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Language by the Book

Preamble: *This introductory chapter discusses and carefully quotes book historians as well as authors who published between 1700 and 1800 in England. The chapter enacts more or less well what literary studies books do best: it brings together all kinds of work in one place, not only providing a filter for massive amounts of data through selection, but also shaping that selection via argument. I don't think data can yet be presented via digital media in the same way except insofar as such data resembles printed scholarly articles and books. This chapter does bookwork: it provides an accounting of passages previously published in other articles and books. Each passage quoted is examined not only for what is said, but for how it is said because the precise manner of speaking has intellectual consequences.*

So, for instance, below you will find a passage written by Ludwig Wittgenstein juxtaposed with a passage by Ernest Gellner that "summarizes" Wittgenstein's point. A summary always pretends to be saying the same thing in a different way, but the difference between Gellner's summary and Wittgenstein's statement is that the summary leaves out and slightly warps the original. The careful attention made possible by printing the two passages next to each other brings to the fore some essential ideas. This form of attention made not only possible but likely by printed books reveals that there is a very significant difference between, on the one hand, what Gellner

says that Wittgenstein says and, on the other, what Wittgenstein actually says. Gellner's complaint against Wittgenstein's philosophy misses a crucial part of that philosophy, but we might not have seen that crucial part without Gellner's important (mis)interpretation. Books of literary criticism allow us the luxury and time to set two passages next to each other and compare.

I have seen no such precision in arguments that are truly digital (as opposed to merely printed texts that have been put up on screens—kindles, iPads, computer screens), and so agree completely with Aden Evens when he says that computational "exactitude ... must not be confused with an infinite precision. On the contrary, the digital is calculably imprecise; it measures its object to a given level of accuracy and no further" (Evens 2005: 69). I'm not sure that this will be true forever, or that it is true about the digital per se*, but, for the moment, it is only in printed book form (whether the printed book is on the kindle or the web making no difference, as far as this claim is concerned) that one can carefully compare two sentences, explicate the difference, and argue for the importance of that difference, not only to the original writer, but to us all.*

When someone writes, prints, and mass-distributes their patterns of thinking, they know that printed proclamations cannot be effaced from their "body of work," and so, they work hard to make sure that their formulations are careful and compelling. They get help from readers and editors of manuscript copy before it is printed, readers of offprints who send a note, sometimes, in response, reviewers among their peers who print their own mass-distributed and careful evaluations of the book. Then in writing something new, I as a literary critic, draw as many of those careful and considered formulations together as I can. Sifting through ideas, comparing sentence to sentence when precise formulation is at stake, that's the way that literary- and cultural-studies book writers argue now, as exemplified by Amanda Anderson's important book that makes and tracks argumentation per se *(discussed below, pp. 40–41). Gellner's formulation is so important because it tries out—*essayer, *the French word for "tries" constituting our word for "essay"—a pointed reformulation of Wittgenstein, and it only through the work of multiple trials of that sort that we can fully understand the sentences from Wittgenstein or other important documents that we are trying collectively to read. The work of literary and cultural studies* is *there-fore interactive, collaborative, albeit slowly, and grounded in precision.*

One conclusion that can be drawn from the difference, articulated by Evens, between computational exactitude and literary precision is as follows: that only precision allows for ambiguity, and ambiguity generates precision, since the imprecise exactitude of coding and programming languages accompanies their intolerance of ambiguous statements. And now, to my topic and my chapter, Language by the Book. *I begin with an epigraph:*

> The other project [at the School of Languages of the Grand Academy of Lagado] was a scheme for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever, and this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity. For it is plain, that every word we speak is, in some degree, a diminution of our lungs by corrosion, and, consequently, contributes to the shortening of our lives. An expedient was therefore offered, "that, since words are only names for things, it would be more convenient for all men to carry about them such things as were necessary to express a particular business they are to discourse on." And this invention would certainly have taken place, to the great ease, as well as health of the subject, if the women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate, had not threatened to raise a rebellion, unless they might be allowed the liberty to speak with their tongues, after the manner of their forefathers; such constant irreconcilable enemies to science are the common people. (Swift 1726)[1]

In *Gulliver's Travels* published in 1726, Jonathan Swift here rather famously mocks the writing ideal promoted by the Royal Society as articulated by Thomas Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667): "to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, [of language] when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words" (Sprat 1667: 113).[2] But why, in the passage written by Swift, do "women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate" feature as defenders of the language "of their forefathers," a.k.a. common speech? In Swift's fantasy, women defend what will come to be called the "mother tongue" or non-book language (Cavell 1981: 16).

Swift writes during coterie print culture, a moment when print runs were still very small, publishing still dominated by subscription

and patronage, and—here is the most important part of all—when manuscript circulation was still a viable publishing alternative to print (Ezell 1999, 2009; Karian 2010). In fact, the medium of handwritten manuscript was often preferred for reasons of prestige,[3] just as in our moment print publication is often preferred to digital publishing. We live in an era of mass-print publication that is ceding to something else. Each scholar who publishes a book imagines that it reaches a wide, at least partially anonymous audience because, as I discuss fully in Chapter 3, living with mass-printed books structures the writers' imaginary beliefs about what he or she is doing when publishing in printed codex format. However, the "mass-printed" book that I currently hold in my hand, Ann Moss's *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structure of Renaissance Thought* (1996) probably, like most academic monographs these days, had a print run of 200 (McGann 2006b, qtd. in Kirsch 2014), approximately one third the size of the print run of Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad* printed by William Bowyer for Bernard Lintot (Foxon 1991: 53), although it was printed again in 2002. My copy of Moss (as we say when speaking of printed books) is clearly a copy produced via print on demand: I can tell by the thickness of the letters, their warping in places, the fact that the pages look more like photocopies or laser printing than traditional imprints. And indeed, the copyright page states the case explicitly: "This book has been printed digitally and produced in a standard specification in order to ensure its continuing availability." We live in an age in which expectations structuring book-rhetoric are based upon the mass-print run, but, given that almost all scholarly articles are now available in pdf form online, an age in which digital publishing is the unstated norm.

Just as Swift had one foot in manuscript and one in print culture, we too straddle two publication media, print and screen. It is because of that similarity, because coterie print culture mingled print and manuscript forms just as we mingle printed and digital material forms, that we can now really see, I believe for the first time, precisely what Swift was saying about the print medium.

Before now, we were ourselves too embroiled in mass printing to fully understand. It takes the entirety of this introductory chapter to explicate the epigraph from *Gulliver's Travels*; taken together with other recent analyses of the passage, the full import of this epigraph is visible now perhaps for the first time.[4]

In this book, I examine the book, the printed codex as it has been conceived after mass-printing became possible and automated binding techniques were developed in the early nineteenth century, looking at the book as "a simulation machine," in the words of Jerome McGann (2006a: 60): the book is a machine for simulating or modeling communication. Thinking about the book as a machine allows, metaphorically, for breaking it open to examine its inner workings, though of course literally, only the spine of a book can be broken. I look primarily at scholarly communication, which, as it currently accounts for a little under 1% (0.68%) of net book sales per year, so it seems grandiose to call my subject "The" book. However, "the" book that most concerns me in the following chapters, the book of literary and cultural criticism, is the book about books. Pre-bound, the book of a literary critic is often a series of published articles or talks: here in this chapter, I'm interested primarily in the earliest printed articles circulating in the earliest journals which were written primarily in the field of natural philosophy or early modern science. They are quickly and in multiple configurations bound into books. The Society's journal, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, is the longest-running journal in Western literature, published as it was from March 1665 up to the present day, and, because they began to be bound annually shortly after they began being published in the 1660s, the *Transactions* constitutes the most consistently published printed codex as well.[5] Additionally, collections of important essays from the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* are printed from the 1690s onward. But if the physical articles were pre-bound and then bound, the discourses in them are also "pre-bound," not yet bound to the common sense that was instilled by living habitually with mass-printed and mechanically bound books. Many Royal Society authors therefore

state explicitly their hopes for what their own book-language will do, hopes that we later tacitly, unconsciously assume.

Breaking the Book gathers together and filters—by forging them into an argument—a number of the books and essays published in the last two centuries about book history, asking through them, "how does the book machine work?" It would be too easy to slip into a critique of the printed book medium that conceives it as an omnipotent, inexorably thought-determining machine, but it is precisely such paranoid critiques, I'll argue below, which the book medium most fosters and which it takes a conscious effort to resist. So I want to break open the book machine to look inside, allowing us to be fascinated without being overwhelmed by its workings. It's not a machine that I personally can live without, and so I won't be breaking up with it, nor doing any machine breaking for the sake of breaking away, but only for the sake of tweaking slightly, trouble-shooting my own engagement with books, and tracking the extent to which the simulation-machine's conditions in codex form carry over to scholarly communication's form on the computer, the iPad, the smart phone.

A lot is at stake. The field of digital humanities is one among numerous interdisciplinary movements that are currently restructuring the academy, and all of them could perhaps be demonstrably connected to new media. In this book at least, I will argue that the discipline of English literature qua literary criticism and cultural studies is book-based and book-sustained, its dismantling proceeding apace with the work we are now doing to digitize the archive. And so it seems to me important to write a book about what portions of our discipline we should try to retain in the face of cuts and media transformations—how to shape the digital instantiations of our cultural heritage by keeping, if we can, the best parts of book culture and letting go of the worst. This shaping won't just happen on its own: digital media, like the book, makes some things easy that are very good for the new academy, and some things that are not; new media could make some things that we care about disappear if we don't clamor to keep them—clamoring

about what matters, like Swift's "women and the vulgar," to keep academic discourse healthy.

But did Swift succeed? That is, were he and Pope and other writers who straddled manuscript and print culture able to keep the things they cared about alive in print culture? What were they afraid would be lost? *Breaking the Book* attempts to revitalize the complaints of those entering print culture to see where we succeeded and where we failed in making sure that we ran the book-machine rather than it running us: the mass-printed book that came into being around 1800 shifts, in fact, from being a machine operating on its own to being a tool wielded by human hands only to the extent that we work with it by being consciously aware of the book's limitations.

So then, back to Swift. First: "things." Swift is making fun of the article-publishing early scientists of the Royal Society, in general, and, in particular, of Sprat's *History of the Royal Society*, first published in 1667. Swift takes literally Sprat's infamous mandate to deliver things in words by having his Lagado academicians hold up "things" instead of using the "eloquence" that has made Sprat and his society so "disgusted" and "angry." But for me, at least, the Lagado Professor's idea problematizes the Royal Academy's: what could Sprat possibly mean when he says that the writers for this new community of scientists have decided to "deliver things in an equal number of words"? Does he mean that writers will attempt to string together nouns that name things, using as little of the other parts of speech as possible? If so, how would doing so protect "the whole spirit and vigour" of experimental design? (Sprat 1667: 111–12).

Over half a century ago, A. C. Howells traced the use of the Latin phrase "res et verba" in philosophical discourse of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, noting that "res" changes from suggesting "matter," as in subject-matter, to indicating "things." The phrase occurs in an admonition culled from Cicero and Quintilian to use verba—words—that are intimately bound up in a subject: "More matter with less art," Gertrude says to Polonius in *Hamlet*,

urging him to make his point instead of pedantically pontificating upon majesty, duty, time, and madness by way of introducing what he has to say about her son (Shakespeare 1604–5: 230). Shakespeare too is making fun of the style of philosophers in the schools that is universally condemned by Bacon, Hobbes, and Sprat.[6] Gertrude's "more *res* less *verba*" comes gradually to be interpreted to mean using the "plain style" rather than to focus on saying something meaningful. And while it is easy to understand the Royal Society's desire to bring metaphysicians back down to earth, it is less easy to understand the relationship between words and things in the writings of this anti-academic and anti-humanist scientific society, as Sprat defines it.

In his *History of the Book*, Adrian Johns devotes one full chapter to describing how, in a "culture of usurpation" and piracy, the Royal Society worked to create a trustworthy, reliable "civil domain of print."[7] *Philosophical Transactions* reported experiments and discoveries which could be seen as the manipulation and finding of things—hence the obvious importance of these authors to words representing things. But other kinds of words besides noun-names of things would have to be involved in the explanations, and so Sprat's enmity against "Tropes and Figures" surely exceeds the need for concrete descriptions in experimental reportage. The passion of his exclamations is legendary: "Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledg?" (1667: 112). Sprat is furious, he says, with his "Predecessors" in the field of natural philosophy for showing off their "Wit" at the expense of describing their own "bare" observations and experiments; by that means they attempted to be "Tyrants over our Reasons" rather than our "Benefactors" (1667: 116).

This statement accords of course with the history-of-ideas notion that the emergence of modern science required rejecting past authorities. The academic urban legend, if there can be such a thing, is that, since Aristotle said that the back legs of skunks were shorter than the front, no one bothered looking until the great

instauration of the new empirical method in the seventeenth century when people began observing for themselves. But I want to look now at the how the *sine qua non* of the Enlightenment— "think for yourself"—in all its glorious performative hypocrisy ("I command you to think for yourself") is fostered by the printed book medium.

