CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

When this journal was in the process of becoming an online journal, we indicated that it faced an uncertain future. In particular, it was not attracting enough contributions to appear annually. Unfortunately that trend has continued. The present academic climate is unfriendly to small, specialist journals, nor are such journals helped by the digital revolution in which material of uncertain quality is posted on the web. As editors we have been committed to maintaining the quality of the journal and, with few submissions coming in, the journal is no longer sustainable. We have therefore concluded, reluctantly, that this will be the last number of *Enlightenment and Dissent.*

Some final reflections

When the journal was founded in 1982 its aim was to expand the subject matter from the Price-Priestley newsletter which as the title suggested focussed on Richard Price, Joseph Priestley and their immediate circle, notably of the Honest Whigs. *Enlightenment and Dissent* succeeded in such ambitions, broadening its chronological span from the late seventeenth century to the mid nineteenth century either through thematic numbers, for example the role of women in enlightened Dissent and the place of science in Enlightenment thought, or special issues, focussing on individuals, notably Samuel Clarke and Isaac Newton, all guest edited by experts in the field. It has published work concerning the Enlightenment in America, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France and Germany, including substantial pieces which would not have found an outlet in most journals, wedded as they are to word limits. Similarly reviewers were given space to explore the full significance of the work reviewed, and some reviews metamorphosed into review articles. Another distinctive feature of *Enlightenment and Dissent* is that it has published original documents of unusual interest including material by Richard Price, Joseph Priestley, Theophilus Lindsey, William Godwin, William Morgan and most recently a special supplement of the Diary of Hannah Lightbody.

The editorial policy of the journal has differed from many journals today in that the editors edited and were not dependent on referees

or peer reviewers. They did indeed take advice, for which they were very grateful, but the editors were hands-on, and it was a matter of pride that they checked over the references of contributors, something which has become much easier with the launching of Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Prior to that they were able to consult the holdings of Aberystwyth University library, the National Library of Wales, D O Thomas's wonderful library of antiquarian books and other well known collections.

Over the years the journal has attracted some eminent contributors and ground-breaking contributions. In that context it is sad to report that Alan P F Sell, who contributed numerous articles, review articles and reviews, died in February last year. He was always looking for ways of supporting the journal, and was a great source of information and advice. He retained a wonderful sense of perspective; his scholarship came with a smile. The journal has been fortunate to have such distinguished supporters and contributors. Before we bow out, we think it worth noting that the contributor of the main article in this number, Timothy Brain, has always retained an interest in things academic while enjoying a successful career in the police force. It is especially fitting that the author of the last article to be published in *Enlightenment and Dissent* was one of our earliest contributors, writing for the *Price-Priestley Newsletter* before it became the journal. We owe a debt of thanks to all those like Dr. Brain, who, as contributors and subscribers, have supported the journal over many years.

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JD</div>

THE NEW POLICE 1829: THE ENLIGHTENMENT IN ACTION

Timothy Brain

Introduction
In September 1829 Lieutenant Colonel Charles Rowan and Richard Mayne, the magistrates recently appointed to take charge of the newly created Metropolitan Police, issued their first instructions to the 1,000-strong force.[1] These contained a key phrase.

> It should be understood, at the outset, that the principal object to be attained is the Prevention of Crime.

It seems that Robert Peel, the Home Secretary who had finally steered though Parliament the Metropolitan Police Bill after several years of false starts, had inserted the qualifying word 'principal' at the last minute, but it lessened only marginally the effect of the instructions, as the next paragraph illustrates:

> To this great end every effort of the Police is to be directed. The security of person and property, the preservation of tranquillity, and all other objects of a Police Establishment, will thus be better effected, than by the detection and punishment of the offender, after he has succeeded in committing the crime. This should be kept in mind by every member of the Police Force, as the guide for his own conduct. Officers and Police Constables should endeavour to distinguish themselves by such vigilance and activity, as may render it extremely difficult

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[1] Lt Col Sir Charles Rowan KCB (1782(?)-1850); born County Antrim, army officer 1797-1829; Commissioner of the Police for the Metropolis 1829-50. Sir Richard Mayne KCB (1798-1868); born Dublin, graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, barrister Northern Circuit; Metropolitan Police Commissioner from 1829 until his death.

for any one to commit a crime within that portion of the town under their charge.[2]

In making this statement, placing prevention as the principal duty of the Metropolitan Police, Rowan, Mayne and Peel were implicitly acknowledging the influence of, and their debt to, some of the most important principles of the European Enlightenment. Consequently, although created in nineteenth century England, the 'New Police', of which the Metropolitan Police was simply an early, if numerically large, example, was an intellectual child of the eighteenth. Ideas of preventive policing, indeed of preventive justice**,** became more coherent and influential as a direct result of the influence of the Enlightenment. It is, however, important to qualify that statement to the degree that it is necessary to emphasise that the Enlightenment did not invent the principle of prevention; that was implicit in the various requirements which established night watches in urban areas in England since at least the later middle ages. The Enlightenment's contribution was to take this implicit principle, systematise it and shape it into such compelling form that it became the explicit influence shaping fundamental innovations (contemporary politicians would prefer the term 'reform') in law, penal policy and the police. It is policy development in the latter category that is the focus here, but the three were inextricably linked in the minds of reformers.

That such polices were required, however, was due to a series of social and political threats associated with crime and disorder, amounting to a crisis in the aftermath of the American War of Independence, to which traditional methods of policing and penal policy were, for very practical reasons, no longer deemed adequate. In short, policy makers at the end of the eighteenth century were in search of new ideas to counter growing threats to the social order and

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[2]   Quoted in David Ascoli, *The Queens Peace: the origins and development of the Metropolitan Police 1829-1979* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1979), 87.

the Enlightenment provided them. Even so, the adherents of the old methods of policing and penal policy did not give up without a fight, and it required a combination of renewed social and political threats with the arrival in office of a politician possessed of high skill and determination to bring the final change about.

Those diverse elements came together to institute a 'New Police' in 1829. Notwithstanding that there were many aspects of theory and practice which were a continuation of developments in the preceding century, contemporaries understood that something fundamentally different was happening, hence why the term 'New Police' had currency. The path towards this outcome may be identified as starting with Henry Fielding's publication of his *An enquiry into the causes of the late increase of robbers* in 1751. Fielding intellectualised not only the causes of the spike in crimes of robbery in the post-war London of the late 1740s and early 1750s, he also intellectualised its solution around the preventive principle and set the course of what may be conveniently, if consciously anachronistically, termed 'police reform' for the next seventy years and beyond.

That this process should be so protracted should not come as a surprise. For some police historians, especially those of the 'Whig' school of history (for example Leon Radzinowicz, T A Critchley and Charles Reith), who saw the progress to 1829 as inevitable and wholly beneficial, this delay was reprehensible and an indictment of successive ministers. The reality, however, was that the solutions did not seem so clear cut at the time and were beset with practical and principled difficulties.

The reality was that in the British Isles this coming together was neither a consistent nor entirely rational process. The intellectual development and practical implementation of the 'New Police' possessed *some* of the elements of social control which Michel Foucault claimed to find in the development of the penitentiary prison system of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (itself a product of the same Enlightenment intellectual origins), and which may be more applicable to the contemporary continental

systems of preventive police. [3] Certainly, some of the British proponents of preventive police theory, notably Edwin Chadwick (1800-90), wanted the *English* (as distinct from the *British*) preventive police to be part of a wider system of social control (see below), but the introduction of the New Police in the British Isles was protracted and fragmented, with high theory more than compromised by practical political reality.

The reasons for this was a combination of factors: ministerial caution, vested interest, emotional attachment to, even affection for the old systems, aversion to innovations, especially from autocratic European regimes, and a high principled belief in preserving the collective and individual liberty which was perceived to be the birthright of every British subject. 'Liberty' was the ideological currency of the political and intellectual classes. It was considered the possession, therefore, of radicals and conservatives, of those in power and those in opposition. Consequently it could be used as an argument simultaneously for both change and the status quo.

The purist form of expression of the rights of Englishmen might be found for those of a philosophical inclination in John Locke's *Second treatise of government* (1689), but for practical purposes probably the jurist William Blackstone (1723-80) perhaps came closest to summarising what liberty meant for most informed Englishmen in the first volume of his famous *Commentaries on the laws of England*.[4] For him liberty was, in effect, England's gift to the world ('The idea and practice of this political or civil liberty flourish in their highest vigour in these kingdoms, where it falls little short of perfection'.) It comprised a series of rights hard won over the centuries commencing with those enshrined in Magna Carta and

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[3]   Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (trans. Alan Sheridan, London, Penguin, 1991), *passim* but especially 213-16.

[4]   John Locke, *The second treatise of government*, ed. J W Gough, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1948), and William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the laws of England* (Oxford, 1765), I.

expanded by the Petition of Right to Charles I, the Habeas Corpus Act (1679), the Bill of Rights (1688/9) and the Act of Settlement (1701). The rights of all Englishmen, and by extension to all Britons comprised the right to life, the right to personal security, and the right to liberty expressed as freedom from arbitrary arrest and a right to personal property. Blackstone recognised that hard won rights needed protecting by limiting the king's prerogative, guaranteeing access to courts of justice and, if absolutely necessary, permitting citizens to have recourse to arms. In short Englishmen were free to do whatsoever they pleased up to the point where their actions became 'pernicious either to ourselves or our fellow citizens.'[5] These freedoms did not extend to complete freedom of religious conscience, however. Atheism was illegal because it undermined the moral sinews of civil society but nonconformity in religion could be tolerated so long as it did not threaten the security of the state and by extension the maintenance of the established church.[6] For most theoretical purposes, therefore, any debate about security, prisons and the police revolved around the degree to which alterations to the status quo in these fields protected or undermined the constitution and the rights of Englishmen.

Blackstone's scheme was essentially an organic evolution of rights. He resolved the tension between general security and individual rights through the application of the principle of necessity. It was a tension recognised by more radical philosophers, such as Jeremy Bentham (1747-1832), only his reconciliation was by the application of the principle of utility. Having no belief in an innate state of liberty, for Bentham liberty was a beneficial product of a regulated society. Liberty could, therefore, be legitimately constrained, as exemplified in his theory of the 'Panoptican' system of incarceration, which imposed a near total surveillance on prisoners who in turn were denied normal socialisation and required to engage in forced labour, all justified on the utilitarian principle

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[5]   Blackstone, I, 120-41
[6]   Blackstone, IV, 41-1

that such incarceration struck the right balance between protecting society, reforming the offender and delivering with the minimum use of resources and maximum efficiency.[7] The implementation of preventive systems of punishment, incarceration and policing, the benefits of which were self-evident to Bentham and the Utilitarians, was, therefore, fundamentally at odds with a standard 'Whig' conception of liberty which placed its maintenance as the very purpose of government, and received its clearest expression in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's speech to the House of Commons in March 1781.

Sheridan (1751-1816) was proposing reform of the police of Westminster after its failure to prevent and then contain the Gordon Riots of the previous year. His principal target was not, however, the organisation of the watch or constabulary but the magistracy, which had been in dereliction of its duty and resulted in what he considered to be the illegal deployment of the army, the Riot Act not having been read. His own answer, a committee of inquiry, was rejected by the Commons, but in his speech he encapsulated in a few lines the inherent tension in a liberal state in striking the right balance between collective and individual security and collective and individual liberty:

> The police of every country was an object of importance. (Gentlemen would understand what he meant by the term police; it was not an expression of our law, or language; but was perfectly understood.) In a despotic country, where laws were regulated by the will of the sovereign, the view and purpose of the police is to give comfort and security to the subject and, perhaps, to furnish secret information to the rulers. In a constitution of liberty, like that of Britain, it was the duty and the object of the people

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[7] Douglas G Long, *Bentham on liberty: Jeremy Bentham's idea of liberty in relation to his utilitarianism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 6 and 186-7.

> to prefer the essentials of freedom, to the comforts of ease; and they were not to purchase internal protection at the expense of slavery. It is not a dead and slavish quiet; it is not a passive calm and submission, that is the ultimate object of the police, in such a state; but as much good order as is consistent and busy bustling genius of liberty.[8]

The creation of a permanent, professional body of police, on lines similar to those on some continental, and generally autocratic regimes, such as France, created another threat to the delicate balance of the constitution. Blackstone warned that liberty had to be protected against the incursions of the Royal prerogative. Throughout the eighteenth century 'Country' or opposition Whig MPs were sensitive to the encroaching power of successive ministries through the use of Crown patronage and guarded against its extension through the creation of new administrative posts. A professional police, therefore, represented an extension not simply of government coercive power but also its powers of patronage. Originally Rockingham Whig policy, encapsulated in Edmund Burke's *Thoughts on the causes of the present discontents* (1770), became a default Whig position from the 1770s onwards, acting as a counterbalance to the growth of the administrative state in the nineteenth century.[9] The creation of a new cohort of salaried police professionals, directed and employed by the government could, therefore, be presented as a fundamental threat to England's constitution of liberty. It was always, therefore, an easy default position to represent the current system as broken but not beyond repair, or even that the cure, a professional police, was a greater evil than the crime and disorder it sought to remedy. This position is

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8   A Constitutional Friend [psued.], *Speeches of the Right Honourable Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (London, 1816), I, 6.

9   See Frank O'Gorman, *The rise of party in England: The Rockingham Whigs* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1975), *passim*.

exemplified by the independent MP Thomas Pelham (1756-1826) in his response to Sheridan's motion, when he said, 'a single instance of mal-practice [sic] in the executive administration of a city police, was by no means a sufficient foundation for destroying the established system of interior government, and introducing a new one.'[10] Adherence to, or preference, even affection for the old system as tried and trusted surfaced in arguments in favour of its retention. Cautious amendments relating to current threats or problems were deemed sufficient well into the nineteenth century and this attitude greatly influenced the Parish Constables Act 1842, the Conservative alternative, even antidote to the Whigs' County Police Act of 1839.[11] To this was added the understandable localism of modernising parish vestries, such as Marylebone, which had reformed their watches and saw no reason to share their resources with neighbouring parishes which did not meet their standards of efficiency and effectiveness.[12] Principled opponents of a preventive police did not have to look far for what they considered to be an example of the threat posed by a preventive police to the general liberty of the population. If pre-Revolutionary France and its institutions represented a threat from the autocracy of the *Ancien Régime*, and it possessed a system of

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[10]   William Cobbett, *Parliamentary history of England* (London, 1814), XXI, 1319

[11]   The Parish Constables Act 1842 applied to parishes in those counties which did not adopt the 1839 County Police Act, placing the appointment of parish constables in the hands of county Quarter Sessions and empowering, but not compelling, the appointment of paid parish constables. It permitted parishes to combine together but few took the opportunity. It was thus a devolved alternative to the centralised county forces which Quarter Sessions were empowered, but not required, to establish under the 1839 act. See David Philips and Robert D Storch, *Policing provincial England 1829-1856* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), 213 and following.

[12]   Elaine A Roberts, *Before the Bobbies: the night watch and police reform in metropolitan London 1720-1830* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 121.

preventive police, albeit a multi-layered one, much less centralised in practice than it appeared in theory, supported by its system of covert spies and detention without trial, then the Revolutionary and Napoleonic systems brought higher levels of threat. Napoleonic France adopted essentially two national systems of police, the police itself and the gendarmerie, under separate ministerial direction, and while less centralised than popularly supposed to English observers, it still represented a massive extension of state power and authority, especially when supported by extensive legislative powers of preventive detention and social control of labour and movement.[13] In short, to the French system of preventive police was an anathema to purist defenders of English liberty.

The practical development of a preventive police in England (less so in Scotland and Ireland) thus represented the fulcrum of two defining but ultimately contradictory, or at the very least hard to reconcile, principles of the Enlightenment – the promotion of liberty and the development of collective security through prevention rather than punishment. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, with democracies faced with preserving liberty in the face of terrorist threats undreamed of in the worst nightmares of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century politicians and philosophers, it remains a fulcrum of the clash of imperatives still.

To these practical considerations must then be added the complex process of intellectual evolution and fusion. As Peter Jones has explained in the context of the Enlightenment the transference of ideas between intellectuals, much less from high theory to practical implementation, is rarely straightforward:

> Everyone learns and absorbs ideas from other people, from the context in which they live and from the traditions with which they become familiar. Very rarely have even

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[13]   Clive Emsley, *Crime, police and penal policy: European experiences 1750-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 77-113.

the best-known thinkers originated the ideas for which they are famous; typically, what distinguishes them are the ways in which they mould, develop or emphasise existing ideas, make new syntheses and interpret their own context.[14]

The transfer from high Enlightenment theory to the practical implications for constables walking the beat and the public of nineteenth century England nevertheless did take place, and it is the purpose of this article to chart its course.

'Policing' in the early eighteenth century
The roots of the system that Peel sought to improve in 1829 lay deep in English society. The word 'police' had first surreptitiously crept into the English language in the fifteenth century. Greek in origin it came to be associated with governance in general, then more specifically with the governance of towns and cities. In 1755 Samuel Johnson defined police as 'The regulation and government of a city or country, so far as regards the inhabitants'; Blackstone consciously linked it with 'oeconomy' by which he meant 'the due regulation and domestic order of the kingdom'.[15] From the latter quarter of the century onwards, however, the use of the word became increasingly associated with the body of men established for the prevention and detection of crime, and 'policing' similarly construed. By 1796 Patrick Colquhoun could assume that his readership knew this and wrote in his introduction to his popular *Treatise on the police of the metropolis*:

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14   Peter Jones, in *The Enlightenment world*, eds M Fitzpatrick, P Jones, C Knellwolf and Ian McCalman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 8.

15   Johnson quoted in Leon Radzinowicz, *A history of English criminal law and its administration from 1750* (London: Stephens and Sons, 1956), volume III, 2 and 5; Blackstone, IV, 162. See also 'Police', in Oxford English Dictionary (oed.com [accessed 5 March 2016]).

> The police of the Metropolis is a subject of great importance to be known and understood, since every innocent and useful member of the community has a particular interest in the correct administration of whatever relates to the morals of the people – to the protection of the public against depredation and fraud – and to the prevention of crimes.[16]

'Police' did not, however, entirely lose its more general associations. In 1828 the radical commentator John Wade continued to view 'the functions of police' as 'not limited to the mere purveyance to the judicial powers' but extending 'to whatever interferes with internal security, order, comfort and economy; to the removal of nuisance and obstructions, the repression of disorders, the protection of the peaceful citizen in his daily and nightly vocations, the maintenance of public health and of a due observance of the local and general laws intended for municipal government and regulation.'[17] The police and policing retained a wide range of administrative functions throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century until the introduction of 'Unit Beat Policing' in the 1960s and later 'Intelligence Led Policing' gradually refocused policing on investigation, response to local nuisances and regulating

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[16]   Patrick Colquhoun, *A treatise on the police of the metropolis, explaining the various crimes and misdemeanors which at present are felt as a pressure upon the community; and suggesting remedies for their prevention. By a magistrate* (1st edn, London, 1796), 227, cited as *Treatise*. There were to be seven editions of Colquhoun's *Treatise* between 1796 and 1806; the first edition is the one cited unless otherwise shown.

[17]   [John Wade,] *A treatise on the police and crimes of the metropolis* (London, 1829), 2

behaviour between families and private citizens, removing residual administrative functions largely to local authorities.[18]

By the first years of the eighteenth century the English structures of law, order and local governance had been evolving for centuries and were the result of layers of custom, practice and occasional legislation. The foundation unit was the parish, or ward in towns, run by a vestry, which might be elected annually by those entitled to vote, or might be the product of perpetual self-selection, the so-called 'select vestries'. Their principal officer was the constable, an office dating from the early years of the Norman Conquest. The office holder was elected annually by fellow parish residents meeting in the Court Leet. It was voluntary, the office holder being a respectable citizen, probably a minor property owner, although there were no formal qualifications, who was expected to carry out their duties alongside those of their normal trade or calling. In some places a paid deputy was appointed. In the larger towns and cities there was a night watch, a requirement since the Statute of Winchester 1285. Again taking turn as a watchman was in theory a voluntary duty required of all male residents but again in practice this was generally discharged in the eighteenth century by deputies, who were also paid. Layered on top of these dual structures were the Justices of the Peace, an office in existence since the late twelfth century but statutorily recognised by the Justices of the Peace Act 1361, the purposes of which were to administer justice for petty crimes or misdemeanours, deal with many of the less serious crimes, in regular joint sessions at county level ('quarter sessions'), and to issue warrants of arrest and search.

Such was the scale of urbanisation in the London and Westminster area, or 'The Metropolis', that bespoke arrangements had developed. In the square mile of the City of London each ward was further subdivided into precincts, each with its own constable

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[18]   Timothy Brain, *A history of policing in England and Wales from 1974: A turbulent journey* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 230 and 280.

appointed by the residents. The Lord Mayor and Corporation were responsible for the night watch. In addition there were City Marshalmen to maintain order. In Westminster each parish was responsible for its constables but the Court of Burgesses, itself operating under the authority of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, was responsible for the night watches. Criticism of the Burgesses' efficiency in maintaining the watch led individual parishes to petition Parliament for a bill to establish their own watch under the authority of the vestry. From 1735 a series of acts were passed devolving responsibility to several parishes, increasing parochial control but diminishing cross metropolitan coordination. Concerns about the efficiency and effectiveness of the policing of the metropolis were the mainsprings for government interest and initiative in crime prevention from the second quarter of the eighteenth century until the Metropolitan Police was created in 1829.

The justice system, however, depended very much on individuals. Prosecutions for most felonies and misdemeanours were undertaken by the victim and at their own expense. Criminal investigation was not a function much undertaken by the authorities. In this environment there developed a recognised but unofficial justice agent, the thief-taker, private individuals who sought the return of stolen property and the arrest of suspects for reward. Two in the first half of the century, Charles Hitchen (1675-1727) and Jonathan Wild (1683-1725), were particularly enterprising, the latter styling himself 'Thief-taker General', but both ran venal and corrupt operations, and both were ultimately unmasked and disgraced, Hitchen pilloried for sodomitical practices and Wild hanged after being found guilty of receiving stolen goods. Despite these revelations, of necessity thief-taking remained in operation by other less high profile individuals for the remainder of the century. Indeed, Westminster justice Henry Fielding defended thief-taking but sought to regularise its practices and place it on an ethical footing when from 1748 he obtained a barely adequate government subvention for his

team of officers based at his Bow Street office, known colloquially as the 'Bow Street Runners'.

By the middle of the eighteenth century policing, a consciously anachronistic but convenient term, was thus ancient, multi-layered, fragmented, notionally voluntary but increasingly professional, and variable in effect. Governments were responsive to crises in the system but tended to act piecemeal, until cumulative crises in the last quarter of the century forced governments to find more systemic solutions, and in doing so of necessity drew upon persuasive and coherent ideas, the product of the English and European Enlightenments.

Crime and punishment in the eighteenth century
The eighteenth century was a period of profound social and economic change, identified by the processes history has labelled the Industrial and Agrarian Revolutions. Population increased, as did urbanisation, particularly in the metropolitan area. This subjected the nation's structures, social and material, to extreme strain. Governmental responses, local and national, tended to be specific and localised, for example as manifested in innumerable local improvement acts. The highly local system of policing was subject to strain as a result of these social processes.

However, this general social strain was not the proximate cause of concerns over policing. The proximate cause was a series of rapid increases in crimes of theft (technically petty and grand larceny) and its variants, burglary and especially robbery. These rapid increases, which the twentieth century would term 'crime waves', were often associated with immediate periods of peace which ended one of Britain's frequent wars in the century. These crime waves were most intense in the metropolis, and therefore impacted on the ruling elite. Analysis of their cause and the proposing of solutions became subject to much scrutiny and theorising from the middle of the century onwards.

Governments were not insensitive to the crime problem and periodically legislated to address it. Early initiatives focused on

using severe sentences as a deterrent. By the end of the end of the eighteenth century there were over two hundred offences punishable by death, transportation or incarceration with hard labour, the so-called 'Bloody Code'. It was not called so until the nineteenth century, and it was not a 'code'; far from it, for the legislation was incremental and intended to deal with evolving criminal behaviour.[19] For sentencing to work as a deterrent, however, there had to be both a realistic fear of the punishment being applied and of being caught in the first place. The evidence is that while some convicted felons were executed for theft-related crimes, many sentences were commuted to lesser penalties, or the courts preferred the non-lethal alternative of transportation, once the enabling legislation had been passed in 1717. Sentencing records at the Old Bailey indicate that across the century only 16 per cent of those convicted of any offence were sentenced to death and under half of them were actually executed. In contrast, across the century 46 per cent of those convicted were sentenced to transportation, an attractive option for both the judiciary and society as it both punished and removed offenders from the country.[20] This mismatch between theory and practice would create problems for a system which relied on the threat of capital punishment for its deterrent value.

