

early experiments in Gothic fiction, *Zastrozzi* (1810) and *St. Irvyne* (1811), with *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), arguing that each work is an inorganic, Gothic “assemblage that finally disassembles itself” (p. 49). Some key ideas in this chapter are less clearly expressed than they might be. The present reviewer has seen a forthcoming article on the Gothic by Rajan in which these ideas receive a clearer exposition. Taken together, the chapters demonstrate the manifold techniques Shelley’s works employ to disable our received idea of narrative (*viz.*, “the Novel”) and gesture toward a broader kind of “Romantic” narrativity.

The four chapters which follow—on Hays, Godwin, and Wollstonecraft—aim to show how this narrativity works in Romantic-era prose: that is, as a kind of “unworking” of form, “a faculty of perpetual deconstruction” whose forgetting is “crystallized in the Novel” (p. 83). Hence Rajan argues that *Caleb Williams* “puts on trial the very genre of the Novel as judgment: the very reaching of a moral decision formalized by ‘deciding’ or resolving the plot” (p. 121). Similarly, tropes of gambling and alchemy in Godwin’s peculiar novel *St. Leon*, which Rajan inventively reads with Kant, become allegorical of narrativity’s opposition to an encroaching “realism” (in Kantianese, “pragmatic anthropology”). The chapters on Hays and Wollstonecraft test, through inventive readings, how narrativity is enabled or inhibited by the minimal difference between “life” or “biography” and “fiction.”

At its heart Rajan’s book aims—and this is signaled in her choice of representative authors—to restore to “Romanticism” a certain spirit of resistance or radicalism. Whether one agrees with its goals and methods or not, *Romantic Narrative* stands as a striking instance of the recent return to thinking about genre—and, again, the limits of genre—in the Romantic Era. Indeed, it might be productively read alongside recent—if very different—work in the field, such as David Duff’s *Romanticism and the Uses of Genre* (Oxford, 2009), or Srinivas Aravamudan’s *Enlightenment Orientalism: Resisting the Rise of the Novel* (Chicago, 2011).

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The Neural Sublime: Cognitive Theories and Romantic Texts. By ALAN RICHARDSON. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. Pp. xv, 179. Paper, \$35.00.

The Neural Sublime is about marrying the science of cognition to the study of literature—a difficult proposition when most cognitive scientists have refused to appear at this wedding! Can Richardson bring cognitive science to the altar? Even if he can, will the marriage succeed; will literature and cognitive science each respect and honor what the other has to give?

Richardson, as a literary scholar, indicts literary scholars for spurning cognitive science: no wonder cognitive science flees the union that sometime did it seek, he claims, when it isn’t valued and respected by the literary family. Cognitive science, though, is far from blameless in this nuptial spat, never having taken

time to understand literature's culture and discourse. To the extent that it wants literature to be a part of its life at all, cognitive science seems to want literature as an extension of its own ego rather than as a valued partner. If the wedding is to end well, cognitive science and literature will have to surpass mere inter-discursive adoption of each other's terms and develop actual interdisciplinarity.

In the face of this interdiscursive coldness, Richardson defends the honor of literary scholarship, insisting, "I do not regard [neuroscience, cognitive science, and evolutionary biology] as intrinsically superior or more authoritative than the humanities" (p. xi). That he feels this necessary to say, though, tells a great deal about the current state of cognitive literary studies. Many literary scholars—not Richardson—seem still to feel a sort of colonial deference to their perceived cognitive-scientist masters who dwell on the proper side of the Two Cultures divide. Which is the truer discourse, though? Whose terms more genuinely or directly represent the structure of human cognition? Does it make any extra sense to declare that "[the Eltons] tacitly count on Emma's gaze direction detection and shared attention capacities to make sure she shares Harriet's embarrassment and pain" (p. 91)? Richardson succeeds so well in his cognitive-literary matchmaking precisely because he uses this substitution of terms only as example; less confident literary scholars might offer it as explanation. Richardson's crucial point amounts to the observation that a healthy marriage is an equitable one. Cognitive science, in particular, can steer literature's attention towards "the right questions" (p. x), but literature then can apply its own proper methods—methods that extend or supplant those of cognitive science—to these cognitive hypotheses and propositions.

