tells Defarge and the Jacques that the hanging man's shadow, “stuck across the church, across the mill, across the prison – seemed to strike across the earth, messieurs, to where the sky rests upon it!” (158). The hanged man's shadow stretches to the horizon in the inner theater of the road mender's mind, and this cinematic recall is part of the evidence that he, as Dickens informs us, “saw it vividly; perhaps he had not seen much in his life” (155). The road mender is a prisoner of his own visually stifled experience, so that any images he is allowed to witness become etched on his memory as larger than life.

Similarly, Dr. Manette seems to see the reality before him while Lucie’s power over him is strong, but even at the end of the novel, he is never completely free from the impressions his mind's eye imposes over those of reality.

Though Lucie’s face can induce the production of visions in the mental theaters of others, it can also force others to betray their emotions physically. Charles’s involuntary reaction to her face includes the motion of his “hurried right hand” parceling out herbs into “imaginary beds of flowers” while “his efforts to control and steady his breathing” shakes “the lips from which the colour [sic] rushed to his heart” (63). Lucie’s power over others not only engenders sympathy in the hearts of her spectators; she also affects their outward appearances. “Her forehead was painfully anxious and intent […] Among the lookers-on there was the same expression […] a great majority of the foreheads there, might have been mirrors reflecting the witness” (65).
Lucie’s ever-expressive forehead manages to transform all other foreheads into reflections of herself in the manner of “any chief actor in a scene of great interest to whom many eyes are directed” (65). Her ability to display emotion is unusual in a novel filled with facades, and reminds us of De Monfort’s involuntary displays that so incapacitate his ability to adapt to his social atmosphere. Where this is a liability for De Monfort, it is Lucie’s strength. It also provides a contrast between her and Jane because Lucie openly demonstrates passions that overwhelm her, causing her numerous fainting fits throughout the course of the novel. While both Jane and Lucie derive their main power from being objects of gazes, Jane’s emotional control keeps her from surrendering her body to the dictates of passion. Both women are paradoxically strong and weak at once: though Jane is never rendered dependent by her emotions, she can never hope to influence anyone else by their powerful expression, whereas Lucie, in her emotional dependency, is able to exert emotional influence on those who sympathize with her every expression.

Lucie’s ability to direct the passions of others through the display of her own often melodramatic passions neatly ties into Mr. Stryver’s characterization of her as “picturesque” (81) and connects her with Burke’s ideas of beauty as a soft and gentle aspect inspiring love, while still somewhat empowering her to be more than a mere beauty in distress. As William Gilpin notes, travelers should “examine the face of the country by the rules of picturesque beauty” (1), using the term as a manner for measuring, significantly, the face, and defining it as “expressive of that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture” (Essay on Prints xii). The picturesque is the measurement of the “face” of the countryside, but it is also an expressive display of nature which bridges the gap between the beautiful and the sublime. Lucie, similarly, is the object of gazes, presenting a picture that impresses those who look on it with distinct emotions as well as with her own beauty, while maintaining connections between all that is
beautiful or all that possesses, according to Burke, qualities that “cause love” and all that is sublime or “fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, or [that which is] analogous to terror” (Enquiry 91, 39). Lucie is the golden thread, by virtue of her picturesqueness, that connects Dr. Manette’s terrible past imprisonment and solitude with the beautiful present of his family and freedom. As Stryver is quick to observe with his “sharp look,” even Sydney is not impervious to the beautiful charms of the “golden doll” for whom he needs no “perspective-glass” to observe and who clearly recalls to Sydney’s mind the terror of his wasted past and inevitably bleak future as well as the more pleasant fantasy of what might have been (82).

Though Lucie’s power is quite strong, it never really conquerors the Bastille of the mind, nor is there any hint that it can or should. Charles Darnay, Mr. Lorry, Miss Pross, the Old Bailey, and most significantly, Sydney Carton, are generally, excepting the last, only influenced by her power while they view Lucie’s face or can call her beauty to mind. As with Jane De Monfort, the other characters rely on the power of Lucie’s picturesque beauty to uphold them and guide them, to unleash their better selves, but without her they revert back to their solitary states. Her beauty is captivating when one is in her presence; “she looked so beautiful,” Dickens recounts upon a vision of Lucie expressing her sympathy for Sydney, “that her husband could have looked at her like that for hours” (193). There is a danger in allowing one's gaze to be drawn to Lucie in that one will be permanently captured by her, forced to continue staring. Lucie is the siren to Madame Defarge’s gorgon. Perhaps this is partly why Lucie’s popularity among so many people (especially men) as a spectacle annoys Miss Pross, who is quick to take in the gazes directed toward her “Ladybird,” exaggerating, in her frustration (and jealousy?), their numbers:
“I don’t want dozens of people who are not at all worthy of Ladybird, to come here looking after her,” said Miss Pross.