Before relying upon past authorities was depreciated by the Enlightenment, there was common-placing, and, at the very outset of printing's history, printed books attempted to teach this chirographic activity. Ann Moss writes about early modern printed commonplace-books which instructed their elite readers in moral virtues, certainly, as well as other topics, but were also designed to teach literate students how to collect quotations from their own reading, how to organize passages for future use under various headings as they copied them in their own manuscript commonplace-books. The resulting handwritten "Commonplace-books were the principal support system of a humanist pedagogy" (Moss 1996: v)—its infrastructure, we would say now. ("Humanities" at this moment refers to the study of Latin and Greek; it is opposed to theological subjects.) These commonplace-books were not simply lists of quotations but were "digested," organized according to topics (topos = "place") that comprised various conceptual systems, by authors such as Erasmus in *De Copia*. Their mode of collecting quotations of authorities or respected authors that they passed onto students was explained using the image of a bee culling honey from flowers that made its way into Swift's *Battle of the Books*: the bee, Erasmus says, "lies busily round to every flower" gathering "material" that then passes through its "digestive organs," turning into honey "in which it is impossible to recognize the taste of any flower or shrub from which the bee has sucked."[8]

Erasmus's printed commonplace-book, *De Copia*, gathers together copious amounts of "copy" (writing) for the sake of students who wish to produce elegant, organized thinking. The goal is not simply to remember, but to produce, and the capacity to write in this worldview requires knowing how words and ideas co-occur.

Before the advent of modern science, linguistic prowess is crucial not only for arguing and persuading (dialectic and rhetoric), but in itself as a form of knowing: "generally the best words are inseparable," Quintilian says (in translation), "from their things [or subjects—*res*—which] are discovered by [the] light" shed by the words—*verba*. In contrast, because investigating the workings of words seemed to Enlightenment thinking only subservience to previous authorities, exploring their meanings was demoted as a mode of knowing. But like Quintilian, Erasmus's *De Copia* precedes Enlightenment. Organizing words into subjects, Erasmus says, is necessary "in order to ensure that an undigested mass of material does not engender confusion."[9] This philosophy of the ancients reiterated by Erasmus clearly corresponds to Alexander Pope's famous adage from an *Essay on Criticism* (1711): "But true *Expression*, like th' unchanging *Sun*, / *Clears*, and *improves* whate'er it shines upon …" (Pope 1711). For manuscript writers of commonplaces, words are a means to truth, a means for clearing off the fog of incomprehension, whereas for the new scientists, words themselves do not forge truth but are only translucent pointers to things.

The value most touted by Sprat in his *History of the Royal Society* is "undigested," "naked" writing. Royal Society members should avoid imbibing all intellectual systems that pre-digest or organize according to preconceived hierarchies of topics: he is not only rejecting past authorities, the Humanities or adages by classical authors, he is rejecting the early modern theory that had developed from Quintilian, Seneca, and Cicero, through Erasmus, Agricola, Melanchthon, and Vives, as a method for organizing one's thinking. Sprat's ideas participate in the "seventeenth-century decline" of the commonplace-book from a tool for the production of "intellectual activity" into a mere "notebook of references" to be remembered and cited. After Bacon, Port-Royal grammarians, Bishop Lamy, and John Locke, whose works span early to late seventeenth century, "the commonplace-book does keep a role in production, though that role is for information only"—that is, it gives us matter for the index, footnotes, and bibliography of a

printed codex (Moss 1996: 275, 278). Experimenters, Sprat says, do "read over books and digest into Manuscript volumes all that has been hitherto try'd. This is the only help that an Experimenter can receive from Books" (Sprat 1667: 252).

Erasmus insists that labeling sections of notebooks "with commonplaces, that is to say with short phrases" delineating topics—not simply alphabetically, as Locke advises—allows you to better remember "an example or strange occurrence or a pithy remark or a witty saying or any other clever form of words or a proverb or a metaphor or a similitude" and thereby allows you to "make use of the riches you have acquired by reading."[10] By the seventeenth century, this kind of study was risible. Shakespeare shows us its failure in action at the very moment when Hamlet's mother asks Polonius for more matter with less art:

> My liege and madam, to expostulate
> What majesty should be, what duty is,
> Why day is day, night is night, and time is time,
> Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time;
> Therefore brevity is the soul of wit
> And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes.
> I will be brief: your noble son is mad.
> Mad call I it, for to define true madness,
> What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
> But let that go.
> … .
> Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.
> That he's mad, 'tis true, 'tis true 'tis pity,
> And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure!
> But farewell it, for I will use no art.
> Mad let us grant him then, and now remains
> That we find out the cause of this effect—
> Or rather say the cause of this defect,
> For this effect defective comes by cause.
> Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. Perpend,
> I have a daughter … . (2.2.86)

Polonius is running through the heads in his commonplace book: majesty, duty, time, wit, madness, cause, effect, defect, and he's not really remembering anything written under those heads, only the heads themselves, which he has embellished with the "artful" device of rhetorical figures, particularly chiasmus and anaphora. That commonplace-books were the occasion of abuses is registered in René Descartes's comment on them that they provide people with the opportunity "to speak, without judgment, about things of which they are ignorant rather than to learn them."[11]

Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* codifies this distaste ("disgust") with the quotations from past authorities gathered in commonplace-books as a way of distinguishing the new technologies that constitute the Royal Society's infrastructure: the post, whereby intelligence can be received from all over the world, and printing which publishes all the correspondents' experiments to the world.[12] The members of the Royal Society will receive letters from people of all sorts from all over the world about experiments and observations—"histories," Sprat calls them—will try out the experiments, and will then publish them in print. Bacon had earlier accepted the possibility of collecting adages about science, but without the "vulgar and pedantic" commonplace-heads, one of many systems constituting Idols of the Tribe, and also read differently: not as unassailable truths but as testable hypotheses (Moss 1996: 269–71). In Sprat, too, far from showing off the "wit" of the author, far from "tyran[nizing] over reason" with their own systems, Royal Society print publications will invite readers to test and observe for themselves: "What depth of Nature, could by this time have been hid from our view?" (i.e., none), "if, instead of raising so many Speculative Opinions, [the Ancients] had only minded the laying of a solid ground-work, for a vast Pile of Experiments, to be continually augmenting through all Ages." The Antients didn't reveal their experiments ("Experiences") only their "systems" (Sprat 1667: 116–18).

Here, in discussing the Royal Society's methods as opposed to those of the "Schoolmen" is where Sprat's treatise sounds most like the proponents of digital humanities discussing their difference

from traditional humanists—in our case, not professors of classics only but also the modern languages and literatures, history, philosophy, and other disciplines categorized as "liberal arts."[13] So, at a recent symposium on data modeling held at Brown University, Julia Flanders asked "whether data modeling in the Humanities is to generate a conversation or to allow an individual to demonstrate his or her insight"[14]—to demonstrate his or her "Wit," Sprat would say, and Bacon as well. And, as for us in the Digital Humanities now, the whole gambit of the Royal Society and its infrastructure of correspondence and printing is designed to escape disciplinarity and cultivate an educated public. It is professors in the schools whose methods must be overcome. The Royal Society rejects "that which is call'd Pedantry in Scholars: which is nothing else but an obstinate addiction, to the forms of some private life, and not regarding general things enough." The attack on the school men is also an attack on disciplinarity *per se* insofar as the Royal Society overturns past beliefs about knowledge acquisition:

> Men did generally think, that no man was fit to meddle in matters of this consequence, but he that had bred himself up in a long course of Discipline for that purpose; that had the habit, the gesture, the look of a Philosopher. Whereas experience on the contrary tells us, that greater things are produc'd, by the free way, than the formal.

In lieu of the ancients' "abstruse doctrines" that "could be known but only to those, who would throw away their whole Lives upon it," the Royal Society accepts members from all the literate classes ("Gentlemen," "Physicians," "Mechanicks," "tradesmen," "Merchants") and all nations of the world to write "Histories" "by the plainest Method, and from the plainest Information" (Sprat 1667: 66–7, 73, 118–19, 257). Such a celebration of public knowledge resembles the opening statement in *The Future of Learning Institutions in a Digital Age* by Cathy N. Davidson and David Theo Goldberg, in which they say that the Internet has "the

capacity to allow for a worldwide community and its endlessly myriad subsets [a.k.a. factions] to learn from one another in a way not previously available" (2009: 2). Davidson explicitly discusses interdisciplinary teaching experiences enabled by digital media: her "Project Classroom Makeover" sounds just like Sprat's desire to turn the world into a school for science (2011).

I myself have had such heady, interdisciplinary teaching experiences as the one described by Davidson in the *Chronicle*: I write this not to dismiss it but to point out that it is not something that has, will, or can happen *because* of the Internet, that the hope for the widest circulation of ideas, for global and interdisciplinary conversation, animated the witnesses of the advent of print circulation as well. Print did not by itself turn the world into a school, for reasons that can be tracked. Although Cathy Davidson was the Vice President for Interdisciplinary Studies at Duke for many years, her original scholarship is in American revolutionary print culture: she already knows the utopian claims that were staked on mass-circulation of printed matter, but not quite realized. My argument is therefore not directed at her but at historically unaware interpretations of her more recent digital advocacy. We have another opportunity at global enlightenment, a second one, and so let's try to do it right this time. Knowing what went wrong the first time might help.

And for that very reason, back to Sprat. What Sprat means when he speaks of Histories produced by Royal Society members, like his own *History of the Royal Society*, is "accounts" or "observations," not historical research in the way that we understand it. (In *Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Stern calls John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* a "History" "of what passes in a man's own mind."[15]) "Scholemen," Sprat says, do not converse with the world; they are "private Writers," whereas the Royal Society offers "Public Registers" of everything they do:

> By their fair, and equal, and submissive way of Registering nothing, but Histories, and Relations; they have left room for others, that shall succeed, to change, to augment, to approve, to contradict them,

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at their discretion. By this, they have given posterity a far greater power of judging them; than ever they took over those, that went before them. By this, they have made a firm confederacy, between their own present labours, and the Industry of Future Ages …

After testing the experiments logged in their manuscript registers, revising them, and sometimes even combining some of them as they rewrote,[16] the Society then published articles relaying these experiments in the *Philosophical Transactions* and thereby making their registers "public." The Royal Society imagines interactivity— though, in actuality, a quite controlled one—of the slow sort that does in fact happen in print through peer review, editorial review, and books reviews. The Royal Society's vision of interactivity through time is utopian. Sprat imagines building through time a new tower of Babel—that is, discerning "nearer into heaven" than ever before, which will not be punished "as it was in the Old World" because accompanied this time by the intent to admire rather than usurp God. Sprat imagines and asserts that "the Royal Society will be Immortal" (Sprat 1667: 19–20, 115, 116, 110–11, 79).

Sprat says in his *History* that recounting "Experiments" means keeping "closer to material things." But we should notice in the preceding that circulating repeatable experiments in print also means having the ability to communicate with the future—immortality in the sense of always being understood: "the Royal Society has put [philosophy] in a condition of standing out, against the Invasions of Time." It is, Sprat explicitly maintains, the Royal Society's usefulness to people that will keep it alive despite the death of a few intellectuals or the burning of "a Library." Print circulation escapes the singleness of that burning library in Alexandria by populating many libraries, but the effects of such an extrusion into the world are moribund if no one can understand what the books are saying, if one has to become a philologist to dope out the culturally relative meaning of their words. Sprat describes how hard "philologists" have had to work to make the meaning of the Ancients understandable that, "by the distance of times, and change of customs, were grown obscure" (Sprat 1667: 118–19, 23–4). If one can

write in words that point to things, such work will be unnecessary, and one will not have to depend upon one's own work being explicated by the philologists of the future in order to communicate with future ages. Sprat's belief that the publications of the Royal Society will participate in scientific conversations of the future depends upon imagining that there is a language of things free of cultural connotations, that there is out there a world made up of timeless things onto which words can be permanently pinned.

Bacon, lauded by Sprat as the most brilliant mind, despite his detestation for admiration of past authorities, says in the *Advancement of Learning*: "Here then is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter … for words are but the images of matter; and … to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture."[17] Though according to the O.E.D., images could refer both to representations made available both to sound and sight, Bacon is not saying that written or printed words are graphic images of the auditory, of spoken language. He's claiming that words are pictures of matter: if it were not so familiar to us after a long history of philosophical discourse that sees sentences as truth propositions, the utter strangeness of such a claim would be apparent.

The only way one can imagine words as images of matter, I would like to suggest, is in some kind of scenario such as the one recently described by Katie Trumpener in her attack on Franco Moretti for an argument made in *Critical Inquiry* deploying the methodology of "distant reading," a.k.a. the quantitative analysis of literary texts. Trumpener attributes her ability to read the title pages of German novels in bookstores to a scene of instruction that occurred before she moved to Germany with her family as a young girl:

> To prepare us linguistically for an impending sabbatical year in Germany, my American mother had affixed German labels to everyday objects around the house. For one summer, at least, to look into our dining room was like looking into a three-dimensional children's picture dictionary; palpably real objects all sported slips of paper bearing their proper names and thus existed at an odd remove from their usual selves.[18]

This exercise did not actually prepare her children to *speak* German but rather to *read* it. Only if they had been instructed to say each word aloud upon encountering the slip of paper, or if one could push a button and hear the word spoken while looking at the object, would one learn to speak from this scene. If those words on those slips of paper had been *printed*, one would here have what Bacon and Sprat must mean in thinking about words as images of things: each individual printed graphic emblem—a word taken as an ideo-gram—pictures a thing to which it could be pinned. For words to function like bricks in the new tower of Babel being built through global print circulation, words had to function as things that one could pick up and throw, living free and independently of local, his-torical cultural descriptions and practices, readable without any help from the historical expert, the philologist. Though referential the-ories of language were certainly not invented along with print, nor by print *forced* upon us intellectually, print culture cherishes them. Nominalism as found in Locke, theories that simple ideas refer to things, dominated intellectual life through the age of print. Why? If our words refer to concrete things in the world, future ages will always understand us. Word-things offer us immortality by the book.