Richardson's opening two chapters provide background on historicism and on the British Romantics' implicit awareness of the sublime as an experience of the subjectivity of neurally mediated perception, with a focus on Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, and Wordsworth. The next two link the cognitive phenomenon of theory-of-mind to the literary device of apostrophe, with a particular focus on the misconstruals in Jane Austen's *Emma*. An apostrophic speaker's awareness of the putative addressee isn't so much suspended as it is augmented by awareness of an audience—usually in a generative, purposeful mode typical of cognitivism rather than in a self-abnegating, catastrophic mode typical of deconstruction. The book closes by relating evolutionary biology to the monstrous outcomes of Romantic incest narratives, and exploring vocal affect in the siren songs of Romantic poetry that capture male speakers' (and authors') hearts—topics that may seem forced only because they could be, and perhaps ought to form, separate volumes in their own right.

As if to demonstrate its argument for historicism and contextualization, *The Neural Sublime* is written from the literary point of view, from which cognitive science is decidedly the other and the foreign. Aspects of the argument take an atavistic view of cognitive science: much of the text appeals to twentieth-century cognitive science's modularist ideology when in fact Richardson's position

contra structural absolutes, and his appeal to constrained constructivism in particular, would be strengthened by reference to the more current cognitive developmental theory of interactive specialization. Similarly, Richardson's treatment of apostrophe rediscovers cognitive psychologist Yaacov Trope's notion of psychological distance and its relation to level of construal, but doesn't explicitly draw the resulting connection between a continuum of apostrophe and a like continuum of theory-of-mind complexity. Perhaps in a culturally inspired zeal to credit feminist readings, Richardson neglects results on cognitive sex differences in language development and empathy—differences which, again, would have deepened his earlier-presented observations on theory-of-mind.

In the cognitive literary universals that it observes as in the cognitive scientific developments that it neglects, then, Richardson's text is a product not only of its time but also of the literary-scholarly culture in which its author is embedded—and this limitation of Richardson's text itself serves to emphasize his point about the role for cognitive historicism in the interpretation of any text. His is an argument that cognitive literary critics sorely need to hear.

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Building Romanticism: Literature and Architecture in Nineteenth-Century Britain. By NICOLE REYNOLDS. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010. Pp. viii, 211. Cloth, \$70.00.

Literary critics have long noted the architectural metaphors that underlie canonical texts by writers like Wordsworth, Keats, and De Quincey—the epic poem as cathedral, human life as a Mansion of Many Apartments, sleep and dream as Piranesian interior—but they tend to see these as isolated tropes. In *Building Romanticism*, Nicole Reynolds asks why so many Romantic-period authors employed architecture as an organizing metaphor, and why, correspondingly, architects dwelt on the literariness of built space, using narrative paradigms like the Gothic and the Lyric to describe their environments. At this significant moment in England's history, Reynolds suggests, various charged architectural spaces became flash points for “shifting notions of gender and sexuality, increasing class mobility, the individual's uncertain place in history, challenges to the British national character and to the project of nation building, and the very form and function of art itself” (p. 3).

This study treats a broad range of genres and texts, from Keats's “The Eve of St. Agnes” to Sir John Soane's descriptive guidebook, using an interdisciplinary array of critical lenses to illuminate the issues at stake. In four main chapters expanding spatially, Reynolds moves from a consideration of windows and case-ments to an examination of the boudoir, the cottage, the house, and finally the house as museum. In a brief Afterword, the visual field radically contracts, as Reynolds uses C. N. Ledoux's “Coup d'oeil du théâtre de Besançon” (1804) to contemplate a theatrical space in the mind or in the mind's eye. It is an apt image