BRYAN GRACE

Class, Suffering, and Sensibility in Godwin's *Caleb Williams*

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, sensibility exploded in popularity as an aesthetic, philosophical, and scientific concept in England; despite the supposedly disinterested nature of these discourses, sensibility was never divorced from its sociopolitical contexts. Modern readers are attentive to the fact that Wordsworth's famous description of the poet, formulated in the "Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*" as a man endowed with "more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature" (414), is largely contingent on economic factors such as leisure time and education. In fact, the science of sensibility as it was first formulated by Newton and Locke quickly took on social and political reverberations in subsequent thinkers such as David Hume, Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, and William

Godwin. These thinkers negotiated sensibility and class issues in an economy of suffering—the proposition that one man's suffering is quantitatively and qualitatively more valuable than another's. These political frameworks inform William Godwin's *Things as they are; or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (*CW*); specifically, Godwin explores the ways in which an economy of suffering that privileges the ruling classes can be used as a justification for the tyrannical treatment of the subordinate classes. For Godwin, as for many thinkers of the eighteenth century, scientific concepts of sensibility were intertwined with the social, cultural, and ethical ramifications of those concepts. But for him, the economy of suffering was not a reflection of the natural order of things, but just one more way in which proponents of "things as they are" justified their tyranny.

Modern science has succeeded in showing that sensations are no more than electrical impulses that travel along nerves into the brain. While this may be true, it hardly succeeds in enlightening the different ways in which sensations are *interpreted* by subjects—or more precisely, how the interpretation of sensation is inflected by historical and social factors. In his book *The Culture of Pain*, David Morris points out how pain "cannot be reduced to a mere transaction of the nervous system. The experience of pain is also shaped by such powerful cultural forces as gender, religion, and social class" (20). Following Michel Foucault, Morris argues that a meaningful interpretation of pain "emerges only at the intersection of bodies, minds, and cultures" (3). Shifting emphasis in such a way, from the physiological act of sensation to the historically grounded interpretation of sensation, is "to open up the possibility for differences in the political significance of pain" (Bruhm 27-8). These are exactly the kinds of possibilities that need to be opened up when reading a novel like *Caleb Williams*, since Godwin's text explores

the political consequences of the "economy of suffering"—that revealing intersection of body, mind, and culture. Knowing this doubly vested structure, one must be attuned not only to what Godwin is saying about *either* sensibility *or* authority, but to interrogate how the informing discourses of sensibility and class consciousness penetrate each other.

Such an argument is not without precedent in recent scholarship. For example, in *Gothic Bodies: The Politics of Pain in Romantic Fiction*, Steven Bruhm notes the ways in which pain can inspire "ambiguous politics." He positions Godwin as one of several Romantic authors probing the politically contentious issue of "whose pain we should feel and whose pain we should remain insensible to" (24). Isabel Bour observes that the main plot of *Caleb Williams* dramatizes "the failure of sensibility as a moral principle and as an epistemological master concept" (820)—a proposition I agree with, yet hasten to add that the *reason* sensibility fails as a moral principle is because of the particular ideological economy Godwin sees attached to it. Monika Fludernik picks up this line of inquiry in "Spectacle, Theatre and Sympathy in *Caleb Williams*," saying that "a criticism of sympathy as subtending the existing power structures" is "valid." She notes how such an argument "mirrors a corresponding criticism of the aesthetics of the sublime," but passes over such analysis to focus instead on "problematical workings of sympathy beyond its merely ideological functions" (7). In another, related article, "William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*: the Tarnishing of the Sublime," Fludernik calls sympathy "a concept of threatening ambivalence" that Godwin uses to "deconstruct the religious and ideological tenets underpinning Burke's fundamentally conservative beliefs" (888). Coming at the problem from a vastly different angle—by looking into the way classical allusions function in the novel—Andrew M. Stauffer argues that Godwin's novel is a

critique of chivalric passions that "reveal the dangerous connections between honor and anger" (6). While each of these writers has cleared some of the ground to enable my analysis, none has endeavoured to build the kind of structures that a politically aware reading of sensibility in *Caleb Williams* requires.