Swift's professor at Lagado's Academy of Languages is also a "Projector," entrepreneurial, rather in the mode of some of the new Digital Humanists like myself. However, he's an absolute idiot: someone has said to him, "Ahh, don't waste your breath!" meaning "shut up!," and he stupidly took their statement as a problem to overcome, that is, how to speak without wasting your breath.[19] He is an idiot savant, unable to understand the "pure and neat lan-guage" loved by Ben Jonson, that is at once "plaine and customary" (Jonson 1620–35?: 39). As we have seen above, one can purchase immortality via printed books only at the cost of rejecting in them the use of language that is either disciplinary or customary. In Swift's passage, it is not just "women, in conjunction with the vulgar" who want to speak "after the manner of their forefathers": it is "women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate"—i.e., those who cannot read.

It seems as if Sprat wants to embrace ordinary language in reject-ing disciplinarity:

> [Leaders of the Royal Society] have exacted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can: and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that, of Wits, or Scholars. (Sprat 1667: 112)

But from subsequent history, we know that this search for clarity in the "plain style" led to the invention of nosologies and highly spec-ified disciplinary vocabularies in the sciences.[20] Swift's parody proved right: even though the disciplinary discourse of the scholas-tics was rejected, the gulf only widened between this new scientific thing-language and "customary" discourse.[21]

For John Locke, at least, in his 1700 edition of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, clarifying language by reducing it to simple ideas (things susceptible of being sensed; Land 1974: 43) is a way for the discipline of natural philosophy to improve upon ordinary lan-guage, about which he complains in his "Epistle to the Reader":

> [F]ive or six Friends meeting at my Chamber, and discoursing on a Subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand, by the Difficulties that rose on every side. After we had a while puz-zled our selves, without coming any nearer a Resolution of those Doubts which perplexed us, it came into my Thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set our selves upon Enquiries of that Nature, it was necessary to examine our own Abilities, and see, what Objects our Understandings were, or were not fitted to deal with.[22]

The "remote Subject" is most probably politics, and if so it would be hugely important to Locke, in imagining some kind of democratic political system, that people be able to agree—it probably seems more important to him than it is actually necessary, which we can

say in hindsight, from the perspective of a working democracy: by "working," I mean one that hasn't fallen into continuous revolution as those who opposed democratic forms of government in the eighteenth century sometimes imagined might happen.

For Locke, the meanings of words that refer to combinations of simple ideas are not learned via sensation, and "*Definitions*, or the teaching of the signification of one word by several others, … *may make us understand the Names* of Things, which never came within the reach of our Senses …" That is, while most words are learned from interactions between the mind and the world, there are some words that are learned only through social interaction (Locke 1700: III.iv.11–III.iv.12).

The words naming "Collections of Ideas"—what Locke calls "mixed modes"—are learned only from others. As an association of ideas not found to be connected by nature in the material world, the socially defined word cannot be clarified via the senses: these "Names … that stand for Collections of *Ideas*, which the Mind makes at pleasure, must needs be of doubtful signification." A child learns the meaning of moral terminology only from hearing other people use the words rather than from building up their meanings by associating them with things in the world. This kind of word is only socially significant: it is associated with nothing but another's use of it and consequently has a very "obscure and confused signification" (Locke 1700: III.ix.7–9).

In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* printed in 1757, Edmund Burke explains how the meaning of words can be obscure, though for Burke such obscurity is valuable insofar as it is emotionally affecting—sublime. For Burke as for Locke, some words are learned from hearing other people use them before the words have been associated with any determinate idea. Burke's "compound abstracts," like Locke's "mixed modes," are "unoperative" words; that is, they do not refer to things. "I am convinced," Burke asserts, "that whatever power [compounded, abstract words] may have on the passions, they do not derive it from any representation raised in the mind of things for

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which they stand." People's "passions are affected by words from whence they have no ideas."[23]

Burke describes in more detail that time when words do not apply to any set of sensations that may be experienced, when (unfortunately, Locke would say) they do not stand for any idea:

> Mr Locke has somewhere observed with his usual sagacity, that most general words, those belonging to virtue and vice, good and evil, especially, are taught before the particular modes of action to which they belong are presented to the mind; and with them, the love of the one, and the abhorrence of the other; for the minds of children are so ductile, that a nurse, or any person about a child, by seeming pleased or displeased with any thing, or even any word, may give the disposition of the child a similar turn.

Words not associated with any idea of their referents will be associated with the passions of the person who first used them in speaking to the child. However, there is a big difference between Burke's notion of "compound abstracts" and Locke's "mixed modes." In Burke's account, Locke's child never grows up: that is, for Burke the child never does later acquire an idea which corresponds to "honour, justice, liberty," and similarly abstract words:

> If words have all their possible extent of power, three effects arise in the mind of the hearer. The first is, the *sound*; the second, the *picture*, or representation of the thing signified by the sound; the third is, the *affection* of the soul produced by one or by both of the foregoing. *Compounded abstract* words … (honour, justice, liberty, and the like,) produce the first and the last of these effects, but not the second.

Some words only ever produce in the mind a passionate effect rather than an idea reducible to sensations (Burke 1757: 165–6).

Burke sees a word as giving rise in the mind to memories of passions with which the word has been associated when used by other people throughout the individual's lifetime—and perhaps beyond, since people communicate passion to their children that had been

communicated to them by their elders, and so on. For Burke, the memory of how someone, or indeed a whole culture, uses a word is not an idea. Obscure words refer to the passions of others directly without the intermediary of any ideas because the sound of the word has been associated directly with the passion with which it was uttered by other people. The word refers not to one clear idea of its meaning, but instead is associated with many competing memories of the social interchanges in which it is habitually used and has been through time.

When Burke writes his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in November of 1789, almost a half-century later, he again values these customary forms—so much so that he himself uses them in writing for print distribution his *Reflections* instead of the "polished" literary language of his day (Smith 1984: 36–9). Burke believes in what J. G. A. Pocock has called "the common-law mind," that traditions are like the thoughts of a huge, eternal, collective mind. When he speaks of the constitution of England, his foes mocking him by asking him to produce such a document, he is really talking about the constitution of an organism, his country as a living culture. For Burke, traditional practices obey only the sanest laws because they have changed so gradually in being passed from one person to another that individual quirks drop out, leaving only what is best for society and applicable to most people.

Writing in 1612, Sir John Davies, Attorney-General for Ireland, presented the idea that common law was better than written law because it has been put into effect by being passed down through generations rather than by being legislated by powerful individuals:

> And this *Customary Law* is the most perfect and most excellent, and without comparison the best, to make and preserve a Commonwealth. For the *written Laws* which are made either by the Edicts of Princes, or by Councils of Estates, are imposed upon the Subject before any Triall or Probation made, whether the same be fit and agreeable to the nature and disposition of the people, or whether the same be fit and agreeable to the nature and disposition of the people … But *Custome* doth never become a Law to bind the

people, untill it hath been tried and approved time out of mind, during all which time there did thereby arise no inconvenience: for if it had been found inconvenient at any time, it had been used no longer, but had been interrupted, and consequently it had lost the virtue and force of a Law.[24]

In the common-law view, law decreed by a single person does not reflect the interests of the people "time out of mind." However, in the process of passing customary law through time, the people continually get the opportunity to ratify or reject it: they keep what works; what doesn't drops out.

Burke would say the same thing about words. First, he values the language people learn from their "nurses," he says, in his *Philosophical Enquiry*, since it comes to them "warmed" with "passions," "heated originally by the breath of others" (Burke 1757: 165–6). That passion is precisely what enables people to feel love for their country when they hear the word "patriotism." As customary language passes through time, it accrues these associated passions, some conflicting, many the same, but the memory of a-social, self-interested, or psychically diseased passions will be faint in comparison with the memories of the feeling that most people share.

While for Burke custom is healthy, for Locke ordinary language is inimical not only to rationality, but also to sanity. A covert syllogism governs Locke's thinking that is worth teasing out, most visible in the chapter called "The Association of Ideas," added to the 1700 edition of his *Essay.* Locke is "clearing the ground" in the first place because, while "Reason" traces "a natural Correspondence and Connexion" among ideas, "there is another Connexion of *Ideas* wholly owing to Chance or Custom." "This sort of Madness" he says, is often caused by "Education … and Prejudice is a good general name for it." Locke insists that he is not being extravagant in calling it "Madness": "I shall be pardon'd for calling it by so harsh a name as *Madness*, when it is considered, that opposition to Reason deserves that name." For Locke, customary culture makes us mad.

And the cure is philosophical correction of customary mis-associations, especially as they occur in language:

> [C]omplex Ideas … have their union and combination only from the Understanding which unites them under one Name: but … Men … have scarce any standing Rule to regulate … their Notions by, in such arbitrary ideas. 'Tis true, *common Use* … may be supposed here to afford some aid, to settle the signification of Language; and it cannot be denied, but that in some measure it does. Common use *regulates the meaning of Words* pretty well for common Conversation; but no body having an Authority to establish the precise signification of Words, nor determine to what Ideas any one shall annex them, common Use is not sufficient to adjust them to philosophical Discourses … . (Locke 1700: II.xxxiii.1–5; III.ix.7–8)

Common usage of words, like prejudices and other customary associations, is madness. Books provide a place where one can in fact assume the "Authority to establish the precise signification of Words" that Locke longs for here by carefully defining the meaning of words.

To Locke and subsequent Enlightenment thinkers, the *only* place where a clarifying, defining, rational, and sane Authority can be established is books, for two reasons. First, authority requires reach. Whereas writing in a notebook or manuscript that circulates among a select few can show others one's thinking, only the wider circulation of print could impose Authority over usage—that is, upon thinking in general. Second, only in books can one take the time to justify definitions, allow people to contemplate and judge those justifications, and finally, give them the opportunity to "consent" to them. "Consent" and usage are the only two modes of meaning words, for Locke:

> Men learn Names, and use them in Talk with others, only that they may be understood: which is then only done, when *by use or Consent*, the sound I make … excites in another Man's Mind … the Idea … in mine … . (Locke 1700: III.iii.3, my emphasis)

"Use" is one way of defining words, but it doesn't work very well; "consent" is the other. Just as in Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* the King's subjects consent to be governed by him, so "philosophers" consent to be governed by the way a word is defined— philosophically, by edict, by book. The hope of scientific redefinitions of ordinary language is that culturally-induced madness will be cured, that we (all human beings who speak the languages of our cultures) will stop thinking in the deluded ways prescribed to us by customary language. Access to reality is at stake.

Robin Valenza quotes George Berkeley in his 1710 *Principles of Human Knowledge* bemoaning the fact that people continue to use their "traditional idioms": "They who … are convinced of the truth of the Copernican system," Berkeley complains, "do nevertheless say 'the sun rises', 'the sun sets', … and if they affected a contrary style in common talk it would without a doubt appear very ridiculous." Instead of using those ordinary phrases— "sunrise" or "sunset"—we should say, the earth just performed its diurnal rotation toward / away from the sun. But no. We still say, "I saw the sunrise this morning." Valenza then sums up an opposition to ordinary language that can be seen as prevalent, continuously from 1710 to 2010, with the dominance of modern disciplines grounded in the medium of the printed book:

> We still use the common phrase ["sunrise"], even when it no longer represents either expert knowledge or the *sensus communis* [i.e., we all know that the earth revolves around the sun]. More often than we acknowledge, there is a radical disconnect between the language we use in common conversation and what either experts or lay persons believe about the workaday world. If the very function of [modern] academic research regardless of discipline is, as Jonathan Culler has on occasion suggested, to dispute or at least to question commonly held views, then the tight alliance between common sense and common language needs to be broken or at least loosened.[25]

We have told people in book after book what is technically happening when they see a sunrise, but they still speak in the ordinary

way: "such constant irreconcilable enemies to science are the common people."

Obviously, I invoke Gulliver's words at the language Academy of Lagado because I think there is something wrong here. Not just Valenza, but modern book disciplinarity in general stakes this claim: that humans are befuddled, and we must clear up their confusions by setting language straight. What's missing from this disciplinary picture, however, so beautifully and clearly stated by Valenza, and so wryly contested by Swift, is this: when people talk about sunrise and sunset, they are not trying to make truth claims about reality—that's just *not* what they are doing. Making truthful statements is what professors and scholars are doing, in writing, printing, and publishing books and articles that address communities within our respective disciplines, and we have falsely generalized that mission to all of human discourse. To us, there is no outside text because we see the world as a book being written. It needs editing, cutting, clarification—and we are doing that work by publishing books.

From its inception with the print publications of the Royal Society, it's founders imagining it so widely distributed as to persist into the future despite the burning of one or two libraries, Western academic thinkers have imagined that the kind of care one takes in defining terminology will transform ordinary ways of speaking and, by this bookish, referential refinement of language, clear up faulty thinking: this is an Enlightenment project to which every disciplinary, mass-printed book subscribes, even those attacking the Enlightenment, and even—especially—those books that do not care about having an impact on the populace. Disciplinary disputations with the common are fostered by the printed book. Moreover, the discipline of English literature and cultural studies is encouraged by the mass-printed book's stake in rectifying customary beliefs to engage in the "social mission of English criticism" (Baldick 1983). In the field of literary and cultural studies, both the development of a specialized language and its foray into political critique is promoted by the book medium.