Vagrancy represented a specific crime concern for the political, social and intellectual elites. This was partly as a practical response to what they saw as the best means of alleviating the worst effects of poverty for those who could not help their condition (the deserving poor, principally the old, infirm and very young) and the idle poor who could work, even if menially, but chose not to. This group

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[19]   Joanna Innes and John Styles, 'The Crime Wave: Recent Writing on Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century England', *Journal of British Studies*, vol 25, no 4 (October 1986), 46-7.

[20]   'Old Bailey Punishment Sentences 1690-1800, http://www.cambridge.org/download_file/882538 [accessed 31 July 2016], and B Godfey and P Lawrence, *Crime and justice 1750-1950* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 70.

(variously identified as 'idle and disorderly persons, rogues and vagabonds, and incorrigible rogues') was viewed as potentially subversive, especially if they moved from their place of original settlement to the growing towns and cities of the industrial revolution, and especially the growing metropolis. The perceived subversive threat of this group was the result of the widely held belief that its members sought the benefits of being rich without the concomitant requirement to work for it. They became therefore the principal potential source of higher levels of crime. At intervals, in response to rises in vagrancy, Parliament passed a series of acts intended to stiffen the law, reinforcing a series of penalties that included public whipping, hard labour in a house of correction and internal transportation back to the vagrant's parish of original settlement.[21] The laws, however, appeared ineffective. The reasons identified for ineffectiveness ranged from corrupt constables, constables intimidated by lower class hostility, and the cumbersome system of transportation, which in practice was often in the hands of private sub-contractors. Addressing the problem of vagrancy would be a recurring aspect in all police reform initiatives from Henry Fielding to Robert Peel.

The Enlightenment antecedents of Preventive Policing

The starting point for the chain of reasoning that leads to preventive policing, and, indeed, preventive penal policy, is the concept that man is capable of following reason, thereby avoiding punishment and pain, and equally capable of being reformed. That in turn requires the concept that man is formed by environment, association, experience and reasoning, and not by preconditioning. The converse is that if men, or even some men, are innately evil then they will do

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[21] For a concise overview of the vagrancy laws in the eighteenth century see Nicholas Rogers, 'Policing the Poor in Eighteenth-Century London: The Vagrancy Laws and Their Administration', *Histoire sociale – Social history*, volume XXIV, no 47 (mai-May 1991), 127-47.

wrong and inflict harm, because that is their nature. If, on the other hand, men are formed by the environment and reasoning then they can learn to avoid those things which cause pain and instead pursue pleasure and happiness. The intellectual origin of this reasoning is, inevitably, John Locke in his *Essay concerning human understanding*, where he states that men 'barely by the use of their natural faculties, may attain to all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate impressions, and may arrive at certainty, without any such original notions or principles.'[22] Locke developed his reasoning to establish the pleasure/pain principle: 'Attention and repetition help much to the fixing any ideas in the memory. But those which naturally at first make the deepest and most lasting impression of those which are accompanied with pleasure or pain.'[23] From here he concluded:

> *Moral good and evil*. Good and evil, as has been shown… are nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to us. *Moral good and evil*, then, is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law, whereby good or evil is drawn on us, from the will and power of the law-maker; which good and evil, pleasure or pain, attending our observance or breach of the law by the decree of the law-maker, is that we call *reward* and *punishment*.[24]

Montesquieu developed this further in his *De l'esprit des lois* (1748). If through reason it was possible to prevent crimes it became the duty of the 'good legislator' to do so: 'In moderate governments… a good legislator is less bent upon punishing, than preventing, crimes; he is more attentive to inspire good morals than

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[22]   John Locke, *An essay concerning human understanding,* ed A D Woozle (Fontana, 1975), 67.
[23]   Locke, 124.
[24]   Locke, 222.

inflict penalties.' It followed that extreme punishment, of the kind that then predominated in both Europe and Britain, was devoid of merit: 'Men must not be led with excess of violence; we ought to make a prudent use of the means which nature has given us to conduct them. If we inquire into the cause of all human corruptions; we shall find that they proceed from the impunity of crimes, and not from the moderation of punishments.'[25] In other words, the fear of being caught is a more potent deterrent than the fear of severe punishment if the prospect of being caught is remote.

There were other important intellectual crosscurrents between the Enlightenment and the evolution of policing. These were not necessarily direct casual relationships, but they did form part of an intellectual environment in which ideas of preventive policing evolved. First, was the preservation of political and religious liberty, and associated ideas of the freedom of the subject. This was partly an inheritance from the reaction to perceived Stuart and Commonwealth despotism, and partly the entrenched belief in the superiority of English Common Law over continental codifications. Continental examples of 'policing' and the organisational institution of 'the police' in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, no matter how successful, were inevitably associated with first absolute monarchies and then revolutionary suppression. By extension there became an associated idea that the institutions that had evolved in English history, such as the parish, the corporation, the established church and the restricted franchise were essential elements in the maintenance of collective and individual liberty. One consequence was that when policy makers and legislators assessed social, legal and economic problems they tended to seek solutions in terms of making existing institutions work more effectively through incremental legislation rather than through organisational reform.

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[25]   [Charles] de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu (1689-1755), *The spirit of the laws translated from the French* (London, 1750), vol I, 118 and 122.

This inertia existed in juxtaposition with the general ideas of 'improvement' and 'progress' in individuals and society. Asa Briggs entitled his general study of the period 1780-1867 as *The age of improvement*, but the antecedents of his age are to be found emphatically in the century that preceded it. [26] Infrastructural improvement was closely linked to personal improvement, either culturally through fashionable ideas of what constituted refinement, politeness and good taste, or morally, through religion.[27] There was a growing expectation amongst at least some elements in society that those who held positions of leadership, locally or nationally, socially, economically or politically, ought to use their position of privilege for the public good. This attitude is exemplified by Daniel Defoe's 1728 pamphlet *Augusta triumphans* in which he implanted the idea that London ought to be the best and greatest city in the world. The improvement Defoe sought in cultural terms for London other citizens throughout the country sought in more prosaic terms for their locality. They sought improvement in their local infrastructures, in street paving and cleaning, in water supply, in cleanliness and in street lighting. In a very practical sense this was an age of 'enlightenment'. It is no accident of terminology that the acts of Parliament which permitted these projects were generally termed 'improvement acts'.

There was also an increasing aspiration towards politeness and refinement in the ruling and intellectual elites. Politeness and refinements were aspirations at odds with the teaming chaos of the metropolis's streets, as brilliantly illustrated in William Hogarth's 1751 print *Gin Lane* and the associated series *The four stages of cruelty*, simultaneously illustrating and censuring the cruel behaviour to animals and humans seemingly endemic in London's

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[26]   Asa Briggs, *The age of improvement 1783-1867* (London: Longman: 1974), 1-7.

[27]   David Lemmings, *Law and government in England during the long eighteenth century: from consent to command* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 12-14, and Porter, 22-3, and 339-82.

streets. [28] Ideally education would deliver refined behaviour, but despairing of this in the lower classes, and especially of those vagabonds in the underclass, regulation, legislation and the threat of punishment would have to substitute. The Gin Act of 1736 had sought to reduce the debilitating social effects of gin consumption through taxation, pricing it beyond the reach of its principal customers in the lower classes. Through popular opposition it turned out to be unenforceable, and was replaced by the more moderate act of 1751, which sought to reduce rather than eliminate consumption. The Evangelical and Methodist revivals, together with the more establishment associated movement for the 'Reformation of Manners', in religious terms sought similar ends..

Henry and John Fielding – developing the theory and practice of crime prevention and detection

Henry Fielding and his half-brother John (1721-80) made significant contributions to both the theory and practice of policing in the eighteenth century, but they were not the first to do so. In 1728 Daniel Defoe (1659-1731) observing the sharp increase in street robberies, even in broad daylight, in his *Street Robberies Consider'd*, attributed the causes to 'idleness' amongst discharged soldiers, lack of sufficient deterrence in the sentencing regime, and gambling debt. His solutions were transportation for those with 'no visible means of a Livelihood', and reform of the watch, whose ranks were characterised by 'want of Vigour and Youth; for you shall seldom see a Man under Fifty among them.' Defoe was more explicit in his *Augusta triumphans* of the same year. Terming the watchmen 'superannuated Wretches', he argued for the watch to be composed

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[28]   See 'Gin Lane 1751' (http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hogarth-gin-lane-t01799, [accessed 14 June 2016]) and, 'Hogarth: Hogarth's Modern Moral Series, The Four Stages of Cruelty' (http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/hogarth/hogarth-hogarths-modern-moral-series/hogarth-hogarths-4 [accessed 14 June 2016]).

of physically able men, well-armed ('Fire-arms and Sword'), well salaried, equipped with a bugle to summon assistance, and deployed with a high level of density – one watchman per twenty houses on both sides of a street, with the streets well lit. It was not all for Defoe about prevention, however, as he thought that rewards, where merited, should be promptly paid.[29]

Governments were not unresponsive to the demands for improvement. In 1734 the vestries of the wealthy and relatively recently created parishes of St George's Hanover Square and St James's, successfully petitioned to have their own watch and set their own rate. The petition set 'forth the Importance and Necessity of keeping a sufficient, strong and well-regulated Watch, in the Night-time, within the several Parishes of this great and populous City, Burglaries, Robberies, and other Outrages and Disorders, in an about the same, having, of late, much increased'.[30] A succession of vestries successfully petitioned to have their own watch, with seven having succeeded by 1738 and a further thirty-five by the end of the century.[31]

These piecemeal arrangements were not, however, sufficient to deal with a new crime wave which followed the Peace of Aix la Chapelle in 1748. This coincided with the appointment of Henry Fielding, then a jobbing barrister, journalist and author, who had made himself useful to the Whig administration of Henry Pelham during the Jacobite Rebellion, to the post of Westminster justice. Unlike other justices, even in Middlesex, this post was salaried and in the government's gift.

The scale of criminality with which he was confronted profoundly shocked Fielding. In his first six months he was

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[29]   Daniel Defoe [attrib], *Street robberies consider'd. The reason of their being frequent, with probable means to prevent 'em* (London, 1728), 49, 50, 57 and 58, and, *Augusta triumphans*, 48-57.

[30]   Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons Journals (PPHCJ), 28 February 1734 (OS), 396.

[31]   Reynolds, 2-3.

presented with violent woundings, a mass gaol break, and a riot involving disgruntled seamen. His reaction was to submit an unpublished memorandum, in the form of a draft bill, to Lord Hardwicke (1690-1764), the Lord Chancellor, proposing the professionalisation of the night watch, placing it under the supervision of five government appointed 'Commissioners'. His scheme was essentially preventive, and comprised professional senior management, increased professionalism, improved discipline, and greater coordination. The commissioners, all stipendiary with previous experience as justices and qualified as barristers, would provide oversight for groups of parishes and appoint 'Constables or Headboroughs' who would in turn appoint and control the watchmen in their respective parishes. Each parish would be patrolled by up to forty watchmen. Watchmen would be relatively well paid at the rate of '18^{d}' per night. To prevent felonies and higher levels of crime it would be necessary to prevent the lower forms of crime and antisocial behaviour which provided the social environment which led to those higher forms. His officers would therefore apprehend anyone found in the streets or alehouses armed with 'dangerous Weapons', gaming or betting, engaging in lewd or profane behaviour, street prostitution, swearing, and engaging in threatening behaviour. The list concluded with a catchall power to enable constables after ten at night to apprehend 'all suspicious Persons after that hour walking or standing in the streets Lanes or bye allys who shall by their behaviour give any just Cause of any evil design'. Receivers of stolen goods would be punished as felons.[32]

The memorandum appears to have ended up on the desk of Pelham's brother, the Duke of Newcastle (1693-1768), then Secretary of State for the Northern Department. It did not produce an immediate response but it may well have informed the government's thinking as it considered its response to the burgeoning post war crime wave, a crime wave, furthermore, which

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[32]   See Martin C Battestin, *A Henry Fielding companion* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 706-11

was not limited to the metropolis.[33] Pelham's administration did not shy away from confronting the century's social problems, although its responses were framed in terms of the prevailing world view of individualism, localism and legislative regulation.[34] In framing its response it was aided by the publication in early 1750 (old style) of Fielding's own plan for dealing with the problem, set out in his *Enquiry into the causes of the late increase in robbers*. That Fielding had his eye on assisting the government is suggested by his dedication of the work to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke.[35]

Fielding looked for practical solutions to problems that confronted him in his role as Westminster magistrate but in his search he would use new philosophical and psychological tools. It will be noted that Fielding still stressed the personal responsibility for crime; it was '*the late Increase in Robbers*', not '*robberies*', an emphasis consistent with his own strength of Christian morality and individual responsibility for actions and consequences. He went on, however, to construct a social scheme in which the behaviour of the poor could be regulated, by association of positive experiences, to improve general social order as well as their own happiness. In developing this thesis he had at his disposal the psychological tools developed by Locke and Montesquieu, although he cites neither. He might also have been aware of the work of David Hartley (1705-

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[33]   Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker, *London lives: poverty, crime and the making of a modern city, 1690-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 196.

[34]   See Richard Connors, '"The Grand Inquest of the Nation": Parliamentary Committees and Social Policy in Mid-Eighteenth Century England', *Parliamentary History*, vol. 14, pt. 3 (1995), 285-313.

[35]   Henry Fielding, *An enquiry into the causes of the late increase of robbers, &c, with some proposals for remedying this growing evil* (first edition, London, 1751 [sic]), dedication (cited as *An Enquiry [1751]*).

757), whose *Observations on man*, had been published in 1749.[36] The promotion of happiness (albeit for the lower classes, a very limited view of happiness), the value of pain in promoting moral behaviour, and the requirement to deconstruct the association of laziness and the superficial pleasures of drunkenness and vice, for Fielding became functions of government. Fielding argues that failure by government to intervene when it perceives a social problem, especially a failure to protect life and property, amounts to a dereliction of duty.[37]

He did not spend time establishing that there is a problem of an increase in robberies; he accepts it as a fact, and moves on to an analysis of the causes. His analysis relies on his observations as a magistrate, although his conclusions would be to modern tastes at the very least condescending and elitist, a not uncommon trait amongst Enlightenment philosophers.[38] Fielding attributed the cause of crime to the access by the poor to too much luxury, allowing them to indulge in vices such as gaming and drunkenness, and for laxity in poor law enforcement allowing them to actively choose idleness in preference to honest labour. This was not a new idea; for example clergyman George Ollyffe (1682-?) had in 1731, writing after Locke but before Montesquieu, attributed the increase in property crime to the 'an inexpressible Number thro' the Nation, amongst the idle, vagrant and loose Tribe'. It would be prevented by draconian punishments such as 'execution attended with more lasting torment', branding and maiming, and by diminishing, the 'nursery' of

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[36] See Henry Fielding, *An enquiry into the late increase in robbers and related writings*, ed Malvin R Zinkler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 65n; and, Battestin, 230.

[37] Fielding, *An enquiry [1751]*, xxx, 3 and 127.

[38] Porter, *The creation of the modern world: the untold story of the British Enlightenment* (London: WW Norton and Company, 2001), 364.

criminality by removing beggars to the plantations, or 'work in some Gallies [sic] for a Guard of our Seas and forts'.[39]

In his dissection of the problem of robbery at the end of the 1740s Fielding offers a higher level of social observation and analysis than anything seen before, all based on his experience as the Westminster Magistrate and aligned to his powerful literary style. He also offers a solution, and one which is more humanitarian than any currently available, either in theory or practice. While he continued to stress the culpability of individuals, he attributed their inclination to criminality to their cultural and social environment, no doubt well aware of Locke's appreciation of the powerful hold of habits once formed on the individual.[40] The habits that concerned Fielding were idleness and access to cheap gin leading to drunkenness and the loss of inhibitions, while the environment which facilitated criminality encompassed the easy fencing of stolen goods by unscrupulous and unregulated pawnbrokers, while the practice of advertising for the return of the goods for reward, effectively compounded the original felony.

Fielding's practical solutions were to prohibit advertisements for return of stolen goods for reward, to regulate pawnbrokers, and to make receiving stolen goods a specific crime. He also identified itinerants as a source of criminals. His solution – prevent 'the Poor from Wandering', the reason being that it would be impossible 'for any Thief to carry on his Trade long with Impunity among his Neighbours and where not only his Person, but his Way of Life, must be well known.' New powers available to 'Parish and Peace Officers' would facilitate the detention of vagrants in houses of correction where they would be purposefully put to work. He concluded: 'Thus if we cannot discover, or will not encourage any

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[39]   George Ollyffe, *An essay humbly offer'd, for an Act of Parliament to prevent capital crimes, and the loss of many lives; and to promote a desirable improvement and blessing in the nation* (London, 1731), 3, 7 and 12-14.
[40]   Locke, 251.

Cure for Idleness, we shall at least compel the Poor to starve or beg from home: for there it will be impossible for them to steal or rob, without being presently hanged or transported out of the way.'

In Fielding's scheme the death penalty remained essential to set an example 'to prevent Evil', but, applying Hartley's association theory, if prevention was to be effective there must be far fewer pardons for those convicted, while the executions themselves should take place quickly after conviction, should be private, and be solemn affairs, rather than the spectacle of public entertainment that was currently permitted. The carnival atmosphere offered the criminal fame rather than shame and the prospect of pardon lessened the effect of deterrence. To be effective as a deterrent the execution must quickly follow conviction to reinforce the association of crime and punishment. As a magistrate Fielding was also conscious of the practical inhibitions to successful prosecution, as the victims privately funded these, an inducement to seek out of court means of resolution. He therefore proposed that some of the cost of a prosecution should be defrayed by public expense. Crucially for the future, he argued for greater public trust to be placed in 'thief-catchers', previously so discredited by the activities of Jonathan Wild. In Fielding's experience thief-catchers showed courage in pursuit of the public good and were unfairly maligned.[41]

Fielding's analysis and recommendations might seem harsh to later generations, nurtured with a greater sense of social compassion, but he did actually have in mind the common good, harm reduction and the promotion of happiness, as his conclusion demonstrates.

> Upon the whole, something should be, nay must be done, or much worse Consequences than have hitherto happened, are very soon to be apprehended. Nay, as the Matter now stands, not only Care for the Public Safety, but common Humanity, exacts our Concern on this Occasion; for that many Cart-loads of our Fellow-creatures once in

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[41]   H Fielding, *An enquiry [1751]*, 130-1, 144, 162, 171, and 182-88.

> six Weeks carried to Slaughter, is a dreadful Consideration;
> and this is greatly heightened by reflecting, that with
> proper Care and proper Regulations, much of the greater
> Part of these Wretches might have been made not only
> happy in themselves, but Very useful Members of the
> Society, which they now so greatly dishonour in the Sight
> of all Christendom.[42]

Furthermore, Fielding's treatise represented a shift in social analysis. In the accounts of the Newgate 'Ordinary' (the clergymen on hearing the last words of those going to execution at Tyburn) in the 1730s, vice was presumed intrinsic to human nature. By contrast Fielding's argument was based on analysis and observation, and from that he concluded that people were motivated to commit crime because of their social condition, and not by their intrinsic nature.[43] In his worldview, society was culpable if it punished without having first striven to prevent crime [44] Fielding's work, therefore, represented a significant shift in perception – society had a duty to prevent crime. In that specific sense he represented an important element in the intellectual case for a preventive police and the precursor of the post-Beccaria Utilitarians (see below). His scheme for prevention, however, lacked the principle of the progressive proportionality of punishments, the distinctive contribution of Beccaria and the Utilitarians.

Pelham's government may well have been already planning its own legislative programme when Fielding published his work, but his extended pamphlet certainly gave it public impetus. Fourteen

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[42]   Fielding, *An enquiry [1751]*, 199.

[43]   In contrast see for example the underlying moral presumption in James Guthrie, *The ordinary of Newgate his account, of the behaviour confession, and dying words of the malefactors, who were executed at Tyburn, on Friday the 17th, of this instant, April, 1730* (London, 1730), 1-4, and Hitchcock and Shoemaker, 271.

[44]   Fielding, *An enquiry [1751]*, 127.

bills were prepared but in the event only two made it into legislation, both in March of 1752. These were, however, significant and had a clear intellectual link with Fielding's programme. The first was the so-called Disorderly Houses Act, although in its scope it was a general crime prevention measure. Places of entertainment 'for the lower Sort of People' were specifically identified as 'another great Cause of Thefts and Robberies'. It created new powers to control places of entertainment and to detain 'suspicious persons'.[45] The second measure was the Murder Act. This had been prompted by recent high profile cases and, for a statistically low crime, a mid century spike. The act at one level met Fielding's insistence that the opportunity for spectacle and entertainment associated with an execution be reduced, but at another level it did not go so far as he was seeking. Those convicted of murder would indeed be executed quickly; sentence being carried out either the next day, or the day after if the next day was a Sunday, the body then being delivered for medical dissection. However, these provisions extended only to convictions for murder and not other felonies. Nevertheless, the intention underlying the legislation was to *prevent* murder and not simply to punish.[46]

Another practical outcome of the treatise was Fielding's establishment, on his own initiative, of a small team of experienced constables as professional investigators, based at his Bow Street office. He funded the operation out of the rewards gained for convictions, but these were clearly insecure sources for sustaining

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[45]   Bill for the better preventing Thefts and robberies, and for regulating Places of publick Entertainment, and punishing Persons keeping disorderly Houses 1752, Parliamentary Papers, House of Lords Sessional Papers (PPHLSP) 1714-1805, vol 1747-1753; see also J M Beattie, *The first English detectives: the Bow Street Runners and the policing of London, 1750-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 16.

[46]   A Bill for the better preventing the horrid Crime of Murder 1752, PPHLSP 1714-1805, volume 1747-1753.

the operation. In late 1753 the government, in the form of the secretary of state for the North, the Duke of Newcastle, confronted by yet another crime wave, sought the advice of Fielding about how to respond. Despite being ill, Fielding produced a fourteen-page memorandum for Newcastle's personal intention. It has not survived, but Fielding's biographer, Martin Battestin, has deduced its contents from other sources. He proposed making his team permanent through an annual government grant; paying his constables a salary, thereby releasing them from the financial tie to rewards; and officially advertising stolen property in his own paper the *Public Advertiser*.[47] The team was quickly, and very publically successful in securing a number of arrests, convictions and returns of stolen property.

Henry, however, did not long enjoy the success of his scheme for he died in 1754. He was succeeded in post by his half-brother John who sought not only to continue but also to expand his brother's operation. He was successful not only because of the continuing success of his 'Runners' (their preferred term was 'Mr Fielding's People', 'Fielding's Men' or later 'Sir John's Men', or later still 'Principal officers'),[48] but also because of his success as a public polemicist for professional, ethical public investigators.

In his first foray into police polemics *A plan for preventing robberies within twenty miles of London* (1755) Fielding essentially reinforces his late brother's argument for 'thieftakers' (John Fielding's preferred term), public advertisements, and for alehouse keepers and stable-keepers along with pawnbrokers to be informed of robberies.[49] His principal method of prevention was, however,

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47   Battestin, 577.

