

JULIE, NOT EMILE: ROUSSEAU'S ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

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Readers of Rousseau who are concerned with his thoughts on education invariably turn to his work explicitly on education: *Emile*. This philosophical novel follows the education of a boy from birth to young adulthood, supplemented with a brief look at the corresponding education of his young wife, Sophie. These educations at first blush appear to be grossly sexist and inapplicable in our contemporary climate, and even if readers take the time to consider them further, they often conclude that these educations do not even succeed in the way Rousseau intends them. The inadequacy of it on his *own* terms is particularly concerning, and offers a hopeful avenue for further inquiry. I argue that Rousseau presents an alternative education that corrects for the shortcomings of the one he presents in *Emile*, in his preceding novel, *Julie, or the New Heloise*. This work is often studied for its content on love and family, while the education of Julie and her proposed education for her children is generally ignored. By ignoring Rousseau's first presentation of individual education, scholarship has been biased towards *Emile* as Rousseau's definitive statement on the subject, for better or worse. I examine *Julie* to flesh out Rousseau's educational vision, both in terms of his theoretical principles on the proper education for men and women, as well as the implications for those who are concerned with the same human problems Rousseau sees in modern bourgeois society and who are interested in his potential solutions. This dissertation helps to "rehabilitate" Rousseau in educational circles today, while also acknowledging and grappling with his prescient observations about our nature and conditions that we are reluctant to acknowledge with the same clarity today.

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For Mum and Dad,
who made all of this possible,
and in memory of Professor Steve Kautz.

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INTRODUCTION

Humans are strange animals. Born with few instincts, we cannot survive without help for the first few years of our lives, and need to learn a great deal to become physically independent. Then when we are finally able to make it on our own, we discover we also have additional needs for happiness and morality that we do not share with other animals, for which we have even fewer instincts to guide us. We humans have a profound need for education to supplement our weak instincts, not just for physical survival, but to figure out what makes us happy and good, as well as the means to those ends. What this particularly human education ought to look like, however, is just as much a mystery as the solutions it seeks to find for us. How can we possibly answer our most fundamental questions if we struggle to discover the content and method of the very education we need to do so?

No one in modernity appears more thoughtful or comprehensive on these difficult questions than Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He is uniquely interested in the problems of human happiness and morality, given his account in his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* that these are recently developed human needs or desires. Ever since we developed the first human societies, we have become more and more “unnatural,” drifted further and further from our primitive solitude and contentment. We are now social, unavoidably so, and we need all sorts of new external help to navigate this brave new world. He writes to examine and explain this human problem of profound ignorance and discontent: he shows how and why our quest for happiness and goodness are compromised by relationships of need in the interdependent world of society, he takes pains to resolve these tensions in a number of ways, and he reveals to us the limits of such possibilities given the constraints we find are imposed upon us by our historical situation.

The fundamental human problem, as Rousseau sees it and outlines in his *Second Discourse* is that when humans became social, this development made us dependent on others and divided our souls, generating conflict between individuals and within ourselves. Advanced technology (i.e. agriculture) and living with other humans generated a division of labor, that in turn changed the character of human beings and their relationships to one another. Suddenly humans were no longer materially self-sufficient, nor were material goods enough for their increased desires (*Second Discourse* 147, 151-54). Rousseau makes clear that *all* humans are dependent on others in this new condition, but the division of labor present in these very first societies fall particularly along gendered lines, and mutual dependence is no longer equal (146-47). Female humans become women and male humans become men, with women becoming more dependent on men than men are on women because women become even weaker with their sedentary lives (147). As Rousseau points out in *Emile*, men depend on women because they desire them, whereas women depend on men because they desire them *and* need them for their material survival (364).¹

As Joel Schwartz so elegantly lays out, Rousseau argues that bodily differences between men and women yield a whole host of gendered differences in human society, a state created and perpetuated by the woman to satisfy her material needs once the division of labor has made her feminine and dependent on man.² Through this process, material dependence generates a moral dependence as well. In order to use men for their material needs, women must coerce them somehow. They must generate a kind of male dependence on women, and they do this by creating

¹ Rousseau's gives two accounts of human sexuality and its effects on human morality, one in the *Second Discourse*, the other in *Emile*, with the former focusing on a broader historical perspective, the latter focused on the more narrow period of socialized humanity. They do not necessarily contradict each other, but the account in *Emile* does include details not found in the *Second Discourse* and it is not clear where they would fit in to that revised history of humankind. I rely on both accounts for Rousseau's explicit statements on the subject.

² Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 2-3, 6, 24-26, 66.

the idea of romantic love (*Second Discourse* 134-35).³ Maintaining the illusion of romantic love, however, involves women subjecting themselves to the moral demands of men and public opinion (*Emile* 361-62, 391). So when Rousseau shows that *amour propre* develops in our social souls out of our new ability to compare and judge, and makes us feel the pain of our dependence on others while also desperately needing their approval for our psychological well-being, we ought to suspect that these problems are greater for women, being of the more dependent sex.⁴

As Schwartz presents it, Rousseau's fullest solution to this problem is for the individual to attain a sort of "bisexuality" in one's soul, to relieve the psychological need for another by essentially containing two souls in harmony within oneself.⁵ The problem of *amour propre* is so difficult to overcome, however, that the individual who attains such "bisexuality" is a rare soul indeed – a soul like Rousseau. On top of all the forces of society working against this solution, such psychological "bisexuality" also depends to a large extent on material independence, since material need is the origin of psychological dependence in the first place. For better or worse, such material independence has been physically and socially impossible for women in most times and places, and so Schwartz's Rousseau denies this could be a possible solution to resolve women's dividedness and unhappiness in society.⁶ Women are out of luck on the individual front, but they can double down on romantic love and create a society based on domestic virtue that yields public patriotism, making men's dependence on women sweet for the men and less degrading for the women.⁷ This is, after all, the best solution for most men as well, since there are very few Rousseaus out in the world.

³ Schwartz, 27, 37.

⁴ Mira Morgenstern, "Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 139.

⁵ Schwartz, 7, 107-108, 156 n.10, 171-72 n.60.

⁶ Schwartz, 172, n.60.

⁷ Schwartz, 24-27, 36-37.

This solution – to make men and women healthily dependent on one another – is most clearly laid out in Rousseau’s *Emile, or On Education*. At the root of all of his solutions, at both the individual and social levels, is education. None of his institutional solutions can possibly work without first cultivating the proper humans for them. So in *Emile* he shows how men and women can be raised for each other, to form family units that run on healthy interdependence, and to give men the proper character to create healthy political societies outside of the home. Yet by the end, once we have seen Sophie’s education in Book V, most contemporary readers are suspicious of just how “healthy” this conjugal interdependence is, or whether Rousseau has asserted that both man and wife will be happy, while really setting up a system that cures men’s dividedness and unhappiness at the expense of their wives’ potential wholeness and happiness.⁸

With *Emile*, Rousseau gives us at least one highly-detailed education as a solution, but any attempt to look to Rousseau for answers or models that might satisfy our emotional and moral desires today is plagued by a two-fold problem. The first problem is external to Rousseau’s work, in the way that we receive it. Today’s reader will very likely raise the Rousseauian objection that we are not his 18th century audience and his own historicism suggests that we are now very different humans with very different educational needs, even if we could figure out what Rousseau recommends for his contemporary audience. New technologies, politics, developments in anthropology, biology, and psychology, and the impact of history since Rousseau’s time have

⁸ Nancy Senior, “Sophie and the State of Nature,” *French Forum* 2:2 (May 1977), 134-46. This is just one example of the argument, which is particularly neat and concise in Senior’s article. Most importantly, she points out the prescriptive form of “nature” Rousseau applies to women relies on a false descriptive form of “nature” he attributes to them (141-44). It is worth noting here that I too see Rousseau’s questionable use of “nature” to establish a double-standard in Book V of *Emile*, but I diverge from Senior’s reading by emphasizing that Rousseau is consciously telling his reader what we must accept as true in order to create women suitable for the new family he wants to establish, *whether or not* those assumptions about woman’s nature *are* true. The contradictions she points out are further evidence that Rousseau *knows* that many of the things girls and women must be taught to do in this system are not actually “natural” to them, or even directly for their own benefit. See also Schwartz, 164-65 n.48.

altered us beyond his recognition. On his own terms, Rousseau seems to have nothing to say to us in the 21st century, and we should instead look to one of our own for solutions to contemporary problems. Not only would one of our own be better aware of our problems and equipped to deal with them, but would also share our deeply democratic principles that reject authoritarian, sexist, and homophobic solutions. Even if we did not believe that historicism rendered Rousseau irrelevant for us today, we would be disappointed to find all sorts of distasteful solutions in his works and we would ultimately have to reject his educational suggestions.

Upon closer inspection, however, Rousseau's account of the social human's problems are hardly foreign to us today, even with our technological advancements and radically restructured societies. In *Julie* alone, he addresses gender roles, sexuality, marriage, parenthood, citizenship, culture, morality, religion, virtue and vice, household management, aesthetics, nature, education, violence, death, and so on. The questions of what humans exist for and how they ought to live undergird the entire book, and have not been swept away with the passage of time or whatever "progress" we think we have made. Rousseau is of course writing as liberalism and capitalism are taking hold of Europe and transforming society into a bourgeois society, the one we still essentially live in throughout the West and, increasingly, the rest of the world. Whether he presents solutions that are still available to us, or even good for us, remains a question – but it is a question we can only answer by reading him seriously.

These complaints, against his political and sexual premises, present the biggest hurdle to taking his novels seriously, but there is a further problem if we can overcome this one. This problem is internal to Rousseau's work: he does not present one single, unified example of proper education that we may simply take as a model for our own endeavors. Although readers often take *Emile* to be such a work, this is to ignore his preceding work, *Julie*, which details two alternative

educations to that which Emile receives, not to mention his models for civic education in *The Social Contract*, *Political Economy*, and *Considerations on the Government of Poland*. Add to this Rousseau's own claim that *Emile* is not a treatise on education, but rather an explication of the principle of humans' natural goodness, and we are faced with the task of determining what his true educational recommendations are.⁹

The problems of potential irrelevance, inappropriateness, and unintelligibility plague all of Rousseau's works, but perhaps none so much as his monolithic novel, *Julie*, especially when *Julie* when read with assumptions about *Emile* already in our minds. *Emile* presents a sexually dimorphic education, focusing on a boy's education through early adulthood, but also including a brief look at his betrothed's education through the same period. Sophie's education is different from Emile's specifically because she is a young woman and is being prepared for a very different life from his, a life of dependence on him. *Julie*, on the other hand, focuses primarily on a young woman's education and is written explicitly for the benefit of women, according to Rousseau's claims in the First Preface to the novel (3-4). His story of a "fallen" woman who is redeemed as wife and mother is for the sake of female morality, which Rousseau claims will be the agent of social reform in corrupt bourgeois society (*Julie* 8, 11-18; *Second Discourse* 52).¹⁰ If the idea of women's continence being the measure of her true value is distasteful, if not abhorrent, to our modern sensibilities, then we are very likely to reject his presentation of an education for women's

⁹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau. "Lettre à Philibert Cramer, October 13, 1764," Volume XXI of *Correspondance complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, ed. R. A. Leigh. (Oxfordshire: Thorpe Mandeville House, 1974), 248-49.

¹⁰ Note that Rousseau's discussion of his intended audience changes throughout the two prefaces. He initially says the novel is meant for "corrupt peoples," especially women, though not chaste maidens (3-4). He later claims that reading his novel will not do "worldly people" any good, and that the novel is actually meant for provincial couples, or provincial women, to rededicate them to their simple, virtuous lives, rather than to reform the corrupt (13, 16-17). He refuses to have *Julie* published in his native Switzerland, even though he presents an example from republican Switzerland to the provincials of monarchic France (20). Schwartz believes Rousseau is more sincere about *Julie*'s reformatory powers than I suggest (128).

morality. This is especially the case for those familiar with his proposal in *Emile*, which seems to cultivate women's morality for the sake of men's happiness and morality, and at the expense of all her own faculties, hopes, desires and needs.¹¹

Yet these complaints assume too much about *Julie* on the basis of a certain reading of *Emile* and ignores the complexity in *Julie* that Rousseau explicitly warns his reader of from the very beginning (*Julie* 12). For one thing, it is not at all clear that his educational proposals in *Emile* are misogynistic, or even truly sexist.¹² He at least argues that male and female humans are effectually the same and equal, by nature, but that over the course of history we have developed sexually-differentiated social roles and gradually became gendered beings (*Second Discourse* 111-12, 146-47). When the question of sexual differentiation and its implications for education arise in Book V of *Emile*, Rousseau does ultimately propose a different education for women, but his justification for it is nuanced enough to give us pause:

In everything not connected with sex, woman is man. She has the same organs, the same needs, the same faculties. The machine is constructed in the same way; its parts are the same; the one functions as does the other; the form is similar; and in whatever respect one considers them, the difference between them is only one of more or less.

In everything connected with sex, woman and man are in every respect related and in every respect different. The difficulty of comparing them comes from the difficulty of determining what in their constitutions is due to sex and what is not. On the basis of comparative anatomy and even just by inspection, one finds general differences between them that do not appear connected with sex. They are, nevertheless, connected with sex, but by relations which we are not in a position to perceive. We do not know the extent of these relations. The only thing we know

¹¹ Leah Bradshaw, "Rousseau on Civic Virtue, Male Autonomy, and the Construction of the Divided Female," 78-80; Susan Moller Okin, "The Fate of Rousseau's Heroines," 97, 99, 110; Else Wiestad, "Empowerment Inside Patriarchy: Rousseau and the Masculine Constriction of Femininity," 174-75, 181-82; Sarah Kofman, "Rousseau's Phallocratic Ends," 230-31; Monique Wittig, "On the Social Contract," 392; all found in *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*.