An example from *Caleb Williams* will serve to open up discussion about how issues of sensibility and authority are negotiated in the text. The words come from Squire Tyrrel, outraged that his cousin Emily Melvile—who has fallen in love with his nemesis Falkland—now refuses to be married off to the boorish and uncouth Grimes:

> Could I even inflict upon you such injuries as you have made me suffer? And who are you? The lives of twenty such as you cannot atone for an hour of my uneasiness. If you were to linger for twenty years upon the rack, you would never feel what I have felt. (64)

There are a number of relevant remarks to be made about this passage. The immediate observation is that the overall statement is a lie—that is, it is not a true representation of a state of affairs. Tyrrel's words are a hyperbolic exaggeration of the dogma that the upper classes were endowed with superior sensibility compared to the lower ranks of men (an argument more fully developed below). This is especially true considering that Tyrrel is described as "boisterous, rugged and unfeeling" (33) and typically has little regard for foppish sensibility, while contrarily, Emily "displayed an uncommon degree of sensibility" (49). Additionally, Tyrrel's so-called "injuries" derive from little more than polite remonstrances from Emily, reasonable objections to his unwarranted tyranny. "You should not think of joining two people for a whim," she carefully objects, "who are neither of them fit for one another in any respect in the world" (64). This is the kind of

reasoned response that typically draws an explosive response the tyrant. Nevertheless, Tyrrel's claim is a *belief* that motivates *action*—it reflects an ideology. Louis Althusser's definition of ideology as "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (23) is particularly germane here, since, to Tyrrel, the truth of the matter is hardly relevant. He *imagines* that his suffering must be more acute than Emily's because of his superior status, and this serves as the foundation of his subsequent actions.

Tyrrel's ideology points to what Bruhm and Morris call the problematic politics of pain. Writing in a different context, but one that is immediately relevant, Morris points out how racist American slave owners justified their cruel treatment of African slaves because "the pain of slaves was considered either wholly trivial or… richly deserved" (39). The accuracy of the slave owner's claim is secondary to its function: rationalizing the violent oppression of slaves by minimizing, in theory, their pain. Again, Althusser is helpful in drawing out the political repercussions of sensibility. It is clear that *Caleb Williams* is in many ways critical of several branches of what Althusser calls the Repressive State Apparatus; "the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons" (11). The economy of suffering that Tyrrel propounds, in so far as it is an ideology, is an Ideological State Apparatus. While Althusser is clear that both mechanisms serve the same ends, he also makes the distinction that "the Repressive State Apparatus functions 'by violence', whereas the Ideological State Apparatuses *function* '*by ideology*'" (12, emphasis Althusser's). In terms of eighteenth-century proto-capitalism, the discourses surrounding the economy of sensibility that privileges one class's suffering over another's—makes one suffering more *valuable* than another—

function to serve the same ends as the courts, the prisons, and the law; the RSA and ISA both facilitate the interests of the dominant political powers.

Tyrrel's words should thus be read as an expression of class difference. A potentially rewarding alternative reading that places Tyrrel's invective in the context of a *gendered* economy of sensibility is here bracketed off, in order to stress the class dynamics at work. His words are no mere observation; they are the expression of an ideology that he can use to justify his tyrannical treatment of Emily. Tyrrel sets up a contrast between himself and Emily primarily based on his conception of her as a separate, lower class than himself. Emily's mixed parentage—the daughter of an "unfortunate" marriage between a noblewoman and an irresponsible "adventurer" who squandered the inherited fortune—leaves her "without any resource upon the wide world" (48-9). As a result of this trouble, Emily is raised in an "amphibious situation, which was neither precisely that of a domestic, nor yet marked with the treatment that might seem due to one of the family" (49). Because of Emily's unfortunate circumstances, Tyrrel considers himself socially superior to her. "Who are you?" he asks, inferring that his life and identity are exponentially more valuable than hers.