“Do dozens come for that purpose?”

“Hundreds,” said Miss Pross. (86)

Though we are told later that “no Hundreds of people came to see the sights” and that “still the Hundreds of people did not present themselves,” we soon find that “everything turned upon [Lucie], and revolved about her” including her three suitors, and as the footsteps foretell, the Hundreds will present themselves eventually to look on the spectacle of her face once more (90).

However, among the Hundreds is one on whom Lucie’s gaze has absolutely no effect whatsoever. When Lucie’s formidable forehead meets Madame Defarge’s imperturbable eyes, Madame is inevitably the victor. Upon first meeting Madame Defarge, Lucie displays a terrified look to her, and Madame Defarge, we are told, “met the lifted eyebrows and forehead with a cold, impassive stare” (248). The dark to Lucie’s light is, of course, Madame Defarge, whose face, instead of encouraging reflections of her expressions, invites avoidance of her very powerful gaze. Lucie is linked with the mirror that showers light down upon Charles Darnay in the first trial scene; she is the Light of Freedom; her very name means “light” and she is both the source of light which illuminates vision and the object upon which all gaze in order to reflect that light. The antithesis of Lucie, Therese Defarge (Therese meaning, appropriately, “harvest”) is linked with shadows, darkness, and, most appropriately of all, the Gorgon: her gaze kills.

Upon the eve of the Marquis's death, Dickens introduces the Marquis's home as being peopled with stone statues as “if the Gorgon's head had surveyed it” centuries before (108). After the Marquis's murder, it is understood that the Gorgon has “added the one stone face wanting” for which it “had been waiting through about two-hundred years” (118). The Gorgon is
an outcast, cursed, monstrous; her gaze petrifies because it represents something terrifyingly incomprehensible. When we first meet Madame Defarge, she is, like the Fates, knitting the destinies of men and women “with a watchful eye that seldom seemed to look at anything” (30). It is characteristic of Madame Defarge, we soon discover, to hardly speak and yet to make her intentions clear through lifting an eyebrow, coughing, or simply staring a person down. But Madame Defarge also has a curious ability to observe without looking: she leans against the door of the wineshope, knitting, and “[sees] nothing” twice in two paragraphs (44). This seeing without seeing implies that her powerful gaze is often in reserve; she withholds it until it's necessary. It also implies her unusual sensitivity to cues other than visual ones, though we infer that while her gaze is misdirected for the benefit of the object being observed, she still notices every detail. This reveals how aware Madame Defarge is of the gazes of others, and yet, possessing her own powerful gaze, she is not paranoid.