¹² While "sexism" as a term is generally conflated with "misogyny" in current discourse, thereby imbuing "sexism" with a negative connotation, I distinguish between the two. "Misogyny" specifically refers to the idea of men's superiority, women's inferiority, and the resulting disdain for women and femininity. I will use "sexism/sexist" in its neutral sense to simply indicate the idea of *sexual difference* rather than the negative, misogynistic idea of *sexual superiority/inferiority*.

with certainty is that everything man and women have in common belongs to the species, and that everything which distinguishes them belongs to the sex. (*Emile* 357-58)

Rousseau provides a standard by which to judge his gendered education in *Emile*, and a standard by which to reconsider education for generations Rousseau would not see or recognize. And such a standard is not far from what we consider appropriate even in our contemporary context. While we seem to want to say today that education should be the same and equally accessible for both men and women, not to mention the array of non-binary sexes and genders we increasingly acknowledge, we also struggle to say we are simply all the same, or to tamp down the differences that do not play well with our politics of equality. We are at least ready and willing to admit there are still some gendered differences between men and women, even if we only attribute them to education or socialization.

This is of course just to play into Rousseau's hands as well. Regardless of how these differences arise within us, and Rousseau admits they are not naturally inherent in us, we cannot simply ignore them when it comes to education or proper social relations. If we are to educate humans who are now gendered, social beings, we must work with what they are, even if we ultimately want to change how gender is expressed, how the sexes ought to relate to one another, or how much sex and gender determines what the perfection and happiness is of each. Differences between men and women are undeniable, but Rousseau readily admits that figuring out those differences is difficult and that we are easily misled by our prejudices into conventions that do not reflect the reality of our natures. Even ardent feminists in the critical camp, who see Rousseau primarily as a dangerous misogynist, are still willing to engage with him and many are happy to acknowledge his contributions to enabling feminism by taking women's roles in society

seriously.¹³ Rousseau leaves the door open to critical thinking about all of these relations and their implications.

So when we are confronted with his novel, *Julie*, which precedes *Emile* but is not nearly as well-known or widely-read today, we ought to approach it fairly. A novel about female chastity and domestic harmony seems laughable and useless to many of us today, with our birth control and careers, but its complexity and comprehensiveness can still speak to our hopes and fears about who we are and who we want to be, even as thoroughly modern women.¹⁴ Even among scholars who do take *Julie* seriously, and who are open to at least considering politically incorrect suggestions from Rousseau, most still take it to be a novel essentially about love and marriage. It certainly is about these subjects, but it is also fundamentally about moral education because moral education is both the foundation and the product of proper relations between men and women in Rousseau's mind. Correct morals produce men and women suitable for healthy marriages, and marriage produces children who will be morally educated by their parents. Rousseau is explicit about his intention in writing *Julie* – he writes two different prefaces to explain his desired reformatory effect of the novel on the demographic most likely to read it: women. *Julie* is meant to be educative itself.

Julie being educational does not necessarily make it a novel *about* education, however. To argue this, we need to recognize the importance of the tutor-student relationship between St. Preux and Julie, think critically about St. Preux's proposed educational plans, and connect the Wolmar

¹³ Lynda Lange, "Introduction," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 2-7; "Rousseau and Modern Feminism," 24-25, 39.

¹⁴ The modern career woman is of course not the only prevailing model of woman, even in the liberal West. There are still plenty of men and women who value modesty and domesticity as essential to good human lives, especially women's lives, and it is still a major complaint among progressive women that these values pervade the workplace and the home where male colleagues and husbands, respectively, still expect such virtues in women even while proclaiming equality and promoting the image of the morally and socially "liberated" career woman as a model.

children's education to the wider discussion of education throughout the novel. What *Julie* contributes to understanding Rousseau and the problems he focuses on is a more complex image of education than that presented in *Emile*, and one that forces the reader to figure out exactly what the proposal might be as well as what happiness Rousseau claims women (and men) should seek through the proper education. This has been neglected in the political philosophy literature, and where it has been addressed there and in other fields, the explorations have been inadequate.

This, then, is the purpose of this project, to give Rousseau's ideas about education in *Julie* the full treatment it is due. I examine Julie's education to see how it explains and reflects human nature, on Rousseau's terms, and how he suggests we might become virtuous and happy through such an education – especially women. The answer is complicated by the fact that Julie's education seems to fail when she loses a fundamental aspect of her virtue: her chastity. She then ends up married to Wolmar, escaping her unhappiness only by committing pseudo-suicide.¹⁵ If she loses her virtue and ends up unhappy, then we must wonder whether Julie ought to be our model or if we ought to follow her education. Perhaps this is merely a cautionary tale, a model of what *not* to do before Rousseau makes the necessary corrections in *Emile*.

I argue, however, that such an interpretation is too simplistic and dismissive of Julie's education. Julie is a virtuous wife for the rest of her life, and although she is deeply unhappy because she cannot be with St. Preux, she takes great, sincere pleasure in being a mother and a

¹⁵ Julie's happiness or unhappiness at Clarens is slippery. She claims to be discontent despite all of her blessings as wife and mother, and that she is "too happy; [she is] weary of happiness," (570). On her deathbed, she claims she has reached the peak of felicity and that, had she lived longer, she would only see a decline in her happiness (595-96). The unhappiness she escapes by dying now is at least a future unhappiness that she perceives ahead of her, but she certainly has never been completely happy at Clarens, being unable to find the peace and contentment Wolmar had hoped to provide for her. She feels within her heart a "useless strength" that has no outlet and can never be at ease (570). The prayer and contemplation of the divine that she directs this "useless strength" towards is, she admits, an "opium" that does not quite cut it, either (571-72). She longs for the afterlife explicitly because she will be reunited with St. Preux as her true lover and soul's companion (610). See also Morgenstern 123-24, and Okin 95-96.

benefactor in her position at Clarens. She also develops a negative education for her sons and hints at another for her niece that very closely correspond in their methods and aims with the ones Rousseau presents for Emile and Sophie in *Emile*, which contains passages almost verbatim from *Julie* (Letter V.III).¹⁶ While other scholars, like Jeanne Thomas Fuchs and Judith Shklar, suggest the negative education for the Wolmar children is meant to prevent the moral struggles Julie endured, making the children's education the "proper" one, I suggest Julie's education did not fundamentally fail and therefore still stands as a possible model of education for adults without the need for the complicated and difficult negative education for children.¹⁷

No one has analyzed Julie's education on its own merits, nor has anyone carefully considered how her education relates to the one she proposes for her children without assuming that her children's education is the real model in the novel. Any studies that do consider her children's education focuses on Clarens and Wolmar's godlike control over the estate and its inhabitants.¹⁸ Julie does, admittedly, discuss education at length with Wolmar, and describes what she learned from him to St. Preux, but she has also thought through the problems independently and has ideas of her own about human nature and education. She tells St. Preux, "Even in that [i.e. preparing her sons for their education in reason] I am doing no more than following Monsieur de

¹⁶ See also Stewart's and Vaché's editorial notes to this letter (703-707).

¹⁷ Jeanne Thomas Fuchs, *The Pursuit of Virtue: A Study of Order in La Nouvelle Héloïse* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 178, and Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 24, 65.

¹⁸ See Shklar, 150, 153, 161 n.3, , 163, 165, and Mark Kremer, *Romanticism and Civilization: Love, Marriage, and Family in Rousseau's Julie* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017), 88. Here, Kremer's account of Julie's plan for her children's education indirectly credits Wolmar by arguing that Julie's defense of education is a defense of the order that she lives under at Clarens. The notable exceptions are M. B. Ellis, *Julie, or La Nouvelle Héloïse: A Synthesis of Rousseau's Thought (1749-1759)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949), chapter 5, and Nicole Fermon, *Domesticating Passions: Rousseau, Woman, and Nation* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), chapter 3, 112-13. Both authors take into account that Julie, St. Preux, and Wolmar all present conflicting visions of education for the Wolmar children, more or less independently of the order at Clarens, but still neither author connects Julie's or St. Preux's individual plans for the children's education with their own education that takes place in the first half of the novel.

Wolmar's system point by point, and the further I go the more persuaded I am of how excellent and just it is, *and how well it accords with mine*" (*Julie* 473, emphasis added). She judges Wolmar's system against her own, and their concordance is not entirely attributable to his control. When St. Preux plans to write out an educational system based on his ideas after his conversations with the Wolmars, this system "begins where *Julie's* leaves off" (501, emphasis added).

We must keep in mind that Julie received an education prior to her marriage at the hands of St. Preux, and one prior to that, since the novel opens when she is already eighteen. This helps explain her system's deviation from her husband's. If we are to understand the education she outlines, and how she arrived at it, we ought to take her seriously when she says "that the first and most appropriate education, the one precisely everyone overlooks, is to prepare a child for receiving instruction... Reason is the instrument [parents] think they can use for instruction, whereas it is the one the other instruments must serve to fashion, and of all the branches of learning proper to man, the one he acquires last and with the greatest difficulty is reason itself" (460). While Julie speaks specifically about children's education here, the need for a preparatory, pre-rational education is necessary for developing reason later, regardless of age. Upon examination, we see that Julie's education develops in this way as well, and we are left to wonder whether the exacting educational project in *Emile* is necessary at all if the same ends can be achieved in less arduous ways.

I argue that Julie's adult education, with its combination of emotional conditioning and rational development, presents a serious alternative to the childhood educations Rousseau details in *Emile* and in the second half of *Julie*. That is, the adult education Julie receives is far more practical as a model for virtue and happiness than the "negative" education used to prevent vice

arising in children.¹⁹ Even though it appears her education fails, since she succumbs to romantic love and later cannot be happy under Wolmar's salutary rule, her education is fundamentally successful insofar as it prepares her to come up with the negative education for her children that is appropriate for the context of Clarens. Julie, in discussing with Wolmar, discovers the principle of natural goodness, and what can and cannot be done to preserve it. This is exactly what Rousseau tries to explain in *Emile*.²⁰ If it is Julie's education that actually yields the idea of natural goodness and how we might maintain it through education, then we ought to conclude that her education has been successful in a very significant way and that it might be a better model for real human education. *Emile* does not create, nor does it seek to create, Emiles or Sophies out of its readers, but *Julie* must create Julies.

This claim is consistent with Rousseau's other writings on the importance of women's education, since they control all of morality and happiness by educating men (*First Discourse* 52, *Letter to d'Alembert* 47). *Julie*, as opposed to *Emile*, has a practical purpose in promoting virtue in its (primarily female) readers, but it also introduces them to the principle of natural goodness through a romance shot through with theoretical discussions of morality and human nature. *Julie* starts with women as they are and how they operate in bourgeois human society, as Rousseau sees them, but the novel combines moral and intellectual education for women, blurring the lines between practical and philosophical education for a demographic that elsewhere in Rousseau's work appears to only deserve or need a practical education. In this way, I argue, Rousseau shows in *Julie* what an education towards "bisexuality" would look like, not just as a solution for men

¹⁹ I will argue later that, insofar as a childhood education is insufficient if not followed by an appropriate adult education, then the best education must also involve the adult education modeled in *Julie*. While this might correct for the deficiencies I find in Emile's and Sophie's educations, resulting from its hyper-gendered nature, I argue that it best follows from the childhood education Julie lays out herself, if such an education is possible.

²⁰ Arthur M. Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 92-93.

but for women as well. Here we see the opposite of the sexually dimorphic education proposed in *Emile*. *Julie* presents an alternative education that aims at making preexisting, imperfect adults into human wholes instead of turning children into gendered adult halves of a conjugal union.

This reading of *Julie*, then, also has implications for reading *Emile*. Rousseau says explicitly in his letter to Philibert Cramer that *Emile* is not “a true treatise on education. It is rather a philosophical work on this principle advanced by the author in other writings *that man is naturally good*.”²¹ The reader of *Julie* has already encountered this principle in a more readily-accessible work, and is thereby prepared to read the more theoretical *Emile*. *Julie* effectually creates the “mother who knows how to think” to whom Rousseau “addresses” *Emile*, to take Denise Schaeffer’s thesis even further, that the process of reading *Emile* creates such a mother.²² If the task, as Schaeffer argues, is to educate a reader who is able to look at the text critically and determine whether *Emile*’s education actually succeeds, in service to becoming free republican individuals, then we cannot start with *Emile*.²³ We must start with the preparatory education of *Julie*’s romance to cultivate taste and develop judgment; we must follow the educational plan for adults who have not had the “negative education” outlined in *Emile*.

²¹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Lettre à Philibert Cramer,” 248-49. Translation from Melzer 8 n. 10, emphasis is Rousseau’s.

²² Denise Schaeffer, *Rousseau on Education, Freedom, and Judgment* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2013), 21-24, 31.

²³ Let me say here that I agree with Schaeffer’s arguments that Rousseau is not the authoritarian he can be made out to be, and that he is perhaps more liberal than we realize since even his educational proposals in *Emile* encourage freedom and good judgment (6). I take issue, however, with her claims that *Emile* can create the free reader with good judgment (31). Instead, I believe *Julie* does the necessary work to create such a reader, through a process that is outlined in the novel’s discussion of *Julie*’s own education. While it still may be necessary to read *Emile* after *Julie*, to either further this education or to present additional ideas to the reader, *Julie* is the necessary first volume of the pair.