We are already quite accustomed to hearing debates over disciplinary "jargon" in the field of English studies. Some argue for the necessity of theoretical terminology by comparing English to Physics. But even in that discipline, there are those who maintain that, if a scientist can only explain the theory of relativity mathematically and cannot translate it into ordinary language, then that scientist does not truly understand it, as exemplified by N. David Mermin in a talk he gave at Cornell:

> Language evolved under an implicit set of assumptions about the nature of time that was beautifully and explicitly articulated by Newton: "Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external … ." Lovely as it sounds, this is complete nonsense. Because, however, the Newtonian view of time is implicit in everyday language where it can corrupt apparently a-temporal statements, to deal with relativity one must either critically reexamine ordinary language, or abandon it altogether. Physicists traditionally take the latter course, replacing talk about space and time by a mathematical formalism that gets it right by producing a state of compact non-verbal comprehension. Good physicists figure out how to modify everyday language to bring it into correspondence with that abstract structure. The rest of them never take that important step and, I would argue that like the professor I substituted for in 1964, they never really do understand what they are talking about.
>
> The most fascinating part of writing relativity is searching for ways to go directly to the necessary modifications of ordinary language, without passing through the intermediate nonverbal mathematical structure. This is essential if you want to have any hope of explaining relativity to nonspecialists. And my own view, not shared by all my colleagues, is that it's essential if you want to understand the subject yourself. (1999)

Many if not most professors would disagree, as evinced by the dismissal of cross-over books: they are not simply seen as "mere service," but often as self-aggrandizement, punditry, or, worse, betrayal (McLaughlin 1998, qtd. in McGee 2005: 245 n. 6).[26] Too many

attempts by scholars to publish popular works are condescending in tone, if not disdainful. But there are some arguments against popularizing intellectual ideas developed in the disciplines that hold some weight. It is most evident in science, but true in the humanities as well, that specialization leads to greater discovery. If one has to explain everything from scratch, it seems, you cannot get as far in deliberations. On the contrary, if addressing a specialized audience, shorthand can be used to indicate ideas upon which one builds. It is amazing, really, how little one can actually accomplish in one book, and so all the shortcuts that can be taken through gestures and shared specialized languages pave the way to accomplishing more. It is precisely this problem that Jürgen Habermas confronts in thinking about modernity as an unfinished project. Disciplinary autonomy and specialization lead to the unbridled development of intellectual achievement in all fields, but Enlightenment has not yet finished doing its work, I am arguing here, if the results achieved are not brought back into the lifeworld (Habermas 1997).

Academics publish books to clear up the confusions of ordinary thinking by redefining the meanings of words, and such clarifications could be imported back into the Lebenswelt by educating the masses to understand disciplinary terminology. Publishing books while educating people to read them is implicitly, I would argue, the goal to which most humanities scholars in the academy devote their lives of teaching and writing. Such bookwork is definitely what I'm doing with my life—ideally, right now. Why is it a problem? That is, what is at stake for Swift in ironizing that mission of clearing up ordinary confusions? Or, what can he see from his perspective, when this mission is emerging, that could not be seen quite as easily from within the mass print culture that emerged about 1800 (Smith 1984: 161–2; Franta 2007), if anything?

Shamelessly copying Friedrich Kittler, I will now look at three different medial ecologies: 1700, 2000, and 1800, in that order. I will ask in examining each medial economy what is made of the fantasy that I have just described, that, given a properly educated

populace, the mass-printed book *could* in fact have legislative authority over common usage, that we can change language by clearing up its confusions.

The year **1700** is roughly Swift's moment, a moment when one could still decide whether to circulate one's work in manuscript form or publish it in print. "Even after 1710," Margaret Ezell persuasively argues, "script was still a competitive if not the dominant, mode of transmitting and reading what we term "literary" and "academic" materials." Her book, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*, demonstrates convincingly that

> What has been left out of existing literary histories of the Restoration and early eighteenth century is a sense of authorship and readers that existed independently from the conventions and restrictions of print and commercial texts. (Ezell 1999: 12, 24)

Ezell's picture in which manuscript circulation was a choice makes sense of so much that is otherwise strange or remarkable. For instance, David Foxon's account of Pope's relationship to publishing describes Pope as heavily revising and even leaving blanks in manuscripts to be run off by the printer. Pope used printing, in other words, in precisely the same way he used script copying: a fair copy, as it's revised, becomes foul papers or at least becomes blotted, and Pope's foul papers were sometimes printed. Foxon tells us that Pope, as his printer John Watts knew, was accustomed "to rewrite in proof." Foxon even quotes a letter from Lintot begging Pope not to delay printing the *Iliad* with any more corrections. In fact, Foxon argues that W. W. Greg's theory of editing in which one finds an author's final intentions embodied in manuscript, with only accidental changes made by printers in printed edition, won't work on Pope: no manuscript, but only specific editions, embody Pope's "final intentions" because he changed accidentals throughout each stage of printing and reprinting (Foxon 1991: 153–5, 59, 160–1, 153). Taking Foxon's insight further, I would argue that it is impossible to speak about "final intentions" at all in coterie print culture.

Pope felt free to revise his works extensively between printings, the *Dunciad* being most extensively revised—substituting a new anti-hero, adding a book. As Ezell points out, Pope's constant revision of his manuscripts as well as "multiple print versions of the same text" demonstrates that he is treating even printed editions as if they were circulating manuscripts, malleable in form (Ezell 1999: 69).

One feature of manuscript circulation is that the people to whom you passed your manuscript could, and in fact were supposed to, correct and change things as they wished. "[T]he interactive literary mode of additions, adaptations, and responses [are] characteristic of manuscript circulated texts." Ezell recounts Pope's many "correcting" activities on manuscripts that were circulated, including some pushback by Wycherly (Ezell 1999: 64, 69). That Pope saw printing and manuscript circulation as much more similar than we do today becomes evident when Foxon points to a startling fact about Pope's practice of correcting print runs: "the public and not the subscribers received the more polished text." Pope expected his aristocratic subscribers to correct, and to want to correct, on their own, perhaps differently or better than Pope did himself, and he expected them to do it on printed texts just as they would have on manuscript copies. Foxon describes other strange incidents, in which proofs for the *Iliad* are sent to Pope's engraver's house and the engraver, Charles Jervas, performs some of the corrections. Similarly, corrections to Pope's translation of the *Iliad* in typeset proofs are sometimes made in another hand (Foxon 1991: 154, 67).

Notice that this rather explains the difference in notions of clarity long noticed by critics and mentioned earlier in this chapter (p. 12): as opposed to Locke and Sprat's notion of clarity, achieved by making words into pictures of their referents, Pope writes in his 1711 *Essay on Criticism*:

> But true expression like th'unchanging sun,
> Clears, and improves, what'er it shines upon,
> It gilds all Objects, but it alters none.

> Expression is the Dress of Thought, and still
> Appears more decent as more suitable; …

The sun clears things up the way it burns off fog, gradually through the warmth of its attention. Multiple sun-like interventions from noble readers will improve the text the way that the sun improves what one can see in the morning, without really changing those objects at all, just cloaking them in sunlight. Pope's idea that "public readers," non-subscribers, need pre-corrected texts, however, means that they are not suns.

For Pope, neither print nor manuscript would legislate correct usage, clarity, among the nobility, whereas for the public, it should, because it is part of publishing practice for "gentlemen" to correct each other's writing whereas the public would need to be given a correct text. This fact also goes a long way toward explaining the Royal Society's practice of appropriating, altering, and superseding some of the experiments logged in their registers by tradesmen: these people occasionally protested the appropriations and transformations of their work, but for Boyle and Oldenburg, it was, I surmise, just a gentleman's right—perhaps even his duty.[27] Swift too spent time correcting the writings of women authors whom he befriended (Doody 1988): these would be women writers who participate in the culture of gentlemanly writing and sociable exchange, not the "women" who protest along with the vulgar and illiterate against the Academy of Lagado's legislation of usage on behalf of ordinary language.

It is crucial, I think, to reconsider editing practices of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century publishing, by thinking of manuscript circulation practices as the default view in 1700 of how publishing should work, among the lettered. These practices are evinced by Nahum Tate's and Pope's infamous revisions of Shakespeare, along with Pope's writing of the first modern editor into the *Dunciad* as star Dunce: for publishing *Shakespeare Restor'd* in 1725, Lewis Theobald is as ridiculous as Swift's projectors, and

in the same way. Theobald gets the starring role of Dunce because he attacks Pope's edition of Shakespeare (Levine 1991: 229).[28] But Pope attacks Bentley a modern as well as Theobald—Bentley, a modern philologist who works on the classics. It is thus modern philology itself which is mocked by Pope, as is evident in the *Dunciad Variorum*'s mock notes and apparatus. Around 1700 classical philology is scientifically interpretive. Although born of Renaissance Humanism, articles on modern philology number among the papers published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, it too attempting to pin words onto things.

One such paper was written by Friend of the Royal Society, Thomas Molyneux. Molyneux reads a passage from Horace in order to determine the true nature of "the Ancient *Greek* and *Roman Lyre*," thereby putting into practice Locke's theory as to how a specifically scientific understanding should operate. The passage contains "an ingenious thought" which, had Molyneux not intervened by reporting it, would have "been wholly lost in a piece of Poetry" (1267). Horace's poem begins,

> O Melpomene, who modulates the sweet music of my golden harp; and can, when thou pleasest, give the melodius voice of the swan to the mute fishes, it is wholly owing to you that I am pointed at by those who pass by as the prince of lyric poets: it is by you that I breathe and please, if I can flatter myself I do please.

In the passage, Molyneux says, Horace "[admires] his Muse's power, because she could give when she pleased even to *Mute Fishes*, the melodious Voice of the Swan …" (1268–9). When Molyneux first reads the passage, he is

> shockt and confounded, for I lookt upon the fancy [of fishes having the voice of swans] as perfectly forced and groundless; founded upon nothing that was real or true Nature; and therefore could pass for no more than a wild rant or extravagant whim of the Poets, signifying little if anything at all … (1269)

If Horace is being purely poetic, the passage is meaningless. What Horace really meant suddenly dawns on Molyneux:

> [Horace] makes a sudden exclamation to extol her great Art and Mystery, who by mixing various Notes, could compose such sweet Harmony upon the *Guilded Lyre* or *Testudo*, and by her suprizing Power could when she pleased, give [a voice] even to mute Fishes, or the hollow Shells of the Testudines Aquaticae or Water Tortoises, a sort of Fish, of which I imagined they made their Lyres in old Times … (1270)

In Horace's cryptic lines, he was really telling us that the Greek lyre was made of tortoise shells. The rest of the essay explains how Molyneux verified that ancient lyres were indeed made of tortoise shells during the time that Horace lived: "the Harmony of every speaking Lyre, was then no less than the voice of a dumb Fish …" (1271), Molyneux says. Horace allegorically attributes to "the power of the Muse" that "which now we should say was done by the skill of the musician." The only difference between the "ingenious thought" buried in this poem and Molyneux's report of it is that Horace speaks "in the Allegorick manner of speaking they affected in those days" (1271).[29] For Molyneux, being a natural philosopher and a modern philologist are overlapping enterprises: to Swift, Pope, and other parodists of the *Philosophical Transactions*, these are all "minute philosophers," whether gazing through a microscope or intently, for a long time, upon an incomprehensible, ancient trope.

In contrast to treating past authors' works as conundra with empirical answers, a version of philology to which twentieth-century editing is perhaps too indebted, Pope sees his predecessors as part of the elite with whom he circulates manuscripts and makes corrections: Pope feels empowered, welcome, to change Homer or Shakespeare for the better because that's what noble authors do: they clear and improve the writing of their peers by tweaking it here and there. Joseph Levine is exactly right to argue that the Battle of the Books was really about whether to see classical and even Elizabethan literature as historically distanced, or as part of an

ongoing conversation (Levine 1991: 2). Participants in the conversation work with each other to revise language. For Pope, the "public" witnesses must be schooled by aristocratic notions of correctness, but among gentlemen, people should make the wittiest changes they can conceive. Clarity is not a matter of finding referents and then legislating interpretation accordingly, as does Molyneux. Pope rebels on behalf of gentlemen to any notion of legislating meaning through clarity conceived of as transparency—for him as for Blake later, language is not a window through which one sees things. For Pope, linguistic meaning is warmed, improved, by the "eminent hands" of oligarchy. I wouldn't want to claim that Swift is a man of the people, in contrast to Pope, but, at the least, for Swift, "women along with vulgar and illiterate" are just as capable of seeing that the empirical projectors and philologists want to seize control of meaning, want to legislate it, by making things more clear.

2000. In our medial ecology, now, the fantasy that publishing books can legislate linguistic usage, trumping ordinary language, is not something any currently active literary critic would seriously maintain: decades of culture wars and conservative backlash in the U.S. have demonstrated how little political impact can be had by "public intellectuals." And yet, I think this fantasy, promoted (though not necessitated) by the regime of mass-print publishing to which Sprat and Locke look forward, informs and in some ways perverts our ideas about the constructedness of social reality.