48   Beattie, 3 and Jerry White, *London in the nineteenth Century* (London: Vintage, 2008), 383.

49   John Fielding, *A plan for preventing robberies within twenty miles of London, with an account of the rise of the thieftakers, to which is added advice to pawnbrokers, stable-keepers and publicans* (London, 1755), passim.

not general patrol but to concentrate supervision and control of the places where thieves resort and consort, travel and dispose of their proceeds of crime. This could only effectively be done, he argued, by a permanent professional policing body, a body which, of course, he was well placed to provide. He was to be successful in securing a regular subvention for his officers. In 1758 John reinforced his arguments with his *An Account of the origin and effects of a Police set on foot by His Grace the Duke of Newcastle in the year 1753, upon a plan presented to his Grace by the late Henry Fielding, Esq.* John traded on the plan his brother had privately introduced to Newcastle in late 1753. He charted what he saw as the success of the Bow Street operations since 1753, giving due credit to his late brother, and delved further into the causes of criminality in order to identify the most effective means of prevention. He certainly intended to break up the gangs of robbers then active in the metropolis, but he equally intended to eliminate the environment in which crime could develop by removing 'the Shoals of Shop-lifters, Pilfers, and Pickpockets, who, being the deserted Children of Porters, Chairmen, and low Mechanics, were obliged to steal for their Subsistence', gamblers, common cheats, and 'the Nuisance of common Beggars; to prevent Street- walking, by keeping the Whores within Doors'.[50] The laws were sufficient; they simply required enforcement, and for that the magistrates should maintain their own duty and ensure the constables did theirs. That required high morale and team spirit, which by implication his officers exemplified; it might also require payment. He further developed his earlier theme of controlling pawnbrokers; they would be required to keep a register

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[50]   John Fielding, *An account of the origin and effects of a police set on foot by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle in the Year 1753, upon a plan presented to his Grace by the late Henry Fielding, Esq; To which is added a plan for preserving those deserted girls in this town, who become prostitutes from necessity* (London, 1758), 17-18; 'the chairmen' referred to are the operators of sedan chairs.

and form a society, only the members of which would be allowed to trade.[51]

Between 1761 and 1763 Sir John (he was knighted in 1763) further developed his ideas in a private memorandum, once again to the Duke of Newcastle. By implication the current arrangements were inadequate. There needed to be 'five or six' stipendiary magistrates responsible for Westminster and its immediate hinterland; there would be a central register of informants; notices of wanted persons would be circulated nationally; stolen goods would be advertised in a national paper; pawnbrokers would commit an offence if they sold goods so advertised; crime prevention would be improved by better street lighting and 'a proper Force' to pursue offenders and prevent their escape. This force he defined as 'a Regiment of Light Horse', with out-stations at each of the turnpikes around the metropolis, supplemented by a foot patrol 'from Michaelmas to Lady Day', that is covering the months of the year with longer nights. [52] Potentially expensive, and potentially

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[51]   J Fielding, *An account*, 17, 37, 57.

[52]   The original memorandum is lost, but Radzinowicz produced an abstract (Radzinowicz, III, 477-85) from the Liverpool Papers. Radzinowicz states that this Plan was probably written between 1761 and 1763. Beattie identifies the Duke of Newcastle as the probable intended recipient (Beattie, 47). Newcastle was First Lord of the Treasury until May 1762 but remained Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of Middlesex until December 1762. The Secretaries of State for the North during the relevant period were the Earl of Holdernesse (1754-61), the Earl of Bute (March 1761-May 1762), George Grenville (May-October 1762), the Earl of Halifax (October 1762-September 1763) and the Earl of Sandwich (September 1762-July 1765). Charles Jenkinson, later first Earl of Liverpool, (1729-1808) was under secretary of state to Bute at the Northern Office, moving with him to the Treasury in 1762 (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB), oxforddnb.com [accessed 31 July 2016]). Given that the memorandum was found in the Liverpool Papers it seems reasonable to conclude it was in fact

controversial by extending the professional principle to the magistracy, Fielding's ideas did not progress further at this stage, but they were, literally, on file.

Beccaria
The preventive principle was given substantial intellectual impetus in 1767 with the publication in English of *On crimes and punishments* by Cesare Baccaria (1738-94). Beccaria's work, first published in Milan in 1764, was partly the result of his reaction to seeing at first hand the appalling conditions of Milan's gaol, and partly his association with the Milanese intellectual society the 'Society of the Fists', from where it seems he drew influence from Montesquieu and the English rationalists such as Bacon, Newton, Locke and Hume.[53] Rationalising his emotions he drew on the principles of promoting 'happiness', education, liberty, and of proportionality of punishment to redefine the purpose of the state.[54] In Beccaria's worldview punishment was unjustified unless it served to reduce crime ('A punishment, to be just, should have only that degree of severity which is sufficient to deter others.') and only then

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written for Bute, sometime between March 1761 and May 1762, with a probability of earlier rather than later. The abstract is written in the third person and is therefore likely to be a summary of what Fielding had said or written down elsewhere. Given the turnover of relevant secretaries of state at this time it is hardly surprising that policing received so little ministerial attention.

[53] Piers Beirne, *Inventing criminology: essays on the rise of 'Homo Criminalis'* (Albany: State University of New York Press 1993), 13-30. Although Beccaria acknowledged Montesquieu in his text (Cesare, Machese di Beccaria, *An essay on crimes and punishments, translated from the Italian; with a commentary, attributed to Mons. de Voltaire. Translated from the French* [London, 1767], 7), Beirne observes that such was the inhibiting effect of the Lombardy censors that he otherwise took great care to obscure the rationalist origins of his intellectual influences.

[54] Beccaria, passim.

in proportion to the degree of harm caused to society. Punishment should set an example and act as a deterrent, and to do that punishment should follow conviction as soon as possible. Punishment of small crimes would deter the commission of greater ones. For example, the punishment of robbery should be 'pecuniary' ('He who endeavours to enrich himself with the property of another, should be deprived of part of his own.'); if the criminal cannot pay, then slavery was justified; if robbery was attended by violence, then corporal punishment was justified. In sum: 'It is better to prevent crimes, than to punish them. This is the fundamental principle of good legislation, which is the art of conducting men to the *maximum* of happiness, and to the *minimum* of misery, if we may apply this a mathematical expression to the good and evil of life.' [55] Imprisonment should be a means of securing a suspect for examination not a punishment. The corollary of his progressive system, however, was that individual pardons were counter-productive, less necessary, and therefore should be infrequently issued. For deterrents to be effective the putative criminal must know what punishment to expect with certainty; the hope of a pardon lessened the potency of deterrence. As he explained, 'The prince, in pardoning, gives up the public security in favour of an individual, and, by his ill-judged benevolence, proclaims a public act of impunity.'[56] He further, famously, concluded that neither torture nor the death penalty were useful means of deterring criminals and therefore could not be justified.[57] The first was not relevant to the British criminal justice system; the latter most emphatically was.

On crimes and punishment proved highly popular across Europe, exemplified by its early publication in English, with a lengthy foreword by Voltaire, in 1767. The general argument that laws

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[55]   Beccaria, 164.

[56]   Beccaria, 176.

[57]   Specific quotations are from Beccaria, 107, 164 and 176; for his specific views on robbery, torture and the death penalty see, 57-72, 83-4 and 102-7.

should be codified and based on their deterrence value was gaining ground thanks to its popularisation in the work of Montesquieu, in the texts of such journals as the *Spectator*[58] and the *Tatler*, as well as the Fielding brothers' earlier work, but it was Beccaria that made the impact.[59] Such was Beccaria's esteem, however, that the future Prime Minister, the Earl of Shelburne (1737-1805), met him on his visit to Italy in 1771.[60]

Not everyone was convinced, however. In 1785 Archdeacon William Paley (1743-1805) continued to argue for deterrence through capital punishment for numerous crimes but tempered by clemency through frequent but well-directed pardons.[61] The Evangelical clergyman Martin Madan (1725-90) agreed with Beccaria that pardons undermined the effectiveness of the system of deterrents, but argued that the solution was rigorous application of capital sentences in cases of guilt.[62] In 1781 poor law reformer Thomas Gilbert (1720-98) in his *Plan of police*, argued for reducing the opportunity for criminality by reducing the number of alehouses, limiting imprisonment for debt for only those debts of £10 or upwards, fining those who allowed thieves and felons to frequent their premises, and 'using proper Means for educating and

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[58]   The journal (1711-1712) was much re-printed in bound editions throughout the century.

[59]   Randall McGowen, 'Law and Enlightenment', in *The Enlightenment world*, 511.

[60]   John Norris, *Shelburne and reform* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1963), 82. Reform of the police is not amongst the extensive range of administrative reforms tracked by the late Dr Norris.

[61]   Quoted, M L Clarke, *Paley: evidences for the man* (SPCK, London, 1974), 82-3.

[62]   A Sincere Well-wisher [Martin Madan], *Thoughts on executive justice, with respect to our criminal laws, particularly on the circuits* (London, 1785), 64.

employing the Infant poor'.[63] Philanthropist Jonas Hanway (1712-86) argued that the 'foundation of true *police*, is the *employment* of the people', supported by enforcement of the poor laws and a humane prison system based on solitary confinement. Significantly, however, he also proposed a new hierarchy for the police in the metropolis, dividing it into four justice areas, each with first and second head constables, and six constables, independent of the parish structure, and wearing uniforms of 'dark blue, or other garb of distinction'.[64]

It is also possible to trace Beccaria's influence in Edward Sayer (1758-1834), sometime Deputy High Steward of Westminster, in his *Observations on the police, or civil government of Westminster with a proposal for a reform* in which he catalogued the defects of the city of Westminster's governance, poor law administration, and the character and abilities of individual constables and watchmen. His solutions included greater coordination between poor law and civil justice enforcement, but also a new hierarchical police organisation similar to Hanway's, although he continued to adhere to the voluntary principle, arguing for strict fines for constables who appointed deputies and creation of a 600-strong volunteer militia

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[63]   Thomas Gilbert, *A plan of police: exhibiting the causes of the present increase of the poor, and proposing a mode for their future more effectual relief and support* (London, 1781(?)), 3-5.

[64]   Jonas Hanway, *The defects of police: the cause of immorality, and the continual robberies committed, particularly in and about the metropolis: with various proposals for preventing hanging and transportation: likewise for the establishment of several plans of police on a permanent basis, with respect to: beggars; the regulation of paupers; and peaceful security of subjects; and the moral and political conduct of the people: observations on the Rev. Mr Hetherington's charity; and the most probable means of relieving the blind. In twenty-nine letters to a Member of Parliament* (London, 1775), 238-45.

under the command of the ancient office of High Steward of Westminster.[65]

A system in crisis
Crime waves occurred at intervals in the third and final quarters of the eighteenth century, again not only associated with the ending of wars but also with economic downturns and poor harvests.[66] Again governments proved responsive to the developing adverse social situations but reform was incremental, responding to specific circumstances rather than systemic. This was partly because such solutions had not been developed and partly because of sustained opposition to such measures of more general reform as were brought forward, opposition generally on the grounds of threats to civil liberties or local interests. Such measures as were brought forward were, however, of significance for the future. A 1772 Commons committee of inquiry looked at the problem, while its chairman, Sir Charles Whitworth (1721-78), published his own case for a more proactive preventive watch based on what he identified as best practice in the parishes of St Andrew's and St George's, Holborn.[67] The result was the Westminster Nightly Watch Act 1774 which imposed a degree of regulation on several central Westminster parishes, and, in an explicit acknowledgment of the preventive principle introduced such practices as regular patrol, checking doors for security, and the power to detain 'all Night Walkers, Malefactors, Rogues, Vagabonds, and other disorderly Persons… disturbing the public Peace', or 'all Persons lying or loitering in any Square, Street,

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[65] Edward Sayer, *Observations on the police, or civil government of Westminster with a proposal for a reform* (London, 1784), passim.

[66] Frank McClynn, *Crime and punishment in eighteenth century England* (Oxford: Routledge, 2002), 89.

[67] Sir Charles Whitworth, *The draught of an intended Act, for the better regulation of the nightly watch and beadles within the City and Liberty of Westminster, and parts adjacent and for other Purposes therein mentioned* (London, [1773]), passim.

Court, Lane, Mews, Yard, Alley, Passage, or Place'.[68] In 1783, after Sir John Fielding's death, a preventive foot patrol, based at Bow Street and comprising 68 men each supervised by a conductor, was established to patrol the principal routes of the metropolis and the suburbs.[69]

These incremental measures might be important precursors of later reforms but they were insufficient to prevent or deal with the Gordon Riots and another post war crime wave, which created a crisis in the criminal justice system and public confidence. The effect of the crime wave was exacerbated by the collapse of transportation as a sentencing option because of first the war and then the loss of the colonies, with Botany Bay not becoming an alternative destination until 1787. Meanwhile the capacity of London prisons was severely reduced because of the destruction and damage caused in the riots. The pressure on prison capacity increased because of the increase in vagrancy, a consequence of the post war economic downturn, a secondary consequence of which was the City of London authorities resorting to simply escorting vagrants to the City limits and leaving them for the Westminster authorities to deal with. Finally, there was an adverse public reaction both to the removal of executions from Tyburn to the outside of Newgate Gaol and the increased use of corporal punishments, such as flogging and branding.[70] Crime reports were a regular feature of the new daily newspaper *The Times*, while the inadequacies of the police arrangements became the focus of Parliamentary opposition criticism from the MP Richard Sheridan (1751-1816) and the Earl of

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[68]   *The Statutes at Large, from the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of King George the Third to the Sixteenth Year of the Reign of King George the Third, inclusive* (London, 1776), 205-10, and Reynolds, 50-7.

[69]   Beattie, 176

[70]   T Hitchcock, 'The Vagrancy Crisis of the 1780s', *Rural History*, 2013, volume 24, passim; and, McClynn, 79.

Shelburne (1737-1805).[71]

In response a mounted patrol operated from Bow Street from 1783 but more ambitiously Pitt's relatively new ministry brought forward a bill to create a combined watch for the City and Westminster under the command of three commissioners supported by nine sub-divisional stipendiary magistrates.[72] The bill, known as 'Pitt's Police Bill', although drafted by ambitious barrister John Reeves (1752-1829), drew on previous work by the Fieldings and Jonas Hanway, but probably also a study of the French police system published by Sir William Mildmay (1705-71) in 1763.[73] It suffered from poor parliamentary management but also ran into sustained opposition from the City Corporation, which would have lost the ability to control its own vagrancy problem. The bill failed, although the Irish government, beset by its own problem of vagrancy, took it up, implementing a similar police structure for Dublin in 1786.[74]

The problems of crime and vagrancy, however, remained and Pitt's administration introduced a similar if less ambitious measure in 1793, which established seven police districts, each with a small team of professional constables, operating 'by Night as by Day', under the command of a stipendiary magistrate. The Middlesex Courts Act also included a power for constables and watchmen to

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[71]   [A Constitutional Friend,] *Speeches of the late Right Honourable Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (London, 1816), volume I, 6-16; and, Lord Fitzmaurice, *Life of William Earl of Shelburne afterwards First Marquess of Lansdowne with extracts from his papers* (2nd edn, London, 1912), vol 2, 60; and, for crime reporting examples see *The Times*, 20 September 1785, 3;

[72]   Beattie, 176, and Radzinowicz, III, 108-12.

[73]   [Sir William Mildmay], *The police of France: or, an account of the laws and regulations established in that kingdom, for the preservation of peace, and the preventing of robberies. To which is added, a particular description of the police and government of the city of Paris* (London, 1763), passim.

[74]   A T Harris, *Policing the city: crime and legal authority in London, 1780-1840* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004), 46-52.

arrest any 'Person or Persons of evil Fame, and a reputed Thief or Thieves' found in any avenue of highway not able to give a satisfactory account of themselves, and demonstrate his way of living. The person so apprehended could then be deemed a rogue and vagabond and held until the next quarter sessions, when they might be sentenced for up to six months hard labour. Despite opposition from Charles James Fox, especially over professional magistrates and the wanted or suspected person power, the bill passed, the key to its success being the exclusion from its scope of the City of London. Significantly, Home Secretary Henry Dundas (1742-1811) robustly defended the loitering and suspicious person provision on the grounds of its preventive utility. He reminded the Commons,

> that rogues reached the gallows by degrees; that they started as pickpockets when they were about 13 or 14: that they became emboldened by habit and practice; that when by picking pockets they were able to buy a horse, they commenced highwaymen; and by an accumulation of crimes, all highly injurious to the public, they arrived at the climax of their fate, and ended their career by the hands of the hangman. He appealed to the House, whether it would not be practical humanity to rescue such wretches from their fate, and by an early prevention of their pursuits, check their evil courses, and afford them an opportunity of being restored to society?[75]

The act remained in place until subsumed by the 1829 act.[76]

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[75] William Cobbett, *Parliamentary history of England, from the earliest period to the year 1803* (London, 1817, cited as *Parl Hist*), volume XXIX, 1464-1476.

[76] An Bill for the more effectual Administration of the Office of Justice of Peace, in such Parts of the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey, as

The proto Utilitarians

The preventive principle had thus been gaining ground incrementally for almost half a century, but this piecemeal progress was insufficient for a developing group of political, economic and social theorists associated with Jeremy Bentham. Utilitarianism in the late eighteenth century, as with policing in the early eighteenth century, is consciously anachronistic but again a convenient term to describe those philosophers who, like Beccaria, adopted the principle of utility to inform and direct their worldview.

Bentham might be one of the most original of philosophers but even he acknowledged the influence of Beccaria in the association of pain and pleasure as a prime motive for human behaviour. Laws were to be based on the principle of 'utility', that is they were to induce more benign behaviour in humans, and if they must commit a crime, at least let it be a lesser rather than a greater one. In his system it became the purpose of 'the preventive branch of the police' to avert 'mischief'. In his earliest exposition of this worldview in *An introduction to principles of morals and legislation* (1789) he did not elaborate further *how* the police were to be organised to achieve this purpose, although it might be inferred (but only inferred) that this was to be through active public surveillance, as he proposed for his 'Panoptican' prison regime.[77]

Where Bentham was general, Patrick Colquhoun (1745-1820) was specific. He spoke with experience, authority and perspective. A former Lord Provost of Glasgow he was appointed one of the stipendiary magistrates under the 1792 act, and, being based in Shadwell, he knew the developing dockland east of the City intimately. It is, therefore, probably wrong in police specific terms

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lie in and near the Metropolis, and for the more effectual Prevention of Felonies, 1792 (PPHLSP, vol 1792-01-31 to 1792-06-15).

[77] Jeremy Bentham, *An introduction to the principles of morals and Legislation* (London, 1789), passim, and [i], iii, clxxiv-v, ccxvi, and lxiv.

to assume that Calquhoun was a simple disciple of Bentham. Certainly he would have had the opportunity to have read Bentham when in 1796 he reviewed the effectiveness of the Middlesex Justices Act 1792 in his *Treatise on the police of the metropolis* (probably written as a prompt to remind Dundas of his talents) and the problem of increasing crime on the Thames and the new dockyards to the east of the City.[78] In writing his *Treatise* Bentham's influence is likely to have been general rather than direct, for while there were numerous references to Beccaria, and Montesquieu receives an honourable mention, Colquhoun does not specifically cite Bentham.[79] Indeed, it is probable that although possessing a similar worldview to each other, Bentham and Colquhoun only started their correspondence with each other after the first publication of the latter's *Treatise*, and it was not until the end of 1796 that Colquhoun visited Bentham in his home.[80] In terms of developing what he would call in the later editions of his *Treatise* the 'new Science' of police, Calquhoun was his own man, although in 1798 Bentham assisted in presenting Colquhoun's ideas for a Thames Police in a quasi-legal format and in cooperating on a manuscript 'Heads of Police Bill'.[81]

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[78]   Radzinowicz, III, 211-19 and DNB.

[79]   Patrick Colquhoun, *A treatise on the police of the metropolis, explaining the various crimes and misdemeanors which at present are felt as a pressure upon the community; and suggesting remedies for their prevention. By a Magistrate* (1st edn, London, 1796), 221, 257, 282, 287 and 300, and 259

[80]   Jeremy Bentham, *The works of Jeremy Bentham, now first collected; under the superintendence of his executor, John Bowring* (Edinburgh, 1842), part XX, 329, and Tim Causer, 'Box 150 monthly update', Transcribe Bentham – a preparatory initiative (https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/2015/03/19/box-150-monthly-update/ [accessed 23 March 2016]).

[81]   Colquhoun, *Treatise* (7th edition, London, 1806), preface, np; unless otherwise indicated the pagination used relates to the 1796 edition. See also Causer, and Philips and Storch, 63.

Such was its impact that Colquhoun's *Treatise* went through seven editions between 1796 and 1806, with the later editions displaying the extension of his view of preventive policing, and the resources, powers and organisation necessary to make it effective. His work was based on his own experience and a massive accumulation of data. Some historians have questioned his use of data, but at the time it carried weight.[82] Above all he combined high theory with practical solutions to pressing problems. Whereas Bentham had been moving in the realm of general principle, Colquhoun quickly applied the preventive principle to the problem of the police of the metropolis.

> The Police of the Metropolis is a subject of great importance to be known and understood, since every innocent and useful member of the community has a particular interest in the correct administration of whatever relates to the morals of the people – to the protection of the public against depredation and fraud – and to the prevention of crimes.[83]

In a significant pre-echo of Rowan and Mayne's first general instruction, Colquhoun asserted the principle that 'Prevention of crimes and misdemeanors [sic] is the true essence of Police'.[84]

If the failure of punishment as deterrence needed further illustration he drew on the example of Holland (in 1796 the revolutionary 'Batavian Republic'), Flanders and 'Several of the Northern States on the continent' (tactfully avoiding reference to revolutionary France). Their 'security did not proceed from severer punishments, for in very few Countries are they more sanguinary

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[82]   For contrasting views see T A Critchley, *A history of the police in England and Wales* (Constable, London, 1978), 39 and Hitchcock and Shoemaker, 406.

[83]   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, [v].

[84]   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, passim.

than in England. – It is to be attributed to a more correct and energetic system of Police, joined to an early and general attention to the employment, education, and morals of the lower orders of the people'.[85] His solutions were a better regulated and organised system of police; a resident clergy to better educate society; a '*Pauper Police Institution*' to prevent 'Idleness' ('a never-failing inroad to criminality') by directing the unemployed to a 'place of industry'; municipal improvements delivered by a consolidated act of Parliament; a codified system of laws; regulations to control those features of society which facilitated criminality – cheap lodging houses, late night hackney carriage drivers, scrap metal dealers and pawnbrokers; new laws to inhibit receiving stolen goods; and, a modern police organisation to replace 'the disjointed state of the police of the metropolis'.[86] The detection of offenders would be further enhanced by the appointment of 'a Public Prosecutor for the Crown' to replace the existing system of private prosecutions, an 'institution' where they would perform useful labour.[87] There would be a clear tariff of punishments and sentences, with judicial discretion greatly reduced, for it was essential that the putative criminal knows what to expect if caught, without the prospect of remission. The death penalty would be restricted to 'a very few atrocious offences', but execution (solemnly in public) would immediately follow conviction.[88]

All this presumed 'an energetic police', comprising properly paid and appointed 'men who risk their lives in public service, either as police officers, or as temporary agents for the purpose of detecting atrocious offenders'.[89] By 1806 he was also following Reeves in advocating extension of the powers of constables and watchmen to

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85   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 86-7, and *Treatise (1806)*, 529.
86   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 91-2, 183, 185, and *Treatise (1806)*, 373 and 376.
87   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 253.
88   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 259-313.
89   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 128 and 151.

enable apprehension and detention of those reasonably suspected of carrying on them the means of counterfeiting coins, while his 'well organised system of police' would enable the houses of receivers to be under surveillance night and day.[90] To be most effective it was necessary for a 'greater degree' of unity to exist between the police of Westminster and the City. It was also necessary for the police to be at the sole direction of the stipendiary magistrates, and for them in turn to be independent of party politics.[91] By 1800 he was arguing for a fully developed 'Board of Police', as recommended by the 1798 House of Commons Finance Committee report, which would provide a central administration between the Commissioners and the Home Office, maintaining registers, disseminating criminal intelligence and publishing the *Police Gazette*.[92]

The number and frequency of the editions of his work illustrate the influence of Colquhoun's ideas. It is, perhaps, therefore surprising that his system was never adopted in its totality. His ideas did unquestionably have contemporary influence, as evidenced by the Thames Police created in 1798 as an explicitly preventive force. However, with the British state under internal and external existential threat for several decades, successive Home secretaries moved cautiously, and even then only when pressed by a clear imperative, in the matter of police reform. The Ratcliffe Murders (1811) delivered a profound shock to public confidence and

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[90]   Colquhoun, *Treatise* (7th edn, London, 1806), 205, 291 and 403, cited as *Treatise (1806)*.

[91]   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 333 and 337.