The crucial class dynamic at work here is that Tyrrel believes his experience of sensibility, as a member of the gentry, is more developed and more valuable than Emily's. Even under extreme circumstances of torture, "you would never feel what I have felt," he insists, presuming an insurmountable gap between the range of his sensibility and hers. This supposition draws directly on an eighteenth-century tradition of popular, scientific, and philosophic writings hypothesizing that the nerve elasticity that facilitates neurological transmissions was more highly developed in the middle classes (Barker-

Benfield 1). In his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1749), David Hume went so far as to say that "The skin, pores, muscles, and nerves of a day-labourer are different from those of a man of quality: So are his sentiments, actions and manners" (276). It would not be a stretch to read Hume's description of the day-labourer's disposition as "different," to mean "less refined" or "worse," since he goes on to claim that the "different stations arise necessarily, because uniformly, from the necessary and uniform principles of human nature" (276). Hume's contention that the different classes arise "necessarily" from the differing constitutions of human physiology is echoed in Edmund Burke's *Reflection on the Revolution in France*. Burke claims that, from the combination of primary natural disposition and secondary social life:

> arose many diversities amongst men, according to their birth, their education, their professions, the periods of their lives, their residence in towns or in the country, their several ways of acquiring and of fixing property, and according to the quality of property itself, all which rendered them as it were so many different species of animals. (185)

According to this formulation, society exerts a centrifugal force on men, separating naturally superior individuals into graduated class structures. The conclusion to be drawn is that, for Burke, *things as they are*, the sedimentary socio-economic order, is a reflection of the natural order, and efforts to change that order (such as the revolution in France) are unnatural. Significantly, Burke's formulation echoes articles in England's popular press that recommend "perceiving the miserable and hungry in London's streets as 'a different species'" (Barker-Benfield 1). Implicitly, there is a kind of dehumanization

at play in Burke's theory, as the gentleman looks down upon the lower classes not only as a different species but an *inferior* one.

Godwin resolutely rejected attempts like Burke's to rationalize the highly stratified nature of English society as a reflection of necessary and essential differences between individuals. In his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (*PJ*), Godwin argues against the notion of essential difference, and attributes the current order strictly to "impressions"—the sensory input affecting the nervous systems even from the pre-natal stages of life. For him, impressions both shape and are shaped by sensibility. He writes, "it is impression that makes the man, and, compared with the empire of impression, the mere differences of animal structure are inexpressibly unimportant and powerless" (34). Further still, Godwin does not outright reject Hume's position that the sensibility of a labourer is "different" from that of a nobleman; he knows very well that a man subjected to a life of hard labour will cultivate different sensibilities than a man accustomed to a life of luxury. Instead, Godwin traces the difference in "disposition" explicitly to external factors, arguing that "the actions and dispositions of mankind are the offspring of circumstances of events, and not of any original determination that they bring into the world" (28). Godwin's point is a very modern one. He states, alongside Hume and Burke that, yes, subjects do indeed experience pain differently—no single stimulus produces identical results in two separate individuals. But, the "different species" that Burke talks about in his *Reflections* arise not because they represent the natural eminence of one man over another, but because of the inherited orders into which men are born and are cultivated.

Incidentally, Godwin's critical attitude toward Burke's "different species" ideology informs *Caleb Williams* before the narrative ever begins. The title page of the 1794 edition uses the following verse motto:

> Amidst the woods the leopard knows his kind;
>
> The tiger preys not on the tiger brood:
>
> Man only is the common foe of man. (1)

This is a paraphrase of the Latin proverb *Homo homini lupus* ("man is a wolf to man"). Godwin recognizes that to denigrate a class of people to an existentially inferior position is to open the possibility for social oppression. Again, Godwin appears to be directly responding to Burke, by implying that the division of different ranks of men into "different species" is explicitly not natural, as the latter had argued. It is a predilection exclusive to man, not even shared by the most ferocious beasts of prey.