Madame Defarge’s gaze resembles the general gaze of the downtrodden masses, that is, with one half of the pre-revolutionary gaze. Early in the novel the relationship between the aristocracy and the lowest classes is set up as a particularly visual one. The aristocracy is a mockery of itself, presenting a spectacle to the lower classes, and while the gaze of the peasants is always directed in anxiety, fear, and hunger toward that spectacle, the aristocracy very pointedly does not return the gaze. Too busy in gazing at itself, the aristocracy makes it a point to ignore the lower classes it oppresses; it is blinder than Madame Defarge’s seeing without seeing. When the Marquis is forced to look at the rabble after his carriage runs over a child, he “[sees] in them without knowing it, the slow sure filing down of misery-worn face and figure, that was to make the meagerness of Frenchman an British superstition” (104). The future history of his actions is written in their present faces, but his ignorance of this future is a sure as his blindness
to the present poverty. Part of this is, admittedly, not his fault; the peasants have learned to mask all offensive emotions and so his blindness is partly due to their ability to dissemble. “There was nothing revealed by the many eyes that looked at him but watchfulness and eagerness; there was no visible menacing or anger,” relates the narrator, and we are told the Marquis “ran his eyes over them all, as if they had been mere rats come out of their holes” (100-1). To the aristocracy, the peasants are vermin; there can be no sympathetic gaze directed toward them because they are not recognized as human beings. But as Dickens shows, the people are “watchful”; their methods of deception are as cunning as the facades of the aristocracy, and their skills in surveillance far surpass the ignorance of those who ought to be most aware of the gazes constantly directed toward them and their stagings of indolence and excess. This is where the avenging gaze of Madame Defarge makes itself known. We are told, after the Marquis threatens the people, that “the woman who stood knitting looked up steadily, and looked the Marquis in the face” when no other person would (102). Madame Defarge’s gaze, while it resembles that of the generality of mankind, breaks away from the gathered crowd, not only because her gaze leads and directs, but because it pierces, destroys, and petrifies. One may well imagine that the Marquis's death in the following chapters is the direct result of Madame Defarge’s gaze, and indeed, once the Revolution is underway, one look from this Gorgon is enough to condemn the innocent and guilty to death. When the spy, Barsad/Solomon, makes his visit to the wineshop (only eight pages after Madame has finally spoken), the man of the twisted countenance begins to writhe under Madame Defarge’s constant smile, and while she knits on steadily she notices and records every detail of his appearance both mentally and into her knitted register (166). Part of the power of Madame Defarge’s gaze is that it is vengeful; it combines killing intent with a long memory. But this memory is particularly visual. Can we infer that Madame Defarge may have a
photographic memory?

Since so much of the novel is concerned not only with gazes but with types of vision, and since we already have two visionaries, Manette and Carton, who constantly superimpose past, present, and fantastic images onto each other, it is not unreasonable to suspect that part of the power of Madame Defarge’s gaze is also linked to image memory. Though she and her husband have already exchanged a “portrait” of Barsad through words before she meets the man, and though she records everything in her knitted register, yet when her memory is questioned, Defarge defends her by claiming that she can remember the entire register without the aid of the knitting. “If madame my wife,” he tells the doubtful Jacques Two, “undertook to keep the registry in her memory alone, she would not lose a word of it” (159). “Word” may not seem visual, but if we remember that Madame Defarge writes the names and descriptions into knitting patterns, we realize that her memory becomes an encoding machine, able to recreate images from written (visible) symbols, not from oral memory. We see this when Defarge brings Madame to see Lucie and her family so that she may “be able to recognize the faces and know the persons” for their safety (248). Madame Defarge very easily recalls the faces of Dr. Manette and Lucie at the third trial of Charles Darnay, though she is supposed to have been looking only at the jury. “I have observed his face!” she shouts, repeating this two more times, “Let him take care of his face!” and again, “I have observed his daughter [...] yes, I have observed his daughter, more times than one. I have observed her other days. I have observed her in the court. I have observed her in the street by the prison” (317). What could be more terrifying than a personification of vengeance equipped not only with a killing gaze but with a nearly perfect visual recall? Of course there is also the emphasis on visual chicanery. In fact, it may be because of Madame Defarge’s visual recall that Dickens cannot allow her to live long enough to see Sydney put to
death in place of Darnay. Though the little seamstress seems to be the only one to see through the deception, we might speculate on the likelihood of Madame Defarge’s sharp gaze and sharper memory recognizing the trick and spoiling the ending.