[92]   Colquhoun, *Treatise*, 240, *Treatise (1800)*, 520-1 and 539, *Treatise (1806)*, 401 and 545-58, and *Eighteenth Parliament of Great Britain: second session (2 November 1797 - 29 June 1798) Twenty-Eighth Report from the Select Committee on Finance, &c. Police, Including Convict Establishments* (http://www.parlipapers .chadwyck.co.uk [accessed 28 December 2015], 13. The recommendation of the Select Committee was hardly surprising; it had received extensive evidence from Colquhoun.

provoked a parliamentary inquiry, but as the moral panic subsided so did the demand for reform. Post war crime waves, political agitation and social stress and the manifest inefficiency of the multi-layered policing systems of the metropolis occasioned several parliamentary inquiries in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, but concern over the independence of the City, parochial rights and general civil liberties trumped the apparent necessity of public protection. The case for Metropolitan-wide reform appeared to have been made on several occasions, but ultimately the legislature baulked at taking the required step. The report of the 1818 committee of inquiry summed up the dilemma:

> This is a subject of great difficulty. It is no doubt true, that to prevent crime is better than to punish it; but the difficulty is not in the end but the means, and though Your Committee could imagine a system of police that might arrive at the object sought for; yet in a free country, or even one where any unrestrained intercourse our society is admitted, such a system would of necessity be odious and repulsive, and one which no government could be able to carry into execution. In despotic countries it has never yet succeeded to the extent aimed at by those theorists; and on a free people, the very proposal would be rejected with abhorrence: it would be a plan which would make every servant of every house a spy on the actions of his master, and all classes society spies on each other.[93]

Towards the New Police
In retrospect it is clear that the intellectual case had been largely won between 1796 and 1806 with the publication of the last edition of

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[93] House of Commons, *Third report from the committee on the state of the police of the metropolis: with minutes of evidence taken before the Committee* (London, 1818), 32.

Colquhoun's *Treatise*. Bentham was known as an enthusiast, although his specific ideas on policing were published too late to be of direct influence in the critical debates of the 1820s. His ideas were, however, transmitted indirectly through the work of his youthful disciple Edwin Chadwick.[94] Even John Wade (1788-1875), author of *The extraordinary black book* and no friend of increasing government spending and patronage was convinced by 1829.[95] In sum, the group identified by police social historians, David Philips and Robert D Storch, as 'the National Governing Class' ('those government ministers and other politicians of both parties [sic] whose field of activity was, principally, London, or who took a broad national view of this and other problems') was convinced.[96]

The problem was not one of winning over the intellectual radicals; rather it was one of public and parliamentary opinion. There were incremental developments. A key practical development was the formation of the Marine Police in 1798, consolidated by the Thames Police Act 1800, which established stipendiary magistrates based at Wapping and professional, supervised police officers, and provided with statutory powers of search, and, most significantly, the power to arrest suspected persons found not simply along the rivers and quays and in warehouses, but also in the adjoining streets.[97] The Bow Street foot patrol was expanded and in 1805 an armed and

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94   See Bentham, 'A General View of a complete Code of Laws', in *The Works of Jeremy Bentham,* ed John Bowring (Edinburgh, 1838-43, cited as *Works*), volume III, 285, and, 'Constitutional Code', *Works*, volume IX, 213, 216, 332, 439, 467 and 623. For a comprehensive summary and analysis of Edwin Chadwick's essay 'Preventive Police', *London Review*, (1829), see Radzinowicz, III, 449-565.

95   [John Wade,] *A treatise on the police and crimes of the metropolis* (London, 1829), passim.

96   Philips and Storch, *Policing provincial England 1829-1856* , 6

97   Leon Radzinowicz, *A history of the English criminal law and its administration from 1750, volume 2, The clash between the private initiative and public interest in the enforcement of the law* (London: Stevens and Sons, 1956), 388-91.

uniformed (blue coat, red waistcoat) mounted patrol was established, again based at Bow Street, to patrol the outer reaches of the expanding metropolis at night.[98] Shortly after becoming Home Secretary for the first time in 1823 Peel created a 'Dismounted' patrol to provide daytime patrol in Westminster, while the City of London authorities simultaneously if independently took steps to increase the professionalisation and supervision of its day and night patrols.[99] Legislatively he introduced a new Vagrancy Act, consolidating previous legislation, and clarifying and extending definitions of idle and disorderly persons and rogues and vagabonds, and increasing penalties, including those for constables neglecting to enforce the act. The preamble was explicit in the act's intention – to suppress vagrancy. It was implicit rather than explicit that this purpose was intended to prevent crime in general.[100]

These were important extensions of the preventive policing principle but were incremental initiatives. What ultimately tipped the scales in favour of wholesale reform was the sustained increase in crime in the 1820s throughout England and Wales, but again most noticeably in the Metropolitan area.[101] It propelled Peel to act and

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[98]   Beattie, 176

[99]   Reynolds, 127, and Harris 87-131

[100]   *An Act for the punishment of idle and disorderly persons, and rogues and vagabonds, in that part of Great Britain called England*, 1824. Although subsequently amended, the act remains in force. That it did not prove as effective as intended is evidenced by the work of the Poor Law Royal Commission, 1832.

[101]   At least as evidenced in returns for persons charged and committed to trial between 1823 and 1829. Charges and committals increased by 52 per cent in England and Wales as a whole, but by 43 per cent in Middlesex, but as Middlesex accounted for 19 per cent of the total this still represented the most notable increase. 'Summary Statements of Number of Persons charged with Criminal Offences in England and Wales 1823-29', UK Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons Papers (http://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers [accessed 2 August 2016])

gave him the leverage to persuade a still reluctant political elite to take the final decisive steps to introduce a centrally commanded metropolitan professional day and night patrol. Even so, as late as January 1829 *The Times* still expressed the concern that such a preventive police was a threat to civil liberty. A few years earlier that might have provoked much supporting correspondence. Now it provoked a contrary response from an 'Inhabitant of Camberwell'. Replying as if to the then Home Secretary Robert Peel himself, the Inhabitant asserted, 'the constitution of the British Government is a sufficient safeguard against any system of preventive police being so formed as to encroach upon the liberty of the subject; but if such ridiculous apprehensions are entertained, it is in your power to frame the regulations so as to quiet the fears of such visionary alarmists.'[102]

The decisive factor in police reform, at least for the Metropolitan area, however, occurring in 1829 was the presence of Robert Peel at the Home Office. Peel was an intelligent pragmatist, who when Irish Secretary had not hesitated to introduce a system of gendarmerie to rural Ireland in response to a near breakdown in order. England and the metropolis were not Ireland, but soon after becoming Home Secretary in 1822 he became convinced that reform of the police was essential to addressing the problem of crime. He did not see the issuing of policing, however, in isolation but as part of a wider programme of penal and law reform, in which the preventive principle featured highly. While no abstract theorist, by the 1820s Peel had become convinced that prisons needed to be reformed in line with the humanitarian principles of John Howard (1726-90) and the utilitarian ones of Becarria and Bentham as advocated by Samuel Romilly (1757-1818), and that the law needed to be increasingly codified, with a commensurate reduction in the number of offences punishable by death, as advocated by James Mackintosh (1765-1832). Peel was, however, firmly convinced that this wider reform programme would not be effective without aligned reform of the

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[102]   *The Times*, 8 January 1829.

police along preventive principles, thereby inhibiting the occurrence of crime in the first place.[103]

Peel's plans and intentions were delayed by his temporary absence from office due to the political fallout from Catholic Emancipation, but it was possibly as well because Peel's earlier plans were for simply bringing the Westminster and some neighbouring parish watches under central control. Another Parliamentary inquiry, one he influenced at a distance rather than controlled, once again highlighted the problem not simply of crime but also vagrancy. The day police was still essentially regulated by the Westminster Constables Act 1756 and the Middlesex Courts Act 1794, while the new suburbs encroaching on hitherto rural Middlesex would still have been reliant on the old parish constable system, with or without adequate deputies depending on individual vestry policy. The inquiry found that the parochial and watch systems were multi-layered, fragmentary, inconsistent and often, if not always, uncooperative. There were examples of good practice but these were isolated and insufficient. It also found that often the day patrol was inadequate to deal with the growing problem of vagrancy in the suburbs. Consequently, the committee was unequivocal in its ultimate recommendation, 'THAT there should be constituted an Office of Police acting under the immediate directions of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, upon which should be devolved the general control over the whole of the Establishments of Police of every denomination, including the Nightly Watch'.[104]

This gave Peel the leverage he sought, but he also acted with great political acumen, stressing continuity and avoiding antagonizing the City of London by excluding it from the bill he introduced in April

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[103]   Norman Gash, *Mr. Secretary Peel: The life of Sir Robert Peel to 1830* (London: Longmans, 1961), 314-7.

[104]   House of Commons, *Report of the select committee on the police of the metropolis* (London, 1828), 30.

1829.[105] His bill was presented as simply a bill for 'improving' the police in and near the metropolis, and as a means of removing the growing expense of policing from those parishes less wealthy than those like Marylebone and St George's Hanover Square which wished to retain their autonomy. He also absorbed the parish watches incrementally over a year rather than all at once. What was left, however, was breathtakingly audacious, absorbing all the parish night watches and day patrols, into a single organisation under two commissioners, appointed by the Home Secretary, who would be responsible for appointment, promotion and discipline. The new organization would work alongside, not yet supersede, the seven district police offices, Bow Street and the Thames Police. The City of London remained autonomous.

   The commissioners, Rowan and Mayne, had no doubt that their purpose was prevention. Not only did they make that perfectly clear in their general opening statement, as quoted at the beginning of this article, they also made it clear in their specific instructions to the new force. The new officers, all sworn as constables, wore a sober blue uniform, to make them clearly distinguishable from spies and undercover agents, and walked a regular beat. Static observation from watch boxes was abandoned, as was calling the hours of the night, and replaced by the assurance that an officer would patrol the same spot every ten or fifteen minutes. Prevention would not only be by this intense surveillance; it was implicit in the powers to arrest 'every suspected person, or reputed thief, frequenting any river, canal, dock, or any wharf or warehouse near thereto, or any street, highway, or place adjacent, with intent to commit a felony'. How might intent be judged? This would be for the constable to assess 'from the situation and behaviour of the party'. Darkness was a time

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[105]   'An Act for improving the police in and near the Metropolis', in J Gifford, *The Public General Acts of the 10° Geo IV passed in 1829, being the Third Session of the Eighth Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, [1829]), passim.

which would create additional grounds for suspicion: 'If after sunset, and before sun-rising, the constable shall see anyone carrying a bundle, or goods, which he suspects were stolen, he should stop and examine him first, and may detain him'. Rowan and Mayne understood that the force had to win over public support and allay lingering suspicions of arbitrary power. Therefore constables were expected to exercise discretion in the use of their extensive powers: 'he should judge from all the circumstances – the appearance and manner of the party, his account of himself, and so on, – whether he has really got stolen goods, before he actually takes him into custody.' The duty of circumspection extended to the arrest itself, with the influence of Howard and the prison reformers evident: 'After the arrest the constable is in all cases to treat a prisoner with kindness and humanity, and impose no constraint upon him but what is necessary for his safe custody.'[106]

There were other aspects of the preventive principle evident in the new force. The officers were paid regularly and promoted within the new management and supervision hierarchy (sergeants, inspectors and superintendents) on merit. As the general instructions made clear: 'Every police constable in the force may hope to rise by intelligence and good conduct to the superior stations'.[107] It was also implicit because the new force had no detective branch. The Bow Street office would provide this for another ten years.

The preventive policing principle – pinnacle and descent
Peel's achievement was significant, but it was not a complete reform. His new force created the largest civil organisation in the British administrative system, but it covered only the metropolitan area excluding the City. Peel probably would have extended the system had he remained in office but he was bundled out in the political swirl that surrounded the Reform Bill and the accession of a new king, William IV. Consequently, the next stage in development of

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[106]   'New Police Instructions', *The Times*, 25 September 1829.
[107]   *The Times*, 25 September 1829.

the preventive policing principle belonged to Lord Grey's Whig government. The evidence is that Lord Melbourne as Home Secretary intended to introduce a kind of gendarmerie to deal with rural agitation in 1831-2, but as the trouble subsided so did the zeal for reform. Provincial policing was, not, however, neglected but came under scrutiny from a different route, namely the Royal Commission on Municipal Reform (1833-35).

The Commission found ample evidence of municipal police inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and consequently the Municipal Corporations Act 1835 required incorporated boroughs to form a 'Watch Committee' and 'appoint a sufficient Number of fit Men, who shall be sworn in before some Justice of the Peace having Jurisdiction within the Borough to act as Constables for preserving the Peace by Day and by Night, and preventing Robberies and other Felonies, and apprehending Offenders against the Peace'. Again the priority of the preventive principle is evident.[108] The constables appointed under the act therefore possessed preventive powers similar to those of the Metropolitan Police, as well as reflecting the preoccupation with vagrancy. Section 78 specified: 'it shall be lawful for any Constable during the Time of his being on Duty to apprehend all idle and disorderly Persons whom he shall find disturbing the public Peace, or whom he shall have leave just Cause to suspect of Intention to commit a Felony'.[109] The role out of the new police across the country was, however, slow, and did not yet cover the new industrial towns, which had to either apply for incorporation or, if they so desired, create a force under an improvement act, as, for example, did Middlesbrough.

With hindsight it is possible to see that the preventive policing

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[108]   An act to provide for the regulation of Municipal Corporations Act in England and Wales, 5 & 6 Guliemi IV, 1835, section 76, printed in N Simons, *The Statutes of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland* (London, 1835), vol 13, 1029-30, cited as MCA 1835.

[109]   MCA 1835, section 76, 1030.

principle reached in purest expressions with the legislation between 1829 and 1835. When the legislators next addressed policing it was in different circumstances and with the benefit of pure theory tempered by practical experience. The 1835 act had left policing of the shires unaddressed, yet this was the era of 'Captain Swing', the Tolpuddle Martyrs and rural Chartism. A commission for the 'County Constabulary', led by Rowan and Chadwick, found the deficiencies it was expecting to find and recommended reform. The Whigs passed the County Police Act 1839, empowering, not requiring, county quarter sessions to establish professional forces. However, the preamble to the act only inferred, not explicitly expressed, prevention as its underlying principle. Rather its purpose was to ensure 'the Protection of Inhabitants and the Security of Property'; similar to, but not so powerful as, the preventive statements at the head of the 1829 and 1835 Acts.[110] 1839 also saw a new Metropolitan Police Act, principally a consolidating measure, but one which extended the professional magistracy and extended powers of stop and search, and created an offence of possession of goods merely suspected of being stolen for which the possessor could not satisfactorily account. One of the consequences of the Act was to merge the Bow Street court with the seven district courts, thereby almost inadvertently abolishing the Fieldings' famous 'Runners'. This meant, however, that in future the Scotland Yard Commissioners would be responsible for the detective as well as the preventive function of policing. They initially did so with faltering effectiveness. Public pressure on Rowan and Mayne following the mishandling of the Roehampton Murder case in 1842 resulted in a detective branch being formally established.

Thereafter crime prevention would have to compete for strategic priority and resources with the investigation of crime. The

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[110]   An Act for the Establishment of County and District Constables by the Authority of Justices of the Peace [27th August 1839], passim, cited as County Police Act 1839.

preventive principle would, nevertheless, remain the fundamental building block of the English, and thence British policing systems for the remainder of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After initial public reticence and resistance, it became an accepted model of reassurance and such was its success that it was a model that was exported to the growing urban centres of the British Empire, dominated by British colonists keen to adopt familiar models of municipal and national governance, and the developing liberal democracy of the United States. It was not, however, a principle that was suited to the expanses of the new empire where indigenous and native peoples numerically dominated, and where the gendarmerie model Peel introduced into Ireland became the primary policing model. In the UK the preventive principle was substantially eroded by the changes in post war British society and the introduction of a more response orientated style of policing in the early 1960s. Walking ubiquitous, regular beats became a diminishing practice in favour of mobile patrols, although it was a practice that was never quite eliminated and found a substantially modified resurgence in the 'Proactive' community policing model advocated by John Alderson (1922-2011), chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, 1973-82, and by the policing policies of the Labour government (1997-2010). The image of the 'Bobby on the Beat' (and particularly its popular fictitious representation in the BBC TV serial 'Dixon of Dock Green' (BBC, 1955-76), and its association, even if erroneously, with happier, calmer timesin British history, continues to resonate in British police politics, as exemplified in a speech by Sir Thomas Winsor, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, in April 2013, when he reasserted that crime prevention was 'the primary purpose of policing'. [111] In making this statement, albeit in circumstances of severe cuts in contemporary budgets, he was, perhaps unwittingly, stretching back not simply to the perceived

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[111] 'Police should focus on crime prevention "not catching criminals"', BBC News, 29 April 2013 (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22333662 [accessed 5 August 2013])

Timothy Brain

origins of the modern police in 1829 but to its true foundations in the intellectual movement of the European and English Enlightenments.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

BRITISH VISIONS OF REFORM IN THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA

Anthony Page

Stephen Burley, *Hazlitt the Dissenter: religion, philosophy, and politics, 1766-1816*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014; 232pp., ISBN 978-1-137-36442-5; hardback £95.

Lena Halldenius, *Mary Wollstonecraft and feminist republicanism*, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2015; ISBN 9781848935365; hardback £102.

Emma Macleod, *British visions of America, 1775-1820: republican realities*, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2013; 251pp., ISBN 9781851966509; hardback £95.

Gordon Pentland and Michael T Davis, eds., *Liberty, property and popular politics: England and Scotland, 1688-1815: essays in honour of H.T. Dickinson*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2016; 256pp., ISBN 9781474405676; hardback £45.

Mark Philp, *Reforming ideas in Britain: politics and language in the shadow of the French Revolution, 1789-1815*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013; 480pp., ISBN: 9781107027282; hardback £65.

Britain during the revolutionary era continues to inspire scholarly interest. In addition to democratic revolutions in Europe and America, and the beginnings of industrial revolution in Britain, the period arguably marked the beginning of modern culture, with Romanticism emerging out of Enlightenment. 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive. But to be young was very Heaven!' was how Wordsworth described his response to the early years of the French Revolution. While radical optimism was unbounded in 1790, throughout the revolutionary era British reformers envisioned a brighter future. They did so, as these books illustrate, in ways that

were rooted in British religious and political thought, and influenced by a changing domestic and international political context.

British radicals were overwhelmingly reformers. Despite considerable social strains caused by war and industrialisation, the potential for a revolution in Britain was diminished by the strength of the British state and popular loyalism.[1] However much they were inspired by events in France, British radicals were rooted in the tradition of whig constitutionalism. Thus Major Cartwright's maxim 'Hold fast by the laws' was, according to Samuel Bamford, 'adhered to with a religious observance'.[2] For example, of Thomas Muir, the Scottish lawyer sentenced for sedition and transported to Australia, Harry Dickinson has written:

> Muir was never as radical as the fearful government and legal authorities came to believe in the heightened legal atmosphere of 1792-3. He believed in the need for moderate political reform, rejected all appeals to force, and advocated change by peaceful, constitutional means. He was, however, intoxicated by the heady atmosphere in Britain and France at this time.[3]

In short, British radicals espoused a radical reading of the 1688 'Glorious Revolution' as unfinished business, requiring extension of the franchise, annual elections, the secret ballot, re-balancing of the

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[1]   E Royle, *Revolutionary Britannia? Reflections on the threat of revolution in Britain, 1789-1848* (Manchester, 2000).

[2]   Cited in Anthony Page, *Britain and the Seventy Years War, 1744-1815* (2015), p. 194.

[3]   H T Dickinson, 'Muir, Thomas (1765–1799)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2010 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19498, accessed 10 Jan 2017].

powers of crown, lords, and commons, and extension of toleration to full religious liberty.[4]

Various examples of British political thought and activity are analysed in *Liberty, property and popular politics: England and Scotland, 1688-1815*, a *festschrift* in honour of H T Dickinson's long and impressive career as a leading scholar of popular politics in the 'long eighteenth century'. When Dickinson began his career study of the eighteenth century was dominated by Namierite analysis of the parliamentary manoeuvres of aristocratic factions. Ideas were seen as little more than window dressing for actions that were primarily motivated by vested interests. Around the same time, Marxist historians were pioneering 'history from below', with books like E P Thompson's *Making of the English working class* (1963) and George Rudé's *Wilkes and liberty* (1962) illuminating the nature of plebeian protest. Meanwhile the 'Cambridge School' of historians of political thought were beginning to explore 'ideas in context', which usually involved analysing 'great books' in the context of neglected texts. Alongside this, as Francis Dow observes, in *Liberty and property: political ideology in eighteenth century Britain* (1977) Dickinson 'focussed on linking political pamphlets and polemical literature, which often lacked philosophical depth, with the practical issues of the day' (ix). And, along with many articles and edited collections, he also published *The politics of the people in eighteenth century Britain* (1995), which explores the interaction of elite and popular politics. As Dow notes, while other scholars such as John Brewer produced similar studies of short periods of time, such as the Wilkes and Liberty agitation, Dickinson worked across the whole

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[4]   K Wilson, 'Inventing revolution: 1688 and eighteenth-century popular politics', *Journal of British Studies,* 28 (1989), pp. 349-86; A. Burns and J. Innes, *Rethinking the age of reform: Britain 1780-1850* (Oxford, 2003).

century.[5] His recent article in this journal on 'Magna Carta in the Age of Revolution' is a fine example Dickinson's commitment to analysing the relationship between ideas and actions across a broad sweep of time.[6]

Dickinson's interest in the interaction between ideas and actions, and between parliamentary and popular politics, is used as the uniting theme of a diverse collection of *festschrift* essays. They range across the long eighteenth century, analysing subjects such as liberty of the press, the Scottish peerage, parliament and church reform, the post-Culloden acts of parliament, political toasting, and the Scottish sedition trials of 1794, or discussing individuals such as Edmund Burke, William Ogilvie, Thomas Spence, William Winterbotham, Thomas Paine, and Horatio Nelson. It is a valuable collection of essays, and a testament to the various ways Dickinson has inspired and encouraged other scholars. The volume concludes with a fine essay by Pentland on the 'The posthumous lives of Thomas Muir'. Noting that 'the contemporary sources for the life of Muir are limited' (208), he shows how that has not stopped people over the past two centuries from constructing a 'useable' Muir, variously as a British radical, Scottish nationalist or pioneer of democracy in Australia.

Mark Philp is one of the most insightful scholars of British political thought in the era of the French Revolution, and so it is good to have a collection of his essays edited, augmented with three new essays, and published as *Reforming ideas in Britain: politics and language in the shadow of the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (Cambridge, 2013). Alfred Cobban once declared that the debate over the French Revolution provoked 'perhaps the last real

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5   John Brewer, *Party ideology and popular politics at the accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976).

6   H T Dickinson, 'Magna Carta in the age of revolution', *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 30 (2015), pp. 1-67.

discussion of the fundamentals of politics' in British history.[7] This owed much to the publication of Edmund Burke's seminal conservative *Reflections on the revolution in France* (1790), and the many responses it elicited such as Thomas Paine's *The rights of man* (1791). Philp observes that 'it is possible to imagine French affairs playing a relatively slight role in the British reform movement in the 1790s'. Yet the combination of Burke's 'conspiratorial linking and Paine's willingness to endorse the conflation of the French example and principles of British reformers', saw argument about the nature and significance of the French Revolution become central to debate over the British constitution (20). The extent to which it was a 'debate', however, Philp has questioned in nuanced discussions of the impact of government repression and the spread of popular loyalism.

While the policies of Pitt's government cannot be called a 'terror', they had a significant impact on the ideas and tactics of reformers.[8] The working class radicals who were 'making a bid for inclusion' in the political system found themselves confronted by sedition and treason trials, mob violence, royal proclamations, loyalist publications and petitioning, and formation of armed volunteer regiments (92). Probably more than half a million people participated in burning effigies of Tom Paine, and Mike Davis has shown how he was widely vilified by loyalists as a 'folk devil' figure.[9] Songs were a particularly powerful form of promoting

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[7]   A Cobban, ed., *The Debate on the French Revolution, 1789-1800* (New York, 1960), p. 31.

[8]   C Emsley, 'Repression, "Terror" and the Rule of Law in England during the Decade of the French Revolution', *English Historical Review*, 100 (1985), pp. 801-25.

[9]   F O'Gorman, 'The Paine Burnings of 1792-1793', *Past and Present*, 193 (2006), pp. 111-55; M T Davis, 'The vilification of Thomas

loyalism and intimidating radicals, as Philp illustrates in his essay analysing over eighty songs about Admiral Nelson. The absence of any 'counter-Nelson songs … containing a whiff of scandal and scurrility', Philp suggests, reflects the 'extent to which popular culture, by the middle of the 1790s, had become tightly policed and, by 1803, had become wholly dominated by loyalist forces' (256).