Returning again to Tyrrel's venomous attack on Emily, the final thing to note specifically about his diatribe is the significant contrast it bears to an important passage in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In the second paragraph of his treatise, Smith articulates one of the fundamental principles of sympathy:

> Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our sense will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. (9)

In contrast, Tyrrel claims that Emily could not suffer as he had, should she spend "twenty years on the rack" (64). The implication of this difference is that the perniciousness of

class hierarchies prevents individuals from the proper exercise of sympathy. If nobles regard the lower classes as a "different species" as Burke suggests, it should be impossible (and distasteful) to use the imagination to form a conception of their suffering. While "our brother" is upon the rack, the sympathetic imagination works just fine; but replace the brother with a member of a "different species,"—particularly one dehumanized by class differences—and sympathy breaks down. If sympathy is a true account of human morality, then, Godwin implies, hierarchical class regimentation is the root cause of immorality.

Thus far I have mainly endeavoured to show how the economy of suffering that informs *Caleb Williams* was foregrounded in the contemporary discourses surrounding sensibility that privileged the pain of the upper classes over that of their inferiors. The analysis has focused mostly on the secondary plot of Volume I, the conflict between Tyrrel and Emily. This economy also crucially informs the relationship between Caleb and Falkland. Explication of the Tyrrel/Emily pairing sets up a sustained assessment of this dynamic in the predatory relationship between Caleb and Falkland. The parameters of this extended analysis are roughly the same, though somewhat complicated by Falkland's more sophisticated sensibility when compared to the brutish Tyrrel.

Whereas in the relationship between Tyrrel and Emily, the class-privileged economy of suffering intensifies tyrannical oppression, this situation is, (initially) reversed between Falkland and Caleb. Caleb cannot seem to put Falkland's "secret wound" (106) out of his mind: "What was the meaning of all Mr Falkland's agonies and terrors?" he asks himself in perverse delectation (104). Falkland's exquisite sufferings, his paroxysms, bouts of madness, and fits of unaccountable rage tantalize, rather than

frighten, Caleb. Falkland's "secret wound" becomes a fetishized object of desire for Caleb, feeding his curiosity and "impelling" him inevitably towards subterfuge. He pushes on heedless of impropriety, trying to discover the "story" (133) that will enlighten Falkland's strange appearance. In fact, Caleb is acting in line with a kind of human perverseness that Adam Smith points to in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*:

> A stranger to human nature, who saw the indifference of men about the misery of their inferiors, and the regret and indignation which they feel for the misfortunes and sufferings of those above them, would be apt to imagine, that pain must be more agonizing, and the convulsions of death more terrible to persons of higher rank, than to those of meaner stations. (52)

This perverse urge inscribes relatively greater value in the suffering of social superiors. Thus, for Caleb, Falkland has a vicarious "tragic hero" appeal that has cathartic value, spurring him to moments of ecstasy and other tingling sensations (104). Falkland's "tender and ambiguous sensibility" (111) is an enticing ambrosia too sweet to resist.

The relationship in these stages has a theatrical quality—Caleb always watching and Falkland always mindful of his demeanour. The peasant's trial, especially, illustrates the performative aspects of their relationship. Noticing the minor similarities between Falkland's case and the peasant's, Caleb declares that "I will watch him without remission. I will trace all the mazes of his thought" (123). Aware that he is under close supervision, Falkland's "complexion turned from red to pale, and from pale to red." Noticing these changes, Caleb opines that "I perfectly understood his feelings" (123). For Caleb, sympathy is a means of reading Falkland's bodily guilt; on the other hand, "if

sympathy leads to 'the true equalization of men,' as Godwin argues in *Political Justice*, then Falkland is alarmed because Caleb's 'familiarity' subverts social hierarchy" (Daffron 222). Falkland is acutely aware that Caleb's prying into his secret guilt threatens to transgress his privileged status. "I am at the mercy of every creature," he says, "however little, who feels himself inclined to sport with my distress" (117). Instead of solidifying his control, Falkland's delectable sensibility acts as a lure, tempting his social inferiors, "however little," to sport with him.