Plan of the dissertation

This dissertation, like the novel it analyzes, contains two parts corresponding to the two halves of the novel: Julie's romantic youth with St. Preux and her reserved adulthood with Wolmar. Each half presents a model of education, first for the young woman and her companions, and then for her children. Chapter 1 elaborates on Rousseau's vision of humanity's problems and the educational solution to those problems, as expressed specifically in *Julie*. Chapter 2 examines the moral education St. Preux develops for himself and his pupils, cultivating taste and judgment to become independent moral wholes by "bisexualizing:" them. I step out of *Julie* in Chapter 3 to discuss the success of this education and the implications of it for Rousseau's thought about women's education. Chapter 4 turns back to *Julie*'s second half, where Julie presents an education for her children that is similar but not the same as Rousseau's more famous educations for Emile and Sophie. Finally, Chapter 5 is a substantive conclusion that again steps out of the novel and evaluates both Julie's and her children's educations, with initial comparisons between them and the educations Rousseau presents in *Emile* to show the problems of each, but also the potential superiority of Julie's education.

This dissertation, for the sake of time, clarity, and focus, does not go so far as to analyze *Emile* in light of what we learn from *Julie*, though this is the logical progression of this project and I will take it up in future work. Here, it is enough to show for the first time that *Julie* presents some serious alternatives to Rousseau's educational views in *Emile*, explain what these alternatives are and why Rousseau proposes them in the first place, and to suggest the ways in which we might get out of this novel a superior educational model, especially for us today.

CHAPTER 1: ROUSSEAUEAN PROBLEMS AND EDUCATIONAL SOLUTIONS

Before Julie proposes an education for her children that will prevent excess desires and dangerous passions from arising in them and conflicting with their duties, an education that Rousseau will refer to as a “negative education” in *Emile*, she receives a different moral education from her beloved tutor, St. Preux (*Emile* 93, *Julie* Letter I.XII). Their studies and their conversations comprise an alternative education to that usually associated with Rousseau, the one presented in *Emile*. This education is for adults as opposed to children, to cultivate their virtue through taste and judgment, first by imitation and then by reasoning to the principles of virtue. They must aim at virtue, however, because they are subject to a heightened level of passion that Rousseau prevents from arising in *Emile*. Whether this education is the appropriate education for adults who are not raised in the careful way *Emile* is, the appropriate adult education that follows from the proper negative education in childhood, or the only possible education for resolving social humans’ internal tensions between desire and duty, it is at least an alternative model to that presented in *Emile*.

This image of education that Rousseau presents in *Julie* seems to be a more practical education, but to say so is to make a somewhat obvious point insofar as most scholars understand that *Emile*’s education is impractical, if not impossible, and that Rousseau did not set out to create lots of real-life *Emiles* through an educational treatise. Rather, *Emile* serves to elaborate the principle “*that man is naturally good*” and to show us what extreme lengths it *would* take to preserve this natural goodness: “One must either be a philosopher or be raised by one.”²⁴ Yet

²⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Letter to Philibert Cramer, October 13, 1764,” *Correspondance Complète de Jean Jacques Rousseau*, ed. R. A. Leigh (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1974), 248 (my translation, his emphasis); Arthur M. Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 93. See also Allan Bloom’s introduction to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 28.

scholars have not fully examined the more practical education St. Preux proposes for his pupil in the novel that constitutes Rousseau's first explicitly outlined domestic education.²⁵

Of course, the most important pupil in *Julie* is the eponymous heroine, so those prejudiced by their familiarity with *Emile* might argue that this novel is about *women's* education rather than education as such. Indeed, Rousseau's complicated presentation in *Emile* of the relationship between humanity and sex, and its implications for the appropriate education for men and women, seems to make a discussion of education without reference to gender and/or sex impossible. As I pointed out in my introduction, however, what makes Rousseau's position complicated is his insistence that there is something shared between men and women in terms of common humanity, and that this dimension of them must be educated in the same way, even if those aspects of them that are determined by sex must be educated differently (*Emile* 357-58, 363). It will turn out that St. Preux, as tutor, will revise the curriculum for Julie's and Claire's studies, and will become a student of this course as well (*Julie* 46-47). St. Preux "bisexualizes" this new education first by adding some traditionally "masculine" studies and eliminating some traditional "feminine" studies, and by including himself as a student of this new curriculum along with his female "pupils" (49).²⁶ Here we find an education that does not depend on gender to dictate its method or content, and that ultimately aims at creating whole, happy, independently moral human beings – rather than

²⁵ Rousseau discusses proposals for public or civic education prior to *Julie* and *Emile*, in the *Discourse on Political Economy* and the *Letter to d'Alembert on the Theatre*. His works, if they have a character as a whole, seem to move from the big picture into the details, presenting the crucial problem facing all of social humanity first, then closing in on the solution(s) to that problem – from the political society, to the family, to the individual.

²⁶ This is to use Joel Schwartz's terminology. See Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 7-8, 107-108, 165 n.50, 171-72 n.60. Although I have adopted Schwartz's terms "bisexuality" and "bisexualizing," this term is imperfect in that we understand it differently in contemporary usage. When Schwartz refers to "bisexuality," he means the possession of both male and female attributes, rather than the sexual orientation that is attracted to both men and women (our common usage today).

gendered halves of a moral couple. In this chapter, I establish who Rousseau's characters are, how their problems are the human problems Rousseau is most concerned with, and what role education plays in solving these problems. This chapter is then followed by a chapter on how St. Preux's proposed education develops their taste and judgment, and point out how this program attempts to "bisexualize" each of them in this way.

Who are our pupils?

If we can take any cues from the rest of Rousseau's work for reading *Julie*, then the most important task will be to establish what *is* before we establish what *ought* to be done. According to Rousseau, we must work with what we are given because we are not only limited by our nature, but also by our history and our present conditions. Hence the importance of his new account of human history in the *Discourse on Inequality* (103-104). Humans have developed different characters at different stages in their history, and the problems that attend each stage cannot be solved without accommodating these existing characters. So when we are faced with the task of considering an education, it necessarily involves evaluating some former condition to determine what we need to do to it. At minimum, we need to examine this original form to see if it is defective, incomplete, or fragile, to find out whether we need to change it, supplement it, or preserve it, respectively. The original condition may *also* dictate the methods and content of the education, not just the purpose, but we will have to confirm that relationship further on. This is of course not limited to Rousseau's thought, but his particular emphasis on the influence of both nature and context gives us enough justification to pursue this question of characters on the basis of wanting to know *why* they need education.

To direct our inquiry, we need to identify how Rousseau would categorize the interlocutors in *Julie*. Rousseau presents many examples of duality and the tension between opposites, making

him famously “self-contradictory,” and we find a number of dimensions we might use to divide the characters: male or female, old or young, parents or children, sentimental or rational, private or political, rich or poor, innocent or corrupt, good or virtuous, and so on. Some of these distinctions map onto other distinctions, while others cut across categories. Just acknowledging these cross-cutting cleavages in Rousseau’s thought complicates scholarship that insists his categories simply reinforce each other and that raises all its objections on this basis.²⁷ We will have to be careful to properly assess where each character falls on each dimension independently, and figuring out which dimension is most responsible for their educational needs.

Again, readers already familiar with *Emile* and Rousseau’s other work will likely be tempted to make the fundamental distinction between Julie’s characters a sexual or gendered distinction, especially as it relates to education. This is both the original distinction between humans that arises in early hut society in Rousseau’s new human history, and it ends up being *the* crucial difference between social humans once children become adolescents and young adults, because the awakening of erotic needs and desires changes the whole orientation of each human towards all others (*Second Discourse* 147, *Emile* 165).²⁸ It is our relationships with ourselves and others that Rousseau wants to make as healthy as possible. His *Emile* and *Sophie* are “man” and

²⁷ Much of the feminist literature accuses Rousseau of maintaining a strict – and artificial – distinction between the political and the personal, which maps onto the male/female, citizen/human, rational/emotional dichotomies. Because of this, they deny that the cooperation between each allows both sides to fully express themselves, instead working in favor of the man and the principles associated with him. See for example Susan Moller Okin “The Fate of Rousseau’s Heroines,” 99, 109-10, and Else Wiestad, “Empowerment Inside Patriarchy: Rousseau and the Masculine Construction of Femininity,” 173-75, 178, 185. For a helpful example of the opposite argument, see Mira Morgenstern, “Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life,” 126, 128, 130, 137. All three references come from *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

²⁸ Whereas it is clear that gender arises in early hut society in the *Second Discourse*, prior to which male and female humans lived the same lives and had the same abilities to preserve themselves, Rousseau makes ambiguous claims in Book V of *Emile* that only man becomes a man (i.e. gendered) once he reaches puberty, while a woman is woman her “whole life” – well, “at least during her whole youth” (*Second Discourse* 147, *Emile* 361).

“woman,” respectively, and they are meant to relate to one another as husband and wife (*Emile* 437, 442). Their entire education works to reinforce and emphasize their sexual differences to make them interdependent, and in this way, Rousseau only presents reinforcing cleavages in his most explicit work on education. It is useless to deny the importance of sex in his thought, especially as it affects this education towards a familial solution to human dividedness and selfishness, but this is certainly not the only important dimension of human character – and might not be the most important dimension, either.

Rather, when we look at the characters in *Julie*, Rousseau confounds these differences across dimensions. There are male and female characters, but also old and young, rich and poor, parents and children, and a wide variety of combinations of these external characteristics. Given the obvious variety and greater realism of these figures, we are invited to look more closely and consider what their characters are like. They actually have personalities, and these personalities cause problems. They have not been exactly educated from birth like Emile and Sophie, they are not the individuals with characters already suited to the negative education Jean-Jacques will administer or encourage parents to administer. Rousseau presents two average young people when he presents Emile and Sophie – they are not prodigies, they have reasonably comfortable upbringings, and they are simply good-natured (393). Julie and St. Preux, on the other hand, are imperfect, extreme, and retain all of their distinctive problems that accompany their different characters. As humans they are conflicted and unhappy, which education ought to correct, but each is conflicted and unhappy in their own way.

The most important distinction that arises between the correspondents in *Julie* is that between the sensitive and the insensitive characters. That is, those who are full of deep feelings, romantic longings, and a taste for transcendent beauty, like Julie and St. Preux, as opposed to those

who are less passionate, less easily moved, and less concerned with sublimity, like Claire and Wolmar. Julie and St. Preux express themselves passionately, not only when they are in ecstasy over their love or despairing their cruel fate, but even in their discussions of virtue, friendship, and the world around them. When Julie sends St. Preux away, his letters recount his wailing and wandering through the mountains, imbuing the picturesque landscape with his mournful longings and images of his beloved, to the point of marking the landscape itself with “monuments” to his love (*Julie* Letters I.XXVI; IV.XVII, 424-26). The lovers indulge every one of their feelings. The insensitive characters, on the other hand, do not wander along cliffs, become deathly ill, or mourn their fates, because they remain unaffected by their feelings and shrug off misfortunes. Wolmar, once a rich nobleman, loses his fortune and leaves his homeland without so much as batting an eye (288, 402-404). Claire endures an unhappy youth in her father’s home, but laughs at life’s vicissitudes and jumps at the opportunity to marry Monsieur d’Orbe to escape her unhappy home life, despite not being fond of married life, either (334-35). They have no strong feelings inside of them to divide them and drive them mad, and for the most part, no unfortunate circumstances can shake their inner harmony.²⁹

Wolmar and Claire instead follow their “heads” instead of their “hearts,” and appear as the rational characters – not just insensitive characters. Wolmar is almost purely a brain, a “living eye,” and Claire is “incapable” of great passions for anyone or anything, besides Julie, that could cloud her judgment or compete with it in any way (403, 168). They calculate what is in their best interests, both materially and morally, and judge what is good for others when they struggle to do this for themselves. Wolmar is the “godlike” architect of the wholly but subtly engineered Clarens,

²⁹ Julie’s death is the obvious exception, which drives Claire mad and disturbs even Wolmar’s calm (Letter VI.XII).

both household and estate.³⁰ Claire offers generally unbiased advice to Julie, and she is capable of taking action for Julie's benefit even when it hurts both of them (e.g. Letter I.LXV). These are the characters who understand necessity and adapt to it, but they are capable of adapting primarily because there is no dimension of them that necessity can actually harm. They "accept" misfortune but it costs them nothing – they see random fortune where others see bad fortune.

If our insensitive characters also appear as the rational characters, the reader is tempted to map the sensitive versus insensitive distinction onto the irrational versus rational distinction. The sensitive characters have something fundamental inside of them that is pained by their circumstances. The necessary evils of life constantly test them and their mistakes are often the direct result of following their hearts, as when they succumb to sexual temptation (Letter I.XXIX). This does not mean that these characters are not rational, however, and it certainly does not suggest an inherent incompatibility between sentiment and reason. Rather, as Alice Ormiston argues, there is a strong case for rejecting this Enlightenment distinction in Rousseau's thought on the basis of his concept of modern identity. Civilized humans are not all sentiment or all reason, but instead always preserve the natural sentiments of *amour de soi* and *pitié* within them, even when the capacity for abstract rationality develops and the intense, unnatural passion of *amour-propre* or vanity arises out of this capacity (*Second Discourse* 155-56, 221-22 note (o); *Emile* Book IV). Reason is not the opposite of sentiment, but it is the root of the perverse sentiments that cause human suffering and unhappiness in civil society.³¹ In the individual with a healthy conscience and good judgment, reason will rule over the sentiments when they come into conflict, but the conscience still has to be motivated by the love of the good and so reason cannot function properly

³⁰ Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 155, 128.