The fantasy of legislating meaning has been most baldly stated by a recent President of the Modern Language Association—the organization overseeing all the disciplines of modern languages and literatures. In a chapter of *Rhetorical Occasions* that formed the basis for an English Institute talk published also in *What's Left of Theory?*, Michael Bérubé describes a debate with Alan Sokal, author of the infamous "Sokal Hoax" of the 1990s. During the debate, Bérubé brings up and glosses John Searle's *The Construction of Social Reality*

which describes two kinds of "real" world—one of which, Searle claims, is susceptible to social construction and therefore is fair game for speech act theory, and the other of which is not. The first he calls "social fact," one crucial substitute of which is called "institutional fact," and it concerns phenomena like touchdowns and twenty-dollar bills—items whose existence and meaning are obviously dependent entirely on human interpretation, insofar as their properties could be redefined tomorrow by human fiat. The second he calls "brute fact"… (Bérubé 2000: 142).

The problem with Bérubé and Searle's account is that social facts, albeit constructed, are not, never were, and cannot be re-defined by "human fiat" ("tomorrow").

Dollar bills and touchdowns participate like language in social games—one rather literally. What Bérubé would have to be imagining here is some kind of legislation by the NCAA or government regulations of currency, and obviously language cannot be legislated in the same way. But usage is a bit like common law, and common law has always, in the case of unsupported legislation, put up a fight—or even caused people to out-and-out ignore the laws that were made to contravene common practices. For instance, the copyright act of 1710 in Britain, under Queen Anne, imposed a 14-year copyright with the option for one renewal, 28 years total. But the publishers in England behaved as if copyright was perpetual until a legal battle for copyright upheld that law in the 1774 case of Donaldson v. Beckett—and even then, publishers did not begin "willy nilly" to publish books no longer in copyright; the publishing industry changed slowly (Elliott 2011: 374). Some forms of legislation actually indicate a populace's refusal to adhere to government norms: think of the law stating that English is the official language of California—spoken English only had to become "official" when threatened with minority status. Or think of marriage law in both eighteenth-century England and here, in the U.S. now. Judith Butler has made what to me is one of the most dramatic statements about the impact of current attempts to either legalize or outlaw gay marriage in the U.S.: "my partner told me

that, if I tried to marry her in the state of California, she'd divorce me." These laws certainly impose punishments and deprivations, but the people are not adhering to them any more than eighteenth-century people adhered to Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act: designed to deter clandestine marriage, it may have had the opposite effect, or at best, no consequences at all.

As Bérubé himself knows, I'm sure, the evolution of language works even more indeterminably than law.[30] Right now, "just sayin" and "really?" dominate the discourse of my pre-teens: will these locutions stay? For how long? Where did they originally come from? Why were they taken up? During Shakespeare's time, "trivial knowledge" was knowledge of the trivium: grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. Did the scientific revolution make the adjective "trivial" mean "inconsequential," as it does now, by demoting the prestige of this humanist knowledge? Did Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, in which Hamlet vows to wipe from the "tables" of his brain "all trivial, fond knowledge" participate in the change, given that Hamlet was wiping out of his mind his beloved school-boy knowledge of the trivium in order to replace it with real-world, hard, political knowledge of his father's usurpation by fraud, theft, and murder? The relationship between thinking patterns and linguistic change is fascinating, and will be relied upon in this book as a way of getting at book-thinking, but it would be impossible to specify precisely in each case which among the interlocking changes in habits, technologies, and media affect language most. The only thing that is certain about changes in customary usage is that nothing happens overnight, and nothing can be done by one dramatic human intervention such as legal decree.

Certainly it makes sense to argue that everything is constructed: even lightning, though real, is always reality under a description, and the minute we begin describing phenomena, they become human constructions (Bérubé's point). But we make a mistake if we add to that charge of constructedness some kind of implicit sense of falsity, or a whiff of consciously wielded power plays, or deliberate mystification, the sense that would come precisely from

a sense of constructions as willed or imposed by human fiat, "tomorrow." Within the Kantian and post-Kantian discourses of epistemology, our world is constructed AND real: to echo Frances Ferguson, the world defined via human forms "is as real as it gets." But the desire for literary critics to have a profound impact on ordinary confusions through the activity of publishing their work takes that notion of the constructedness of human reality and surreptitiously transfers agency to construction. Ordinary people are "common enemies" (to quote Swift's name for ordinary people) who work against their own liberation, a liberation offered to them by academic writers who reform language via mass-printed books.

Ah, but you might say, there's where you are wrong, Laura, because Cultural Studies critics such as Bérubé do not derogate but rather celebrate the agency of ordinary people, often finding and describing their acts of resistance. Bérubé et al. do not see people as "common enemies." Yes, I respond, they do. Here is Chris Baldick explaining the social mission of English criticism as ideology critique, which means for him shattering the complacency of people who think things are fine as they are. In describing how social criticism functions to usurp ideology, Baldick forgoes conspiracy theories, he says, in offering a view that

> sees ideologies simply as the line of least resistance taken in inter-
> preting existing circumstances; as "lazy" reflections of the world
> [that people see] around them, [and they] either do not bother or
> do not want to consider the evidence unfavorable to their implicit
> tenets.[31]

While Baldick here claims to be talking about the "new critics"—traditional English professors who see nothing political at stake in their aestheticizing of literature as a way of abrogating criticism's intervention in politics—the absence of agents in his sentences which I had to insert is interesting. I would wager that most professors, graduate students, and adjuncts in literary and cultural

studies believe Baldick's statement to be true about non-humanists in general, both within the academy and without.

Since these are fighting words, I want to give at least one "proof," though I'm certain that the view is pervasive in print humanities professors' discussions: literary and cultural studies critics believe that people are enmired in ideology, and truly, only we know the way out. Although both these critics and Stanley Cavell engage with "popular culture," there are a number of differences between the kind of arguments you will find in Cavell's *Pursuits of Happiness* and those to be found in *Cultural Studies* edited by Grossberg, Nelson, and Treichler. The most important one, and my proof, is that Cavell tries to show us how director Frank Capra consciously decides to play out a problem in Kantian Philosophy in his movie *It Happened One Night* (albeit without necessarily having read Kant). If creators of pop culture do anything theoretically interesting in *Cultural Studies*, it isn't by conscious philosophizing or theorizing: contributors to that reader don't describe sitting down with the creators of popular cultural objects to discuss possible modifications of the literary critic's own thinking. With no interchange from the masses welcomed, an academic monograph is an oligarchy not a republic. While literary and cultural studies critics might like the politics of the masses, they cannot imagine, as Cavell's book suggests that he can, considering people outside the academy as theorists in their own right, on the same level as academics themselves. Popular cultural engagements are objects of study, not subjects with whom to engage in conversation.

For Cavell, Kant's categories or forms of thinking do generate the world we know. But in contrast to Kant, for Cavell there are not just 12 categories: every word proffers a worldview, constructing reality in a way that all of us need to discover. Only then can we consent to the meaning of the words we speak, as one consents to being governed by legislative bodies in a Republic. And for Cavell, no one native speaker necessarily has a better understanding of meaning's constructedness than any other.

Just as cultural studies critics do not count ordinary speakers of language among those capable of truly discerning reality

(theorizing), Habermas who champions bringing disciplinary discourse back to the lifeworld sees no possibility of the Lebenswelt informing theory. For him, communication must be rationalized, which is to say, "blind tradition" must be corrected by experts. Habermas bemoans the "increasing distance between expert cultures and the general public," but for him, ONLY the "lifeworld … threatens to become impoverished" by this problem. The culture of expertise, in contrast, only gains by "specialized treatment." What he imagines in bringing expert and popular culture back together is actually identical to what is imagined by the cultural studies critics whose work is grounded theoretically in the very "neo-conservatives" whom Habermas deplores: bringing disciplinary knowledge back into the world is a one-way endeavor, and so it can only happen by the people "appropriating" disciplinary knowledge as a means for solving *the* problem which is that our "living heritage" has been "impoverished by mere traditionalism" (Habermas 1997: 45–6, 52). Insofar as Habermas theorizes "communicative rationality" only in the sphere of debates and procedures,[32] he is indeed theorizing the fantasy of legislating language use. He wants to throw the book at people outside this rational sphere, and their only contribution to the whole enterprise will be picking it up. In *The Way We Argue Now*, Amanda Anderson insists that Habermas is not simply proposing the rationalization of culture, but proposes an "ethos" as well. However, establishing this ethos also involves legislating to the populace rather than taking anything back into disciplinarity from popular culture. Habermas prescribes a collective, democratic ethos that opposes itself to a "blinkered adherence to custom" (Anderson 2006: 158–9): in other words, adherence to custom—which necessarily includes speaking ordinary language—is always "blinkered," never considered; it is always the unreflective life, always just "lazy."

None of us live that way, thinking if and only when we are writing or speaking book language, if the latter is even possible. All of us have good, intelligent, thinking friends who speak ordinary language and even think well in it. And in fact the strongest literary

histories written by scholars make use of—*think* in—ordinary language and customary ideas, as opposed to proffering what David Simpson calls "parodic" literary history in which the past wears a black hat and the critic a white one. Disregarding the intellectual value of ordinary language could almost be seen as a part of the body memory of literary critics whose habitus involves publishing out rather than taking anything in. Certainly there are reviews, and questions at talks, but these rituals are all confined to the game of clarifying through disciplinary language; they don't involve backtalk to it by the vulgar and illiterate, disciplinarily speaking. Habermas's theory of communicative rationality accurately depicts the way we live in our work-a-day lives, though not the way we live completely.

Ignoring the way we live now, the academy substitutes three general precepts generated via the way we publish disciplinary monographs now, which is to say, writing, publishing, reading, and reviewing disciplinary books that wish to reform customary language with their own, much more carefully articulated idiom, imposing upon traditions a series of "demands for justification":

- That publishing scholarly and theoretical monographs in a medial economy of mass-printed and circulated books does, *through the act of publication alone,* perform political action;
- That popular culture, customary language, and traditions outside the academy are to be critiqued and not engaged in any other way;
- That customary life and language has no rationality of its own worth contributing to disciplinary discourse, and in fact, in its totality as the constructedness of reality, implicitly exerts a malevolent agency, willfully upholding ideological blindness.

Book thinking proffers but does not force those precepts upon us: there are some who deliberately write and publish against those precepts. I mentioned the literary and cultural studies critics

who value ordinary language as an analytic tool, and name a few of them whom I have observed doing so: Deidre Lynch, Alan Liu, Michael Warner, and Frances Dolan—any cultural studies critic who makes use of our customary ways of speaking in order to situate themselves, their own current beliefs and ideas, inside the analysis they perform, to demonstrate its motivations. This deliberate use of anachronism is discussed again in Conclusion. There are also philosophers and theorists who have recognized intellectual value in ordinary language: obviously, the philosophers in the Ordinary Language Movement, J. L. Austin, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Stanley Cavell. (My understanding of the first two comes from Cavell 1979). Finally, Bruno Latour, whose works are freely distributed on the Internet, engages in ethnographic practices that resemble Wittgenstein's insofar as they do not demystify in order to change the world, but lay bare simply to discover and reveal how something works. Wittgenstein and Cavell, I argue here, through their attentiveness to problems in the discipline of philosophy, have most explicitly argued that ordinary forms of thinking as codified in language need to have a disciplinary impact, and thus, in this argument, of thinking past book illusions. Whereas Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* identifies "grammatical illusions" troubling analytic philosophy, I will insist that these grammatical illusions are sustained and supported by media blindness.

I wrote above of Cavell's argument that the producers of popular culture are thinkers of a high order, undertaking intellectual problems that are also confronted by Kant. Cavell is accused of granting too much agency to directors, of upholding therefore the model of the "great man" in art. To answer that criticism, I would say that Frank Capra and Howard Hawkes are indeed men, but not great: that is, to see them as exceptional is once again to discount the intellectual power of those outside the humanities. Cavell has also been accused, at least in reviews of the *Pursuits of Happiness*, of ignoring the economic oppressiveness in which Hollywood movies of the 1940s and 1950s participated, and that may be true.

And so, in turning back to the moment of the emergence of mass print, I wish to ask, do we have to give up the political radicalness of literary and cultural studies if we question its devaluation of customary thinking, of ordinary language; if we gainsay the intellectual laziness of the crowd? If we recognize the intellectual strength of customary forms, grant that intellectual work itself can be distributed in this way, would that require adopting the conservative political views expressed by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*?

Medial ecology **1800**: Just to recapitulate Burke's argument in that treatise, we should follow tradition because it represents the inheritance from our forefathers. Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, her response to Burke's 300+ pp. "pamphlet"—one of the most powerful responses, next to Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*—rightly asks, why should do what our forefathers tell us to do without questioning whether they were wrong (Wollstonecraft 1790, 23–4, 40–41, 74)? Why shouldn't we think for ourselves (Wollstonecraft 1790, 77, 131)? Burke's *Reflections* includes some of the most politically retrograde rhetoric imaginable:

> The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what by labour can be obtained; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavor, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice.

The "art" that Burke mentions here is the artifice of Enlightenment philosophers, "this new conquering empire of light and reason" by which "All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off." So, to paraphrase: people must not be taught to think, because by thinking they will discover that inequality is unjustified and the reward for hard work too small.