The role of republicanism in British radicalism is a complex one, and Philp argues that much confusion has been caused by failing to distinguish between two forms of republicanism. Republicanism is usually thought of as an anti-monarchical ideology. However, in the eighteenth-century classical republicans considered Britain as, in the words of John Adams, a 'monarchical republic'.[10] The key contrast drawn by supporters of Britain's 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 was between the classical republican ideal of 'a government of laws directed toward the common good of the people' on the one hand, and despotism on the other, rather than with monarchy *per se* (108). This distinction between two forms of republicanism makes clear how a fan of republican America, like Richard Price, could also support the continuance of constitutional monarchy in Britain.[11] According to Philp, a 'constitutional consensus' – a 'broadly shared tacit agreement on the basic institutional structure of the British state' – saw debate focus on the relative power of the crown and the House of Commons: was reform needed? and if so, how much? In the polarising 1790s, with classical republicanism being woven into a militantly anti-monarchical French state, it was rapidly abandoned in Britain (107). British radicals focused on calling for radical reform

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Paine: constructing a folk devil in the 1790s', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, pp. 176-93.

[10] John Adams to Roger Sherman, 18 July 1789, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-02-0682.

[11] D O Thomas, 'Neither Republican nor Democrat', *The Price-Priestley Newsletter*, 1 (1977), 49-60.

of the British constitution, rather than a modern republican revolution. Indeed, it was the dominance of the aristocratic establishment that was seen as the main problem, rather than the existence of the crown. Monarchy was compatible with democratic reform of the parliament. For example, William Cobbett did not think American style republicanism should be adopted in Britain, unless 'the present tyrannical oligarchy should continue to trample on king and people'. [12] This attitude remained characteristic of British radicalism in the long term. Tellingly, a republican conference at Birmingham in 1873 'passed a resolution to abolish the House of Lords but not the monarchy'. [13]

If British radicals were overwhelmingly reformers rather than revolutionaries, they nevertheless drew on a range of discourses. As Philp observes in his final essay, 'Time to talk', modern scholars are usually interested in analysing the doctrines of past actors. Yet this too often leads to the imposition of a false coherence, or criticism of a lack of coherence and consistency. Reflecting on the writings of the shoemaker Thomas Hardy and publications of the London Corresponding Society, Philp suggests that, rather than any particular ideology, they were primarily motivated by the desire to have a voice – to simply communicate about politics. Writing to a cousin, Hardy declared that 'a dish of chat about politicks Foreign and Domestick I relish very well when I have the leisure of an hour or two' (293). The London *Corresponding* Society was fundamentally interested in exercising a right to communicate about politics, rather than pushing any particular ideology. Thomas Hardy was inspired to establish the LCS after reading various pamphlets distributed by the Society for Constitutional Information,

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[12] Cited in Emma Macleod, *British visions of America, 1775-1820* (2013), p.167.

[13] D M Craig, 'The crowned republic?: monarchy and anti-monarchy in Britain, 1760–1901', *Historical Journal*, 46 (2003), p. 183.

particularly those by 'the Duke of Richmond, Major Cartwright, Dr. Jebb &c.' that advocated universal manhood suffrage and annual parliaments. After 'a great deal of conversation' about their name, 'whether the patriotic club – The reformation society – constitutional society', they agreed upon

> *London Corresponding Society* … as more appropriate to the object of the Society, which was to correspond with individuals, and societies of men who wished for a reformation, and to collect the opinion and sense of the nation as far as possible by that means.

When they first met, the LCS spent five successive nights debating whether parliamentary reform was necessary, and also whether '*we* who are Treadsmen – Shopkeepers and mechanicks' had 'any right to seek to obtain a parliamentary reform?'[14] While constitutionalist language about English/British liberties was dominant in their writings, it was often accompanied by an Enlightenment language of universal natural rights that echoed Paine's *Rights of man*. Theirs was a 'multi vocal world', according to Philp, and their private writings could express greater hostility to the aristocracy than in their more tactful publications. For example, in mid-1792 Thomas Hardy described members of the LCS 'meeting in one another's houses' of an evening and discussing

> the low and even miserable condition the people of this nation were reduced to by the avariciousness and extortion of the haughty, voluptuous and luxurious class of beings who would have us to possess no more knowledge than to

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[14] Mary Thale ed., *Selections from the papers of the London Corresponding Society* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 5-6.

believe all things were created for the use of that small
group of worthless individuals' (295).

While loyalists did not face the same challenges as radicals in
voicing their views in the 1790s, loyalism was far from a simple
expression of conservative patriotism. Included in *Reforming ideas
in Britain* is Philp's classic article on 'vulgar conservatism', which
explores the 'multidimensional and complex' nature of the popular
loyalism that emerged in late 1792 – years before Britain faced the
threat of invasion (42). Most of those who corresponded with John
Reeves' Loyalist Association were middle class and displayed a keen
attention to rank – at times betraying an anxiety about their own
status as a participant in the political nation. They sought to
distinguish themselves from the 'lower orders', but at the same time
pressed the need to talk politics to the common people in order to
counter the spread of Painite radicalism. As a result, 'loyalists
breached the traditional boundaries of the political nation and
thereby advanced a process of mass participation that they had come
into existence to prevent' (43). This explains why some figures, such
as William Cobbett, could move between radicalism and loyalism
during the course of their career – 'participation was not
acquiescence'. Cobbett recalled that 'among the first things that
Reeves ever said to me was: "I tell you what, Cobbett, we have only
two ways here; we must either kiss their–, or kick them: and you
must make your choice at once' (68-69).
In the wake of E P Thompson's *Making of the English working
class* (1963) the study of British popular politics in the 1790s became
an academic industry. Mark Philp counts himself fortunate to have
worked in such a vibrant field, observing that 'the intellectual
community of scholars of the 1790s has some similarities to the free
and easy debating clubs of the period' (4). Along with important
collections of essays edited by Philp and H T Dickinson, there have

been many detailed monographs, such as John Barrell's weighty tome *Imagining the King's death: figurative treason, fantasies of regicide, 1793-1796* (2000).[15] Part III of the *festschrift* volume of essays for Dickinson is titled 'The Long and Wide 1790s' – it is hard to think of such a name being given to another decade. To an extent this is all justified, but it has caused a tendency to magnify the degree to which the 1790s marked a new era, and to neglect the important developments in previous decades – in particular, the significant impact of the American Revolution on British politics. While Philp's collection of essays covers the period 1789-1815, the essays focus overwhelmingly on the 1790s, and there is little discussion of the important developments in popular politics that preceded this period.

Fighting and losing the American War of Independence provoked widespread debate in Britain and, as Joanna Innes has observed, the 1780s became a decade 'marked by an unusual efflorescence of reforming enthusiasm'. [16] Arguably more than any other decade before the twentieth century, the 1780s saw widespread debate about the nature and future of the British empire, with the Hastings trial attracting widespread public interest and the campaign to abolish the slave trade attracting widespread popular involvement.[17] Building on the London centric 'Wilkes and Liberty' agitation of the 1760s, it was in the turbulent politics of the early 1780s that nationwide

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[15]   H T Dickinson, *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (1789); Mark Philp, ed., *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics* (Cambridge, 1991).
[16]   Joanna Innes, 'Parliament and church reform: off and on the agenda', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, p. 44.
[17]   Christopher L Brown, *Moral capital* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006); Jennifer Pitts, *A turn to empire: the rise of imperial liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, 2009), pp. 64-99.

'Associations' for parliamentary reform were established.[18] While the rise of organised plebeian radicalism inspired by Paine's *Rights of man* is regarded as one of the most important developments of the 1790s, this working class engagement with politics, in the form of protest, petition, newspaper reading and discussion over drinks, grew substantially during the era of the American Revolution – with the official prohibition on reporting parliamentary debates not being enforced after 1771.[19]

Thomas Spence (1750-1814), a radical artisan bookseller in 1790s London, hailed from the north of England where he was advocating *The real rights of man* and property redistribution back in 1775. In a forensic analysis, Stephen M Lee has rejected the traditional view that Spence was substantially influenced by James Harrington's *Oceana*, and instead emphasises Newcastle on Tyne's 'vibrant political culture' in which this autodidact came of age in during the 1770 and 80s.[20] And Matthew Grenby demonstrates that

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[18]   E C Black, *The Association: British extraparliamentary political organization, 1769-1793* (Cambridge, MA, 1963); I R Christie, *Wilkes, Wyvill and reform* (1962); Anthony Page, *John Jebb and the enlightenment origins of British radicalism* (Westport, CT, 2003).

[19]   E Baigent and J E Bradley, 'The social sources of late eighteenth-century English radicalism: Bristol in the 1770s and 1780s', *English Historical Review*, 124 (2009), pp. 1075-1108; J E Bradley, *Religion, revolution and English radicalism: non-conformity in eighteenth-century politics and society* (Cambridge, 1990); Troy Bickham, *Making headlines: the American Revolution as seen through the British press* (DeKlab, IL, 2009); R Duthille discusses the 'politicised choice of beverage' in 'Political toasting in the age of revolutions: Britain, America and France, 1765-1800', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, p. 76.

[20]   Stephen M Lee, 'Thomas Spence and James Harrington: a case study in influence', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, p. 125.

Spence was also influenced by the 'remarkable radicalism of mid-eighteenth-century children's literature'.[21]

In terms of political alignments, the election of 1784 appears to have had a profound and lasting impact. In previous decades popular *English* patriotism had usually been associated with parliamentary opposition to Hanoverian ministries, but in early 1784 the young William Pitt won an election by mobilising *British* patriotism to endorse George III's rejection of the Coalition government of the previous year.[22] Battle lines between Pittites and Foxites were drawn for a generation, and would evolve into the conservative Tory versus liberal Whig parliamentary politics of the nineteenth century. Many Dissenters supported Pitt in 1784 owing to his professed support for political and religious reform, and also their abhorrence of the 'unnatural' coalition in 1783 between the Foxite whigs and Lord North. It is hard to overstate the degree to which Dissenters had been dismayed by the Coalition government. Great hopes had been raised in 1780 as the eloquent Charles James Fox stood forth as the 'man of the people'. But he appeared torn between civic virtue and immoral sensuality and self-interest, flaunting his mistress and accepting the spoils of office via a coalition with the man who had coerced and lost thirteen colonies in America.[23] With Pitt proving a disappointment in terms of religious and parliamentary reform, however, Dissenters were drifting back to the Foxite Whigs even before the French Revolution inspired high hopes in all liberal minded Britons. But memories of the 1784 split remained sensitive.

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[21] M Grenby, 'Thomas Spence, Children's literature and "learning … debauched by ambition"', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, p. 142.

[22] P Kelly, 'Radicalism and Public Opinion in the General Election of 1784', *Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research,* 45 (1972), pp. 73-88.

[23] L G Mitchell, *Charles James Fox* (1992).

Edmund Burke never forgave the Dissenters for deserting the Foxites in that election. His *Reflections on the revolution in France* were provoked by reading Richard Price's *Discourse on the love of our country* (1789), yet it is notable that he was initially moved to read that published sermon after being told that Price had criticised Charles James Fox for 'insulting the virtuous part of the community by an open exhibition of vice!'[24]

A noted scholar of the 1790s, it is good to see Emma Macleod turn her attention to the significant impact of the American Revolution. *British visions of America, 1775-1820* provides an elegantly structured analysis of how Britons thought about the early republic. For the period 1775 to 1791 she analyses radical anticipations, liberal expectations and conservative doubts; and then for 1792-1820: conservative reaction, liberal engagement, and radical attraction. While some might criticise the use of terms such as 'radical' and 'liberal' to describe eighteenth-century people and ideas, Macleod makes a good case for their analytical usefulness.[25] Macleod's book fills a scholarly gap between the various studies of British reactions to the American Revolution, and David P Crook's *American democracy in English politics, 1815-1865* (1965), which she follows in distinguishing between radical and liberal views, rather than lumping them together in analysing perceptions of America.[26] She also categorises individuals according to their views

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[24] Martin Fitzpatrick, 'Edmund Burke, Dissent and church and state', in Pentland and Davis, *Liberty, property and popular politics*, p. 95.

[25] J C D Clark, *Our shadowed present: modernism, postmodernism and history* (Stanford, CA, 2003), pp. 110-45.

[26] For British responses to the American Revolution, see H T Dickinson ed., *Britain and the American Revolution* (1998); S Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford, 2000); E H Gould, *The persistence of empire: British*

on America, rather than more broadly – thus Samuel Taylor Coleridge is a 'liberal' on America, even though his views on British culture and politics became conservative (3).

Macleod's book is based on analysis of the speeches and publications of leading 'political commentators' to assess the 'parameters of the British debate on America' (5). The crown and its ministers to a large extent turned their back on the United States in the years following American independence, and relations remained problematic through to the War of 1812 and beyond. At the same time, in a book full of interesting analysis and quotations, Macleod demonstrates that there was 'also a considerable level of continuing interest in the United States shown by a substantial number of influential British political commentators and opinion formers' (169). Radicals criticised some aspects of America, such as slavery, but they were overwhelmingly inspired by the USA, and some migrated to the 'asylum for liberty' – where many of them were disappointed by the gap between their perception and reality. America bulked larger in their vision when it became a focus of the second part of Paine's *Rights of man* in 1792, and as the French Revolution turned violent and dictatorial. Liberals admired the United States of America, and wanted to promote good Anglo-American relations, but did not see it as a model for reform in the different context of British state and society. Conservatives were scornful and sought to magnify every supposedly negative anecdote about the young republic. Reviewing Morris Birkbeck's travel account of America, the *Anti-Jacobin Review* highlighted its more critical observations and concluded:

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political culture in the age of the American Revolution (Chapel Hill, 2000).

> So that this, after all, is the real world, and no poetical
> Arcadia after all … of the chances of success in life by
> emigration, we shall say nothing … the old world must
> vomit its idle population into the new … the sum total of
> Mr. Birkbeck's experience is, that in the wilds of Illinois,
> *a backwoods* man and his family, with a sufficient sum to
> begin the world, may vegetate coarsely, solitarily, and
> sullenly (98).

As Macleod observes, conservatives 'inserted into the long term British view of the United States a potent combination of resentment and contempt, laced with a certain element of unease' that it might succeed and become a powerful rival (99). The key point that emerges from Macleod's book is that, across the political spectrum, commentators were primarily interested in how their vision of America could be deployed in debates over British politics.

The sheer volume and quality of publications in the debate on the French Revolution, by both men and women, in large part explains the deep and abiding scholarly interest in the 1790s. Aside from Burke and Paine, other leading intellectuals in the 1790s have attracted numerous biographical studies and expert published editions of their letters and diaries.[27] With the rise of feminism in the late twentieth century, Mary Wollstonecraft's life and works have been recovered and analysed in detail.[28] To this expanding corpus of

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[27]   See, for example, Mark Philp, *Godwin's political justice* (Ithaca, NY, 1986); Pamela Clemit, *The letters of William Godwin, volume 1: 1778-1797* (Oxford, 2011); Also, Timothy D Whelan, *Politics, religion, and romance: the letters of Benjamin Flower and Eliza Gould, 1794-1808* (Aberystwyth, 2008).

[28]   Claire Tomalin, *The life and death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (London, 1974); Janet Todd, *Mary Wollstonecraft: a revolutionary life* (London, 2000); Barbara Todd, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the*

work Lena Halldenius has added *Mary Wollstonecraft and feminist republicanism* (2015), a book written from the disciplinary perspective of philosophy. As such, it is focussed on discussing Wollstonecraft's thought in relationship to various ideas and concepts such as republicanism, independence, freedom, natural rights, and so on. Halldenius aims to 'make the case for regarding Mary Wollstonecraft as a feminist republican' (2). Allowing that the anachronistic use of words like 'feminist' and 'radical' can be useful in aiding historical analysis, regarding Wollstonecraft as a feminist is relatively unproblematic. Describing her as a republican, however, may be justified but is more complicated. At the outset, Halldenius asserts that 'characterising an eighteenth-century progressive thinker who defended the French Revolution on the basis of the principles on which it was fought as a republican makes good sense' (2). Yet, as Sylvana Tomaselli has noted in her review of the book, this is too simplistic. The nature of the French Revolution and its principles remain debatable, and Wollstonecraft's views shifted over time, becoming more critical of the revolution as it descended into terror.[29] Indeed, Wollstonecraft's first defence of the revolution, *A vindication of the rights of man* (1790), was published when the revolutionaries were trying to turn Louis XVI into a constitutional monarch. As a philosopher, Halldenius displays a less than strong grasp of the historical context. For example, she declares:

Feminist Imagination (Cambridge, 2003); Caroline Franklin, *Mary Wollstonecraft: a literary life* (Basingstoke, 2004); Lyndall Gordon, *Vindication: a life of Mary Wollstonecraft* (2005); Charlotte Gordon, *Romantic outlaws: the extraordinary lives of Mary Wollstonecraft and her daughter Mary Shelley* (London, 2015); Janet Todd, *The collected letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York, 2004).

[29] Sylvana Tomaselli, '*Mary Wollstonecraft and feminist republicanism*, by Lena Halldenius', *English Historical Review*, 131 (2016), pp. 1180-1182.

> *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is written on the
> ruins of the revolution. In 1792, the one thing you cannot
> set your hopes on is revolutionary change, particularly not
> if your concern is the political and social status of women
> (10).

This is an odd statement. The first edition of the *Vindication* was
published in January 1792, when France was still a constitutional
monarchy. Louis XVI was certainly embattled following the public
relations disaster of the flight to Varennes in mid-1791, yet it was
not until August 1792 that he was overthrown by a republican
revolution. Those who wanted radical change in both France and
Britain still had high hopes when Wollstonecraft was writing her
book. Indeed, it was in the same month as the publication of
Vindication of the rights of woman that the 'London Corresponding
Society' was established as the first working class political
association formed to campaign for democratic reform of the House
of Commons. It was only in the Terror of 1793-94 that the
republican revolution began to devour its own children and dismay
many of its British sympathisers. Living in France at that time,
Wollstonecraft wrote: 'my blood runs cold, and I sicken at thoughts
of a Revolution which costs so much blood and bitter tears'.[30]

    Halldenius's primary aim is to refute interpretations that classify
Wollstonecraft as a Lockean liberal and unsystematic thinker. In her
view, 'the key' to understanding Wollstonecraft's thought is an
appreciation of her deep commitment to independence and equality.
In the words of Halldenius, to

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[30]   Mary Wollstonecraft to Ruth Barlow, 8 July 1794, in Janet Todd,
    ed., *The collected letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York, 2003),
    p. 254.

> live unfreely is to live in an unequal state of dependence under the arbitrary power of others, and that such inequality – in all aspects of life – destroys people: without equality, no liberty; without liberty, no virtue; without virtue, no progress. (130)

Halldenius's general interpretation of Wollstonecraft's concerns about independence and equality are convincing, but did not need to be rooted in a simplified concept of republicanism. Tellingly, she has not engaged with Mark Philp's sophisticated work on British political thought and the nature of republicanism in the 1790s.[31] And as Matthew McCormack has shown in *The independent man,* the concern with 'independence' pervaded British political culture in the eighteenth century.[32] As noted above, while classical republican ideals were an important part of this, British reformers, and even 'republican' ones, were overwhelmingly constitutional monarchists. Halldenius has only a few passing references to the leading Rational Dissenter, Richard Price, who she simply describes as 'a nonconformist minister and writer' who 'was a figure of note in republican London' (99, see also p. 20). It is disappointing to see a philosophical study of Wollstonecraft neglect Price's important influence on her – especially when it has been noted by other scholars such as Barbara Taylor.[33]

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[31] Halldenius cites Thomas Paine's works as published in Mark Philp's edition of *Rights of man, Common sense, and other political writings* (Oxford, 2008), but makes no reference to Philp's various books and articles.

[32] M McCormack, *The independent man: citizenship and gender politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2012).

[33] Barbara Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the feminist imagination* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 6-7, 103-08.

The prominence of Rational Dissenters in the reform movements of the late eighteenth century has been increasingly recognized since this journal began as the *Price-Priestley Newsletter* four decades ago. They were among the most vocal supporters of the American rebellion and the cause of parliamentary reform. They were also active in various social reform movements, such as abolition of the slave trade and in promoting female education.[34] The influence of Rational Dissent on the formation of some of the leading English writers at the end of the eighteenth century, such as William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, is becoming evident in recent scholarship.[35] William Hazlitt (1778-1830) is another excellent example of the influence of Rational Dissent on the modern British intelligentsia that emerged in the years around 1800.

'We think we are very fine fellows nowadays,' Robert Louis Stevenson told his fellow late-nineteenth century authors, 'but none of us can write like Hazlitt'.[36] Hazlitt the essayist has justifiably attracted the attention of scholars of romanticism, and Duncan Wu has depicted him as 'the first modern man' for having pioneered

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[34] Anthony Page, 'Rational Dissent, Enlightenment, and abolition of the British slave trade', *Historical Journal*, 54 (2011), pp. 741-72; Arianne Chernock, *Men and the making of modern British feminism* (Stanford, 2010).

[35] Mark Philp, *Godwin's political justice* (Ithaca, NY, 1986); Barbara Taylor, *Mary Wollstonecraft and the feminist imagination* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 6-7, 103-08; The important role of Rational Dissenters in fostering female education and literary careers is discussed in A Chernock, *Men and the making of modern British feminism* (Redwood City, CA, 2009). See also, 'Intellectual exchanges: women and Rational Dissent', *Enlightenment and Dissent,* 26 (2010)*,* Special Issue, ed. Gina Luria Walker and G M Ditchfield.

[36] A C Grayling, *The quarrel of the age: the life and times of William Hazlitt* (2000), p. 2.

many features of modern journalism.[37] Stephen Burley has now rendered us a great service in providing a detailed analysis of the formative influence of Rational Dissent on the young 'pre-journalistic, pre-essayist' William Hazlitt. *Hazlitt the dissenter: religion, philosophy, and politics, 1766-1816* is a study of the writings and publications Hazlitt produced before he started working for James Perry's *Morning Chronicle* in November 1812 (4). While scholars have traditionally emphasised the intellectual impact of Hazlitt's visit with Coleridge and Wordsworth in 1798, and the influence of German idealist philosophy, Burley argues that his philosophical development at the Dissenting New College, Hackney, and his reaction to the death of the detested William Pitt in 1806, was possibly more significant.

Hazlitt entered New College intending to become a clergyman like his radical Presbyterian father. Burley's first chapter is a valuable biographical study of the elder William Hazlitt (1737-1820), which analyses 'a substantial body of new material, including previously unattributed books and periodical writings' (5). Hazlitt Sr grew up the son of a Calvinist minister in Shornell, County Tipperary, and was sent to Glasgow University where he attended Adam Smith's lectures on moral philosophy and was exposed to the liberal theology of William Leechman, who had been accused of anti-Trinitarianism in the 1740s. Hazlitt Sr became a preacher who forcefully advocated Unitarian theology and radical politics. In the 1760s he might have been elected minister to the wealthy Lewin's Mead Presbyterian congregation in Bristol had not, according to his daughter, 'a few bigots raised an outcry of heresy against him' (23). In 1770 he became minister to the congregation at Maidstone in Kent,

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[37]   Duncan Wu, *William Hazlitt: the first modern man* (Oxford, 2008). See also M Tomalin, *Romanticism and linguistic theory: William Hazlitt, language and literature* (Basingstoke, 2008).

where he became part of a burgeoning network of Unitarians led by the likes of Joseph Priestley and Theophilus Lindsey. It was here that the young William Hazlitt was born in 1778. By then his Irish father had become a noted Unitarian polemicist and champion of the American Revolution. Eventually anger among the congregation at his outspoken radicalism forced Hazlitt Sr to resign in 1780 and take up a position at Bandon in County Cork, where his praise for the American revolutionaries saw him become known as 'the black rebel'.[38] In 1783 the Hazlitt family sought a new life in the United States of America. While Hazlitt Sr did much to promote Unitarianism in Pennsylvania and New England, opposition from orthodox Calvinists combined with his uncompromising stance saw him fail to secure a stable living. He turned down the offer to become the minister at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, and Principal of Dickson College because he was asked to sign a confession of faith – according to his daughter, he 'would sooner die in a ditch than submit to human authority in matters of faith' (33).