³¹ Alice Ormiston, "Developing a Feminist Concept of the Citizen," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 144-49.

without the right sentiments.³² There are natural sentiments, which are always good, but also new unnatural sentiments that can be good or bad, so reason must be balanced with the good sentiments to control the bad ones.³³

Characters like Wolmar and Claire are not entirely insensitive, then. Their sentiments are just so basic and natural that they are obscured by their rationality, but both are present and work in harmony with each other, just as they do in early hut society (*Second Discourse* 150-51). Julie and St. Preux, however, are also rational. It is just that their passions, their intense and unnatural sentiments, obscure their rationality and are likely to overcome it if left unchecked. Whereas Wolmar and Claire do not need to rule themselves actively, or can do so with little trouble, Julie and St. Preux can only keep their unnatural sentiments under control by using a combination of reason and good sentiment. Although such self-control does not come naturally to them, making them appear sentimental and irrational, they are not without reason entirely – it is just weak in them. As we will see, their moral education will focus on strengthening their reason and natural sentiment together to gain the advantage over their unnatural passions.

We witness Julie's and St. Preux's moral educations, but Rousseau also includes one character who is sentimental and rational, and yet has this moral strength over his passions: Milord Edward. He often serves as the voice of reason for St. Preux throughout the novel, mirroring Claire's role towards Julie, but he also has his own life to worry about – a life importantly marked by two love affairs detailed in an appendix (613-20). He does not wail or gnash his teeth like his sensitive friends, but he is not incapable of feeling emotions like his insensitive compatriots. Rather, he very acutely feels the pull of desire, yet can use his reason to escape both unsuitable

³² Ormiston, 150.

³³ Ormiston, 150, 162-64.

lovers — with the help of St. Preux.³⁴ He is not a slave to either dimension of himself, remaining reasonably compassionate towards the two women once he is no longer attached to them (Letter VI.III). Milord Edward is, in this way, the Elinor to Julie's and St. Preux's Marianne Dashwood.

These different combinations of sensitivity and rationality help us to bridge the gap between Rousseau's particular characters and his more general characterizations of humanity. In particular, it reveals concretely the difference between goodness and virtue. As Melzer explains, Rousseau's new concept of human goodness is "the effortless indulgence of one's naturally good and unified inclinations, the total surrender to 'being oneself,'" which is good for the individual and good for others.³⁵ This is in contrast to the Christian view predominant in the West that humans were fallen, sinful, or incapable of living well while spontaneously being good for others.³⁶ Here it is not a question of whether *Julie*'s characters, as humans, are naturally good, but whether they have maintained their natural goodness up until the point of the novel's opening, as Emile has by the time he is a young adult.

If we who have read *Emile* believe that Emile's education is the only way to maintain natural goodness, and see (or assume) that none of the characters in *Julie* have received the same education, then this question is almost absurd – there is no way they could have maintained their goodness. Yet Wolmar and, perhaps to a lesser extent, Claire have apparently managed it. Their desires are simple and they live according to their harmonious sentiments and reason. Julie, St. Preux, and Milord Edward are in the unfortunate, but more common, camp of individuals who

³⁴ St. Preux is sent back to Italy with Milord Edward to help make sure he does actually break off his relationship with Laura (*Julie* Letters V.XII, VI.III). Well-balanced reason and sentiment is not foolproof over the enflamed desires, and all of the characters need help from others to make good and moral choices for themselves. This is primarily used as a test for St. Preux, to see if his reason and judgment have been developed enough to encourage virtuous action in his friend, but Milord Edward does still struggle to deal with his former lovers (510-12, 533-34).

³⁵ Melzer, 21-22.

³⁶ Melzer, 34.

need additional resources to resolve the tensions between their good and their inflamed sentiments, and their desires and duties. They are subject to passions they can only follow at the expense of other passions, or their passions conflict with what they owe to others. Rather than spontaneously following their sentiments and reason, they must be wary of some of their sentiments that lead reason astray, and so they need virtue or moral strength to pursue that which is in accordance with the good found in less conflicted souls.³⁷

Wolmar is the most extreme, impressive, and analyzed example of natural goodness in *Julie*. He is “cold” and “impassive,” ruling his household fairly but absolutely (*Julie* 404). Although Bloom says that Wolmar “is a man of irreproachable virtue, above the snares and temptations of the passions,” this description is a bit sloppy and conflates our concept of virtue with Rousseau’s concept of goodness; it is Rousseau’s great project to distinguish the two.³⁸ As he says in *Emile*, “If [man] had been born in the heart of the woods, he would have lived happier and freer. But he would have had nothing to combat in order to follow his inclinations and thus he would have been good without merit; he would not have been virtuous” (473). Goodness, again, is the spontaneous following of one’s inclinations that are good for oneself and good for others, whereas adhering to what is good for oneself and good for others in society means overcoming some of one’s newly inflamed inclinations (particularly the satisfaction of *amour-propre*) to satisfy the demands of social life while also serving one’s genuine good.

Wolmar admits to being free from passions to fight against to be good to others or to pursue his own good – he does not even feel the basic sentiment of pity, found even among savages, in

³⁷ I will refer throughout to those things that are good, moral, and right as “good,” while I will also specify where certain characters are “virtuous,” when they are doing something “virtuous,” or when a certain characteristic is a “virtue” as opposed to spontaneously good. Virtue is a different means of reaching the same good end, and the virtuous is always in conformity with the good.

³⁸ Allan Bloom, *Love and Friendship* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 152.

spite of his pain at good people's misfortunes (402-403).³⁹ Seeing Julie's tears as she embraced her father gave rise to the "only emotion" Wolmar ever felt, and his desire to marry her despite knowing her heart belonged to another was the only temptation he had ever endured (404-405). Pursuing her was indelicate, imprudent, and meant risking their honor and their happiness, but he could not keep from marrying her (404). Without passions, one is naturally good and lives spontaneously in accordance with reason and the healthy natural sentiment of *amour de soi* (403). When passions arise, however, one must control them by means of another passion: virtue. Wolmar confirms this distinction himself when he tells Julie and St. Preux:

How to repress even the weakest passion, when there is no counterweight to it? Therein lies the disadvantage of cold and impassive characters. Everything is fine so long as their coldness protects them from temptations; but should one appear and hit them, they are defeated as quickly as they are attacked, and reason, which governs while it is alone, never has the strength to defend against the slightest assault. I have never been tempted but once, and I succumbed. If the intoxication of some other passion had made me vacillate further, I would have fallen every time I stumbled: only fiery souls know how to fight and win. All great struggles, all sublime acts are their doing; cold reason has never accomplished anything illustrious, and passions are overcome only by being set against each other. When the passion of virtue arises, it alone rules and keeps everything in balance; that is how the true sage is made, who no more than any other is immune from the passions, but alone is able to overcome them through their own means, as a pilot sails forward using contrary winds. (*Julie* 404-405)

Wolmar has no other passions, including the "passion of virtue," to counter the one passion he ever feels, his love of Julie (405). Their marriage, however, still accords with reason and natural goodness; he argues that Julie is the only woman who could make him happy and comfort him in his looming old age, and Wolmar alone can provide the order and tranquility to make Julie's peace

³⁹ Pity is part of the primitive life, prior to society in Rousseau's new history of mankind in his *Second Discourse* (130, 221-22 note (o)). It is also the subject of the three maxims he presents in *Emile*, after explaining how Emile becomes aware of the human species and develops "pity, the first relative sentiment which touches the human heart according to the order of nature" (*Emile* 222-26). There the example is complicated by the fact that Emile discovers the human species in its social form, but he is being raised as "naturally" as possible within his social and historical context.

possible (405). He knows she is virtuous, that she lives in accordance with what is good but must struggle for it, and he wants to restore to her the calm that accompanies natural goodness.

While Wolmar is the most extreme example of this natural goodness, Julie's "inseparable" cousin, Claire, is also naturally good. Bloom points out that her love life is "puny" and that her role as a friend to Julie is primarily to serve as the confidante to her romantic confessions.⁴⁰ Yet this "puny" love life reveals much more about Claire's character, that she is a foil of goodness to Julie's virtue. She too has no great passions, except her love of Julie, and therefore has little to nothing to suppress in herself (*Julie* 525-26). Even when she develops an affection for St. Preux that goes beyond her love for him through Julie, she has no trouble indulging it innocently because her husband's memory minimizes her desire, and her enjoyment of merely flirting with St. Preux satisfies the remaining desire (527, 531). She does not delude herself, and the sentiments that guide her are too good to fail her the way Julie's do. She can be lighthearted and gay because she has nothing to fear. Nothing can lead her astray if there is nothing misleading that can appeal to her. Further, while Claire's only passion, Julie, does sometimes lead her to be too gentle, it is always for Julie's sake. Her love of Julie is not characterized by *amour-propre* in any way; their friendship is based on a mutual love of virtue and is expansive rather than restrictive. They are each something very important to the other, without desiring to be the exclusive anything to each other. Perhaps men need friends for the sole purpose of bragging about their conquests, but Rousseau's women share profound friendship that wholly satisfies the good soul and is crucial to the happiness of the virtuous one.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Bloom, *Love and Friendship*, 147.

⁴¹ Bloom argues in *Love and Friendship* that friendship is greatly watered down in Rousseau's thought, that it only serves as a supplement to romantic love as it provides an outlet to "discuss one's mistresses" (147, 421). This glosses over both the male friendships in *Julie*, between St. Preux and Milord Edward, and even St. Preux and Wolmar, as well as disregarding the multifaceted female friendship between Julie and Claire

As noted above, Rousseau's male and female characters have different characteristics on a number of different dimensions, so that the men are not as wholly "masculine" as Emile is, nor are the women as wholly "feminine" as Sophie is. The mix of masculine and feminine in each of them does follow a curious pattern, however. The naturally good characters are those who most closely approximate Rousseau's "bisexuality" at the end of his life.⁴² That is, Wolmar and Claire are especially indifferent to sexuality and romance, finding within themselves the proper balance of masculine and feminine qualities that do not yearn for completion from another. Wolmar does fall in love with Julie, but he seeks out a bride to comfort him as he grows old, not for the sake of beauty, virtue, or a longing for immortality (404).⁴³ He might have been satisfied with a very good friend, of Milord Edward quality in relation to St. Preux. The friendship-focused Claire also marries, but only to escape her unhappy paternal home and not because of any passionate love towards her husband (169). She respects her husband and is grateful for her life with him, but she finds married life tedious and restrictive (334-35). She does not "perceive" a sex in her soul, and that as a woman she is a "sort of monster" who has no desire for another (169; 146). She is morally self-sufficient, but necessity demands she have husband to support her materially. When Monsieur d'Orbe dies, leaving her with the resources to raise their daughter and manage their estate, she is free from the restrictions of marriage and glories in her new freedom. She does not seek to be a solitary or selfish being, but rather she wants to enjoy her friendships with the inhabitants of Clarens.

that involves more than discussing St. Preux (e.g. Letters I.VI, I.VII, I.XXIX, I.XXX, I.LXV, II.V, IV.I, IV.II, IV.IX, IV.XIII, VI.I, VI.V).

⁴² Schwartz, 8.

⁴³ Wolmar's concern with his old age is his physical decline, not the fact that he will cease to be. He wants a companion for the end of his life, not children or a taste of the sublime – though he will of course have children and does recognize Julie's impressive and incomparable virtue (404-405).

Their freedom from the inflamed passions associated with sex and romantic love, while they are still capable of conjugal love and deep friendship, are not the full extent of their more “bisexual” natures, though this is a crucial element of them. They also demonstrate the combination of particular and general, or feminine and masculine, judgment that helps to free them from personal interdependence. The conjunction of these for average but well-educated people is meant to arise with marriage, the joining of a man’s and a woman’s judgment that forces them to depend on one another for the “clearest insight and the most complete science” of human nature and morality, according to the account in *Emile* (377, 383-84, 387). Wolmar and Claire naturally combine both in themselves as individuals, however. Disch specifically points this out in Claire, who has what she calls “contextualized judgment,” that is, good taste as particular judgment which informs general judgment.⁴⁴

Wolmar has yearned for most of his life to be a “living eye,” to observe humanity without being observed himself or having to interact in relationships with others (403). He seeks to be that observing feminine half of the “eye-arm” model of the interdependent couple, but for the purpose of masculine theoretical knowledge in the “particular-general” combination of judgment among that same couple (*Emile* 377). He is morally whole unto himself even though he eventually develops a desire for companionship. Though Wolmar’s rule at Clarens is beneficial to those in his care, it is purposefully hidden and manipulative, like women’s rule over men according to

⁴⁴ Lisa Disch, “Claire Loves Julie: Reading the Story of Women’s Friendship in “La Nouvelle Héloïse,”” *Hypatia* 9:3 (Summer 1994), 22, 32. Disch characterizes Wolmar, in contrast, as “a model “autonomous” reasoner” and “a caricature of dogmatic universalism” whose haphazard application of his authority reveals his lack of particular reason or judgment (21, 37). This is to ignore Wolmar’s “feminine” principle of observation, made most clear by his arguments on behalf of particularized educations for carefully-observed particular characters in contrast to St. Preux’s argument that a universal education towards a universal moral form should be applied to children (*Julie* 462-63). While he perhaps does not apply the correct “cure” to his wife and her former lover, he is not wholly incapable of “contextualized judgment” and his “insensitivity” towards Julie’s and St. Preux’s struggle is a unique instance of misjudgment rather than an indication of generally bad judgment.

Rousseau (*Emile* 371, 385, 387). But indirect rule is not necessarily harmful. The “ascendancy of women,” that is, their indirect power over men through indirect rule, is a welcome arrangement if they rule properly (*First Discourse* 51-52). Even the Great Legislator is notably “feminine” in *The Social Contract* in his role as a benevolent manipulator (*Social Contract* 67-70). On the other hand, in *Emile* Rousseau emphasizes that while woman’s method of ruling ought to be manipulation, men ought not to adopt this method since they ought not to be constituted the same way (363).⁴⁵ Yet Rousseau includes two characters in *Julie* who often beneficially judge and direct others’ actions in ways that are elsewhere described as inappropriate for their sexes, who naturally approach the independent bisexuality that eventually relieves Rousseau.