However, Dickens chooses to fell the Gorgon before she can expose the family's flight from Paris, and of course the only thing that could withstand that petrifying gaze must be something already as hard as stone. The unlikely character of Miss Pross, so blunt and dense that she deflects every compliment and insult thrown at her, and too blind to see that her own brother is a heartless parasite, is, in her own words, the match for Madame Defarge. In a battle of gazes, Miss Pross and Madame Defarge, separated by a language barrier, trade unknowing insults but perfectly conscious looks. Their first move is to take stock of each other; Madame Defarge’s “dark eyes” follow Miss Pross’s movements while Miss Pross measures Madame Defarge “with her eyes, every inch” (342). “Both were very watchful, and intent to deduce from look and manner, what the unintelligible words meant,” which, as Dickens explains, they do admirably, without ever, even “for a single moment,” releasing each other’s eyes (343). Though Madame Defarge’s gaze generally renders her objects at the very least embarrassed or uneasy, Miss Pross manages to meet the open gaze, saying, “if those eyes of yours were bed-winches...and I was an British fourposter, they shouldn't loose a splinter of me” (343). Miss Pross’s response re-emphasizes the nature of Madame Defarge’s gaze to “tear to pieces” her enemies; her gaze petrifies then wrenches objects to pieces like the tortures mentioned throughout Book One (and like the guillotine itself, separating mind from body and destroying the power to gaze). Ultimately, Miss Pross gains the upper-hand through brute strength, and the struggle ends with her being “blinded with smoke” (345) from Madame Defarge’s pistol. We soon learn that the pistol has not permanently blinded Miss Pross though it has left her deaf, the explosion of
Madame Defarge’s death the last thing she will ever hear. She who was once so blind is now almost totally dependent on sight.

What is more interesting to note, however, is not the most memorable sound Miss Pross can recall, but rather the most memorable vision. Miss Pross “recalled soon afterwards, and to the end of her life remembered, that as she pressed her hand on Sydney’s arm and looked up in his face [...] there was [...] a kind of inspiration in the eyes, [...] which. [...] changed and raised the man” (278). In Miss Pross we have the living record, in images, of Sydney’s moments of transformation from dark to light, proving Pross to be a more wholesome bank of recorded sights than Madame Defarge, however small her comparative collection. This register is important because it is Sydney Carton’s progress to the guillotine that the novel is set out to track through the convergence of every coincidence. The anti-hero of the piece, much like De Monfort, Sydney does not fit his social station or usual company, and his uneasiness breeds self-contempt and dissipation. Seeing himself as a wasted man, “one who died young” as he tells Lucie to think of him (138), he is the “man of good abilities and good emotions, incapable of their directed exercise [...] sensible of the blight on him, and resigning himself to let it eat him away” (82). And yet for all his “lameness” and infirmity, Sydney Carton still proves, unlike De Monfort, to be the story’s most talented gazer. Sydney, in his ability to dwell at once in darkness and light, is the necessary bridge between the vision-producing clarity of Lucie and the deathly penetrating gaze of Madame Defarge. Because of his sophisticated understanding of visual displays and their subsequent emotional meanings and because he shares Madame Defarge’s gifts of memory and visual misdirection, is able to outwit every opponent, even Madame herself.

When we first meet Sydney, he is demonstrating Madame Defarge’s odd talent of seeing without seeing. In the Old Bailey trial, Cruncher spies “a wigged gentleman with his hands in his
pockets, whose whole attention [...] seem to be concentrated on the ceiling” (55) and he maintains this focus throughout the entire trial, yet “this Mr. Carton took in more details of the scene than he appeared to take in” (69). Like Madame Defarge’s, this diverted gaze creates the illusion of an unobservant or uninterested appearance; it is an intentional feint. However, unlike Madame Defarge, whose uninterested appearance is a survival technique (sometimes for the survival of others), Sydney’s diverted gaze seems to be unnecessarily diverted. Sydney is merely a jackal, not a Basilisk. He creates a facade of what he thinks he ought to look like: a dissipated ruin that is a reflection of his inner state, but we know from his every action that this is counter to the “real” Sydney. Unlike the Marquis, behind whose ugly, stone-like mask exists the terror of finding nothing at all, if we seek to see through Sydney’s reflections we see nothing more than a perhaps too sensitive (too delicate) man, lamed by his own excruciating sensibilities and fears of failing what he perceives to be society's demands of him. However, there is one way in which Sydney’s deflected gaze is purposeful other than as a disguise. Sydney’s gaze does not kill, but it often discomforts others, as we see in the scene between him and Lucie when he reveals the depths of his turbulent depression. He is forced to cover his face in the interview in order to spare her the uneasiness his real countenance produces, yet at times his face, when reflecting his nobler ambitions (inspired by Lucie) is capable of encouraging others. Therefore, Sydney’s gaze, though it is not as powerful as either woman's, is still interesting in its variety. Sydney can dissemble and misdirect with his gaze, while still taking in details and gestures, understanding them (he predicts Lucie’s fainting spell in the Old Bailey, and again he knows what she is feeling in their interview without looking at her), and yet he is also able to borrow Lucie’s power at the end of the novel when he is transformed into another projector, like Lucie.