While he failed to obtain a settled position in America, Hazlitt Sr did much to spread Unitarianism in the decade before Joseph Priestley emigrated to Pennsylvania. In 1829 his proud son William observed that the liturgy used by the leading American Unitarian, William Channing, had been 'drawn up by my father forty years ago and upwards, who went to America to plant Unitarianism there' (39). After three years in America, Hazlitt Sr and family returned to England where he was forced to settle as minister to the congregation at Wem in Shropshire. In the bitter words of his son William, Hazlitt Sr 'had been relegated to an obscure village, where he had to spend the last 30 years of his life, far from the only converse that he loved,

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[38]   E J Moyne, 'The Reverend William Hazlitt: a friend to liberty in Ireland during the American Revolution', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 21 (1964), pp. 288-97.

the talk about disputed texts of Scripture and the cause of civil and religious liberty'(12). Provincial life did not, however, prevent Hazlitt senior from corresponding with Joseph Priestley and publishing pamphlets, sermons and contributions to newspapers and magazines. When he died in 1820, the *Monthly Repository* described Hazlitt Sr as 'one of the fathers of the Unitarian church' (13).

Young William Hazlitt's childhood writings reveal how he was preparing for a career as a Dissenting minister and 'the extent to which he had absorbed the style of his father's sermons' (41). His first publication was a letter to *The Shrewsbury Chronicle* condemning the 'Church and King' riot that had destroyed Joseph Priestley's house and laboratory at Birmingham in 1791 (47).[39] In later life Hazlitt the essayist sketched the world-view of the Dissenting ministers of the late eighteenth century:

> They saw Moses when he slew the Egyptian, and the Prophets who overturned the brazen images; and those who were stoned and sawn asunder. They will with Daniel in the lion's den, and with the three children who passed through the fiery furnace … they did not crucify Christ twice over, or deny him in their hearts, with St. Peter; the Book of Martyrs was open to them; they read the story of William Tell, of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, and the old one eyed Zisca; they had Neal's History of the Puritans by heart, and Calamy's Account of the Two Thousand Ejected Ministers, and gave it to their children to read, with pictures of the polemical Baxter, the silver-tongued Bates, the mild-looking Calamy, the old honest Howe;

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[39]   The letter was published on 4 November, one of the most significant days in the calendar for Dissenters, being the birthday of William III and the eve of his landing at Torbay on 5 November 1688.

they believed in Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History: they were deep-read in the works of the a *Fratres Poloni*, Pripscovius, Crellius, Cracovius, who sort out truth in texts of Scripture, and grew blind over Hebrew points (42).

This also provides insight into the influential role of theology and religious history in his own formative education.

Young William was sent to the New College, Hackney, in 1793 to train as a Dissenting minister. While some Dissenting academies were closing in the 1780s, leading Rational Dissenters established a New College in 1787 for which they had high hopes. In the words of Thomas Belsham, the College aimed to 'burst like the morning sun through every mist of prejudice, envy and calumny; and shall diffuse light, and truth, and virtue, and happiness to generations yet unborn' (53). In the words of Joseph Priestley, by promoting free exploration and discussion of the evidence and 'genuine doctrines' of Christianity, the New College aimed to help 're-Christianise the world' in an age of reason and scepticism (59). Despite being well subscribed, however, the College was soon undermined by personal rivalries, theological disputes, financial mismanagement and reports of riotous and seditious behaviour by the students. When young William attended the New College in 1793-1795 its future was under a cloud. Closed in 1796, the college was razed – the site is now occupied by a council housing estate – and its role has been neglected by scholars.

Burley has worked on the Dissenting Academies project, and this research informs his detailed reconstruction of young Hazlitt's college education. By the time William arrived the New College had become 'very much a Unitarian seminary' (80). As a divinity student his studies were dominated by theology and philosophy under the tuition of Thomas Belsham, but he was also taught history

by Joseph Priestley (65-66). In the increasingly radical atmosphere of the college, however, Hazlitt's faith in Christianity began to erode. He read the atheist William Godwin's *Political justice* soon after it was published. Worried about an 'unaccountable tendency of the young men … to infidelity', in May 1795 Thomas Belsham gave a sermon in which he urged students to study the evidence for the existence of God. Within two months of this, however, Hazlitt gave up on becoming a minister and left the college – doing lasting damage to his relationship with his father (87-88).

While at college Hazlitt had formulated strong views on philosophy. He rejected the dominant necessarian materialism as taught by Belsham drawing on the works of David Hartley and Joseph Priestley.[40] Hazlitt began to work on his much neglected *Essay on the principles of human action* (1805), in which he argued that the mind was not solely formed by sensations, but possessed an independent creative imagination. While scholars have long emphasised the influence of Immanuel Kant's anti-empiricism on Hazlitt, Burley highlight's the formative influence of Richard Price's idealist *Review of the principle questions and difficulties in morals* (1758). To some extent Kant's concept of the categorical imperative was anticipated by Price's theory of rectitude, and so 'it is plausible to attribute Hazlitt's apparent debt to Kant to his more detailed reading of Price's *Review* (110). To advance his 'new system of metaphysics', Hazlitt wrote a 'History of English Philosophy', which was never published and the manuscript has not survived. And in 1812 he gave some philosophical lectures that Henry Crabb Robinson described as poorly read and 'hardly tolerable' (122).

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[40]   On the influence of David Hartley in the late eighteenth century, see Richard C Allen, *David Hartley on human nature* (Albany, NY, 1999).

While trying to advance his project to overturn the dominance of empiricist philosophy in Britain, Hazlitt also championed radical politics though pamphlets, contributions to Cobbett's *Political Register*, and a two-volume collection of parliamentary speeches since the reign of Charles I.[41] Drawing on the Commonwealthman political tradition, the language of Rational Dissenting sermons, and echoing the political writings of Richard Price, Hazlitt denounced the influence of Pitt the Younger. Throughout his publications Hazlitt sought to contrast the words and deeds of past 'disinterested patriots' with the cold, money-grubbing, selfish behaviour of his contemporary Pittites. Having failed to make a living as a philosopher, and angered by the political state of Britain, Hazlitt began to flourish as an essayist and critic in the second decade of the nineteenth century – but his Dissenting heritage remained 'a felt presence throughout his cannon of writings' (166).

We can conclude from this review of some recent scholarship that British visions of reform stemmed largely from British religious and political traditions, languages and institutional contexts. The French Revolution provoked much debate because vigorous political debate about organized campaigns for religious and political reform was already a central feature of Britain's public sphere – as was extra-parliamentary agitation for political reform and calls for universal suffrage by the likes of John Cartwright and John Jebb. Arguably the main impact of the French Revolution was to make republicanism appear foreign and unacceptably anti-monarchical to the British political nation. The United States of America was more relevant to British politics, with its shared heritage, balanced constitution and president who was like an elected fixed-term monarch. But even then,

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[41]   William Hazlitt, *The eloquence of the British Senate; or select specimens from the speeches of the most distinguished parliamentary speakers, from the beginning of the reign of Charles I to the present time* (1807).

America was not a model to be copied, but an example to be used in debating British visions of parliamentary reform.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

**PLACING HUME IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT:
'AMBASSADOR FROM THE DOMINIONS OF
LEARNING TO THOSE OF CONVERSATION'.**

Mark G Spencer

James Harris, *Hume: An Intellectual Biography*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015, hardback. pp. 633 ISBN: 978-0521-83725-5, $55; £29.99.

Peter Jones ed., *The Reception of David Hume in Europe*, London and New York: Thoemmes Continuum, 2005, hardback, pp, xxii + 410, ISBN: 0-8264-6349-5, $300 USD, £266.93; London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013, paperback, pp. xlii + 412,   ISBN 978-14411-0242-3. £28.99, $39.95.

Craig Taylor and Stephen Buckle eds., *Hume and the Enlightenment*, London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011, hardback. ISBN: 9781848930841, £95.00, $150 USD; paperback, ISBN 9781138664401, £34.00, $52.95.

In 1742, a young David Hume (1711-1776) opened his collection of *Essays, moral and political* with a piece entitled 'Of Essay-Writing'. That short essay began with this line: 'The elegant Part of Mankind, who are not immers'd in the animal Life, but employ themselves in the Operations of the Mind, may be divided into the *learned* and

conversible' (533).[1] 'The Learned', he explained, 'are such as have chosen for their Portion the higher and more difficult Operations of the Mind, which require Leisure and Solitude, and cannot be brought to Perfection, without long Preparation and severe Labour' (533). On the other hand were the 'conversable World', those who 'join to a sociable Disposition, and a Taste of Pleasure, an Inclination to the easier and more gentle Exercises of the Understanding, to obvious Reflections on human Affairs, and the Duties of common Life, and to the Observation of the Blemishes or Perfections of the particular Objects, that surround them' (533-4). The 'great Defect of the last Age,' wrote Hume, was the 'Separation of the Learned from the conversible World' (534). That had 'had a very bad Influence both on Books and Company' (534). Hume asked, 'For what Possibility is there of finding Topics of Conversation fit for the Entertainment of rational Creatures, without having Recourse sometimes to History, Poetry, Politics, and the more obvious Principles, at least, of Philosophy?' (534). Hume took upon himself the task to reunite those now-separated worlds: 'I cannot but consider myself as a Kind of Resident or Ambassador from the Dominions of Learning to those of Conversation; and shall think it my constant Duty to promote a good Correspondence betwixt these two States, which have so great a Dependence on each other' (535).

Those lines, along with much else that Hume wrote and did, suggest clearly that he saw himself as belonging to what we now refer to as the Age of Enlightenment. But what was his precise role?

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[1]   My quotations in this paragraph are from Eugene F Miller's edition of Hume's *Essays moral, political and literary* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, revised edition, 1987), 533-37.

How do we situate Hume in the context of Enlightenment? Those who study Hume do not agree on the answers. In part, that is because scholars often define the Enlightenment in ways that differ one from another. But it is just as much the case because there is little agreement on how best to interpret Hume's life and writings. The thirty scholars who contribute to the three books under review here do not always see the same Enlightenment, nor do they see the same Hume. Taken together, however, their contributions have much to offer our understanding of Hume and the Enlightenment.

Popular accounts of Hume might flippantly celebrate him as a bright star of the British Enlightenment, but looking a little closer complicates things. While quotations from Hume's writings – such as his 'Of Essay-Writing' – might be assembled to show him to be enlightened, central aspects of Hume's thought appear discordant with standard understandings of Enlightenment themes. Craig Taylor (Philosophy, Flinders University) and Stephen Buckle (Philosophy, Australian Catholic University) take that tension as the starting point for *Hume and the Enlightenment*, a volume that originated in a conference by that name held in Australia (at Flinders University) in 2009. From Hume, they argue, one can even fashion

> a mutually-supporting triad of views with a decidedly anti-Enlightenment thrust. There are his reduction of reason to a servant of imagination and passion; the scepticism that follows from this reduction; and an apparent political conservatism that in turn flows from the scepticism. These all seem at odds with an Enlightened outlook (3).

But looking even closer yet – as the chapters in their book do – mitigates those first impressions. So much so, they claim, that 'Hume's Enlightenment credentials have been vindicated' (11). How convincing is their case?

In some respects *Hume and the Enlightenment* is broadly conceived. Most of Hume's major philosophical works are discussed. *A treatise of human nature* (1739-40), *An enquiry concerning human understanding* (1748) and *An enquiry concerning the principles of morals* (1751) all get sustained attention, as does Hume's posthumously published *Dialogues concerning natural religion* (1777). But Hume's other writings, which have connections to many topics touched by other enlightened writers, receive far less notice. Indeed, there are only passing references to a few of Hume's many moral, political, and literary essays (mostly published for the first time in the 1740s and 1750s) or to his 6-volume *History of England* (1754-1762), an Enlightenment bestseller. Still, the twelve contributions range from accounts of Hume on infinity [Dale Jacquette], cooperation [Mark Collier], and Cartesian rationalism [George Couvalis], to comparisons of Hume and John Rawls (1921-2002) on justice [Ian Hunt] and Hume and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) on cruelty [Craig Taylor], to close readings of parts of Hume's *Dialogues* [Stanley Tweyman and Robert Phiddian] and particular sections of his *Treatise* [Anna Stokloas], among other topics. Some will think an Enlightenment context is not central to all of those chapters, but those interested in Hume's philosophical thought will find much with which to engage. Enlightenment is more central to the first three chapters and to the final one.

The first chapter, 'Hume and the Enlightenment' by Stephen Buckle, offers a clearly-written and succinct account of the 'intellectual world of the Enlightenment period' (23). For Buckle, the Enlightenment was highly 'complex' and it 'spawned conservative as well as radical thought', occasionally, as with Hume, 'in the very same person' (23). Buckle's Enlightenment is as much about the improving impulses of the Englishman Francis Bacon (1561-1626) as it is 'the radical views which came to dominate in the French Revolution and its spin-off radical movements in the

nineteenth century' (36). In chapter 2, 'Will the Real Enlightenment Historian Please Stand Up? Catharine Macaulay versus David Hume', Karen Green sees the Enlightenment very differently from Buckle. For Green, 'the Enlightenment consisted fundamentally in the establishment of the development of the idea that individuals have political rights, which underpins the growth, during the nineteenth century, of democratic forms of government' (39). Measuring with that stick, she claims that the historian Catharine Macaulay (1731-1791) 'has a greater claim to the mantle of Enlightenment historian' (40) than does Hume. Green offers little involved engagement with either historian's text. There is a brief comparison of Hume and Macaulay's accounts of King James I (1566-1625) and Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), but her chapter is notably blind to the wider seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century histories that both Hume and Macaulay drew upon and responded to. Other aspects of Green's argument are challenged by Buckle in the book's next chapter, 'Philosophy, Historiography and the Enlightenment: A Response to Green'. Unlike Green's Hume, Buckle's does not demonstrate a 'conservative resistance' when he attacks 'Whig zealots' (62). Rather, Hume's critiques 'are better read as the scorn of a philosophical historian, with a regard for genuine causes, for the purveyors of historical myths, such as the ancient liberties of the English' (62). That circumspect Hume sits comfortably in an Enlightenment setting that includes more than the political. His view is similar to that of the chary Hume of the book's final chapter, 'Mechanism and Thought Formation: Hume's Emancipatory Scepticism'. There, Anik Waldow offers a thoughtful reading of Hume's scepticism couched in the context of Enlightenment. The gist of her argument can be gathered from her conclusion, summarized in the book's closing sentence:

> Hume is interesting as a thinker of the Enlightenment not *despite* his scepticism that denies reason a special status,

but precisely *because* of it: after all it is thanks to his sceptical arguments that individuals are pushed to accept that the cognitive mechanisms that nature has given to them are not all that bad – and more importantly, that no one can claim to surpass them in their thinking about and engaging with the world without becoming guilty of metaphysical speculation (185).

That way of seeing the Enlightenment, with its implications for morals and religion, is a long way from the programmatic Age of Reason of the *philosophes*, and it is a compelling way to envision Hume's enlightened contribution to eighteenth-century thought.

Despite these and other strengths, there are also significant limitations to this book. One is that the volume provides very little about Hume's biography. Any who come to the volume without a firm knowledge of Hume's life will leave with little gained and may have difficulty contextualizing what they do learn. Even a brief timeline would have helped the uninitiated to situate Hume's major works in a chronology. And situating him in the Paris of Jean Le Rond d'Alembert (1717-1783) – one of his legatees – and the Comtesse de Boufflers (1724-1800) would have improved their cases. Basic biography and a sense of chronology are not all that is missing. Some will think this volume does not sufficiently take into account an existing and relevant historiography. Surprisingly, for instance, this is not the first book to have the title *Hume and the Enlightenment*. That was also the title of a book edited by William B Todd (1919-2011) in 1974. But neither Todd's *Hume and the Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press) nor any of the fifteen chapters in it are noticed in the 'Works Cited' or anywhere else in Taylor and Buckle's *Hume and the Enlightenment*. To live up to its title, this book would need to integrate more of Hume's own works (beyond his strictly philosophical writings). Doing so would

require more of an interdisciplinary approach. All but one of the contributors are from Philosophy departments. (The exception is from a department of English Literature.) Forty years ago, Duncan Forbes (1922-1994) – another scholar whose contributions to the study of Hume and the Enlightenment are overlooked – criticized Todd's collection in the form of a question that might appropriately be put to the most recent *Hume and the Enlightenment*: 'no professional historians are represented here, and what would "David Hume, historian" have said to that?'[2]

Philosophers also constitute the majority of those contributing to *The reception of David Hume in Europe*, edited by Peter Jones (Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University of Edinburgh). However, among the book's eighteen contributors are two historians and other scholars who specialize in Renaissance Studies, the History of Ideas, English and Rhetoric, and Political Economy. The book's sixteen chapters range far and wide geographically as well. Alongside chapters on Hume's British reception [M A Stewart and James A Harris], are chapters on Hume's reception in Ireland [another by M A Stewart], France [Michel Malherbe], Germany [Manfred Kuehn], Italy [Paola Zanardi and Emilio Mazza], Russia [Tatiana V Artemieva and Mikhail I Mikeshin], Sweden [Henrik Lagerlund], Poland [Bożena Kuśnierz], Hungary [Pál Ács], the Czech Republic [Josef Moural], and Romania [Andreea Deciu Ritivoi]. There are also specialized chapters on 'David Hume and Sir James Steuart' [Andrew S Skinner], 'Canonization and Critique: Hume's Reputation as a Historian' [Mark Salber Phillips and Dale R Smith], and 'The Scientific Reception of Hume's Theory of

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[2] Duncan Forbes, review of William B Todd ed. *Hume and the Enlightenment*, *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 359 (April 1976), 430.

Causation: Establishing the Positivist Interpretation in Early Nineteenth-Century Scotland' [John P Wright].

The volume's front matter provides a 'Timeline: European Reception of David Hume', which records the first editions of translations of Hume's works, the first European reviews of Hume's works, and 'Other' related, but miscellaneous, information, such as the founding of the Hume Society, in 1974. The first entry in the timeline is Hume's birth; the last is the Swedish translation of Book II of Hume's *A treatise of human nature*, in 2004. Jones provides a short but smart introductory essay. He argues that the study of Hume's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reception has suffered by the efforts of professional academic philosophers who in their accounts have often 'decontextualized' what Hume and other Enlightenment figures wrote. That method is better at 'generating specialization, faction and jargon' than at building a solid understanding (1-2). Jones recommends a different approach:

> To navigate the rich terrain of our overall topic we require maps of different kinds and on various scales. Several co-ordinates are needed to identify the contexts of writing – personal, historical, political, philosophical, religious, geographical; the publishing details and reviewing practices. Who were the intended and actual audiences? Who responded to what, how, when, why and where? . . . All texts operate within generic and rhetorical conventions peculiar to their contexts, and knowledge of these is necessary to determine what meanings were derived by contemporary readers. Meanings only operate contextually, with the same words conveying different messages in different contexts (2).

In other words, to understand Hume (as philosopher, historian, man of letters, or whatever) requires not only that we read his texts but that we work up a knowledge of the contexts within which he, and those whom he sought to convince, thought, wrote, published, and were read. Jones reminds us that the importance of context to understanding the past was something that some in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment had worked out. Some even appreciated the difficulty of thinking historically. D'Alembert put it this way, in 1751, in the 'Preliminary Discourse' to the *Encyclopédie* (1751-1766): 'It is almost as if one were trying to express [a] proposition by means of a language whose nature was being imperceptibly altered, so that the proposition was successively expressed in different ways representing the different states through which the language had passed. Each of these states would be recognized in the one immediately neighbouring it; but in a more remote state we would no longer make it out' (7). Hume was not far removed from this way of seeing things when, as Jones notes, he commented in his *History of England* that 'it seems unreasonable to judge of the measures embraced during one period by the maxims which prevailed in another' (8). That captures an important aspect of Hume's outlook as an enlightened philosophical historian, as shall become clearer below.

The essays in *Hume's reception in Europe* introduce us to a plethora of historical characters who, through their words and actions, contributed to the contexts of Hume's reception in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A smattering of representative figures and their contributions includes the following: John Smith (dates unknown) who produced an edition of the Stuart volumes of Hume's *History of Great Britain* in Ireland in 1755; Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779), a member of the Berlin Academy whose critiques of Hume's philosophy were published in Germany in the mid-1750s; Francesco Algarotti (1712-1764) a prominent popularist of Newton's ideas who wrote to Hume on music from Italy in 1756;

Nils Wallerius (1706-1764) who attacked Hume's supposed deism in 1750s Sweden; Voltaire (1694-1778) who in 1764 in France published high praise of Hume's *History* ('perhaps the best that has ever been written in any language'); Pietro Verri, an Italian social thinker, who in 1763 referred to Hume as 'Author of Commerce'; Sir James Steuart (1712-1780), a fellow Scot, who also shared ground with Hume by thinking that 'economic policy always had to be related to circumstances' (160); Russian Princess E R Dashkova (1743-1810) the titular head of the Russian Academy who in 1774 translated into her native language Hume's 'Of Commerce' essay; Adolf Kaminski (1737-1784), the Polish translator of 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations', published in Wroclaw in 1785; Ferenc Kölcsey (1790-1838), one of those who contributed to assessments of Hume as an 'Ignoramus' in the Hungarian Enlightenment; Karl Heinrich Seibt (1735-1806) whose lectures delivered at Prague University openly praised Hume's philosophy; the reviewers who contributed to the 'canonization' of Hume's *History* in eighteenth-century British periodicals; intellectuals who overlooked everything by Hume in nineteenth-century Romania; and those in nineteenth-century Britain who contributed to lasting debates about Hume's philosophy, including Professors John Leslie (1766-1832), Thomas Brown (1778-1820), T H Green (1836-1882), and others, like Norman Kemp Smith (1872-1958), who brought that story forward to the twentieth century.

Jones's volume demonstrates that Hume's Enlightenment reception was significant and cast a very long shadow in the fields of history, political economy, philosophy and related areas. But it also varied considerably depending on where, when, and to whom one looks. Readers of this collection cannot help but be struck with the vivid impression that the history of ideas is rooted in places, times, and people. The back matter for the book – each of the book's chapters has its own bibliography, some of which are quite involved,

and there is a cumulative index – underscores that point. *The reception of David Hume in Europe* covers a lot and in detail.[3] It does not, of course, tell us everything we wish to know about Hume and the Enlightenment. In his introduction, Jones identifies other fields to explore:

> Aside from the countries and territories not explored in this book, many other matters await study: the ways in which foreign travel, as well as exile, enabled writers to learn of or discuss Hume's works and ideas; the ways in which the name of Hume gets associated with ideas that have little if any connection with him; the ways in which students' notes were made, and disseminated; the ways in which the physical nature of books, and access to them, influenced how they have been used and interpreted (11).

The volume is a stepping stone to further work on placing Hume in the Enlightenment.

Anyone interested in Hume as an Enlightenment figure would also want to know more about Hume's life than either *The reception of Hume in Europe* or *Hume and the Enlightenment* were intended to deliver. Unfortunately, scholars have long grieved that there are not better single-volume biographies of Hume than Ernest Campbell Mossner's (1907-1986) *The life of David Hume* (1954) – a book widely considered deficient in many ways, even after its second revised edition of 1980. (A renowned Hume scholar once confided to me at dinner, over a glass of wine, that in his home library Mossner's *Hume* is always shelved in fiction.) James A Harris's

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[3]   Thankfully, Bloomsbury Academic published it in an affordable paperback edition in 2013.

(Philosophy, University of St. Andrews) new book, *Hume: An intellectual biography*, provides a welcomed account of the intellectual part of Hume's biography. It is a very good book with much to tell us about Hume and the Enlightenment.

Harris challenges what he identifies as two different Humes in the historiography. The first Hume (championed by T H Green, T H Grose, and others) was one whose life as a writer was comprised of two, distinct phases: 'the discovery in the *Treatise* of the apparent impossibility of progress in philosophy, followed by the taking up of non-philosophical issues thereafter' (7). The second Hume (birthed in the writings of Norman Kemp Smith and John Laird) 'took seriously the programme for a "science of man" described in the introduction to *A treatise of human nature*, and . . . portrayed that programme as the framework in which all of Hume's subsequent work needed to be understood. All of Hume's work, in other words, went together to constitute a unified and systematic study of human nature' (9). Harris rejects both of those Humes. In their place he substitutes Hume, an enlightened man of letters. What does that mean?