One of the keys to understanding the relationship between Caleb and Falkland is through Godwin's allusion to Alexander the Great. One of the methods Caleb uses to investigate Falkland's treasured "secret wound" are a series of apparently haphazard "innuendos" calculated to arouse guilt in the squire. While Caleb works as a secretary "arranging some papers" for his master, he ventures to question Falkland about the heroic merits of the great ruler of antiquity. Alexander, Caleb says, "spread destruction and ruin over the face of nations!" by "sacrificing" thousands of men to ensure his fame (109). Falkland repels these accusations by minimizing Alexander's crimes: "The death of a hundred thousand men is at first sight very shocking," he says, "but what in reality are a hundred thousand such men more than a hundred thousand sheep?" (108). The modifier "such" also takes on an ominous valence in this context. To great individuals like Alexander and Falkland, *such* men's lives mean little to nothing, their suffering is a negligible sacrifice made at the altar of fame. One hardly has to read between these lines to see that, despite his claims to be a sympathetic and beneficent lover of men, Falkland actually subordinates other men's suffering to his misanthropic lust for fame (as he has done with the Hawkinses). Generally speaking, their lives are simply of less value to him

than fame. "Do you not know," he asks, that "I have sworn to protect my reputation at whatever expence, that I love it more than the whole world and its inhabitants taken together" (150). Caleb's insinuating reference to Alexander is particularly apt, since "the Macedonian ruler represents everything…that Falkland hugs so dearly. Yet all of these attributes are based in Falkland's commitment to aristocratic chivalry and *noblesse oblige*, both of which involve a view of common men as 'sheep'" (Stauffer 4). Falkland minimizes Alexander's (and thus his own) exploitation of men in a Burkean fashion: by denigrating the "common man" to a lower species of animal.

The parallel between Falkland and Alexander is also significant, since it turns out to have prophetic connotations. While Caleb is hiding in the forest, the thieves who have been sheltering him become aware of a substantial reward offered for his capture. Mr. Raymond, attempting to prevent his fellow thieves from turning Caleb over to the authorities, asks his cohorts, "Will you for so paltry a consideration deliver up the lamb into the jaws of the wolf?" (217). Raymond's metaphor makes clear the connections between "different species" and tyranny. The upper classes, Falkland, Tyrrel, and Alexander, prey upon the lower classes: man is a wolf to man.

Caleb's investigations do not last very long; Falkland quickly realizes that he is being manipulated by his servant, and is enraged at Caleb's improprieties:

> "How came this conversation? cried he. Who gave you a right to be my confident? Base, artful wretch that you are! learn to be more respectful! Are my passions to be wound and unwound by an insolent domestic? Do you think I will be an instrument to be played on at your pleasure, till you have extorted all the treasures of my soul?" (115)

Firstly, this passage bears a keen similarity to the passage, discussed earlier, where Tyrrel rancorously demeans his cousin. Falkland, like Tyrrel, draws the lines of propriety between himself and Caleb along class lines: "Who gave you a right to be my confident?" he asks, with presumable emphasis on the "you" and the "my," thereby echoing Tyrrel's venomous "And who are you?" (64). Stressing Caleb's status as a household employee, Falkland effectively (but temporarily) reasserts the hierarchy that Caleb threatened to obscure with his intrusions. Secondly, the economic language Falkland uses to describe his sensibility is significant. The secret to his suffering is regarded as a high-value commodity, a "treasure" to be defended against the importunities of an "insolent domestic." On this point, it is also noteworthy that Falkland keeps the secret locked up in a mysterious chest, again evoking the luxuries of valuable treasure. Caleb is an "extortionist," a swindler trying to leverage Falkland out of one of his most valuable possessions. This economic language is repeated soon afterwards, when Caleb reminds himself to be wary since, "I should have an overseer, vigilant from conscious guilt, full of resentment at the unjustifiable means by which I had extorted from him a confession" (135). Here, Caleb reiterates Falkland's depiction of him as extortionist, strengthening the claim that there is an (illicit) transaction taking place, an economic principle working through the fetishized value of sensibility/pain instead of cash.