Those characters that are troubled by inflamed passions, however, are the more gendered characters. This of course makes intuitive sense based on Julie and St. Preux’s romantic relationship, but St. Preux will also have them seek a more bisexual character through their education. They also do not fit the molds of perfect man or perfect woman either, as is evident from Julie’s appeals to her sex and occasional rejection of St. Preux’s attempts to bisexualize them, for example when she reproaches him for criticizing her for being a woman once in her life and rejects his interpretation of Plato that ostensibly favors the surface arguments on behalf of sexual homogenization and the abolition of the family (103-105). Later, at Clarens, she will be the most staunch promoter of sexual differentiation and separation, between herself and her husband, among all her domestics, and between her children (Letters IV.X, V.III). This response to her earlier education will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, below.

⁴⁵ Conversely, direct rule through “bitterness” and “stubbornness” also corrupts a woman – with the further shortcoming of being ineffective since men “feel that it is not with these weapons women ought to conquer them” (*Emile* 370).

The purpose of the education

The naturally good, insensitive, bisexual characters offer *Julie*'s reader both a helpful foil to the virtue-seeking, sensitive, gendered characters, as well as a helpful alternative of sustained natural goodness to the examples in *Emile*, to be discussed later in this dissertation. This is because they help to distinguish the purpose and form of education based on their different natures. The "good" characters do not need education, or at least their education can be much more flexible, as they appear naturally "safer" and less susceptible to moral corruption. These examples appear contrary to Rousseau's presentation of the fragility of natural goodness in *Emile*, where the Tutor takes great trouble to raise Emile properly. No such care was ever taken with Wolmar or Claire. Wolmar's past is a little murkier, but he does not attribute his character to education and we at least know that Claire and Julie were raised rather haphazardly by their governess, Chaillot, who was notably indiscreet (*Julie* 402, 35).⁴⁶ It turns out it took nearly nothing for Wolmar and Claire to maintain their goodness, which is not preserved through careful engineering but rather some inherent quality of their characters. They are not tempted by those things that entice other more sensitive souls, either noble or base.

So what exactly is the problem for the sensitive characters? Why are they not good, and why do they need virtue? Is it because they have naturally bad sentiments, or sentiments that have become corrupted? Rousseau's account of human misery and injustice in his *Second Discourse* traces the source of our dividedness and selfishness back to the *amour-propre* that arises out of increased human faculties once individuals live together as couples and families in permanent

⁴⁶ Claire is still mourning Chaillot at the opening of the novel, though it has been some time since she passed away. Julie says that Chaillot was too loose with the two cousins, teaching them too much for their own good about the ways of the world, but not enough in order to avoid or resist its temptations (Letter I.VI). It is important that the passionate Julie finds Chaillot a questionable teacher, while Claire innocently mourns her friend.

dwellings (228, note (o)). This new, unnatural sentiment makes humans competitive, self-absorbed, and only able to see themselves through others' eyes. This psychological change makes humans dependent on one another for something other than material needs – they now need a sort of psychic fulfillment through others' approval of them (179-80, 222). In *Emile*, Rousseau wants to keep the boy from developing this vanity and psychological dependence on others' opinions, and Jean-Jacques leads Emile to knowledge of the good and the beautiful through their “search” for an appropriate companion for him (324, 328-29, 335-39). This way, Emile's self-esteem will partially depend on his companion's esteem for him, but he will not desire others' esteem indiscriminately – only the esteem of those who understand and embody the good and the beautiful (335-39, 341, 344). Sophie's esteem is valuable and worthy of Emile because she herself is estimable.

This danger of *amour-propre* corrupting the most intimate human relationships is not the problem confronting our sentimental characters in *Julie*, however. Julie and St. Preux already yearn for the most sublime iterations of what is good and beautiful when the novel opens, not the appearance or reputation of being good and beautiful. Their desires are certainly inflamed beyond the simple desires of nature, but they are at least already properly directed towards what Rousseau sees as the very best we can aim at in our unnatural civilized state: authenticity, beauty, and morality. The young couple must remain chaste, against their most natural inclinations, but this privation is still in harmony with their higher longings to maintain the purity of their love. This is their first “duty,” made necessary in society because of men's need to confirm their paternity through their partner's virtue, but it is also necessary to the lovers who want exclusive access to each other for their own psychological wellbeing (*Julie* 296-97, *Emile* 361). This “duty” serves their own interests – they desire to fulfill this “duty”. When they are faced with the additional

trouble of Julie's parents preventing their union and Julie's "betrothal" to Wolmar, this appears to be another conflict between their inclinations and their duty, but it is more difficult than that. For Julie, who ultimately has to make the choice, she is not conflicted between her self-interest and the tyranny of her parents. Rather, she is conflicted between two salutary desires – her love for St. Preux and her love for her parents. Satisfying the needs and desires of one party necessarily precludes those of the other, but Julie genuinely wants to satisfy both. In this case, she cannot simply depend on her inclinations to lead her towards what is right, like those naturally good characters, but it is not because her inclinations are bad. Rather, her inclinations diverge in two opposite but good directions and she must discern the better of the two.⁴⁷

Rousseau's presentation of Julie's and St. Preux's moral dilemma as a conflict between salutary passions leads to the need for education and the particular form of education he proposes through St. Preux for the group of friends. Once Julie and St. Preux have professed their love for each other, St. Preux comes up with a new curriculum for his pupils and for himself. The task of this education, as he describes it, is to cultivate taste and judgment in service to virtuous action (*Julie* 48-49). To develop real morality is to move between the world of particularity (to have good taste) and the world of generality or universality (to have good judgment). Rousseau explicitly maps this distinction onto women and men, respectively, in his description of a dinner party in Book V of *Emile*. The wife tends to every guest's particular needs and makes each feel especially attended to based on her present examination of each, while the husband makes sure he includes everyone and knows how the party fits together based on his acquired knowledge of their general

⁴⁷ This is against Morgenstern's argument that Julie "attempts morally to justify the demands of the patriarchal family while still reckoning with the requirements of her heart," as though the patriarchal family simply uses force, oppression, and injustice and has no legitimate claims on its members or that its members have no genuine inclination to serve the family as something good (118). Really, Julie does love her parents but would also be willing to risk her own life to stay with St. Preux if she felt her family had no right to her obedience through love. She struggles precisely because there are two claimants on her heart.

characters (*Emile* 383-84). Feminine judgment is based on particular, empirical knowledge, whereas masculine judgment is based on generalized, abstract knowledge.⁴⁸ If these two types of knowledge and judgment were to remain separated this way, however, their guests certainly would not have enjoyed themselves so much. The couple compares notes after everyone has left, and while they both know of the party what they are best at perceiving, they each have an incomplete knowledge that is supplemented by the other.

But this model requires a distinctly gendered pair to do the complete work of perceiving, knowing, and judging, and is the *only* model of judgment most scholars recognize Rousseau as offering. The education in *Julie* certainly operates this way to begin with – the formal and informal educations take place in a coed setting, with sex at the very center of Julie and St. Preux’s relationship. Insofar as they are different from one another, either by virtue of their naturally different sexes, because they have been raised differently up until this point, or because each human is unique on almost every dimension, they must learn from one another because they each bring something different to the table.⁴⁹ However, even though they will always want to talk to one another, working through ideas together, the goal of this model of education is not to enhance or reinforce St. Preux’s masculine or Julie’s feminine knowledge and judgment, which would leave them permanently dependent on one another (or just another). Rather, it is to develop masculine

⁴⁸ Lori J. Marso, “Rousseau’s Subversive Women,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 251-52. See also *Emile* for a parallel metaphor of women and men as “eyes” and “arms” that work together to form a whole moral being (377).

⁴⁹ Many contemporary scholars, particularly feminist scholars, criticize Rousseau for this specific model not only because they see it as an inaccurate description of how judgment works in men and women, but also because he appears to praise and/or recommend it. However, there are notable exceptions to both camps – even within the feminist literature. Morgenstern, for example, acknowledges that Rousseau does not actually believe in a sexual differentiation as distinct as he presents (139). Penny Weiss acknowledges that no matter what the actual sex-based differences are, Rousseau’s praise and recommendation of extreme differentiation is because it is politically and socially expedient, with a whole host of drawbacks he acknowledges. See “Rousseau’s Political Defense of the Sex-Roled Family,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 44.

judgment in Julie and feminine judgment in St. Preux. It is to make both of them self-sufficient in moral judgment by adopting the “natural” skills of the opposite sex to supplement their own.

This develops into a drastically different education from the one we see Emile and Sophie engaged in. Notwithstanding the difference in temporal focus – that is, that most of the education of Emile and Sophie that we see is conducted separately and when they are younger than Julie and St. Preux when we meet them for the first time – the mutual education presented in Book V of *Emile* depicts Emile on his knees before Sophie, teaching her the things he knows of “philosophy, physics, mathematics, history—in a word... everything” (425). He does this to “adorn” her who needs no adornment, to add “a new interest... to the pleasure of contemplating her,” and in anticipation of the “pleasure he will have in reasoning and philosophizing with her” (425). This is again how St. Preux began teaching Julie, as he was hired to do – to adorn “a fine natural temperament with a few flowers” as a surprise for Julie’s father (25). But while he is proud to be able to do so, his love for her makes him revise the intellectual education into a moral education – and not because, like Sophie, Julie cannot learn the substance of physics or philosophy.⁵⁰ Rather, he retains some of the “unfeminine” material from the initial curriculum but also does not propose a “masculine” pedagogy of exclusive, solitary introspection.⁵¹ They are to converse, to share what each knows, for the purpose of *doing* something with that new knowledge. They are to *both*

⁵⁰ On the contrary, Julie is almost *too good* at learning her lessons, even if Claire initially surpasses Julie and St. Preux both because she is not preoccupied during their intellectual lessons (46). Julie enjoys her studies, and can both understand and remember her lessons in physics and philosophy, unlike the very average “everywoman” Sophie (*Julie* 42, 44, 50; *Emile* 426).

⁵¹ Again, St. Preux radically “de-sexes” Julie’s education insofar as she does not receive the typical education other women her age receive (49). As for the method, they are not to learn independently, which is a “masculine” approach according to Joel Schwartz’s reading of Rousseau. He stresses that only (the very best) men are and can be fully independent of others if they renounce sexuality, and that knowledge of what is can only be discovered in this realm of independent, solitary inquiry (8).

develop their judgment, on the basis of particular and general knowledge that they bring together for joint inspection.

Of course, whether or not this is Rousseau's real argument about how humans ought to develop judgment – in a gender-neutral process that does not even acknowledge gendered moral concerns in its service to virtue – is another question, and whether Julie and St. Preux successfully develop this judgment is yet another. I will address these explicitly in Chapter 3, below, but for now let me assert that it would at least fit with Rousseau's thought for him to promote such a gender-neutral method of education, despite his arguments in Book V of *Emile*. If moral education aims at minimizing the psychic damage caused by dependence on other humans, we must acknowledge that men *and* women are dependent on one another in modern society according to Rousseau, and so both must learn how to be virtuous to minimize the danger of mutual dependence. Morality does not impose restrictions on women alone, because women make men dependent on them and incorporate them into the world of sociality and morality.⁵² To focus only on the enforced-gender aspect, which is admittedly more explicit and therefore easier to pick out, is to ignore the complexity of Rousseau's arguments about sex.⁵³ Even though Julie insists on women's very different moral concerns and virtue, she is by no means the single Rousseauian mouthpiece in the novel (45, 104, 129).⁵⁴ Schwartz argues that Rousseau's asexuality or "bisexuality" at the end of his life, when he turns to solitude to resolve his dividedness and lack of fulfillment in society, is only possible for men, and only a few men, but this education in moral judgment we

⁵² Schwartz, 2-3, 6, 12, 152 n.22.

⁵³ Again, though some scholarship on Rousseau's sexual politics takes a far too parochial approach and only picks out the most damning evidence of sexism and/or misogyny, there is a reassuring amount of research that recognizes the centrality of sex to Rousseau's thought and takes all aspects of it into account – regardless of whether that research is ultimately sympathetic to or critical of this big picture. See Schwartz, Schaeffer, Morgenstern, Ormiston, and Butler for examples.

⁵⁴ Indeed, I agree here with Schwartz that "*Julie* can be said to provide a synopsis of Rousseau's sexual politics" because it synthesizes his *various* perspectives on the subject (114).

find in *Julie* explores the possibility of this kind of restorative “bisexuality” for both men and women.⁵⁵

So the combination of both feminine, particular taste and masculine, general judgment is crucial for moral independence. Since moral choices require a decision one way or the other, one needs good judgment to decide between competing alternatives, but involving taste as well is Rousseau’s unique insight about the process of moral decision-making. Judgment is insufficient because it can only “see” so closely unaided. That is, the best judgment still needs the “microscope” that is taste, to bring all of the finest moral details into focus (48). In a case like Julie’s, where the choice is between love and love, if judgment were invoked on its own it would find equivalency between the two. Both parties have legitimate claims on her heart that obligate her in two different ways, and these claims are felt through the sentiments rather than discerned through reason. Such claims are those between which St. Preux says “taste alone decides” since there is no accounting for them any other way (48).