“They said of him [...] that it was the peacefulllest man's face ever beheld there [...]
sublime and prophetic,” the narrator recounts of Sydney’s last moments. This is the face that encourages the Seamstress: “your kind strong face which gives me so much support” (350-1). Sydney, unlike Lucie, is aware of the full effect of his sublimely transfiguring gaze, telling the seamstress to “keep your eyes upon me, dear child” so that the two may remain “Eye to eye” (350). Perhaps Sydney’s face acts as one of the many mirrors of Lucie’s expressive forehead, endlessly reflecting images as memories between himself and her. “When you see your own bright beauty springing up at your feet,” he tells her at the conclusion of their private conference, referring to the mirror of her child's face, “think now and then that there is a man who would give his life, to keep a life you love beside you!” (141). The ending speech which, like so many things connected with Sydney, is not real but only a projection of what might have been said, details a momentous reversal of projection. Sydney’s image will forever be projected in the mirrors of Lucie’s forehead and Charles Charles’s face, in their very hearts. “I see her and her husband, their course done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed, and I know that each was not more honored and held sacred in the other’s soul, than I was in the souls of both” (352). The speech implies the two staring into each other’s faces, and yet not seeing the old projections, but rather projecting Sydney’s image between them, like opposing mirrors.

But Sydney still has his own visions to contend with. Sydney’s final vision, unlike Dr. Manette’s, interposes images in a logical progression so that the only overlay that exists is that of the vision over reality (which of course, is really only Dickens’s fantasy of Sydney’s thoughts). “I see,” he says in rhetorical cadence, still fluttering between the present and future, between darkness and light, “I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name […] I see him […] I see the blot […] I see him […] bringing a boy of my name with a forehead I know” (352). Always Lucie’s forehead is in his thoughts; he cannot escape it, and the vision of it
sustains him, making him into a new projector of her light and expression. As his mind wonders from dark to light, the endless repetitions of images ("I see him...I see the blot....I see him") signify the final working out of Sydney’s problem: his need to see the right version of himself. The first “him” is Sydney as he could have been (Lucie and Charles’s child); the “blot,” Sydney as he seems to himself; the final “him,” Sydney as he will be, reborn in Lucie’s child and grandchild, the later possessing Lucie’s powerful forehead and its power, which Sydney takes as his own in the last moments of his life. Her transcendent and liberating power of emotional projection has allowed Sydney to break free of his own visual imprisonment within the confines of his mind, making his magic lantern visions into realities.

But penetrating the prison of the mind with emotional projections can also be an impetus to sublime passions of terror as much as sublime love. Whether physical, mental, or emotional, solitary imprisonment forces the mind to adjust images of reality into magic lantern shows. The Defarges understand the power of images released into the starving visual imagination to be sources of action. This is why they bring the road mender to see the “sentimental” spectacle of the King and Queen later in the novel. “You would shout and shed tears for anything,” Madame Defarge tells him, “if it made a show...” (161). She goes on to point out that in each case of being shown a particular group of things to destroy, the road mender would undoubtedly select the most spectacular because, in his state of deprived sight, he is attracted to the most ostentatious and the most theatrical sights. The implication is that while the lower classes are fed the sentimental sight of the aristocracy, a show performed partly for their benefit (as the Marquis earlier implies in his conversation with Darnay about the hierarchy of vision itself), the lower class only feeds off of the most spectacular of those sights and the longing for more fantastical images will lead to the taste for Gothic visions of the terror and destruction of those beautiful
The power of the mob’s “hungry” gaze is that it is insatiable for heightened theatricality and spectacle. In the trial at the Old Bailey (in direct contrast to Baillie’s interpretation of a crowd’s reaction to public execution or punishment), the crowd, acting as if it were going to “see the play at the Old Bailey,” stares at Darnay with “the sort of interest [...] that was not the sort that elevated humanity” (56). Dickens goes on to describe that, in the view of the crowd, “the form that was to be so shamefully mangled, was the sight; the immortal creature that was to be so butchered and torn asunder, yielded the sensation” (56). Here we see spectators of the most spectacular of all images. The spectacular process requires at once the transformation of the living, “immortal” person into a mere form, or object of observation, which can then be ripped apart, but which is all the more sensational for being more than an inanimate object or machine.