One of the guiding themes of Harris's interpretation is that it is wrongheaded to attempt to locate a systematic thinker behind Hume's various works as philosopher, political economist, and historian. Hume's interests 'do not fit together to form an organized system' (viii). Instead, Harris postulates that we are better to 'take seriously Hume's description of himself as having intended from the beginning to live the life of a man of letters' (2). 'Philosophy was one of his interests, but only one' (15). What unifies Hume's works is not the pursuit of a system, or a doctrine, but 'the disengaged, skeptical, philosophical frame of mind of their author' (viii); a 'commitment to dispassionate, disengaged analysis, even with respect to the most vital moral, political and religious beliefs' (464).

The ruling passion of Hume's intellectual biography, in short, is his desire to be enlightened and to enlighten.

Much that Hume wrote makes sense when seen through Harris's lens. Hume's heightened and persistent concern with the reception of his works also comes into sharper focus. 'Style mattered so much to Hume precisely because, as a man of letters, he did not write as a specialist only for fellow specialists' (23). Harris is right to claim that Hume 'sought, and found, a very large readership among the educated men and women of his day, in Britain, and in Europe more widely' (23). Eighteenth-century America might be added to that list as well for there, too, Hume attracted many readers, some of whom were quite perceptive. And, perceptive readers were the ones who mattered most to Hume. Harris puts that point this way:

> What he wanted from his readers, but did not always get, was a willingness to join him in a certain kind of discursive space, in a kind of conversation which . . . might be called *philosophical*. . . . His task as a man of letters was to be part of the effort to bring that conversation, the conversation that we call the Enlightenment, into existence' (23-24).

Harris's account of Hume as an enlightened man of letters unfolds chronologically in a book divided into 8 chapters. What follows is an attempt to provide a brief synopsis of those chapters while identifying some of their highlights and offering occasional reflections.

In chapter 1, 'Pursuits of Philosophy and General Learning,' Harris perceptively says 'the *Treatise* grew out of the philosophical tension between [Bernard] Mandeville [1660-1733] on the one hand and [Francis] Hutcheson [1694-1746] on the other' (38). Throughout this biography there are very interesting sections on the thinkers that most influenced Hume and in what ways. Others in his early life, like

Colin Drummond (c1685-1753), Hume's likely teacher of logic and metaphysics at the University of Edinburgh, 'gave Hume an edifice to destroy, not a path to follow' (39). In chapter 2, 'Anatomist of Human Nature', Harris notes among other things Hume's passionate curiosity: 'Curiosity gave him a reason to believe that philosophy was worth pursuing even in light of philosophy's evident inability to validate itself' (102). We also find that 'Hume took the theory of belief presented in the *Treatise* to be his most important contribution to philosophy' (139). Harris shows us that Hume's concerns over the reception of his works could at times translate into a deep concern for 'the approval of others' (116). That trait stayed with Hume always. It also informed his autobiography composed as his life came to an end.

Chapter 3, 'Essayist', documents Montesquieu's (1689-1755) deep impact on Hume, especially through his *Lettres Persanes* and *De l'Esprit des Lois*. We get a sense of how in his essays Hume often attempted 'to negotiate a middle way between extreme opposites' (155). That message he aimed to take to a wider audience than could be reached with dense works of philosophy such as his *Treatise* was. Special attention goes to Hume's 'Of the Dignity of Human Nature' essay, 'a kind of supplement to the *Treatise*' (163). Chapter 4, 'The Achievement of Independence', gives perceptive readings of Hume's *Letter from a gentleman to his friend in Edinburgh* (1745) and *A true account of the behaviour and conduct of Archibald Stewart, Esq; late Provost of Edinburgh* (1745), texts that do not often receive attention but helped Hume to establish his reputation in the Scottish Enlightenment, although that is a term that Harris does not employ here or elsewhere in this book. Chapter 5, 'Two Years at Ninewells', focuses on Hume's immensely productive period between 'the spring of 1749 and the summer of 1751' (249). It also introduces Hume's *Essays and treatises on several subjects*, 'a summing up of Hume's achievements so far, a tidying up, and a

presentation of what he had written in a uniform format, to be bound as the purchaser wished, and to give Hume a substantial presence on the library shelves of his contemporaries' (303). Hume, enlightened man of letters, had arrived. But there was more to come.

Harris's approach to Hume requires that the post-*Treatise* writings get attention. The *History of England*, in particular, takes a leading role in the later stages of Hume's intellectual life. It is the focus of chapter 6, 'The Start of a History of Great Britain', and chapter 7, 'The Completion of a History of England'. Here, Harris discusses the nature of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British historiography with references to the works of Robert Brady (1627-1700), William Petyt (1640/1-1707), James Tyrrell (1642-1718), Paul Rapin de Thoyras (1661-1725), John Oldmixon (1673-1742), Thomas Carte (1686-1754), and William Guthrie (1708-1770), among others who rarely figure in general and philosopher's books on Hume. Saying even more about the lives of some of these figures might have been useful to Harris's story. For instance, the fact that Guthrie was also a Scot (and shows up in Hume's correspondence) seems neither irrelevant nor uninteresting in light of the similarities that Harris notes between Guthrie's *A general history of England* (1744-1751) and Hume's Tudor and Stuart volumes.

Harris provides a judicious reading of each of the six volumes of Hume's *History*, proceeding in the order of their publication (two volumes on the Stuarts, two on the Tudors, and two on England's ancient history, back to 55 BC). The first published volume centered on the reigns of James I (1566-1625) and Charles I (1600-1649). There, says Harris, Hume's reader 'is constantly pulled from the parliamentary perspective to the royalist perspective and then back again, and is thereby forced to confront the plausibility of both points of view' (339). The Tudor volumes showed clearly that the Stuarts shared much with their forerunners, Henry VII (1457-1509), Henry VIII (1491-1547), and Elizabeth (1533-1603). 'The theories of James I and Charles I concerning the extent of royal authority really

were in accord with the practice of their Tudor antecedents' (371), says Harris. This in part is why Hume could shed a tear over the execution of Charles I.

Parts of Hume's story emphasized continuity; however, change was also a theme. Whig historians might look back to the 'timeless' Magna Charta in their efforts to define modern political rights, but Hume strove to demonstrate that the English past was rarely a worthy model to emulate. A measure of good luck had led England to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The story here was one of 'endless constitutional change' (406). Harris's reading could have been supported by the fact that some in Hume's eighteenth-century audience read the *History* in just that way. Charles Carroll of Carrollton (1737-1832) did – and made sure that others in colonial America were aware of Hume's point which he discussed at length in prominent debates published in the *Maryland Gazette* in 1773.[4] In eighteenth-century America, Hume's demotion of the English constitution could be put to revolutionary ends by those who desired to break away from its seeming justification of a strong British grip on the colonies.

Some modern historiography is also absent from Harris's account of Hume's *History*, including notable works by David Allan, Jeffrey M Suderman, and Mark R M Towsey. Towsey, in particular, has published work on Hume as an enlightened historian that approximate closely Harris's Hume. In one piece, relying on eighteenth-century Scottish readers' responses to Hume, Towsey concludes:

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[4]   See Mark G Spencer, *David Hume and eighteenth-century America* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005), 140-152.

the *History of England* forced contemporary readers to negotiate for themselves Hume's various critics, the 'English, Scotch, and Irish, Whig and Tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier [who] united in their rage' against him; in the process, it helped fashion in them the sense of moderation, tolerance, and fair-mindedness that was crucial to polite readers in the Age of Enlightenment.[5]

Also, in his discussion of Hume's many and constant revisions to his *History*, Harris might have used Frits van Holthoon's groundbreaking variorum edition.[6] An intellectual biography of Hume is, of course, an immense topic. It is remarkable that the omissions are so few.

The concluding chapter, 8, is on Hume's life after the *History* in 'Paris, London, [and] Edinburgh.' There we read about the Rousseau affair and Hume's reaction to the Wilkes riots. We are also treated to a close reading of Hume's *Dialogues*, a work which, 'taken as a whole, like all of Hume's works, was an attempt to help the reader to stand back from everyday practical concerns, and to consider the

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[5]   Mark R M Towsey, '"The Book seemed to sink into oblivion": Reading Hume's *History* in eighteenth-century Scotland," in Mark G Spencer, ed., *David Hume: historical thinker, historical writer* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 81-102, quoted passage at 97. For a broader context, see also Mark R M Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: books and their readers in Provincial Scotland, 1750-1820* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[6]   While Harris notes two of van Holthoon's essays on the topic of Hume's revisions, he does not use or mention the latter's variorum edition of Hume's *History* (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corp., 2000).

matter at hand in terms of its general principles' (456) – as Hume had not done in his pamphlet, *The bellman's petition* (1751). This chapter gives space to Hume's reading during his final years and also to his revising of previous publications as the output of his pen slowed with the approach of death. An 'Afterword' reflects on Hume's 'My Own Life' and the posthumous publication of the *Dialogues concerning natural religion*.

Hume: An intellectual biography is a well-rounded, solid, and entertaining book. Hume specialists should read it from cover to cover and with pleasure. They will learn much as they read. But this is also a book written to be accessible to many others, including undergraduates and even the learned and conversible public. Like Hume, Harris is something of an 'Ambassador from the Dominions of Learning to those of Conversation'. It is difficult to think of a better single-volume book on Hume.

Naturally, Harris's account will not convince all. No doubt many will continue to think that Hume was primarily a philosopher and that his *Treatise* is more important than everything else he wrote. (Early published reviews make that clear already). Others will argue that Harris paints previous historiography in strokes that are at times too broad. Or that Hume was a more systematic writer than Harris lets on. After all, in the 'Advertisement' to Books I and II of the *Treatise* Hume promised further books on criticism (Book IV) and politics (Book V). Could not his post-*Treatise* life as a writer be seen as Hume's delivering a version of what he had promised at the outset? Indeed, Harris even presents Hume to us as being more systematic than some of his stronger claims to the contrary would lead one to believe. For instance, he writes that Hume's '*Political discourses* and *The history of England* would be informed by general principles of politics outlined in the *Essays*' (175). That seems to imply some systematic structure for his work. Still others will think that Harris does not sufficiently incorporate Hume's life into this

account of Hume's writings. What biography there is here is largely to provide a chronology for the writings and not to cast light on them. True, Harris is careful to say that his book is not intended to be a full-scale biography. 'The best place to start for someone with an interest in Hume's life considered as a whole, and not just in his career as an author,' he writes, 'remains Ernest Campbell Mossner's *The Life of David Hume*' (ix). But is it wise – or even possible – to impose such a clear-cut dividing line between any author's life and writings? Incorporating more of Hume's biography might have provided an intellectual life that was more lively and informative. One suspects such an approach would also be illuminating of the writings of one who claimed, as Hume did in his *Enquiry concerning human understanding*, 'amidst all your philosophy, be still a man'.

Finally, this book is not without typos and other errors and inconsistencies, some of which should have been caught by the Press and more by Harris. Some of these might be considered rather minor slips. For instance, sometimes we have plural possessive case for Advocates' Library (e.g. 326, 350), other times not (e.g. 353, 354). Purists will prefer a possessive case for 'Seven Years' War' (282, and elsewhere) although many modern publishers don't. At page 480, 'epigram' would be better than 'epigraph'. There are several instances of sentences with missing words, or too many words, or wrong word orders. For example, one passage reads: 'It was not a means by which we think ourselves into the situation of another in order to imagine what we ourselves we would feel in that situation' (110). More importantly, similar sorts of errors creep into the quotations. Hume, for instance, is quoted as writing, 'I have not yet seen on quarrel in France' (79); but the original has 'one' for 'on'. Harris points to an important revision that Hume introduced to the *History* in 1772, but leaves a 'we' out of the line being revised: 'that singular and happy government which [we] enjoy at present' (458). Later on that same page, the word 'the' is left out of this line: 'that one half of a man's life is too little to write a book, and [the] other

half too little to correct it' (458). Similar examples could be cited. Other oddities are to be found in the references and bibliography. (I couldn't help but notice, for instance, my being mentioned several times in the notes and in the bibliography as the co-author of an essay I did not write.) Since *Hume: An intellectual biography* is such a good book and sure to have a long shelf life, it is hoped that Cambridge University Press will be able to correct these blemishes, perhaps in a paperback edition which surely is already planned.

All three of the volumes considered in this review add, in different ways, to our understanding of Hume and the Enlightenment. They help us better to appreciate Hume's many-sided writings, the contexts in which those were produced, and aspects of their eighteenth and nineteenth-century receptions. They shed light on the nature of the Enlightenment as a whole and on Hume's particular place in it. They show us that Hume's Enlightenment was not straightforward or easy to demarcate, let alone to describe in full. Even when taken together, these volumes do not define, once and for all, David Hume's Enlightenment. What they show most clearly is that Hume was, and is, a very slippery character. Therein lies so much of what is most captivating about this enlightened man of letters whose writings excited such opposed views among his contemporaries, views that continue to spur debate 240 years after his death.

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REVIEWS

Sandy Calder, *The Origins of Primitive Methodism***,** Studies in Modern British Religious History, Vol. 33. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2016. Hdbk. pp. 316, £75.00; ISBN 978-1-78327-081-1.

A most attractive illustration of Tiverton Primitive Methodist Chapel, near Tarporley in Cheshire, adorns the cover of this study of the denomination that built it. Primitive Methodism, according to received opinion, championed the camp meetings that the Wesleyans rejected, employed many female preachers and underwent persecution for the sake of its mission. It was democratic in organisation and reflected the class aspirations of its humble members. Primitive Methodists fulfilled the ambitions of their co-founders, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, in preaching the gospel to the poor.

All that, this book contends, needs to be swept away. It is the view of the author, Sandy Calder, who presented an earlier version as an Open University PhD, that posterity has been hoodwinked by the most readily available sources, the denominational magazine edited for two decades down to 1842 by Bourne and the autobiography published two years later by Clowes. They, together with the history written by John Petty in 1860, created a framework of understanding in which two complementary leaders stamped heroic evangelism among the working classes as the image of the connexion. In reality, Calder holds, the Primitives soon abandoned camp meetings as a means of recruitment, employed women sparingly and were treated by others less as a target for insult than as members of an ordinary Nonconformist denomination. They were led by many prosperous figures in the early days and only became a church of the unskilled from around the middle of the nineteenth century. They did not identify with Chartism, the movement of the 1840s that voiced the hopes of the working classes, and they played

only a marginal role in the rise of trade unionism. Bourne and Clowes were mutually distrustful, living in constant tension, with Bourne once denouncing his rival in a three-hour diatribe at Conference. Accordingly the old image of the movement must be dropped.

This case is argued with bravura, most earlier historians of the Primitive Methodists having burning coals poured on their heads. But the polemic is supported by a wide range of solid evidence. It is undoubtedly persuasive to discover that one-third of a sample of nineteenth-century itinerant preachers, for example, were in the top 20% of the population in wealth at death. The leadership cannot have been as uniformly poor as some have previously portrayed it. The use of figures derived from probate records, in fact, is one of the strengths of the book. Another is the analysis of the signatories of the 1851 religious census returns which shows that over half were employed in non-manual occupations. Again that finding suggests that the body by no means consisted of the working classes at prayer. There is careful delving into the manuscript history of Bourne's autobiography to establish that he was less prominent at the origins of the movement than has been supposed. Extensive scrutiny of Primitive chapel building habits leads to the conclusion that the places of worship were closer together than those of other denominations because of demand. And there is the satisfying conclusion that leaders and led together embodied values that did not epitomise the aims of the working classes but rather bridged the gulf between the classes of Victorian England.

There are nevertheless features of the book that give the reader some pause. There are strange sets of remarks, typified by one on the economic fortunes of the United States during the Second World War (31 and n.46), which go off at tangents from the subject. Some of the statistics are insufficiently elucidated and phraseology is often cryptic. What, for example, was 'the then-'modern' view of the early movement' (211)? Allusions frequently go unexplained: thus the man whom the author claims to have been the chief early leader, James Steele, is mentioned several times before he is first identified

Reviews

at page 82. There are suggestions that are implausible, such as the notion (this one is avowedly speculative) that a preference for threefold architectural motifs constituted 'an evocation of the Trinity' (217). Occasional errors, including the notion that the Wesleyans were anti-revivalist (265; the Wesleyans generally favoured revivals so long as they were properly managed), affect the cogency of the argument. It is misleading, too, to speak of Primitives holding that a sinner could 'earn salvation' (83, 265). That is to attribute belief in salvation by works to a body that gloried in justification by faith. There are mis-spellings (notably the division of Lincolnshire labelled 'Lindsay' at 32, 37 and 42) and unitalicised published titles in footnotes. It is difficult to escape the impression that the thesis would have benefited from a measure of cutting and polishing. As it is, the text is generally dense and sometimes hard to follow.

Nevertheless the book will stir up Primitive Methodist studies. The author rightly draws attention to many misconceptions that have clustered round the denomination. Perhaps the most important is the image of the movement being democratic, whereas from 1845 it was so closely controlled by elderly preachers that Calder can call it a gerontocracy. The further exploration of that structural arrangement will go a long way towards illuminating the policy and significance of the connexion.

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John M Dixon, *The Enlightenment of Cadwallader Colden*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016, pp.264; ISBN 978-0-8014-4803-4, $35.00 / £27.90.

John M Dixon's engaging and succinct life of Cadwallader Colden (1688-1776) shows his subject is a difficult man to place. Colden inhabited many worlds, but perhaps belonged wholly in none. Born in Ireland in 1688 – the year of the Glorious Revolution as a major contributor over the years he was raised in Scotland and died in

America, in 1776, just as Britain's imperial crisis was boiling over to become America's revolution. Educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he read the works of Isaac Newton (1643-1727), Colden disappointed his parents by pursuing life as 'a London physician rather than a Roxburghshire clergyman' (p.5). When that career failed, he tried his luck farther afield, migrating to Philadelphia in 1710. But perhaps business in the West Indies or New York offered more opportunity? Chasing the possibility when presented to him by New York's governor, Robert Hunter (1666-1734), Colden there met with professional success. He rose to colonial prominence as surveyor general, member of the colony's council, and, in 1761 as an aging man, New York's lieutenant governor – the effective governor of the province. But none of that was without considerable opposition. Cocksure and prickly, others tended not to be at ease with him. Some might think Colden's naturally dour demeanor comes through in John Wollaston's (c.1710-c.1767) portrait of him as a middle-aged man, completed sometime between 1749 and 1752. Later, c.1772, Matthew Pratt (1734-1805) painted Colden with his grandson – and even in that setting one must search to find any hint of a wry smile.

Where Colden aspired most to fit in was with the greatest intellectuals of his time. Drawing on manuscripts held at the New-York Historical Society, Edinburgh University Library, and the Pennsylvania Historical Society, Dixon offers a thoroughly-researched, well-documented, and ably-written intellectual biography. Colden, we find, wore several intellectual hats – he was botanist, historian, and philosopher. Thinkers and writers in Colden's transatlantic circle included many of America's brightest, including James Logan (1674-1751), John Bartram (1699-1777), and Benjamin Franklin (1706-90); the Virginian polymath, John Mitchell (1711-68); and Boston's William Douglass (c. 1681-1752). He knew Fellows of the Royal Society, like the London Quaker, Peter Collinson (1694-1768), and was in touch with Swedish naturalists, Peter Kalm (1716-79) and, via Collinson, Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778). His works were read in France and Germany. Not bad

company for a self-taught botanist who wrote one of the standard accounts of native Americans and sought to 'correct' Newtonian physics.

Still, as an intellectual Colden wished to amount to more than he did. When he is remembered as an author today, it is most often for his *The history of the Five Indian Nations* (1727), a book which heightened his 'standing as Britain's leading authority on the history and geography of New York' (77). But Colden yearned to be recognized as a world-class philosopher who challenged George Berkeley's (1685-1753) immaterialism. He wrote two books on the theory of matter: *An explication of the first causes of action in matter; and, of the cause of gravitation*, published in New York in 1745, and *The principles of action in matter*, published in 1751. The first had some early success before fading from sight; the latter, Dixon admits, was from the beginning 'a commercial and critical flop' (6).

Placing Colden in the Enlightenment is difficult for other reasons too. This 'gentleman-scholar' of the early American Enlightenment espoused notions that struck many of the enlightened of the next generation as old fashioned and even reactionary. They cherished the expanding world of print and participation; not him. Colden – complained, 'Nothing more prevents the advancement of any Art or Science than that of making it cheap & mean' (1). In his final years – passed over quickly in this book – Colden became even more conservative amidst his heightened fears for the future of America: 'it must excite the most poignant sensations of Pain and anxiety . . . in every Breast where the Principles of Humanity and Common Sense are not obliterated by the Rage of political Enthusiasm to see a People thus calmly Determine to involve a Country in a dreadful War and Desolation' (167).

For Dixon, Colden is a figure who should remind us that the American Enlightenment contained possibilities beyond the revolutionary world of the Founding Fathers. 'Imperialism, elitism, and conservatism are not the usual stuff of the American Enlightenment,' he writes. 'But then most of our traditional

narratives concentrate heavily on libertarianism and the American Revolution . . . It is as much to say that America's Enlightenment was not just that of Thomas Jefferson and other patriots and revolutionaries. It was also the Enlightenment of Cadwallader Colden' (8). That is true, to a point. But perhaps this view of an Enlightenment divided clearly between Moderates and Radicals exhibits too much of Jonathan Israel's polarized approach. A more tempered view might cast Colden's Enlightenment as one of many such alternatives. That diversity is part of what makes the Enlightenment such a fascinating field of inquiry. Surely, for instance, our definition of the American Enlightenment would need to make room for the historian and constitutional thinker, William Smith, Jr. (1728-93)? Smith was another who was no Jeffersonian but who figures in this book for his staunch opposition to Colden on many critical fronts (pp. 150-9). These interpretative quibbles should not detract from this book's achievements.

John Dixon's *The Enlightenment of Cadwallader Colden* provides us with the new standard account of Colden. It replaces older works—and even more recent ones, such as Alfred R Hoermann's *Cadwallader Colden: a figure of the American Enlightenment* (2002) – by including much more of Colden's intellectual life and political intrigues. And all of that is thoughtfully situated in wider New York, colonial American, and transatlantic Enlightenment settings.

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Bob Harris and Charles McKean, *The Scottish town in the Age of the Enlightenment 1740-1820*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (2014), pp.xx + 604, 32 unnumbered pages of plates: illustrations (some colour), maps (some colour); ISBN 9780748692569, hdbk, £130; ISBN 0748692576, pbk. £30.00.

This is a splendid book, on which future generations can build with confidence. It is a book about precise context which, surely, should be, but is not, a concern of all historians: and it is also about the best scale to adopt for a particular enquiry. It is generously dedicated to Charles McKean, who, because of terminal illness, was unable to contribute more than part of chapter 3, on 'Urban Embellishment and Public Buildings', albeit his presence was ubiquitous. A fine acknowledgment of research assistants is also prominent at the outset, together with debts to numerous archivists, and those gestures set the tone of this large volume (also available in electronic form), striving manfully to minimise 'political meddling' (xx).

For decades students of Scotland in the eighteenth century had to rely on the admirably written and often carefully researched books by Henry Grey Graham (1899-1901), J G Fyfe's *Scottish diaries and memoirs* (1942) and my own favourite among the Publications of the Scottish History Society, because she was a neighbour of my family, the *Lady Grisell Baillie's household book* (1901). And, of course, aside from Sir John Sinclair's *Statistical account of Scotland* (1791-99), there were such classics of their day as that by Ramsay of Ochtertyre (only published in 1888) and Carlyle of Inveresk. But few scholars ventured into the particularities of daily existence, governed by numerous factors from habit and health, to the technologies available – horses for ploughing, for example, and the design of ploughs or pumping mechanisms – and the religious, geographical and legal constraints on thought and action. If a life is coloured by the values upheld, they themselves are shaped by the resources encountered, available or sought – understood as embracing both people and material things. Values cost: and costs involve both outlay and sacrifice. It has often been argued that unless a scholar who writes about farming and agriculture has lived for some time on a working farm, many aspects and anxieties of such rural lives cannot be fully understood.

From the 1960s onwards historical studies of Scotland in the eighteenth century expanded in both breadth and detail, well illustrated by the social and economic studies of T C Smout, and by

specialist scholars of agriculture, geology, banking, and a few of the existing but rapidly changing industries. Whereas the sciences and medicine remained thinly represented at the time, works on literature and the arts often revelled in dubious hypotheses about contexts and sources. In almost no cases, however, did scholars in one field embrace or even discuss the work of those in other fields. Historians of the various sciences were ostracised, and a prevalent assumption throughout the humanities and social sciences was that a person's ideas and actions are assessable independently of any contextual or biographical enquiry.