Obviously, Burke did not expect "the body of the people" to be reading this book: he miscalculates the spread of literacy, which conservative thinkers such as Sarah Trimmer saw as dangerous in itself. The "body"—the masses—picked up on his phrase "a swinish multitude," used to describe a group of French peasants who had marched from Paris to Versailles to take their complaints about starvation to the King and Queen (Burke 1789: 372, 171, 173). These readers changed it slightly to "THE swinish multitude," a redaction that in my view effectively captures Burke's disregard for the masses in statements such as the one quoted above: let them not reflect upon customs, let them work hard, and, when it comes to naught, tell them they'll get their reward in heaven.

Burke's *Reflections* is a book that marks though indeed does not itself inaugurate a shift to mass print. Published on November 1, 1789, Burke's *Reflections* sold 5,500 copies in the first 17 days of publication, and, Burke says in a letter dated 29 November 1789, 12,000 within the first month (Boulton 1963: 79–80). The book's title may also mark one of the last times that the term "reflection" is used in its earlier eighteenth-century sense: to reflect (against) is to satirize. He is indeed reflecting on the French Revolution in the sense of thinking about it, but he vigorously condemns it as well. Paradoxically, however, the speech act performed by this mass-printed publication is an impossible one if it is directed not at aristocrats but at the mass public. To the nobility, he says, if you get the people thinking about whether social status is deserved, continuous revolution will follow, someone beneath always thinking that those in charge do not deserve their wealth, power, and status. He says, therefore, do not encourage the people to think about traditions critically—you'll be sorry! But if this speech act is directed to the public, it is a book that tells them, "don't think, just feel." It tells them, do not reflect, giving them all the reasons why they should not do so (i.e., reflecting upon reflection). Burke's friend Phillip Francis advised against publishing the *Reflections*, knowing what would happen: it of course set off a pamphlet war, giving Thomas Paine a platform for reaching an even wider audience. Radical

publisher Joseph Johnson sold Part I of Paine's *The Rights of Man*, which was widely distributed by the Corresponding and Constitutional societies: "at half a crown," James Boulton says, "half the cost of the *Reflections*," it sold between 400,000 and 500,000 copies; nine editions were needed in the first 12 weeks of sale (Boulton 1963: 86, 88).

Given that it launched laboring-class writers such as James Parkinson, Thomas Spence, and Daniel Eaton, wrote responses as well, theirs ventriloquizing pigs, we can honestly say that, as an attempt to forestall thinking about customary social structures, the *Reflections* failed. Burke attempted to publish an injunction against reflecting—not concerning the revolution, upon which he did wish to reflect, but upon customary ways of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking. We can see from his failure that book language won't brook this kind of argument: it is of necessity pro-reflection, pro-revolution in the sense of overturning rather than uncritically accepting conventions.

Academic book-language requires that cultural meanings be rationally justified. It also fosters the fantasy that mass-printed disciplinary books can change common language, clear it up, and this utopian fantasy is shared by the sciences and literary and cultural studies, all modern disciplines of the book. Insofar as the printed book makes language use seem legislatable, it inflects the way we understand constructedness, as if it were automatically somehow allied with ideology in the sense of false consciousness, or worse, politics in the sense of conspiracy.

The first people to question the value of book-language were ordinary language philosophers. While early disciplinarians were interested in breaking the hold of ordinary language on common sense, ordinary language philosophers were interested in breaking out of philosophical terminology back into ordinary language. First, they thought through the relationship between the customary and justification. In contradistinction to Bérubé's claim that "human fiat" could change the meaning of a social symbol "tomorrow," Wittgenstein argues that "Philosophy may in no way interfere with

the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it"
(Wittgenstein 1958: §124, 49e). This statement articulates the pow-
erlessness of book-language's careful redefinitions of terms to
control customary ways of speaking. It is precisely to this comment
that Ernest Gellner takes objection, and for political reasons, to "the
'late-Wittgenstein' theory of language, and of the authority it con-
ferred on all its customs and norms, simply in virtue of being part
of natural language":

> If ordinary speech, and the entire corpus of custom of which it is
> part, are a self-justifying system which neither permits nor requires
> external validation—well then, we need never fear the erosion of
> our customary ideas … Our idiom is shown to have a firm, secure
> grasp on reality; and the reality in terms of which we live is shown
> to be sound and true.

Wittgenstein promotes ideology, Gellner insists, which he implic-
itly defines as belief in the "validity" of "our rich old Lebenswelt":
ideology runs rampant when philosophers "cannot hold our views
to account" (Gellner 1979: 15, 7). As against Gellner, however,
Wittgenstein does not defend customary language as "sound and
true." According to Gellner, Wittgenstein says that "philosophy
needs to leave everything as it is." But the passage about only
"describing" language continues without making any truth claims
for ordinary language:

> Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language;
> it can only in the end describe it.
> For it cannot give it any foundation either.
> It leaves everything as it is.

The passage makes a statement about the effects of performing
philosophical work—here, Wittgenstein's—which in the tradition
of Locke is about clearing the ground. But what Wittgenstein
says here about his own work in fact applies to all disciplinary work
that is accomplished by publishing in printed codex form, no

matter what it wishes it could do. That is, whether concerned with philosophy, history, or literature, a disciplinary book offers new ways of describing and understanding them, new ways of thinking, but its effects are completely indeterminate: a printed book in itself has no power to change anything. What is it to "hold ordinary views to account" by publishing a book? It is to give some people the opportunity for thinking harder, but it does not change those ordinary views "tomorrow." Wittgenstein is not ratifying ideology, as Gellner maintains, but honestly describing the effects that disciplinary works can have on language. And for me, there is a big unanswered question here, the question as to whether ordinary language should be uncritically equated with ideology, as Gellner presumes, and whether logico-empirical accountings of validity equated with science or truth, as opposed to ideology.

Second, ordinary language philosophers thought about how and whether ordinary language might be used to solve some disciplinary impasses. The impasse of modern Anglo-American analytical philosophy is skepticism. Wittgenstein analyzes philosophical discourse in order to determine when the language is actually not saying anything, all the while accounting for the fact that both writers and readers believe it to be saying something: "philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*." Disciplinary writers think they are analyzing the way things are when in fact, what they are in fact analyzing are "grammatical illusions" (Wittgenstein 1958: §28, 19e; §110, 47e). Wittgenstein doesn't say, but it is nonetheless true, that these illusions are made much more possible by printed books: when you define a term, no matter how you define it, you make it into a thing that then functions grammatically as if one were taking it out of a bag and examining it.

A *Peanuts* comic strip by Charles Schulz indicates disciplinary language unfettered, and the problems caused to thinking as a result. Lucy and Linus are walking down the sidewalk. Lucy sees a yellow shape on the sidewalk and begins lecturing to Linus about the amazing migration patterns of the monarch butterfly that comes to North America all the way from Brazil. Linus, leaning down over

the yellow shape, responds, "That's not a butterfuly—that's a potato chip." "That's *really* amazing", says Lucy, "how did a potato chip get here all the way from Brazil?" As Wittgenstein puts it:

> A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside of it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably. (1958: §115, 48e)

Language of any kind, disciplinary or ordinary, provides "a *picture*" of the way things work in the world—captivating but illusory—but the printed codex and the disciplinary language in it give us the idea that each word is a picture of a thing in the world.

For one thing, books are indeed physical things, and printed words become things inside these physical codices. While of course the manuscript codex or even the scroll contain handwritten words, their hand-craftedness—indeed, the evidence of the *human hand* to be found in them—make them more human appurtances such as clothing or even limbs themselves. The printed words in books duplicate their own look over and over again with less variation than handwritten words, especially as printing becomes more clear and regularized. Elizabeth Eisenstein and Walter Ong see print as replicating exact images fairly early in the history of the invention, whereas Adrian Johns demonstrates, and David McKitterick agrees, that it takes rather longer for print to insure that books with the same titles were in fact duplicates of each other, since this was a social rather than a technological problem. I agree with the latter, locating the reification of language with mass printing. Insofar as printed books duplicate each other and are therefore two instances of the same thing (*res* as thing) rather than being two different material items that say the same thing (*res* as subject matter), they encourage us to see the bag of words that they contain as things. As Walter Ong points out, "Print suggests that words are things far more than writing ever did."[33]

That disciplines such as philosophy encourage us to conceive of words as pictures of things is a point made through the opening epigraph to Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, as interpreted by

Cavell.[34] Augustine discusses in his *Confessions* how he learned to speak, giving us a particular "picture of language," the referential theory that Wittgenstein will try to debunk: "When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out."[35] Of course, even for Augustine, the memory of being instructed to speak as an "infans" (unspeaking one) is a fantasy. As Jonathan Culler puts it in describing Saussure's theory that linguistic meaning is not referential but differential, a matter of relations between signs rather than a list of ostensive definitions, how would you point to "brown"? (Culler 1986).[36]

Wittgenstein himself, however, reveals Augustine's description to be a fantasy rather than a memory by imagining the "form of life" that would be lived if language worked the way that Augustine imagines it. Augustine's idea is "a primitive idea of the way language functions," but it is also "the idea of a language more primitive than ours." This primitive language could only be at play in the lives of the "slab" people in which a builder calls out "slab" and a worker brings the thing called for. Carriers of packs containing things used to speak Lagado's invented language would similarly only be able to issue calls for things—really, only calls for more things of which they already have one instance. This language couldn't be used for anything but primitive relationships, not social ones beyond "give me" or "bring." One couldn't even write a good poem about red wheelbarrows and white chickens, without the word "beside," though universal grammarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries strove to find a way to hypostatize such words that they might be expressed universally and timelessly. James Harris, author of *A Philosophical Inquiry into Universal Grammar* (1765) sees prepositions as resembling "Nails or Pins" insofar as they bring substances together that would otherwise not naturally "coalesce" (Harris 1765: 262). It would be difficult to tell what someone meant if holding up a wheelbarrow and chickens.

Wittgenstein and Swift have a lot in common. The twentieth-century philosopher strives "to bring words back from their

metaphysical to their everyday use" as a form of analysis (Wittgenstein 1958: §19, 8e); the latter just gestures toward language habits of the "vulgar and illiterate." But they launch their critiques of this picture of language by embodying its workings in the activities of human beings, by giving this language material form, and asking, could humans live this way? Customary language does not refer but participates in socially productive activities, as one material condition among others, of those who undertake the tasks and activities of everyday life. When you bring ordinary language back into disciplinary discussions, you remind book-language of the way of living that subtends its production. And though traditional, and not reflective in the revolutionary way that books reflect, the ordinary language that participates in social interactions resists at least as much as it mirrors any ideology in the sense of false consciousness. It is governed by rules in the game of social interaction, but rules are not laws, and one can do many new, unexpected things even while playing by the book.

The typical deconstructive move to make here would be to say that ordinary language enacts the social as part of the body, and the body leaves a residue of un-ideologically inscribable stuff—a trace. Both Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Michel Foucault's *Care of the Self* might be seen as tracing that bodily resistance. But the creative use of linguistic rules governing ordinary speech is less sherely dumb material than what deconstructive and even Marxist theory typically imagines materiality to be: embodied living needs to be reconceived as enacting material forms that are, or can be, formally innovative and interesting.[37]

Instead, I will turn to someone whose whole oeuvre is, like Wittgenstein's, dedicated to thinking through the failures of their beloved discipline, the analytic philosophy that is dominantly Anglo-American rather than continental. In *The Senses of Walden*, Stanley Cavell discusses how to provide "therapy" for the disciplinary discourse, "the father tongue," in which one writes by attempting to force a meaning into words, via ordinary language, "the mother tongue." In *Senses*, "writing" of the sort done by Thoreau in *Walden* in which he works through words as if he were

hoeing beans "works" to "rescue" both disciplinary discourse and ordinary language. Thoreau "earns his living" by "unit[ing]" the mother with the father tongue. "Earning a living" is of course an ordinary phrase we use to describe what we do when we work. Cavell's *Walden* transmutes the phrase to mean that word work— turning words over, allowing them to arise in their own contexts, discovering where, when, and how they arise, tracking their meanings in multiple contexts—earns a writer and his or her readers a sense of aliveness to meaning: it earns them vital *living*. Thoreau and Cavell's point is this: we are sleepwalking through our use of language if we don't know what we mean when we speak. Thoreau's audience is an ordinary person who takes language for granted and doesn't think about his or her life—someone who lives a life, as he said most famously, of "quiet desperation." Thoreau thought that most "men" lead lives of quiet desperation: I'm not so sure. There are some of those; there are many "ordinary people" who do, indeed, think. Cavell's audience, his "we," is those among them, those ordinary people, who happen to work in the twentieth and twenty-first century American university system: it is primarily disciplinary writers whom he chastises for attempting as they write to choose meanings rather than words that are acknowledged to be already meaningful in their own right (Cavell 1981: 15–16, 28–29, 33, 64).

Ordinary language philosophy of the sort performed in *Senses* is what the best disciplinary discourse, the most permanently effective, does, and it did so even before there was such a movement led by J. L. Austin and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Thus, Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork for a Metaphysic of Morals* (1790) begins by discussing what we ordinarily mean when we say "moral." A more modern instance of this kind of work is Michael Warner's *Publics and Counterpublics* (2002) which opens by and continuously recurs to discussing what we ordinarily mean by "public."