Well-developed and discerning taste is most important for those with inflamed passions because they have a mix of sentiments within them that the unsentimental characters, Wolmar and Claire, do not have. Those characters do have good taste, but it is a simple taste that does not recognize or yearn for complexity or sublimity. Though St. Preux first presents taste in a more abstract moral sense in his educational outline in Letter I.XII, his and Julie’s letters are often written in the concrete terms of taste. He opens his letter on the new curriculum by praising the style of Julie’s preceding letter, its “touching... simplicity” that she generates “artlessly and effortlessly” as opposed to the “contrived style” that cannot truly please a reader (45). The

⁵⁵ Only male “bisexuality” is possible, according to Schwartz’s Rousseau, because a man can be “effeminate” (or whole) by reducing his strength, whereas a woman would have to “add strength she does not have” to be more masculine (or whole) (107 n.60).

aesthetics of simplicity that Julie employs convey authenticity and depth, whereas the aesthetics of extravagance barely disguise deception and shallowness. She responds to his educational plan enthusiastically, as it proves to her his enduring good taste and therefore his commitment to morality. She tells him: “the love you feel is genuine, since it has not deprived you of your taste for honorable things, and you still know in the most sensible part of your heart how to make sacrifices to virtue” (50). The stronger taste for morality enhances and makes love tasteful; without this taste, love would be empty, distasteful lust.

Moral taste, as St. Preux will explain, is inseparable from aesthetic taste because he has “always believed that the good was nothing but the beautiful put into action, that the one was intimately connected to the other, and that both had a common source in a well-ordered nature” (47-48). It is no wonder, then, that he will discuss taste more concretely in his letters from Vevey and Paris, sometimes literally as it has to do with food, sometimes aesthetically as it pertains to cultural tastes in the different societies, but always in relation to their morals (Letters I.XXIII, II.XIII, II.XIV, II.XVI, II.XVII, II.XIX, II.XXIII, II.XXVI). The seemingly trite examples of the simple rustic foods and table manners of Swiss provincial life, contrasted with the elevated tastes and affectations of French urban life, reveal the difference between “naturally good” taste with corrupted tastes, and encourage a taste for the simplicity of the former.⁵⁶ Those who seek ever more refined pleasures, while they are undeniably enjoyable, often do it in service to their corrupt *amour-propre* – to set themselves apart, to elevate themselves above others, and to satisfy their inflated desires that no longer respond to simply good things. When St. Preux directs himself and

⁵⁶ S. K. Wertz, “Taste and Food in Rousseau’s *Julie, or the New Heloise*,” *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 47:3 (Fall 2013), 24-35. Wertz argues that Rousseau’s account of taste and food in *Julie* reveals his attempt to synthesize nature (good natural tastes) with society (quality meals shared within the family and/or community), though he denies any “system” to Rousseau’s thought beyond acknowledging the goodness of nature and the corruption of society (33, 35 n.30). He is at least right to point out the desirability of aligning society with nature as much as possible – which is what St. Preux praises here.

his pupils towards moral “examples of the very good and the very beautiful,” which are “rarer and less familiar,” he is not encouraging the moral equivalent of haute epicurean pursuits fashionable in the cities (47). Those individuals aim at false, deceptive heights that corrupt their pursuers, and their moral tastes reflect their corrupt aesthetic tastes. The Parisians enjoy lascivious jokes (their carriages are painted with scandalous scenes on the outer panels), are amused by the most base and decadent arts, and take lovers freely while neglecting their families (221-23). The corruption is even more profound and widespread among the women, who in turn influence the men to follow their tastes (221).

If virtue, to Rousseau, is what is in accordance with the good but obtained only through a choice between competing goods in the complex, sensitive soul, then true moral heights are reached when one finds pleasurable those things deemed too simple or mild to even satisfy, let alone please, those with corrupt tastes. Rousseau does not condone asceticism – he proposes a properly-educated aestheticism, or “an epicureanism of reason” (*Julie* 544).⁵⁷ The good is necessarily pleasurable, so we cannot simply deny ourselves pleasure and call it virtue, but it is our desire for more and for pleasures that are not good that weaken our good taste or make us lose it entirely. Only the corrupt could call the enjoyment of simple pleasures ascetic. Julie takes the first stab at explaining the genuine connection between virtue and happiness: “the source of happiness lies neither entirely in the desired object nor in the heart that possesses it, but in the relation of the one to the other, and just as all the objects of our desires are not of a kind that can create felicity, all states of the heart are not of a kind that can experience it” (185). That is, the state of one’s soul is what makes it capable of being happy when it acts virtuously, therefore corrupt souls cannot enjoy being virtuous even if they act accordingly. Education is necessary to

⁵⁷ Wertz, 27-29.

make the heart capable of receiving true pleasure, which only comes from the genuinely good. Julie makes explicit the purpose of an education based on examples that cultivate the taste, so that the heart can be ready to observe and *judge* the things it comes across as either worthy or unworthy of pursuit, and then feel pleasure from that pursuit. Moral education does not simply tell us which things can genuinely make us happy, but rather makes us capable of the happiness those things can confer.

It is important to note that the conflicting sentiments in the sensitive soul are good in different ways from each other. That is, there are things that are naturally good according to our original natures that require only simple things, but then there are things that are naturally good to social humans. These are more complicated than our simple original needs, because humans acquire a sense of higher goods (*Social Contract* 151-52, 155-56; *Emile* 211-15). The new sentiment of romantic love still wants to satisfy the natural desire for physical coupling but also the newly-natural desire for beauty, mutual esteem, and exclusivity. Good taste must discern the superiority of satisfying the higher longings over the lower ones, even though the lower ones arise out of our most basic human nature and are “simpler” in that way. The new standard in the social context is to follow the simplest, purest form of the newly-inflamed desires. In this case, to satisfy the sentiment of romantic love not by consummating the relationship but foregoing this consummation until the proper social union is observed.

Though St. Preux claims that they ought to know what is right and beautiful by looking inside themselves, and that it is dangerous for them to look for moral principles elsewhere lest they get misled by the sophistry of “philosophy,” he and his students still need an education because of the complications society produces for humans (47). We might have consciences, and still harbor within us the natural goodness that ought to direct our actions, but these are easily subdued by

external influences that work on our elevated desires but turn them away from their proper ends. Education is dangerous in this way, in that it often promotes others' reason over one's own, whereas St. Preux argues, "of all the Sophists, our own reason is almost always the one that deceives us the least" (47). Our own reason is most likely to guide us correctly, but reason is still always deceptive, just to a greater or lesser degree. Others' rationalizations tend to corrupt our own reason, which in turn does not always follow the proper sentiments in the soul and easily takes the side of our corrupt tastes. Cultivating taste is to tune "the microscope of judgment" that keeps reason in line by bringing out all of the tiny nuances of desire and revealing conflicts between the sentiments that otherwise appear to be in harmony without this magnification (48). When Julie is confronted with the choice between her father's wishes and the demands of her love, she understands this conflict not in terms of duties imposed upon her that she is otherwise disinclined to fulfill, but rather both of them are two sweet duties that she desires in vain to fulfill at the same time (164). If she can tune her taste finely enough, she could discern whose rights are primary, whose requirements better serve love and virtue, and whom she should ultimately satisfy. Yet when it comes down to it, her decision depends less on her taste than her will.

It will turn out that good taste and good judgment are necessary but insufficient for moral action, even when they do not need to confront external corruptive influences. When St. Preux later delineates the moral faculties, he adds in a third element missing from his proposed education: moral strength (315, 561).⁵⁸ Knowledge and even love of virtue is not enough to necessarily choose

⁵⁸ These two delineations are slightly different from each other: St. Preux tells Milord Edward, "But [God] has given man freedom to do good, conscience to will it, and reason to choose it," and later tells Julie, "[God] has given us reason to discern what is good, conscience to love it, and freedom to choose it" (315; 561). The order is obviously reversed in the latter quote from the former formulation, and he attributes to each moral faculty different roles between the two formulations. In both cases, however, the moral mechanism of the soul is tripartite and some form of moral strength to actually be virtuous is the third element.

virtuous action in every situation, though it appears St. Preux takes this moral strength to be a natural development arising out of the cultivation of taste and judgment. There is no concentrated attempt to increase or cultivate this strength, just the idea that it will be a by-product of educating the other faculties. This will ultimately be a shortcoming of the project as St. Preux lays it out, as we will see later, but it helps to explain the apparent neglect of this faculty in the education.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Julie, Claire, and St. Preux begin a moral education that is not based on or operates in service to sexual or gendered differences, unlike the educations Rousseau presents for Emile and Sophie in *Emile*. Rather, if anything, a moral education ought to take moral characters into account – whether the pupil is insensitive and good or sentimental and corruptible. While St. Preux focuses on an education towards virtue based on his understanding of the human soul as necessarily sensitive in its developed, social form, the reader sees that there are other characters who maintain their natural goodness and who do not need to develop virtue in this way. St. Preux is right to outline an education that attempts to approximate their goodness and achieve their moral independence, though it is not clear he fully understands how and why his education will work.

This education, designed for adults who have not received a “negative education” in their youth, begins with an examination of exceptional examples in order to develop the taste for virtue, and in turn to develop the proper judgment required to be virtuous when confronted with moral choices. The moral education the group takes up must involve an education in taste because of the primacy of sense and feeling in human beings according to Rousseau (*Second Discourse* 130-33; *Julie* 12-17; *Emile* 39). Reason cannot answer for the distinctions we make between different types of feeling we experience in human society, which develop out of our simple natural sentiments but yield a new “social” nature. While our moral choices often appear to be between what we desire

and what we must unwillingly do, the real difficulty of moral choices is that they actually take place between two competing salutary desires – the desire for what is naturally good for us versus what is naturally good for us as developed human beings. Good tastes opts for the correct form of goodness, but this conflict manifests itself to greater and lesser degrees in different individuals. Claire and Wolmar are not conflicted and easily choose based on their good taste, but Julie and St. Preux have more developed, intense passions that are not as easily satisfied and are easily corrupted by social tastes that promise to fulfill these increased desires.

This is why the education cannot end with taste, because taste is a particular tool of judgment, which must also be developed in order to make moral choices between conflicting options. Taste is that particular, “feminine” aspect of judgment that needs to be accompanied by general, “masculine” judgment. Examples alone are subject to misinterpretation if not considered carefully, and the taste for or love of virtue is not enough to judge correctly how to be virtuous. On the other hand, others’ judgments about morality are misleading as well and St. Preux wants for the group to ignore philosophy’s “vain systems” that cannot lead them to happiness or virtue, but rather to search out the “principles and rules” of morality inside themselves (47). Their decision-making cannot be left up to the details of every situation. Rather, they must discern the principles of morality to minimize the potential temptations of a million exceptions, but also balance it with the good taste or particular judgment that can magnify salient exceptions to the rules so they can judge accordingly. The next chapter will explore the development of judgment and taste on the basis of examples and discussion, and how it might incorporate the feminine and masculine forms of judgment into a whole moral individual capable of virtue and moral independence.

Cultivating good taste and good judgment in service to virtue is only half the battle, however. Even if we can accurately discern what the moral course of action is, even love it and prefer it to the immoral alternatives, we do not necessarily have the moral strength to pursue it in fact. While the education St. Preux proposes seems to promise this degree of moral independence, his and Julie's regular subjection of their individual wills to the other's should make us wary of this possibility (e.g. 32-33, 60). Indeed, when they both fall under the salutary rule of Wolmar later in life, both of them will subjugate their wills to his in order to be "cured" of the love that still plagues them (342, 407). I will take up the former "failure" to reach moral independence in Chapter 3, as a particular failure of their education, and the latter "failure" in Chapter 5, as a necessary failure of all education on Rousseau's terms.

CHAPTER 2: MORAL EDUCATION IN TASTE AND JUDGMENT

The moral education that Julie, St. Preux, and Claire undertake works through the studies laid out in St. Preux's revised curriculum, as well as their conversations about the world around them and their own moral dilemmas. Each practice contributes to their taste and judgment, inclining them towards virtue, and they continue to learn as they apply their lessons to their lives. This new mutual education involves them bringing their respective feminine and masculine forms of judgment into their education, but with the intention of each developing both forms of gendered judgment with each other's help. This "bisexualizing" education is meant to reduce their moral dependence on others, or at least reduces the dangerous moral dependence on others that corrupts human beings. They cannot take others' moral standards as their own, since they might be corrupt, but they also cannot simply rely on their own standards, as they are not immune to corruption themselves. According to St. Preux, even if we rely on our senses and sentiments, and "our own reason is almost always the one that deceives us least," taste still needs to be improved and judgment developed since our own reason can still deceive us (*Julie* 47).

The content and operation of this new education is the focus of this chapter, in order to show how the group of friends in *Julie* learns together as St. Preux intends. It is not at all clear that they will be capable of completely appropriating the opposite sex's "natural" form of judgment to themselves and become wholly morally independent, but the closer they can get, the better. The danger they face is not corruption via *amour-propre* but the inherent weakness of virtue in the face of conflicting salutary desires and "unnatural" social duties. They are trying to avoid the self-deception that corrupts judgment, so they must ultimately continue to call on each other to supplement their judgment or to reinforce it when necessary. As St. Preux says to Julie, her heart is already full of "sound affections," of which he has much to learn, and Claire argues to St. Preux

later, “While teaching us to think, you have learned sensibility from us, and no matter what your English philosopher [Locke] says, such schooling is as good as the other; if it is reason that makes man, it is sentiment that guides him” (60; 262). Though they imperfectly apply their lessons, making profound mistakes in some cases, their education still increases their capacity for virtue and continues to sustain them after their lives change upon Julie’s marriage to Wolmar.