One reason for this absurd assumption was the difficulty in deciding what an 'influence' was, and when it could be justifiably inferred that a writer was 'influenced' by particular outside factors. Another factor was the seductive opportunity for commentators to postulate 'theories' or 'philosophies' behind literary and artistic works. Because philosophers themselves refused to engage with the resulting vague and often nonsensical interpretations, students and fellow travellers revelled in success. The few philosophers in the 1930s who ever considered the circumstances in which their chosen subjects such as Hume or Smith thought and worked – Laird, in Aberdeen, or Kemp Smith, in Edinburgh – were largely ignored by their contemporaries, the majority of whom regarded philosophy and its 'problems' as *a priori*. Further reasons resulted from the proliferation of 'disciplinary' boundaries, rivalry between fund seeking groups, and the fact that many academic writers had no direct experience themselves of the topics on which they discoursed – whether it be farming, banking or sculpture. Moreover, over the last sixty years, scholars within and outside dedicated institutions have found themselves increasingly targeted by people with political ambitions, usually administrators with no recognised scholarly abilities or achievements. In Whitehall and elsewhere, civil servants rely on their fading and limited memories of student life to inform their understanding of what scholars have achieved or aim to achieve, and scholars themselves have done too little to represent their own case. They have done even less to broaden their vision to

embrace the work and findings of those outside their own self-enclosed disciplines.

It is a measure of the achievement and quality of this book, that it largely avoids or transcends these dismal facts. As a social study its scale is that of groups or families, not of individuals, although the decisions of individuals defined those of the farm or village or business, and inventories in particular record some of those decisions.

Hume's rural life in the Borders and urban life in Edinburgh profoundly influenced his ideas and conduct: densely crowded high-rise dwellings in the city, with minimal heating and furniture, convivial conversations generously accompanied by wine, social behaviour anchored in family tradition and respect for others, personal possessions primarily determined by need and available resources, tastes in food severely limited by climate and geography – not to mention the looming presence of religious practices. And of course much depended on what writings anyone encountered, or could meet, and how they were interpreted. If all our ideas derive from experience, however little of it is first-hand, then using billiard-balls to illustrate problems about the causal relation, or the early training of children to illustrate the acquisition of languages, or the importance of promise-keeping for mutual trust – all examples Hume borrowed from others - show how the contexts in which a life is lived will shape it, and how some knowledge of those contexts will assist in the interpretation of the ideas acquired and espoused. But *what if* Hume had lived in, say, Cupar, Irvine or Wigtown? We do not know whether his views would have been different, but we do know that just as Edinburgh life bore little resemblance to anything in England, the differences between Edinburgh and the small rural towns that were scattered across Scotland were also considerable, and have been ignored. The general point is too obvious to labour: Pringle's views would have been different without his military experiences, Sir James Stewart's without his extensive travels during exile, Smith's without his duties for customs and excise. The temptation for later commentators to flatten out differences, to formulate an all-

enveloping thesis or summary has bedevilled scholarship in many domains, often because of essentially egocentric interests: 'what can I extract from a story told in this way, in order to articulate my own views here and now?'

The book is divided into two parts: the first studies 'Towns and Improvement' by examining means of improvement and urban embellishment, together with a more detailed look at five towns - Selkirk, Irvine, Dunfermline, Kirkcudbright and Perth. Part Two looks at 'Society and Culture' with reference to property and possessions, adaptation, and social stability. A fascinating Appendix lists 'Improvement Profiles' for Arbroath, Ayr, Banff, Brechin, Cupar, Dumfries, Dundee, Dunfermline, Falkirk, Forfar, Greenock, Haddington, Hawick, Inverness, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Kirkcudbright, Linlithgow, Montrose, Paisley, Peebles, Perth, Selkirk, Stirling, Wigtown. These list such activities as street cleaning, fire prevention, water supply, flesh markets, paving, widening of streets, lighting, bridges, enclosure of land. Throughout the text are details of, for example, Kelso fire insurance policies in 1800, race meetings 1760-1820, subscribers to libraries, household items in Dundee inventories 1726-1825. There are, perhaps, too few explanations of how the references to monetary value and costs are to be understood, although many can be worked out from Gibson and Smout's masterly *Prices, food, wages in Scotland 1550-1780* (Cambridge, 1995).

Nevertheless, all the details presented establish an entirely convincing thesis: to understand the fundamental qualitative change in the Scots burgh after Culloden it is necessary to systematically study a much wider range of places, their inhabitants, lives and activities than can be achieved by confining traditional enquiry to the four major cities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow and Dundee. Scotland was a land of very small towns. In the 1790s only sixteen Scottish burghs had populations over 5000, and it was within that context that rapid urban expansion took place - faster than anywhere else in Europe. The reason, of course, was industrialisation, undertaken on different scales and in very different locations from

rural to urban, and initially centred on the linen industry and textile manufacture. Employment in burghs was largely concentrated on the provision of basic services and crafts, although a small luxury sector developed towards the end of the century in such activities as watchmaking, silvercraft and furniture – well represented in the National Museum of Scotland, and elsewhere. And the costs of such luxury items need to be fully grasped: works by Verlet, Thornton, and several other scholarly works on the applied arts, such as Sargentson's masterly *Merchants and luxury markets,* 1996 (none in the bibliography) have revealed details that other historians ignore at their peril. It is well remarked that regrettably few inventories have been found to illuminate rural and small town living, but there are several basic reference books which explore materials and costs in some detail although no reference is made to them: *Brass and glass* (NMS, 1989) which discusses scientific instrument making workshops in Scotland; Morrison-Low's *Making scientific instruments in the Industrial Revolution* , NMS 1997; *Monuments of industry* (HMSO, 1986); and with a wider geographical remit, *English vernacular furniture 1750-1900* (Yale 1991). Studies such as *An insular Rococo* (London, 1999) which compares Ireland and England during the period 1710-1770, might have enriched the discussion of cultural issues.

It is fully acknowledged that the role of music is 'difficult to track' (366), although it was often associated with masonic ritual and sociability, but not with church choirs, which had withered. The Kirk, of course, powerfully influenced cultural development until the Moderates began to exert influence after the 1750s. Towards the end of the century bibliophiles emerged, encouraged not only by the expanding print culture and of circulating libraries, but by emerging aspirations of successful merchants – in Greenock, for example.

It can no longer be argued that London is taken as the main model for Scottish urban improvement in the eighteenth century, not least because Glasgow itself had been essentially re-built in the late 17th century – and thus provided one of several local models – but more because of 'attitudes and aspirations shaped by Scottish conditions

and history'. Nor should ideals canvassed most prominently in France, and derived from Renaissance thinking, be taken as centrally influential, any more than later Victorian developments interpreted as the culmination of earlier ideas. Many influential Scots, after all, had been educated in the United Provinces, from which they brought back not only medical practices. And then there are the crucial differences in materials – generally in England brick, in Scotland stone – and the social fact that the principal form of Scottish urban dwelling was an apartment or tenement, not a house. The local reasons behind improvements also varied considerably, whether for street widening, paving or lighting, with landowners playing a prominent part.

Variations in income, wealth, and the structure of the local economy ensured that cultural features were not homogeneous throughout provincial towns. The influence of the gentry and landed classes was felt in different ways, ranging from assertiveness to the need to absorb newcomers – such as returnees from India. It is also worth underlining that no ready means exist for assessing disorder at the time in Scottish towns, which were lightly policed by British standards, albeit soldiers were a recurrent source of trouble. Powerful local loyalties served to channel and diffuse tensions, but were increasingly challenged as a result of the increasing mobility in the population and by the rise of religious dissent. Moreover, by the last quarter of the eighteenth century and in several burghs, the trades vigorously contested the magistrates' oligarchical rule and campaigned for burgh reform. Importantly, the practices and traditions of guildry and trades, as they declined in influence, were absorbed by other bodies such as Masonic lodges and friendly societies. The influence of religion and the churches remained pervasive, however. Notwithstanding the rituals, Bible societies and Sunday schools, what is not well known, and still awaits study, is precisely what ministers said in the pulpit, and how it was privately understood or criticised by the congregation. Did people voluntarily, or even only unwittingly, surrender any opportunity or capacity for independent thought? Certainly the passive absorption required of

Scottish schoolchildren well into the twentieth century is too well-known to require further comment.

Each chapter is accompanied by extensive notes, and there is a consolidated bibliography; there are numerous pleasing illustrations, although many of the black and white figures, as is so often the case, are regrettably murky.

This book should be compulsory reading, together with all the notes, for anyone interested in eighteenth-century Scotland: it is a lesson in how to examine, interpret and carefully draw conclusions from available evidence – and if no justifiable conclusions can be drawn, to say so. As we all know, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. A small example is readily found in the context of luxury goods and music. Square pianos, much cheaper than harpsichords, became fashionable from the late 1760s, especially from firms such as Broadwood (himself from Cockburnspath) or Clementi, but they were still expensive in terms of (crude) average Scottish wages and incomes in the 1790s. If someone acquired a piano and his daughter (*sic*) played to certain people, how was this viewed? Aside from a few observations by philosophers, little is known about what people thought or said about musical performances in Scotland, influenced as many were by religious dogmas or social unfamiliarity – there is nothing comparable to the comments of Charles Burney during his Continental tours, obviously, or even the enthusiastic observations of James Harris, MP.

The authors powerfully conclude by observing that 'the Enlightenment is perhaps too often adduced as a cause of change in this period without ever specifying properly what it was or the mechanisms by which it supposedly brought about change'(492).

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Atheism and Deism revalued: heterodox religious identities in Britain, 1650-1800, Edited by Wayne Hudson, Diego Lucci and

Jeffrey R Wigelsworth (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 8vo., xxiv + 265 pp. £95.00

Interest in atheism and deism in the English-speaking world shows no sign of abating, and this outstanding volume assembles chapters from thirteen leading scholars in the field. In a Foreword and Afterword from Jonathan Israel and Margaret Jacob respectively, these distinguished historians seek to locate the two phenomena within their own existing scenarios. For Israel, enquiries into atheism and deism 'can have a very large impact on our understanding of the early modern era as a whole, including such key developments as the Enlightenment, secularization and the origins of modernity' (xvii); he reiterates his dichotomy between a moderate and a radical Enlightenment (xx). For him, 'atheism emerged as a towering menace' (xi), and Israel scales down deism (xix); but on the relations between these arguably antithetical positions (that is, between atheism and theism) we chiefly learn that both were victims of 'the apparatus of repression' (xiii). Israel acknowledges Leo Strauss, an early writer (1930) on Spinoza, who saw atheism everywhere in what Strauss first called 'the radical Enlightenment' (xiv). For Israel, 'It is often impossible to draw a clear line between deism, pantheism and atheism' (xvi); consequently, 'it is best to classify self-proclaimed and putative deists less according to their precise metaphysical positions, which are often extremely elusive, than their degree of hostility to the existing social and political order' (xvii).

By 'the early Enlightenment' Margaret Jacob means 'what I called, some decades ago, the Radical Enlightenment', foregrounding 'the English freethinkers, sometimes called deists' (not, it seems, atheists). They have a contemporary relevance, for 'Our contemporary culture wars undoubtedly contribute to the need to understand the roots of the Enlightenment', but the other contributors to this volume, Jacob accepts, do not voice 'solely American-centered concerns' (247). What are they? 'In essence, the Enlightenment endorsed the secular life and justified, even exalted it', but, again, this scenario does not really consider a relation

between atheists and theists (deists): the point, for Jacob, is their shared promotion of a new 'way of living' (253).

But do the other contributors agree? Only, it seems, in part. They are preoccupied by just such 'precise metaphysical positions', mostly concentrating on 'heterodoxy in England' rather than a pan-European Enlightenment (1). True, atheism and deism came to be taken for granted by historians. The editors reply: 'But what did it actually mean to be an atheist or a deist?' (2) If the answers are obvious 'then those who see the Enlightenment as an historical *telos* gain considerable support' (3); but the answers are far from obvious. Moreover, 'some historians with secularist sympathies deploy "atheism" as a term of approval to characterize the thought of a mind that has awakened to the delusions of religion' (4). Could this be said of Israel and Jacob? But such an assumption is inappropriate, since atheism and deism were '*shifting designators*' in 1650-1800 (3). In recent historiography, 'deism' has often been treated as 'a halfway house between theism and atheism' (4), but wrongly.

Many of the chapters admirably explore the difficulties involved in diagnosing the beliefs of authors who concealed the extent or implications of their positions for prudential reasons: Jeffrey Collins on Thomas Hobbes, Ian Leask on John Toland, Giovanni Tarantino on Anthony Collins, Diego Lucci on William Wollaston, Jeffrey Wigelsworth on Matthew Tindal, Tomaso Cavallo on Alberto Radicati in his years in England, Keith Yandell on David Hume, Diego Lucci on the younger Henry Dodwell, Charlotte Roberts on Edward Gibbon. The general conclusion of these studies is often that the private intentions of their subjects can hardly now be recaptured, and that such intentions can at best be inferred, as probabilities or logical deductions, from their published texts. For these scholars, it is the 'extremely elusive' nature of their subjects' beliefs that is the point, and their shared conclusion suggests a need for more research on their subjects' receptions rather than on their private motives.

Other chapters pursue a more thematic approach. Wayne Hudson argues that deism and atheism changed as categories over time, and should not be applied as single essentialist identities or as denoting

single philosophical positions. Luisa Simonutti's Europe-wide paper traces the origins of deism in philology and Biblical scholarship, notably Baruch Spinoza and Jean Le Clerc. James Herrick studies blasphemy in eighteenth-century England and finds that the term was used negatively to condemn a variety of discursive strategies. Jeffrey Wigelsworth explores the debate on miracles and finds that two self-identified deists, Thomas Chubb and Thomas Morgan, adopted very different positions on that question.

The implication of these two sorts of carefully argued chapters may be that the construction of a clearly defined, clearly understood and heroic intellectual or social movement, in the manner of Jonathan Israel or Margaret Jacob, is now more problematic than either appreciated in drafting the excellent Foreword and Afterword. This conclusion is difficult to avoid, since the scholarship of this volume is of a consistently high standard, and it will be a benchmark for future enquiry. I only regret that it does not quite reach to 1800, effectively stopping with Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (1776-88). Deism and atheism enjoyed major development (or revival?) in the 1790s (Thomas Paine, William Godwin, Jeremy Bentham) as did Biblical criticism (Alexander Geddes), and this decade, displaying perhaps the harvest of seed sown in c. 1650-1780 or perhaps a set of new departures, surely deserves a volume to itself. Such a study might discover that in the age of the French Revolution, the relation between deism and atheism still remained unresolved.

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Lionel Laborie, *Enlightening enthusiasm: prophecy and religious experience in early eighteenth-century England,* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015, hdbk, pp. 272, ISBN 978-0-7190-8988-6, £80.00

This book makes a significant contribution to the re-thinking of the Enlightenment. It concentrates on the underside of the Age of

Reason, namely 'enthusiasm', one aspect of the persistence of miraculous, prophetic, millenarian and occult literature that acted as counterpoint to enlightened rationalism throughout eighteenth century. In its most general sense, enthusiasts were those who claimed to be filled with the Holy Spirit that manifested in their convulsed bodies and infused them with the power to foretell the future, perform miraculous cures and speak in tongues. As fundamentally transgressive, enthusiasm 'epitomised the Reformation gone out of (ecclesiastical) control' (3). This book is a case study of those enthusiasts known as the French prophets who arrived in London in the summer of 1706 and remained active there, although by then dispersed and discredited, until the 1740s.

Laborie is not content with allowing his enthusiasts to be merely another example of radical dissent or of irrational popular plebeian religion. On the contrary, he aims to show that, both in principle and in practice, the French prophets were ecumenical rather than sectarian, appealing to establishment Anglican as well as nonconformists and across all levels of society throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. They were more of a religious movement than a sect. Thus, their enthusiasm broke through religious, national and linguistic boundaries 'in an irenic attempt to reconcile Judaeo-Christian denominations into a universal church' (245), reminding their contemporaries that primitive Christianity was grounded in spirit-filled religion. 'Enthusiasm' was a smear-word but the French Prophets embraced it to evidence their enthusiasm for a Christian utopia and their commitment to a better world to come, one that was 'fraternal, charitable and just,' one that brought together 'all levels of the social ladder, genders and ages under a common spiritual umbrella' (247).

In locating the French Prophets within the context of early eighteenth-century England, Laborie is also able to explore other prominent contemporary enthusiasts such as John Taylor, John Mason and Thomas Beverley along with other enthusiastic movements such as the Quakers, the Philadelphians and the early Methodists. Moreover, in so doing, Laborie is also well placed to

cast light on the critical reaction to enthusiasm more generally. At the very least, he demonstrates that religious pluralism and religious toleration remained highly sensitive issues in England during the period – tolerance and hostility were interwoven, although enthusiasts were no longer perceived by secular authorities as a threat likely to turn the world upside down.

More importantly, as Laborie nicely demonstrates, the French prophets came to play different roles in different discursive realms. A key part of his argument is the variety of perceptions of enthusiasm that came into play from 1800 on as 'enthusiasm' came to denote anything 'from a fanatical rapture to a contagious social plague, a legal limbo and eventually a physical disease, without ever losing its religious character' (246).

It has now become something of a commonplace that the conflict between reason and religion in the Age of Reason has been significantly overdrawn. As Laborie concludes, rather than a secularisation of the public sphere, the eighteenth century saw constant interplay between reason and religion. Reason and religion could be antagonists but they also often travelled fruitfully together. The importance of Laborie's book lies in his showing that religious 'enthusiasm', often marginalised as a sectarian moment of 'social dissent', should be placed more within the mainstream of eighteenth-century religion and within the broader context of eighteenth century life more generally. In fact, as he argues, enthusiasm blurred 'the traditional boundaries that defined eighteenth-century life, both horizontally across the religious spectrum and vertically by transcending the traditional plebeian-elite opposition' (248). Laborie's work should inspire much fruitful research, not only on the interplay between reason and enthusiasm in the eighteenth century, but also on those other streams of mystical, occult and alternative religion that have been similarly marginalised in modern cultural and intellectual history.

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Mark G Spencer, ed., *David Hume: historical thinker, historical writer***,** University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013, pp. xii + 282; ISBN 978-0-271-06154-2; $72.95 hdbk, $29.95 pbk.

In his introduction to this collection of essays Mark Spencer points out that Hume's contemporaries were more impressed with him as an historian, whereas he is now regarded principally as a first-rate philosopher. There are, however, many scholars today who seek to link Hume's philosophy with his history. This link, he claims, is best appreciated through a study of his essays. Spencer himself offers an excellent summary of the main conclusions of Hume's essays, while his fellow contributors offer fresh insights and suggest new links of enquiry on Hume as a philosophical historian. Together, these essays offer interesting and useful arguments and evidence for those scholars interested in Hume as a philosopher as well as an historian. Some of them offer a wider or clearer perspective on aspects of Hume's writings as an historian and hence they will appeal to less experienced and informed readers, though a few authors seem to believe that an intelligent and sophisticated argument can only be presented in dense and near impenetrable prose.

Roger Emerson reveals that Hume contemplated writing an ecclesiastical history because existing courses on this topic offered in Scotland's universities were dull and biased. Given his critical views of religious belief based on miracles, however, Hume decided not to give more ammunition to those who regarded him as an enemy of Christianity. While Hume did accept that the church had been a patron of the arts and of learning to some extent, his philosophical works did much to undermine belief in miracles, revelation, providence, the soul, and notions of an afterlife and so he prudently abandoned the idea of writing directly on ecclesiastical history. Jennifer A Herdt praises Hume's awareness of the historian' need for a sympathetic understanding of the perspective of others and of their motives for acting as they did. While Hume made strenuous efforts to achieve this awareness and even claimed to understand

(though not approve of) the motives of religious fanatics, she maintains that there were limits to his efforts. Hume never understood barbarians, for example, and did not quite understand how a belief in providence (which he rejected) could lead the religious to hope and plan for a better future. Philip Hicks examines Hume's discussion of liberty, in which he stressed the importance of institutions and laws rather than manners and morals in promoting it. Hume believed that changes in opinion were responsible for great historical movements. While praising liberty, he warned about its possible descent into licentiousness if it was not balanced by legitimate authority. He feared that fanaticism in support of liberty could lead to disaster, hence he never endorsed the rhetoric of Commonwealthmen or Country ideology.

Mark Towsey explores the reception of Hume's *History of England*, particularly though not exclusively in Scotland. He shows how the initial negative reactions, caused by Hume's perceived irreligion and sympathy for Charles I, changed as professional reviewers praised his later volumes. By the 1770s Hume's *History* dominated the field for such studies. It was translated into French and German, and was well received in America. It helped foster moderation, tolerance and fair-mindedness, and even promoted a British identity among many Scots. David Allan explores in impressive detail how widely Hume's *History* was read across the social classes and geographical regions of Georgian England. He is particularly good at tracing comments on the work, both complimentary and critical, left by contemporary readers in extant copies and in commonplace books. Concentrating on the two medieval volumes of Hume's *History of England*, Jeffrey M Suderman shows that Hume gave great credit to the role of individual monarchs in determining the course of England's constitutional development. He criticized some English monarchs as lazy, morally vicious and ineffective, while praising those who were hardworking and capable administrators, even though ambitious, autocratic and aggressive. Hume believed that weak kings were more dangerous than strong ones because of their inability to control factious

noblemen. His heroes, such as King Alfred and Henry II, were rulers who promoted the rule of law and strong executive government. Hume did not want such rulers in his own day, however, since the balanced constitution after 1688 safeguarded the rule of law while conferring greater liberty on the common people. In one of the most widely useful of the contributions, the Dutch historian, F L van Holthoon explores what Hume might have been seeking to promote in his *History of England*. He maintains that, while Hume was genuinely interested in social history, he wrote an essentially political narrative, concentrating on a study of English rulers and relegating his social and cultural comments to extensive notes which were excised from later editions of his *History*. Hume believed that the state and civil society developed more by trial and error than through rational intentions. Stressing the role of passion in history, Hume was sceptical of human progress. Humans were not good at planning the future and should be careful not to glorify the past. Liberty was the accidental product of religious and political conflict. Changes in public opinion, often not properly appreciated at the time, led to changes in England's political system. Liberty and authority were difficult to balance and it required moderation and intelligence to preserve them. Britain's constitution in the eighteenth century was better than before, but it was inherently unstable nonetheless. To avoid absolutism or anarchy, men should pursue moderate ends through parties of interest (such as Court and Country parties) rather than parties based on more ideological differences (such as the Whig and Tory parties).

In a less clearly argued essay, Claudia M Schmidt examines the extent to which Hume was a philosopher of history of a speculative, analytical or existential type. She claims that Hume believed that the conditions of human life had improved since antiquity, but that he thought that such progress was neither continuous nor inevitable. He was conscious of such threats to progress in his own day as the size of the national debt, the cost of military and colonial adventures, and the intensity of Whig-Tory rivalry. On the other hand, he did believe that history could entertain the imagination, improve knowledge of

human motives, character and circumstances, and develop virtues. His views later influenced a range of later historians and philosophers from Comte to Kant. Timothy M Costelloe explores the distinction that Hume drew between memory and imagination by comparing the craft of the historian with the art of the poet. Historian acknowledged that a good historian needed to use imagination to inspire in readers a belief and conviction about people and events in the past, but not in the same way or to the same extent as poets whose language gave the air of truth to their fictions. Douglas Long also examines Hume's belief in the importance of sympathetic imagination in any convincing interpretation of the past. It was this quality which gave a vividness to historical writing and enables the historian to amuse and instruct his readers. Its use greatly transformed and enlivened Hume's rather conventional historical narrative of the English past. Finally, M A Box and Michael Silverthorne closely examine how Hume set about maintaining, against many of his contemporaries, that ancient Greece and Rome were not more populous than modern societies. Hume wrote extensively on this subject and yet his reasoning and his conclusions have been largely neglected. Hume reached his conclusions by a close scrutiny of the evidence presented in a wide range of ancient Latin and Greek texts, but also because he reasoned that a larger population could not have been sustained by ancient societies marred by chattel slavery, constant and brutal warfare (especially frequent civil wars) and police, manners and constitutions worse than those prevailing in eighteenth-century Europe.

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