As many critics note, there are a range of similarities between Tyrrel and Falkland, and the respective victims of their despotism, Emily and Caleb. Both Tyrrel and Falkland decide that the pain of their enemies is not worth feeling—in other words, both strategically refuse to imagine fellow feeling with their social inferiors, when it suits their interests. Tyrrel attempts to justify his malignant behaviour through a series of rhetorical

gestures. He explains his anger towards Emily by insisting that "the law justifies it" (79), thereby shutting down the possibility of sympathy between them. He rationalizes his irrational temper by maintaining, "I will not spare her an hour. She had no consideration for me, and I have no mercy for her" (80). He further disassociates himself from the suffering he causes by asking, upon news of her death, "if she be dead, what is that to me? Am I to answer for everything that goes wrong in the world?" (88). This hyperbolic rhetoric shows that, on some level, Tyrrel is aware of his own guilt—but his words serve as a gesture to deny fellow feeling. This strategic closure to sympathy is echoed by Falkland later in the narrative when he cautions Caleb that, "I shall crush you in the end with the same indifference that I would to any other little insect that disturbed my serenity… I am now perfectly insensible to every thing you can suffer, but I have no pleasure in it" (149). The addendum that he will take "no pleasure" from the prosecution he intends to visit upon Caleb is surely little consolation. Here again, we see the dehumanization of the victim as a different species, a mere insect to be squashed; the dehumanization is only amplified by the adjective, "little," which again serves to remind Caleb of his inconsequentiality compared to his wealthy master. The implication that Caleb "disturbed" his master's "serenity" is peculiar as well, since Falkland is described from the first as possessing an "unquietness of mind" (4). Like Tyrrel's reference to the "injuries" that Emily caused him, then, Falkland's reference to broken serenity appears to be imaginary. Additionally, his promise to become "insensible" to everything Caleb can suffer foregrounds the dogged prosecution that is to follow. All this is not to say that Caleb is perfectly innocent, but merely that his punishment certainly is disproportionate to his crimes.

Like Tyrrel, Falkland uses insensible administrative arms of the Repressive State Apparatus to persecute his enemy. Tyrrel finds the coarse Grimes "most happily adapted to his purpose" of carrying out his plot, especially since Grimes possesses "an incapacity to conceive those finer feelings that make so large a part of the history of persons who are cast in a gentler mould" (58). The bailiffs who come to arrest Emily are also notably indifferent to her weakened state, insisting that, "We have orders to take her sick or well" (81). Insensate Grimes has a counterpart in the "unfeeling" (283) Jones whom Falkland hires to hound Caleb across the English countryside. The comparison between Grimes and Jones as "tools of despotism" is made even more evident in subsequent editions of Caleb Williams, Fludernik argues, due to the homonymic similarities between Grimes and "Gines"—Jones' updated name ("Tarnishing of the Sublime" 859). Tyrrel's bailiffs also have their doubles in the jailors at the prison where Caleb is incarcerated: according to Caleb, these loathsome characters "were of all men least capable of any sort of feeling" (175). These repeated instances of unfeeling individuals acting on behalf of the state are indicative of the corrupting grasp the upper classes hold over (supposedly egalitarian) administrative justice. Their indifference merely mirrors that of their masters, seeping from the top down and ensuring that oppression and cruelty will be the law of the land.

Significantly, the published ending of *Caleb Williams* has Caleb reconciling with Falkland by appealing to the master's superior sensibilities. In a long testimony before the court, where he is supposed to make a reasoned case for Falkland's guilt in the murder of Tyrrel, Caleb outlines the many pains, physical and mental, he has suffered because of Falkland's tyranny. After enumerating many of the trials he has endured, he explains, drawing upon the language of sympathy, "I am sure that, if I had opened my