Learning through study

The beginning of the friends’ moral education marks a radical break with the education they had been engaged in when the novel opens. St. Preux, originally hired to “adorn” Julie and her cousin, Claire, with some additional academic studies, redesigns their education towards virtue through the examination and imitation of examples, as well as discussing examples to discover moral principles for themselves (25, 46-48). He directs his pupils and himself to “read little, and reflect much on [their] readings, or what amounts to the same thing, to talk a lot about them between [themselves]” (46). St. Preux sends the entire new curriculum to Julie, which he intends to discuss with her in person, but the reader only sees his letter outlining his general thoughts on the education (46). Julie takes the full plan and the accompanying letter to Clarens with her on a family trip, “to contemplate the one and the other,” but we do not have any letters in which they discuss their formal studies further (49). We will primarily see the conversational side of their moral education for the rest of the novel, though they will reference their readings in these discussions as well, so they do not abandon their studies altogether.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ When Julie becomes Madame de Wolmar, and her life revolves around caring for her family, servants, villagers, and travelers in and around Clarens, it seems as though she lives essentially outside of herself, in service to others. St. Preux claims that “[She] practices today what she was formerly learning. She no longer studies, she no longer reads; she acts,” but this is a bit of an exaggeration – he also reveals that she still devotes an hour of every day to studying, after Wolmar has gone to bed, on top of all her “ministries” (455). Julie never fully gives up the education she began in her youth.

The original education was not in vain, however, just misdirected. The readings St. Preux now assigns are culled from his initial curriculum he had been administering to Julie and Claire. Now all their studies are to be directed towards moral ends, which does not eliminate intellectual activities but does limit their scope and intent. Their first task, to cultivate their tastes, depends on them reading “books of good taste and morality,” that present a “tableau of virtuous people” because only the active practice of seeing and examining can develop taste (48). There is no way to convey taste to another simply by telling them what is in good taste and what is not. Good taste is the discovery and appreciation of goodness through the senses and sentiments, affected only by the individual’s experience. Rousseau himself discovered that he could not tell his readers what was good with any expectation that they would listen to or believe him; this is why he turned to the novelistic form, to charm his readers with a vision of life so different from their own in its aesthetic and moral superiority (12). He does not tell his audience what is good in *Julie*: he shows them what is good. The reader has to be moved by it and see for herself what is beautiful about it. The only reliable way into the psyche is through the sensory faculties, not through reason.

Good taste is not achieved by examining a single beautiful example, however. St. Preux’s proposed education certainly limits the number of examples they look at, but for the purpose of spending more time on them (46-47). Good taste requires practice. St. Preux likens the person of good taste to “a painter beholding a beautiful landscape or standing before a beautiful tableau” who notices details that the “common Observer” cannot (48). This common observer might understand that what they are seeing is beautiful, but they have only the vaguest notion of its beauty and they are not moved the same way as the artist. The artist, on the other hand, has practice observing and so appreciates the details of nature and art, but also has practice in rendering the

most accurate reproduction of that beauty himself. To bring common observation in line with such fine appreciation and imitation takes work on the part of the observer.

St. Preux argues that the tableaux they will look at must be the highest and most sublime images of virtue since they already have the basic principles of goodness within them, but they do not find within themselves moral greatness or peaks of virtue yet (47). St. Preux fears that without these great examples, they would incorrectly deny that they exist and excuse themselves for not reaching these moral heights because of their “impossibility” (47). He says that, with this new education in taste, “The soul soars, the heart catches fire in the contemplation of these divine models; by meditating on them at length we try to become like them, and can no longer suffer anything mediocre without utter disgust” (47). They will undergo a complete rededication of their souls to virtue, denying some of their passions in order to better serve their higher ones, and working to gird themselves against self-deception in their pursuit of what is good.

The selections St. Preux makes for this new curriculum, to “enlighten” their tastes and develop their judgment, work to “bisexualize” the group of learners so that they will be morally independent. The content of the education includes both traditionally “masculine” and “feminine” materials, and both sexes will partake in the education together until they gain the independence they seek.⁶⁰ St. Preux does not refer to taste as the province of women, distinguish between masculine and feminine tastes, or announce any intention to cultivate specifically feminine tastes

⁶⁰ As I note in Chapter 1, above, in *Emile*, the young man teaches his beloved “philosophy, physics, mathematics, history-in a word, in everything” but these are the general, masculine subjects and Sophie only really makes “progress in ethics and matters of taste,” the feminine subjects (425-26). Emile and Sophie exchange their books and Emile tutors Sophie on his knees, but this does not constitute a thorough education like the one proposed here (450, 425). Each gives the other their one guiding book to provide insight into themselves, and Emile tutors Sophie to “adorn her” rather than out of concern for her character – though he imagines what “pleasure he will have in reasoning and philosophizing with her” and that such a pleasure would be mutual (425). Sophie is happy to listen to Emile, but is not bright enough to really learn these lessons; she is of average intelligence and has little use for physics and philosophy anyway (393, 426).

in his pupils. St. Preux has already argued that beauty and goodness are the same thing, so two standards of beauty along gendered lines would yield two standards of morality. He implicitly denies this by combining the standard gendered educations into one carefully-selected one that portrays the highest virtues for both men and women as shared models. By incorporating typically “masculine” models of virtue in the shared education, the young women in *Julie* will learn what “greatness of soul” is, just as Rousseau recommends for the salutary ascendancy of women in his *First Discourse* (51-52).⁶¹ But including typically “feminine” models of virtue as well will teach St. Preux about the modesty and gentleness usually reserved to teach women how to be docile. He limits their sources thus: no languages but Italian, no algebra or geometry, no modern history except Swiss history, and no romances or poetry, “contrary to the customary readings for [the female] Sex” (49). The only exceptions to this final rule are “Petrarch, Tasso, Metastasio, and the masters of the French theater,” and some “minor literary works” that are only “retained out of deference to [Julie’s] inseparable Cousin” but would not have been read by Julie and St. Preux alone (48-49). They will also get to keep physics and ancient history from their original curriculum, the former because St. Preux does not have the “courage” to eliminate it and the latter for its valuable examples of true virtue and heroism (49).⁶²

This curriculum is apparently then limited to “books of good taste and morality,” though it is difficult to comprehend what physics might do for morality, and we might find it odd that St. Preux keeps Italian in deference to Julie’s tastes (48). The old curriculum was chosen randomly “more to consult [Julie’s] taste than to enlighten it” and that was much of the problem (46). Though

⁶¹ It is often overlooked that Rousseau concedes that the education of women in the real world, with its corrupt bourgeois morals, must teach them about the ways of the world and how men think and act *generally* so as not to be deceived in their relationships with *particular* men (*Emile* 382-83).

⁶² The physics is a particularly odd inclusion since Julie has used its terminology in the past to flirt with and unsettle St. Preux, so it is not merely useless to morality but seems rather dangerous to include (44).

Julie and St. Preux learned little to nothing together, distracted by one another, while Claire surpassed both of them in her disinterested studies, the suggestion is that if they *had* been paying attention they still would not have learned anything of value (46). Before, St. Preux chose the lessons without any proper system other than Julie's unenlightened preferences, but now he understands that "whatever speaks nothing to the soul is unworthy of [Julie's] attention" and that this new curriculum and method of teaching by heart-inflaming examples will correct "the wrong which distractions have done to knowledge" (49; 46). If St. Preux is to be consistent on this point, Italian and physics will need to have some value to morality outside of Julie's taste for them.

While Italian would be useful for reading their three approved poets in their own tongue, the language lessons that remain for Julie's enjoyment will actually serve another education that St. Preux will recommend later: Julie's music lessons from an Italian *castrato* (*Julie* I.XLVIII, I.LII). Julie developed a preference for Italian poetry and music, or opera, long before St. Preux's arrival, when she learned Italian verse with her now-deceased brother (117). Whereas St. Preux later comes to be moved by Italian music by projecting onto it the memory of Julie's singing of French arias, and then truly converted to it by the singer whom he recommends to Julie as a music teacher, Julie already has a genuine taste for it and appreciation of its foundational poetry (106-108, 117). Here we see an alternative reason to concede to Julie's taste: it is already developed in the way St. Preux desires it, in part independently of him. Although St. Preux realizes after years of teaching his pupils that only soul-stirring lessons that contribute to morality are worth giving, we are quite secure in believing that this has always been Julie's standard for learning.⁶³ When distracted by St. Preux, she is distracted from more or less empty studies, but the things she does

⁶³ Julie has a developed standard for judging books, which Rousseau recommends: "I have no other manner of judging my Readings than to sound the dispositions in which they leave my soul, and I scarcely imagine what sort of goodness a book can possess when it does not lead its readers to do good" (17, 214)

pay attention to – Italian and physics, for example – are in fact soul-stirring studies she already recognizes as valuable.⁶⁴

In fact, Julie does have a standard she applies to her studies: “I have no other manner of judging my Readings than to sound the dispositions in which they leave my soul, and I scarcely imagine what sort of goodness a book can possess when it does not lead its readers to do good” (214).⁶⁵ She expresses this standard much later, after St. Preux has outlined the curriculum and told her that what she brings to her readings is better than the readings themselves, so she has perhaps derived this standard from his arguments (47). Yet for her to bring such enlightenment to her studies in the first place, St. Preux admits that her taste and perhaps even her judgment are already quite developed. When he says these new lessons ought to “enlighten” her tastes, he does sincerely mean this: she does not need to develop taste, or perhaps even judgment, so much as continue to refine it (46). She brings good taste to the table, a soul capable of being moved by the beautiful and the good.

Apart from the strange inclusions of physics and Italian, which we discover are retained out of deference for Julie *because* she has good taste and these subjects suit it, St. Preux also includes some “minor literary works” for Claire’s sake (48). He would not have otherwise assigned these to himself and Julie if Claire were not part of their group, making their value questionable. They are certainly not love stories, since he categorically excludes those from their reading, but seem to be innocent enjoyments for the good-hearted Claire. They contain no “great examples”

⁶⁴ If it is the case that Julie’s taste is already properly developed, even before St. Preux revises his curriculum, then she might not have anything to learn or gain by this change. I will consider this further in conjunction with the question of the “failure” of her education in Chapter 3.

⁶⁵ Rousseau recommends this standard to his own readers and accepts their judgment of his work, whatever it may be, if they judge according to *Julie*’s impact on their souls (17, 214). It is not difficult or unreasonable to imagine that this standard for books is a standard applicable to all learning, since this is the same standard St. Preux more or less proposes for their entire moral education.

but they are not bad examples, either. They simply make the education less efficient by unnecessarily adding to the curriculum. St. Preux and Julie will not be corrupted by their inclusion. Although St. Preux does not remark further on this point, likely because he does not recognize it, this extra inclusion for Claire reflects a laxity in the education she needs. She too will read all of the great, soul-stirring examples her cousin and tutor will read, but she will want more than this — or, more accurately, she needs less than this. She does not need any supplemental education beyond the soul-stirring and heart-inflaming curriculum. Rather, these intense passions are not for her. She has no taste for them since her taste is limited to the naturally good. Her taste does not need to be so honed to serve her judgment; her moral eyesight is sharp enough. As such, lesser works will not dull her abilities to discern and follow what is good, and she does not need the great examples to love or pursue virtue. Although she will not be exposed to anything potentially corruptive, she would have been safe from its effects anyway. She is not temptable and really needs no further education. She can be entertained without danger.

St. Preux will furnish them with many historical examples, but only from ancient history and modern Swiss history. He justifies this selection, which is contrary to the common assertion that “the most worthwhile history for everyone is the history of his own country,” by arguing against the four common arguments for studying one’s own history (48). Apologists for one’s own history say that it is the most worthwhile, that one sees as many good examples in contemporary times and places as in ancient ones, that the shortage of good histories of contemporary times is not symptomatic of having no good history, and that really there are no differences between men of different times and places – that the preference for the ancients is a simple prejudice (48-49). St. Preux retorts that most contemporary histories are unintelligible, lacking in good examples entirely, which can be empirically shown by simply reading the history, that good historians will

arise when there is good history to record, and finally that the historians that convince contemporaries of ancient history's value are the ancient historians themselves, not some prejudiced contemporary (48-49). St. Preux sees a great change in humanity, and it is a change he is most interested in: "...men formerly accomplished great things with small means, and today [men] do just the opposite" (49). St. Preux would gladly leave out all modern history, but the people of the Valais live in a "free and simple country, where ancient men are to be found in modern times..." (48). And yet the rule for choosing among histories is not the quality of the examples furnished by history, but the quantity of them. St. Preux seeks a great *variety* of "examples, mores, characters of every type; in a word, the most instruction" (48).

This is a clarification of the "tableau of virtuous people" he uses to define virtue for himself and his pupils: the examples will not simply be the greatest examples presented absolutely, but always relative to bad examples. This makes far more sense if the task is to fine-tune the taste to serve judgment, since one will be eventually looking at a variety of passions in the soul and therefore needs to be able to discern which are salutary or which salutary passion takes precedence. When the individual examines their soul and does not find great virtue, the remedy is to show them that what they do find is akin to the bad example and ought to be put in accordance with the good example. If only mediocrity is contrasted with the bad example, the individual will likely find themselves closer to the mediocrity but unable to resist the bad example, which likely appears more profitable.

This account makes passion the source of moral action, which seems to be in line with Rousseau's explicit arguments elsewhere, that the natural passions of *amour de soi* and *pitié* underlie all morality when humans become civilized (*Second Discourse* 128-33). But again, it does not simply end with the passions or sentimental conditioning. Passion is necessary but insufficient

for being virtuous, needing judgment to translate love of the good into good action. Those who are naturally good do not need to love goodness – they *are* good already, and do not need judgment in the same way. Their reason can translate their naturally good desires into action without difficulty, and they have little to judge except what is external to them. This will become an important distinction later, when we examine the “success” of St. Preux’s proposed education, since it is applied to both good and virtuous characters. We will see the effects on both.