Dickens’s concern with the dehumanization of the Revolutionary gaze pervades a great deal of the novel, though it is somewhat subverted. Mechanization is one of two methods of controlling and suppressing the emotional expressions and gazes. Mr. Lorry adopts this method in an effort to prevent his and other people's passions from overwhelming him. He seeks to control outward projection and expression by thinking of himself as “a man of business,” a “speaking machine,” and a “mere machine” with “no feelings” (19). However, Lorry cannot notice the “mechanical way” in which Defarge speaks to him later when the wineshop owner tries to hide his conflicted emotions and knowledge of Charles’s impending death sentence and Dr. Manette’s forthcoming confession (248). We also remember the ways in which many characters in the novel are transformed into mechanical objects (a common Dickensian trope), such as Madame Defarge into a guillotine herself. Unlike her husband the gunner, at the storming of the Bastille, Madame Defarge carries an ax and a knife, the latter used to decapitate the
Bastille’s governor. Throughout the scene describing this event, Madame Defarge is “immovable” beside her victim, withstanding the sea of revolutionaries that would have carried him away, until finally he falls and she suddenly becomes “animated” (203).

The horror of the Revolution is not that it engenders an overturning of hierarchy and order, as Burke and others of his ilk feared, but that, through the lack of human sympathy attendant upon passions of terror, it dehumanizes the world. We are told that the sans-culottes, “who scarcely lifted their eyes to look at [a head] a moment ago when it could think and speak,” acknowledge the head when it has become an object for counting (349). In her deliberation over whether or not she should pursue Dr. Manette, Lucie, and the children, Madame Defarge’s companion (one of the Jacques) counsels her to denounce them as well, saying, “we really have not heads enough” and tallying the Doctor specifically as counting “one head” (336). The obsession with turning humans into heads, into objects that can be counted up, rats to be exterminated, or even as mirrors to reflect Lucie’s expressions, hints at the dehumanizing effect of the anxious, prying gaze of the Revolution. Like oppressive suspicion and enforced surveillance, the terror of the guillotine is that it forever deprives the human body of passionate expression and projection: human sympathy and human connection.

Dickens theatricalizes terror in a multitude of ways: by painting it as spectacle, by prescribing detailed blocking of its characters, by special effects and visions, and by directing our gaze through the gazes of the characters themselves. In all of this, Dickens shows the power of the human gaze and face as interceptors and projectors of emotion, and as communicating apparatuses. He also provides a realistic, psychological analysis of the effects of imprisonment on the mind's ability to interpret sights. But though Dickens suggests, mainly through Lucie and her later mirror, Sydney, that expressing and communicating passion is crucial to remaining
human, he does not attempt to create a scientific theory of how this might be done.

Through the variety of gazes, Dickens reinvents the French Revolution and the related discourse of passions as the inevitable and uncontrollable result of the lack of universal sympathy for which blood-shed is the inevitable price. But most significantly, Dickens refrains from offering any methodical solutions to this problem. The slight glimmer of hope he does give us is a thinly veiled allusion to the need for connection and humanization. Lucie’s projective, reflective gaze combats the menacing gaze of the Revolution and the stone-blind gaze of the oppressive aristocracy. Her gaze invites spectators, transforming them into mirrors of her own light. By making every individual person a mirror of herself, she also connects each solitary gaze, much in the manner (not to stretch the visual metaphors too thin) of a spyglass, providing Sydney with telescopic vision, while occasionally causing mirages and tripled images for her father and other visionaries which may or may not lead to heroic action. But in the end, Dickens’s lesson is clear: human connection must be reclaimed by transforming human countenances into mirrors of each other’s light (and we may infer the Biblical allusion: mirrors of a Divine image), rather than magnifying glasses of each other’s faults. This preserves privacy (the point of the grave metaphor) while discouraging the apathetic gaze that Baillie fought against, but without pushing sympathy to the point of cruel curiosity, nor encouraging artificiality as a means to avoiding public exclusion.