We don't decree the meaning of words. Words have meaning that evolves from the living they earn through the work that they do. Cavell earns his living by taking into account all the other actual

and future occurrences of the word "sense" whenever he uses it. Do I successfully perform that bookwork? I'm trying, and therefore trying to make this book work differently than the disciplinary mass-printed books (of which it is one) that define by fiat.

There are other ways to work words than this, Cavell insists—Heideggarian etymologies, for instance. Let me here work the word "copy" via its Latin roots and subsequent history, since it names a thing that is involved in the publishing processes of manuscript circulation, dramatic production, and printing (coterie and *en masse*). Before entry into publishing, however, "copy" was "copia"—Erasmus's *De Copia* or design for commonplacing. According to Moss, this work published in 1512 and 1513 "is addressed to the independent reader about to embark on an unsupervised perusal of the (whole) of ancient literature." The commonplacing in which Erasmus instructs his reader is neither rhetoric nor dialectic, not about how to argue or persuade, Moss, insists. Instead, this reading-through-writing work is designed to provide its-reader-writer-producer with "a vastly extended phrase book, … a resource for the expressive variation of any proposition." Since the commonplace-book Erasmus instructs people to produce is not a rhetoric, it is concerned with subjects, ideas, more than mere art (*verba*), containing, as Moss puts it, "the most abundant store of matter (*res*) with which to vary any proposition." Moss quotes and translates from the Latin Erasmus describing how the machine of the handwritten (writerly) or even his own printed (readerly) commonplace-book works:

> whenever occasion demands, you will have ready to hand a supply of material for spoken or written composition, because you will have as it were a well organized set of pigeonholes, from which you may extract what you want.[38]

Copiousness is copy in the sense that the players on the Renaissance stage had copy, or early modern printers worked from copy. Its opposite is not originality, as its antonym certainly is in the modern

sense of the word, but scarcity: a manuscript page to be used by actors or printers provides a copiousness of language that matters, as in, "more matter, less art." Before copyright, and thus before we had a sense that an original work could be owned in the way that one property, "copy" referred to what *WE* consider to be, retrospectively and anachronistically, an author's original manuscript. What Hamlet reads are "words, words, words" because they belong to anyone, any artistic composition being simply a copiousness of words and subject-matter-things. That meaning of the word "copy," indicating an artistic creation, is preserved in the terms "copytext" and "copyright" itself: what a publisher got the right to was the right to reprint over and over again "the copy" or the (author's original) work. It is absolutely fascinating that the word "copy" or "copie" has gone from meaning an original work from which printed copies or multiple performances were produced to meaning duplications of some other original text or picture. It has slid into meaning its opposite as we have come to change our view of language, from seeing it as a shared inheritance to seeing it as material susceptible of individual ownership achieved through a distinctive arrangement of words.

We used printed words to take inventory of things in the world, our arrangement within a printed book of these word things being entirely our own property.

A notion of language as shared copiousness, as locutions found and disseminated for use by all, persists until the mid-eighteenth century. Roger Lonsdale discusses Thomas Gray's habit of re-using everything he read in his poems, so much so that at times Lonsdale's book of Gray's poetry could have contained pages that simply contained apparatus carrying over from text printed on the previous page with no "original" lines of poetry which is to say poetry written by Gray on it at all. He came to be seen by the writers after 1774 as a plagiarizer. Lonsdale argues powerfully that it was precisely the emerging idea that borrowing was plagiarism, rather than simply making use of one's copious reading, that stopped Gray from writing, prematurely aborting his career as an

author (Lonsdale 1979). No words are original; if we quote no other book, we all quote the dictionary.

Absurd, you say? Ted Nelson, famous for imagining something like the Internet before it had been created in the form of a "literary machine" that he called "Xanadu," had the idea that any quoted bit of text could be automatically traced to its original source on this machine, and whoever used the word automatically charged a fee that would go to the original author. So, if I were to say, reading requires the willing suspension of disbelief, monies for that phrase would go to Coleridge's heirs. Presumably the same would happen for "the suspension of disbelief" and for voluntarily letting go of "disbelief"—would the machine charge me if I said, "voluntarily forgetting that the world of the book doesn't exist"? How much would it charge me? If I even wrote, "the willing suspension of disbelief," would I get charged for quoting "the" and "of"? How would such a literary machine work? If it worked like Erasmus's *De Copia*, all the words in each pigeonhole and especially their "matter" would be yours for free. Cavell articulates that view of language as inherited copiousness or "riches" that somehow living among mass-printed books encourages us to forget:

> Words come to us from a distance; they were there before we were; we are born into them. Meaning them is accepting that fact of their condition… . The art of fiction is to teach us distance—that the sources of what is said, the character of whomever says it, is for us to discover… , (Cavell 1981: 64)

even (or especially) if it is the character that one discovers by them is oneself.

Certainly, people are born into the "dear old Lebenswelt," as Gellner puts it, but they actually live there, we live there, and we don't live without thinking. How, precisely, is living language (as opposed to printed thing-language) involved in thinking? How does it get wise? Ways of living change the way things work, including words, if

and when they are held in common because then and only then, they become a "form of life."

"Form" is one of those ambiguous words that can mean something purely conceptual, such as the formal language of mathematics, or something very material, as when something takes such-and-such kind of material form. Wittgenstein's phrase "form of life" should be read precisely taking both meanings into account: ordinary language unites conceptual with physical stuff. How does one think by using ordinary things?

Lambras Malafouris is among the anthropologists who work on "the cognitive life of things," to quote the title of a collection of essays that he co-edits. He sees archeology as giving us not just evidence of prehistorical human thinking but instances of that thinking itself:

> From an archeological perspective, I see no compelling reason why the study of mind should stop at the skin or skull, despite what other disciplines might think. For one thing, most of our evidence about the origin and evolution of human intelligence comes in the form of material culture rather than abstract ideas and brain tissue. From another, the more we study material culture, the more it looks like a genuine element of the human cognitive system.

For Malafouris, the so-called handaxe enigma, a debate among archeologists concerning whether changes in the way that handaxes were carved were the result simply of becoming more skillful, the new shape that works better only subsequently affecting human cognitive development, an unintended consequence, as it were, or whether on the other hand the tool could only be developed because of human cognitive development? In the latter case, the material instantiation passively incarnates an idea rather than being a means for instilling such an idea. Malafouris's notion that cognition does not "stop at the skin or skull" solves this enigma. He first points out the "neurocentric attitude" that encourages us to locate thinking in the brain as opposed to thinking of tool use as "an

embodied cognitive process." Second, he notes that only the Cartesian notion that thinking represents things establishes the "boundary between the mind and the tool" in the first place.

Malafouris argues for another kind of picture, "distributed cognition." A knapper is someone who builds a handaxe with symmetrical sides, making it sharper and more effective:

> The stone [to be carved, 'knapped'] in the hand of the knapper [tool builder] is not simply a blank surface upon which the knapper's pre-existing mental plan will be realized, but a tightly coupled and intrinsic part of the knapper's cognition.

Building something that works, and not just the planning of what to build and thinking about its efficacy but the actual hand movements, environmental space, and elements manipulated, are all part of the cognitive surface being used to think thoughts. Even if unconscious in terms of ratiocination, problem-solving by physically manipulating things just is thinking (Malafouris 2010: 14–17).

Here is the meat of Swift's parable, precisely embedded in Malafouris's point. We do not think by holding up representations of things in our minds anymore than we speak by holding up things in our hands: speaking allows us to do way more than that. To put this in terms of Wittgenstein's slab people, compare the forms of life depicted in Figure 1.1.

If you try to imagine language that is only representational actually working in social instances, you get the last example in Figure 1.1, item no. 4: no one could live that life, or, it was in fact the essence of the interchange between German guards and foreign-speaking Jewish inmates at Auschwitz—only the worst possible degradation of life could work that way. The other examples, 1–3, show words that work, some markedly less well than others.

When we do things with words, to quote the title of J. L. Austin's book, we are performing cognitive acts, all kinds of them. When our speech-embodied cognitive acts don't work very well, as in the cases of 2 and 3, that's when we consider getting therapy or

analysis—it need not be psychoanalysis in any traditional sense. The difference between a therapist and an analyst is precisely relevant: the therapist will tell you that the meaning of your words is not justified—that they do not describe things as they are in actuality. An analyst will not tell you that, but will give a person the space, time, and techniques for coming to such a conclusion via a modification of both speaker and listener (see Schwaber
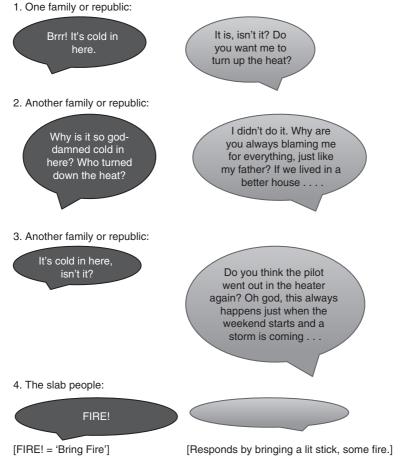
1. One family or republic:

> Brrr! It's cold in here.

> It is, isn't it? Do you want me to turn up the heat?

2. Another family or republic:

> Why is it so god-damned cold in here? Who turned down the heat?

> I didn't do it. Why are you always blaming me for everything, just like my father? If we lived in a better house . . . .

3. Another family or republic:

> It's cold in here, isn't it?

> Do you think the pilot went out in the heater again? Oh god, this always happens just when the weekend starts and a storm is coming . . .

4. The slab people:

> FIRE!

>

[FIRE! = 'Bring Fire']   [Responds by bringing a lit stick, some fire.]

Figure 1.1   Forms of life.

1983). Therapists are probably as effective at changing long-term problems as books are at changing language. Sometimes they work: the word "grok," for instance, like "trivial," comes from a book. But often we just keep on saying, "I saw the sunset tonight," no matter how often we are told that the world turns, to quote the name of a soap opera, because describing reality is not what we're doing, and so knowing that the description is a bad one changes things not at all.

I wish to examine precisely what we are doing as we speak via Edmund Hutchins's *Cognition in the Wild* which argues that "cognitive science made a fundamental category error when it mistook the properties of a person in interaction with the social and material world for the cognitive properties of whatever is inside the person."[39] Since I just championed psychoanalysis over therapy, one might be surprised by this quotation. But a good understanding of transference, precisely the thing analyzed by psychoanalysis, would be to say that it is not a thing at all but a cognition of some sort that was unachieved in specific social inter-actions and continues to seek realization, which is to say, being thought out by people together, at least two.

Ordinary language is itself an abstraction covering all the ways we work with language, most of the time without reflecting upon each word, which is to say consciously interrogating whether the meaning of a word is justified. It is thoughtful in the way that I have defined distributed thinking, if not book-rational and book-reflective. Writers of printed books may reflect upon meaning without really thinking about it: asking a word to justify its accu-racy as one possible description of mind or world is not the same as sounding the depths of everyday language in order to discover the mutual agreements, the worldviews—sometimes the ideology, sometimes the wisdom—to which we adhere when using our language. Uptake of a new word or phrase, the continuous evolu-tion of meanings of words (as in "copy"), and daily usage are ways of thinking: "this word works better" is a kind of wise thinking, not wholly unconscious even though imitative. Users of ordinary

language, somehow collaboratively authorizing its communal shifts in meaning, are thinking through using language by adjusting it so that it works well for them, and writers of books are only thinking to the extent that they take the productiveness of the customary into account. Ordinary language works for what? For me: does it work for you? I didn't say "works *well,*" because the point that Cavell derives from Thoreau is that serious work is required to make ordinary language work well. Everyday uses of language—all of it, speaking, notes, texting, emailing, shouting—work to order, cognize, and count things in our world, as we move among them. But aliveness to meanings and activities involving words, what Cavell calls "serious speech" and Thomas Ogden "sincerity," requires discovering the thinking performed by words as we live with them day to day. Acknowledging the work that ordinary language performs is a means for earning aliveness and revivifying disciplinary discourse.

I want to draw two conclusions, the first answering the question with which medial ecology 1800 was introduced. Ordinary language cannot be adequated to the traditional, nor the unthoughtful, nor the purely ideological. Of course it can be used ideologically—it can become propaganda or can even be used like bricks to throw at people's heads, as in the case of "lager jargon" (Levi 1989). But it can also do some good work. One need not adopt Burke's politics to value it. Second, this overview of 1700, 2000, and 1800 gives us some ideas about the language of the mass-printed book. Drawing from Wittgenstein's picture proverb, I want to suggest that the captivating language that imprisons us in a picture of the world as inert things susceptible of being labeled is constituted of characters printed on paper. Language, comprising both common, ordinary (usually spoken) language and the printed disciplinary book-language that is designed to correct it, can create grammatical illusions about the nature of reality—hypostasize it into butterflies from Brazil—only to the extent that it lies inert on a page. Plato's greatest fear about writing down the words from Socrates' mouth, that they cannot and indeed need not answer

questions but imagine themselves to be authoritative and final, is most deeply realized in mass printing. What he didn't foresee, and our problem, is that mass-printing can so far remove words from active living that no one notices their falsity, which indeed one would the minute one tried to live them.