heart to Mr Falkland, if I had told to him privately the tale that I have now been telling, he could not have resisted my reasonable demand" (300). Caleb adds that, despite the murder of Tyrrel, the betrayal of the Hawkinses, and his own persecution, "I affirm that he has qualities of the most admirable kind. It is therefore impossible that he could have resisted a frank and fervent expostulation, the frankness and the fervour in which the whole soul was poured out" (300). At first, Falkland interprets Caleb's testimony as malign—the insect taking one last sting. His indignation only increases when he "discovers" Caleb "as he supposed, using a pretence of liberality and sentiment, to give new edge to my hostility" (301). Yet, this scepticism fades when he realizes, to his surprise, that "there was much of what [Caleb] said, of which he had little conception" (301). Caleb's words prove that, despite his humble origins, he is capable of great sensation—a fact of which Falkland previously had "little conception." This *irresistible* testimony forces Falkland to acknowledge Caleb's sufferings as something valuable, something essentially akin to his own pain. Falkland opens up to sympathetic intercourse when he finally views Caleb not as a different species, but as an *equal*-in-sensibility; Caleb discerns that Falkland "saw my sincerity; he was penetrated with my grief and compunction" (301). This "penetration" of the repressed sorrow and remorse represents the moment when the economy of suffering ideology breaks down—when the tyrant is metaphorically "touched," "entered," or "invaded" by the pain of his victims. Falkland rises and embraces Caleb like a brother, two men stretched upon the same rack. Falkland's eventual reply, "I see too late the greatness and elevation of your mind," implies that he finally perceives the value, the "greatness" of Caleb's suffering. Once this revaluation happens, which is the "elevation" of Caleb's pains from inconsequential to

relevant, Falkland can extend the bonds of mutual sympathy. Albeit, far too late to save either himself or Caleb.

In contrast to the reconciliation that concludes the published version, the unpublished manuscript ending has Caleb failing to tear down the dominant ideologies around sensibility, thus earning no sympathy from either Falkland or the court. This is due first to the noticeably artificial way he presents himself: after recuperating from the shock of seeing Falkland's wasted body, Caleb stands before the court "perfectly self-possessed," meditating on "the successive parts of the transaction I had to explain" (306). From here, Caleb forgoes his sympathetic identification with Falkland that had been the prevalent theme of the published ending, focusing instead upon salvaging "my future character, my liberty and my peace" (306). Caleb speaks with a calculative design, and he is initially successful, enabling him to "discern in my audience feelings exactly such as I intended to excite" (306). However, unlike the published ending, Caleb's story does not communicate something of which Falkland had "little conception." In the published ending Falkland describes Caleb's testimony as an "artless and manly story" (301). In total contrast to this, in the unpublished manuscript ending the squire merely acknowledges that Caleb's story "was told with great artifice and appearance of consistency" (306). This perceptible "artifice" lends credibility to Falkland's subsequent claims that Caleb's motive clearly must be "either revenge" for the shame of prosecution, "or a weak hope of retrieving [his] character" (307). Seeing that his first sally has failed, Caleb immediately launches into another, more impassioned and less artificial explanation of his case. This time, he says, "I spoke with a rapidity, perturbation and vehemence that were absolutely alarming to my hearers" (307). However, poisoned by

his own vehemence and Falkland's prefatory condemnation, Caleb's second protestations of innocence provoke not sympathy, but "alarm." Neither approach achieves the same "penetration" as Caleb's story does in the alternative, published ending; Caleb's sensibility remains devalued, an inauthentic and alarming scheme of some other species.

Caleb Williams is a novel professing to expose the "gore-dripping robes of authority" (203) for what they are—sinister impositions on the potentially perfectible individual. These metaphorical "robes" take many concrete forms: prisons, courts, officers, mercenaries. But they also take ethereal forms in the silent ideologies manifested in everyday life. The "economy of suffering" is of the latter type. It is an ideology that mobilizes prejudices and tyranny against the working classes. Godwin's novel insists that an economy of suffering privileging the upper classes necessarily leads to the devaluation of other men's suffering which leads, in turn, to the dehumanization of men. As a concept fundamentally tied to morality, the opportune devaluation of working-class sensibility directly contradicts the principles of *noblesse oblige* at a time when, as the result of rapid industrialization and increasing urbanization, the poor would have been unmistakeably visible; in other words, at a time when the noble classes ought precisely to be feeling more for the oppressed, not less.

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