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In “The Demons of History,” Robert Alter asserts that “the essence of history...is inevitability” (21). According to Alter, Dickens’s use of inevitability in his interpretation of the “violence in the life of a nation” allows Tale to avoid the conventional happy endings of
Dickens’s other works by focusing, through a wealth of convenient coincidences, upon “a single, inevitable point”: Sydney Carton's substitution for Charles Charles’s death upon the scaffold of the guillotine (21). Every coincidence or connection builds to this point with more single-minded austerity than in any other Dickens novel, allowing readers to understand the story as an allegory of the history of revolution (the history of mankind), with one moral: expiation must be made. There is no hint at a neat or calculated solution to the problem, only a statement of fact and a promise of divine hope (“I am the resurrection and the life”) that does not depend on human actions. If the world lacks sympathy, Dickens does not propose, like Baillie, that either an immediate or permanent solution may be found by revitalizing that human trait, or by trying to understand the cause and effect of passion. He is careful to show that neglect and hunger lead to repressed hatred and that evil breeds more evil; even on the final stage of the scaffold, Sydney admits that he sees “the evil of this time [...] gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out” (352). The main point remains: there is no simple way to avoid the bloodshed demanded by the passions roused by evil; at best we can expect it to eventually wear itself out. Dickens doesn't offer a way to tame passion, nor does he suggest that it can be tamed by any methods of reason or compassion. Charles Darnay incorrectly rationalizes his case to himself before leaving for France, and again to each batch of revolutionaries he meets until the penultimate tribunal, where it is only his father-in-law's popularity that saves him. The man of reason cannot prevail in an unjust, passionate system. Lucie’s appeals to Madame Defarge, and the emotional appeal of her child, do nothing in the face of Madame Defarge’s unrelenting hate. The terrible, hateful passion of revolutionary fervor is unreasonable and unfeeling, just like its predecessor, aristocratic oppression and indolence. But even in this difference between the two authors we find a common ground in their understanding of the passions, in particular hate. Just as Baillie’s only answer for
De Monfort’s hatred is that he and Rezenvelt are “instinctively reverse[d],” so too is Dickens’s explanation of Madame Defarge’s anger:

It was nothing to her, that his wife was to be made a widow and his child an orphan; that was insufficient punishment, because they were her natural enemies and her prey, and as such had no right to live. To appeal to her was made hopeless by her having no sense of pity, even for herself. (338)

That Madame Defarge cannot pity because she has no self-pity echoes Baillie’s assertion that in understanding others we understand ourselves, and underscores that the reversal of that statement is equally true. Without sympathy for oneself, one cannot sympathize with others.

For Dickens, the French Revolution was not such a point of imminent concern as it was for Baillie at the time of writing De Monfort. The theater riots of the early 1800s added to the increasing sense of panic among the audiences of Baillie’s time; therefore it seems logical that her dramaturgical and social goals involved a gentle repression of terrific excitement and the encouragement of sympathetic surveillance as a means of creating a more stable, normalized society. In contrast, and perhaps because of the effects of the Industrial Revolution rather than the French, Dickens seems more anxious at the possible dehumanization of society through the lack of passion (compassion), and seeks to relive a passionate time in order to draw attention to the importance of emotion and communication as a way of remaining humane and socially aware. For Dickens, the question of the French Revolution is not “what can be done to control passion?” but rather, “what can be done to release it?” Dickens’s continual insistence upon the connection between all human beings, regardless of class, argues for a sympathetic gaze to replace not the paranoid gaze of revolution, but the blindness of complacency that is the aftermath of counterrevolutionary surveillance. While Baillie wants us to use others as models
for understanding ourselves, Dickens wants us to accept others as they are, not as objects of
study. In theatricalizing a major act of terror and dealing with the complexities of that passion,
both authors rely on what has become, even in our own time, the standard response to
incomprehensible, uncontrollable fear: surveillance. We feel the need to constantly protect
ourselves through controlling our surroundings, including those who surround us. Terror creates
a pressing need in us to know what is in the hearts and minds of our neighbors, beyond what they
may say about their feelings. We need surer, more visual confirmation. Baillie understands the
strengths of this approach, and Dickens understands its weaknesses. Baillie focuses on
psychology; Dickens on people. Baillie theorizes on the human race's ability to adapt and grow;
Dickens insists on its complete transformation.
REFERENCES


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