Here at this moment when it is most obvious I have to point out that language is not a medium, even though that disciplinary truism is repeated habitually. It does not physically resemble a mass-printed codex or a computer, material mechanisms for production and distribution embedded in social networks of meaning. "Language" is an abstraction, a "metaphysical" rather than a physical description. Invoking book-language, or especially the language of mass-printed books, reminds us that language has different effects depending upon the medium in which it participates. The widespread habitual use of books encourages us to see printed-book-language as pictures of things—the words in Katie Trumpener's childhood memory, in Swift's backpack, the words that picture things for Bacon and Sprat. Media blindness, in other words, can intensify grammatical illusions.

Ordinary language as spoken, dashed off in text messages or email or on handwritten notes, codifies not just meaning but living because it has to do some work for us everyday. It reflects and enacts our communal agreements about the way the world works grounded in their usefulness, their workability, in daily negotiations. By contrast, in mass-printed book language, grammatical illusions are grounded by disciplinary structures, which sometimes represent a kind of collective madness requiring the "therapy" of having ordinary language introduced back into the disciplinary realm—Wittgenstein's method. Ordinary language works everyday to create pictures of humanity and the world through usage; the mass-printed codex creates a picture of language as a set of nouns defining things. Rendering living things inert provides opportunity and means for dissecting them, for doing the most important work of "desynonymizing," to use Coleridge's term, an excellent mode of analysis. But we forget, as his collaborator Wordsworth

said memorably, that we "murder to dissect," that the Thing investigated is no longer living. Dead, it does not and is not called upon to work, and so our mode of analysis can only go so far and no further.

Though it was indeed possible for manuscript disciplines to develop a jargon known only to a few—this is precisely the complaint of Sprat against the scholastics—mass-printed book culture creates a place, the page, that predisposes language to become unmoored from the conditions of the lives we lead, conditions that are not forgotten in the ordinary language that is a constant companion—actant, participant—in those lives. This manifesto will not prove that books have shaped disciplinary discourses, especially their underlying epistemology as championed by modern Anglo-American philosophy, but you may be convinced by reading through to the end of it that the mass-printed codex as a medium played a shaping role in philosophical quandaries that we now seem to be moving out of via a new philosophy of screen.

This manifesto examines the consequences of putting "print" back into the picture we have of language. Walter Ong pointed out its absence from that picture during the height of "high theory" in the discipline of literary and cultural studies: "Despite the assumptions of many semiotic structuralists, it was print, not writing, that effectively reified the word, and, with it, noetic activity" (Ong 2002: 119). What are the consequences of imagining that the medium of print, the way it works, its relation to concepts central to literary, theoretical, and philosophical disciplines that have been central since 1700? Answering this question is, in my view, crucial to understanding how the humanities might unravel in a new academy not bound by print.

Cavell is very good at analyzing the effects, good and bad, of disciplines upon thinking, and in this Manifesto, I make use of his thought, his Wittgenstein, throughout, bringing ordinary language back into view as I discuss the different meanings of coterie-printed, mass-printed, and digitally performed ideas. But I also want to contest the notion that language is a material thing,

a medium: to me, that is a medial illusion. Language is only materialized in certain media: voice, print, manuscript, video, etc. Like Brian Rotman, I believe and hope to demonstrate in the following chapters that media with which we habitually live have psychic effects: "My concern," he says, "is to illuminate the way communicational media can facilitate new psychic entities and objects of belief. Such facilitation occurs when a new medium confronts and absorbs its predecessor" (Rotman 2008: 107). *Breaking the Book* tracks that confrontation.

Ideas to be drawn from this chapter: *Here follows a list of ideas that I hope to have adumbrated above—my list is a very un-book-like attempt to make this Manifesto user-friendly:*

1. *Mass-printed books make it seem possible to stand outside of culture and critique it with the authority of being a voice from nowhere: they are inherently revolutionary;*
2. *Disciplinary work published in books needs to be reined in by ordinary language and customary thinking;*
3. *Revolutionary mass-book thinking accuses customary thinking of being sheer ideology, thus rendering scholars unaware that their need for interaction with a public, a commons, is an* Intellectual *need.*
4. *Either we disciplinarians can change the way books work, the way we work, capitalizing on the affordances offered by digital media, or the disciplines can be dismantled along with traditional academic institutional structures. Those seem to me to be the choices. (This last point is not a summary, but an addition.)*
5. *Book-language differs from ordinary language in that it reifies and freezes the world, rendering words dead things that can be dissected. On the one hand, the chill slows things down so that one can pay attention to the precise meaning of words for the sake of analysis (comparing Gellner to Wittgenstein). On the other hand, if the inertness of the book-word is forgotten, we risk speaking the language of things, or worse, the brick language of lager jargon, a slab language disguised by an elite vocabulary.*

Notes

1 For keyword searching, I used Swift 1810.
2 Downloaded from EEBO, Early English Books Online, 8 July 2012.
3 Johns 2003. Ezell's work, however, is especially good at not assigning one overarching reason for choosing to circulate a manuscript but showing instead that then, as now, choices about media for communication are made for myriad reasons.
4 Schwenger (2001) also discusses this passage (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344262), found in a special issue of *Critical Inquiry* edited by Bill Brown called "Things."
5 Although certainly sold in wrappers, in both cases, they were as encased in bindings as any other book during the era. An email from Rupert Baker, Library Manager of the Royal Society, answers my question about how the original publications were bound:

> I've been asking around my colleagues, and the consensus is that people would have acquired (by individual purchase or subscription) each 'number' as it came out, then taken them at the end of each volume to their bookbinders to be bound as (e.g.) "volume 1, 1665–1666" etc. We suppose that the overall volume 1 title page would have been issued with the last 'number' of volume 1, much as these days you get the title page and contents list of an annual volume with the December issue, but I have to admit this is speculation rather than based on any hard evidence I've been able to find (from Rupert.Baker@royalsociety.org, 3 August 2012).

Stuart Bennet's *Trade Bookbinding* proves, as David Pearson puts it, that "a significant proportion of books were normally stocked and sold ready bound" during the hand press era (Bennet 2004; Pearson 2005: 8). Even the "fine" binding made to order for a particular customer resembled the ready-bound versions (Pearson 2004: xi). Thus, Elizabeth Eisenstein argues in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* that "opposing books to journals" when discussing the impact of print on the scientific revolution 'not only fails to clarify any issues but also makes many things unnecessarily obscure … To insist that one must distinguish more sharply between a system of 'written' and one of 'printed' interchange, to insist that this difference is more important than that which separates a 'printed' book from a 'published' article is

not to quibble over fine distinctions … Every step of the remarkable adventure in ideas which took educated Europeans from the *Almagest* to the *Principia* in less than two centuries was marked by putting manuscripts into print (1979: 462–3).

6   A. C. Howells discusses the latter three as well as the passage quoted here from Swift (1946: 131–42).

7   http://rstl.royalsocietypublishing.org/. In chapter 7 of *The Nature of the Book*, Johns describes the complicated interplay between manuscript "registers" and printed books as well as the printed *Philosophical Transactions* that in fact shaped the work of the new science as undertaken by the Royal Society (1998: 444–504; McKitterick 2003: 206, 296 n. 4).

8   Originally from Seneca, the figure of the bee appears in Erasmus's *Ciceronianus*, ed. Pierre Mesnard, *Opera Omnia* (Amsterdam: 1971), I.2.706–7, qtd. in Moss 1996: 105; Swift 1704a: 365–8; see also Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweetness_and_light, accessed 24 July 2012.

9   *De Copia*, p. 117, qtd. Moss 1996: 111.

10   *De Copia*, p. 117, qtd. Moss 1996: 111.

11   *Discours sur la méthod pour bien conduire sa raison et chercher la vérité dans les sciences* (Descartes 1637), qtd. in Moss 1996: n. 32, pp. 272–3, my translation.

12   Elizabeth Eisenstein ranks print distinctively higher in this infrastructure: "When set beside the consequences of the new mode of book production, moreover, the results of improvements in the postal service or overland transport appear trivial indeed. Letters exchanged by Europeans in the early-modern era did not travel much more rapidly than had letters sent out in ancient Rome, but the information flow had nevertheless been transformed [via] the replacement of scribe by printer …" (1979: 462).

13   In the U.S., the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act, 1965, as amended, defines the Humanities to include law, archeology, and social sciences using qualitative methods, but those are usually not included. http://www.neh.gov/about

14   True to the spirit of DH, the symposium was streamed live which is how I attended it. Julia Flanders made this comment 14 March 2012.

15   Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, Gutenburg. org, second hit in find "Locke", http://www.gutenberg.org/files/

1079/1079-h/1079-h.htm, accessed 24 July 2012. Before checking the exact wording of the quotation, I wrote, Sterne called it a history of the workings of Locke's own mind. Is there a difference? What value does the precision of checking and noting have?

16 Johns describes the disputes over authorship by some who entered experiments in the register and then had those experiments published by Robert Boyle or some other Royal Society luminary: in a sense, the manuscript registers can be seen as the foul papers used by Boyle and Henry Oldenberg, the first editor of the *Philosophical Transactions*, which nearly ceased publication at his death but was resumed after a short hiatus (Johns 1998: 479–504).

17 Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, 1605, I.iv.3, p. 30, qtd. in Pooley 1992: 219; Pooley also quotes Howells 1946: 133.

18 Trumpener 2009: 160. Trumpener is responding to Franco Moretti, "Style, Inc." (2009b)—obviously his version of Derrida's "Limited, Inc." Moretti then responds to her critique with some justifiable, in my view, irritation (2009a).

19 The example of this commonplace given in the OED is from Dryden's *Indian Emperour* of 1667: "In weak complaints you vainly wast your breath," III.ii.74.

20 On the history of that development during the eighteenth century, see Valenza 2009, which I rely upon here.

21 Recent work by Ted Underwood, presented at the Digital Humanities 2012 Conference in Hamburg, Germany, demonstrates the simultaneous rise of plainness, simplicity, and clarity in poetry with its own specialized discourse. For me, clarity and commonness—availability to all readers—*intuitively* go together: his findings contradicting that intuition were rather a shock.

22 Locke 1700: 7, cited hereafter by book, chapter, and section.

23 Burke 1757: 164, 167; see also Land 1974: 164, 42, 46.

24 Sir John Davies, Preface to the *Irish Reports*, 1612, quoted in Pocock 1987: 33.

25 Valenza 2009: 174–5, quoting Berkeley 1713: 89–90.

26 McLaughlin focuses his argument upon institutional and human relationships based upon the rejection and acceptance of ideas, not on medium. The argument that Micki McGee derives from this article is really her own, based on the evidence given by McLaughlin,

but it is a good one: "McLaughlin observes that writing a book that becomes a popular success, along with working in a cross-disciplinary fashion, all but ensures that one's work will lose its long-term legitimacy," 2005: 245 n. 6.

27 Adrian Johns uses the term "piracy" in his chapter on the Royal Society that describes some of the "disputes" over priority—who made a discovery first, as evidenced by the Royal Society's Register and subsequent publication in the *Philosophical Transactions* (1998: 504), but Margaret Ezell points out that applying the term "piracy" in a culture of manuscript circulation is really anachronistic (1999: 59).

28 Levine describes the battle between Pope and Theobald fully here, mentioning that Theobald's "several hundred emendations" to *Hamlet* are still used today (1991: 230).

29 Molyneux 1702–3: 1268–71. Molyneux quotes the Latin version in his paper; I have quoted the Latin translation by Watson 1741, available open access in the HathiTrust: http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hw3q1n.

30 Nor, apparently, as Chomskyian linguistics predict, do we know how the structure of languages evolve (Dunn et al., 2011).

31 Baldick is talking about academics here, not ordinary people – I think he wouldn't dare say such things about people, only about foes in an academic contest of considerable importance, but I think in this passage that it is ordinary people who these critics are standing in for.

32 Even when discussing "ethos" in her discussions of Habermas, Amanda Anderson sticks primarily to discussions of communication within institutions that have political effects, to contests between "philosophical positions," "disciplinary struggles," and "deliberative debates"—to the contribution that ethos makes to "polemic" involved in "emerging democratic culture"; see "Argument and Ethos" (Anderson 2006: 134–60).

33 Ong 2002: 119 (reification), 126 (duplication), 118 (the sentence quoted here).

34 My interpretation here is based upon Stanley Cavell's seminar at the School of Criticism and Theory at Dartmouth during summer 1991; any mistakes arise from my own misunderstandings.

35 Augustine, *Confessions*, I.8, quoted in Wittgenstein 1958: 2e, translation provided note 1, of "Cum ipsi (majores homines) appellabant

rem aliquam, et cum secundum eam vocem corpus ad aliquid move-
bant, videbam, et tenebam hoc ab eis vocari rem illam, quod son-
abant, cum eam vellent ostendere."

36 Wittgenstein is doing something similar in his discussion of "red."

37 Ferguson 1992: 119, 122; this essay deserves much more attention as
innovative thinking than it has so far received, in my opinion,
because inappropriately placed—or because as a discipline literary
and cultural studies still does not seem to recognize how caught up
we are in a theoretical Romantic dilemma. On that issue in particular,
see Liu 2003.

38 Moss 1996: 107–9, 111, quoting Desiderius Erasmus, *De Duplici
Copia Verborum ac Rerum*, in *Opera Omnia* (Amsterdam, 1991–4), I, 6,
p. 117.

39 Edwin Hutchins summarizes his 1996 book in a newer essay. He dis-
cusses its shortcomings in terms of not thinking hard enough about
speech as "multimodal behavior," as "embodied activity" (2010: 91).