The final stipulation, that there be no love stories or poetry, “contrary to the customary readings intended for [Julie’s] Sex [*sic*],” is important in two ways: first, that *some* poetry, even poetry involving love, will still be retained from three Italian poets, and second, that the “masters of the French theater” are also to be retained, in spite of Rousseau’s polemic against the French theater and its playwrights in the *Letter to d’Alembert* (Julie 49, *Letter to d’Alembert* 27-47).⁶⁶ The former is important for understanding a key element of this proposed education and its justification, while the latter is important for understanding how the reader ought to take St. Preux’s proposal relative to the author’s intent.

First, St. Preux justifies the omission of love stories by asking, “What would we learn about love from these books?” (49). The “we” here is ambiguous, as he is on the one hand specifically addressing Julie in this letter, as his lover, and it would make sense that he has perhaps forgotten or is ignoring Claire in this “we.” The following explanation seems to suggest that she has dropped out of this concern, having already been dealt with at the beginning of the paragraph by giving her some “minor literary works” to occupy her. St. Preux believes the lovers already know about love, or at least their hearts can teach them far better than others do. They are naturally prone to passionate love, and only studying it can quell their salutary ardor that expresses and extends itself

⁶⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts: Letter to M. d’Alembert on the Theatre*, trans. Allan Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970).

beyond the couple and into every other sentiment – presumably, moral sentiments that involve the recognition of others’ needs. He does not know whether Claire does not need lessons about love either, but she will not get these lessons and he is right without meaning to be. Again, because he does not acknowledge Claire as a different type, if he is including her in the “we” who know about love, the only way he could account for her knowledge would be her proximity to the lovers. This proximity without personal feeling would in fact justify her taking lessons in love, according to St. Preux. We will see in Chapter 3 that this is perhaps the correct education for Claire, but that a different one ought to have been pursued by the lovers for precisely the opposite reason St. Preux gives for exempting them: because they are full of passionate love, their inner faculties do not easily discern the right way to direct that passion when it seeks to expand. They would need great examples of those who share the same spiritual makeup in order to truly tune the microscope of their judgment, and eliminating romances eliminates the possibility of exposure to these examples.

Yet the Italian poets are still retained, and their verse is in no way devoid of romance. On the contrary, they contain sustained impassioned tributes to lovers, utter despair at unfortunate fates, and one wonders just how inflamed St. Preux and Julie must be if they can consider the language of these works as even remotely “cold” (49). One cannot blame St. Preux for eliminating contemporary love stories if the justification is something like the one on behalf of eliminating contemporary histories. He is, after all, still opting to include the very peaks of medieval and Renaissance poetry. But his justification for eliminating romances is that they have nothing to learn about love, full stop. With this stipulation, not even the “greatest examples” of romance fit into a useful curriculum as St. Preux initially laid it out. How can he ignore his standard now?

One possible explanation is that St. Preux is still drawing a distinction between his method and curriculum, and the one he contrasts it with – the one usually given to young women, based

on romantic novels and poetry. He eliminates these paltry romances because all *those* can do is teach about love, which are lessons the lovers cannot learn – again, either because they have the knowledge already, or because the true source of any knowledge they would need is within their own experience of love. The explicit argument is that they only need to consult their hearts to learn anything about love. So if any romance is retained, it is retained for a different reason. It is not to teach them about love itself, but like the other “great examples” of morality, these poems ought to create or refine a taste for virtuous action on the basis of this most salutary passion. These examples, then, should be the most important and effective ones for those who already imbued with such passions. Great romantic examples alone account for the particular driving passion of romantic love, and should show how one ought to respond to them if they are to be included in a proper moral education.

With our Italian poets securely ensconced in the moral curriculum, we are still left with the puzzling inclusion of the French masters of theater. On St. Preux’s terms, this is entirely reasonable. What is a more fitting “example” than something as clearly performative as a play? It is a true spectacle, a living and breathing tableau. Plays ought to be seen – and seeing is of course important for St. Preux’s technique of developing truly discerning taste – but even reading them has the benefit of presenting the greatest variety of examples simply as examples. While the playwright may try to convey a specific moral lesson in their work, the characters and situation speak for themselves at some point. A narrator or a character possessing the author’s voice may be written in, but the audience is able to see and judge all the relevant details for themselves. We might well assume that the French playwrights are chosen for presenting the highest examples, and satisfy ourselves that they too belong in the curriculum.

But this inclusion is troublesome for the reader of Rousseau. Immediately preceding *Julie* Rousseau wrote his *Letter to d'Alembert*, railing against the theater as a corruptive influence and especially the French plays that St. Preux here includes as a necessary component of moral education. Here we take a step back and consider the relationship between St. Preux's proposed education, and the view of his creator. Although St. Preux is somewhat modeled on Rousseau, there is no single character in *Julie* who serves as the author's mouthpiece.⁶⁷ Indeed, there is no "author" but the correspondents themselves; Rousseau alleges he is only the editor of this collection, and he provides very little of his own commentary on the letters. Therefore, where Rousseau does not speak explicitly, we are welcome to consider the possibility that his characters' particular views are not exactly his own – especially since he does occasionally disagree with his characters explicitly.⁶⁸

This immediately helps us resolve the presence of French plays in St. Preux's curriculum even though Rousseau railed against them in real life. If Rousseau does not intend to use his characters as mouthpieces, they do not have to agree with him. But we should not assume too readily that this is automatically a disagreement, or that this is a mistaken inclusion in the curriculum. Even though he presents the plays as "spectacles" to be read, St. Preux at least is not suggesting field trips to Paris to see these plays in the theatre, which Rousseau argues is dangerous independent of the plays being performed (*Letter to d'Alembert* 57-65). While later I will consider

⁶⁷ Rousseau describes his characters and the process of writing *Julie* in *The Confessions*, identifying himself "with the lover and friend as much as [he] could... giving him the virtues and flaws [Rousseau] felt in [himself]," while pointing out that many readers considered St. Preux a complete stand-in for the author. Rousseau admits that he incorporates real sentiments and characters into his novel, but denies a perfect likeness between himself and his creations. See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1995), 362, 458.

⁶⁸ E.g. Rousseau's editorial footnotes *Julie* 70, 190, 320-21, 396, 474, 482-83, 570. Philip Stewart and Jean Vaché point out a further layer: Rousseau as "editor" can also be understood as a character independent of Rousseau the "author." They allege this on the basis of editor-Rousseau "not knowing" whether the letters are real or not, as distinct from author-Rousseau, the creator of the letters (655 n. 2).

in more detail how this model of education fits in with Rousseau's thought, St. Preux's inclusion of plays mirrors the epistolary form of *Julie* itself – a form which is educating the reader through examples, just as St. Preux claims his curriculum can and will do.

The operation of the education in taste is clearest when we see the characters honing their tastes together in subsequent letters.⁶⁹ One of the first examples of their lessons and their discussions combining in this effort is their study of Italian, Julie's musical studies, and the examination they make of it. Italian is partially retained out of deference to Julie's preexisting tastes, though St. Preux does not admit it explicitly. She had learned Italian verse with her now-deceased brother, and from it developed a love of Italian opera (117). St. Preux has no appreciation for it, however, and only comes to be moved by Italian music by associating it with the memory of Julie singing French arias. He is only fully converted to it by the singer he recommends to Julie for music lessons, whereas Julie already has a genuine taste for this moving music (106-108). Through Milord Edward, St. Preux meets a castrato who teaches music and after overcoming his initial repugnance at the sexual deformity of the young man and his indifference to the opera that he sings, he discovers the beauty and superiority of Italian music over French and exhorts Julie to learn how to sing in Italian instead (Julie I.XLVIII, n.115). He leaves his pupil in the hands of a new tutor, one who understands and produces the sentiments that only the Italian style of music can convey. St. Preux clearly learns something from this man, something that Julie already knew in some sense, and leaves Julie in his charge to further develop her judgment on the basis of a taste she already had.

⁶⁹ Recall, all three of the friends share the roles of tutor and pupil, so the education is no longer exclusively for Julie and Claire. All subsequent discussions of education – in both taste and judgment – will include examples of St. Preux being educated as well. I am particularly interested in Julie's education as different from Rousseau's proposed education for women elsewhere, but her role in her lover's education is crucial to this discussion of how the new coeducational process works. The study of women's education necessarily includes a study of men's education.

St. Preux initially finds Italian music “strange and lacking in expression,” but something has prevented him from developing the proper taste for it (103). He alleges his sadness at being separated from Julie at the time of this first introduction obscured the music’s “charm, so sweet and melancholic,” for him (103). Just as “not all hearts even have the capacity to be moved at the first look from Julie,” the effects of the external world do not necessarily affect the most sensitive souls right away (48).⁷⁰ His soul is initially unresponsive to this music that he will later discover is the only kind worthy of Julie and himself in its passionate expressiveness. St. Preux begins to develop this taste, however, in the presence of Julie. When he dines with her and Milord Edward, they spend the evening singing together. Julie only sings French, but when St. Preux later spends another musical evening singing Italian duets, he becomes completely enchanted by it and attributes this effect to be wholly Julie’s doing. He suspects he was only affected because he projected her seductive influence onto the music itself (106-107). She has not even sung the Italian herself and yet her charms throughout the evening have apparently put St. Preux in a position to discover the beauty in, and come to prefer, the music to which he was earlier indifferent. Where St. Preux has no appreciation of Italian music at first, he needs to develop Julie’s ear to cultivate his taste.

This first interest he shows in Italian music as a result of Julie’s influence is then worked upon by the castrato friend of Milord Edward, who explains the technical aspects of Italian music and translates them into the effects on the soul. St. Preux tells Julie that, before these lessons:

I did not perceive in the accents of melody applied to those of language the powerful and secret connection of the passions with the sounds; I did not see that the imitation of the various registers by which sentiments animate the speaking voice confers in turn on the

⁷⁰ St. Preux’s “conversion” to Italian music mirrors Rousseau’s somewhat, in that Rousseau harbored the French prejudice against Italian music before he traveled in Italy and gained an appreciation for it (*Confessions* 263-64; *Julie* 665-66 n.107). Rousseau, however, had a profound appreciation for *music* in general prior to this, unlike St. Preux.

singing voice the power to stir hearts, and that the performer's energetic tableau of the movements of his soul is what constitutes the true charm of the listeners. (108)

The castrato approaches the music first from the technical side to explain the sentimental side, while Julie had expressed the sentimental side in her singing before this. St. Preux can feel a few stirrings from music, but needs the technical explanation to help him work out the appropriate reaction to it. Again, as he has already expressed, even sensitive souls do not always respond to the beautiful right away. While he was able to immediately appreciate the beauty and simplicity of the Valais, and judge the interactions between the environment, the culture, and the people's good and simple morals, he has difficulty with the sublimity of Italian music and what passions it conveys. He needs practice listening to it in order to hear it. The castrato uses St. Preux's techniques on him to lead him to his new appreciation of Italian music: he examines the details with him, explains the different aspects, then provides a "tableau" of the aspects and their relations to show how they fit together (108-109). St. Preux has heard such performances before, but without any careful study and certainly without any appreciation. He is made receptive to these lessons by Julie's own love of Italian and her musical performances in French, but he needs more work to recognize how this music reflects the very passions he feels overflowing inside of him. His taste is refined by discovering this new expression of feeling and he learns to judge it properly in relation to other music, like the French he demands Julie abandon (110).

Learning through culture

For Julie's and Claire's education in taste and judgment, St. Preux offers two tableaux from his travels: his accounts of the Valais and of Paris. He begins with aesthetic considerations on the two places' physical attributes and moves to the mores that spring from these characteristics. That is, he moves from the particular to the general to move from taste to judgment. While he does not explicitly discuss the politics of these places with the women, the general principles that drive their

politics reveal themselves through the lives of their inhabitants.⁷¹ The political realm demands the most generalized judgment but St. Preux must work his pupils up to this “masculine” judgment from “feminine” taste. Julie and Claire are subject to the various men in their lives, but each of these men demand different things of them and in the final analysis, Julie and Claire are responsible for judging between these various demands. The particulars of these demands vary according to the women’s circumstances, but they are not simply the demands of individual men. Rather, they reflect the demands of different universal obligations on women in tension with their desires: the demands of family, lovers, husbands, friends, children, as potentially opposed to the demands of one’s soul. The women especially must learn to move between the general and the particular, to better understand their particular circumstances by their general forms, and to judge their proper course of action according to principle.

Rediscovering natural man in the Valais

St. Preux’s first “exile” lands him in the Valais, one of the rustic Swiss cantons that serves as a model for simple morals, where natural goodness remains the standard of living and interacting with others. He presents two reasons for selecting this country to wander: first, because it is “neglected,” “deserves men’s attention,” and needs “Observers who know how to see it” in order to be admired; second, to “entertain” Julie’s heart with the only kind of tableau she needs – that of “a happy and simple people” (61). St. Preux introduces Julie to the country through his correspondence in order to develop their taste further. He will furnish her with examples worthy of her, which he will find even more beautiful by carefully observing them, and by including descriptions of “the state of [his] soul” as the environment affects him, he affects her soul to cultivate her taste (63). Though she cannot be with him, he uses this tableau to teach her how to

⁷¹ This is one of the primary focuses of Mark Kremer’s *Romanticism and Civilization: Love, Marriage, and Family in Rousseau’s Julie* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017).

“see” – he imagines them sitting together while he points out certain features of the landscape for her further inspection and enjoyment, increasing her appreciation of it (68).

He begins, in true Rousseauian fashion, with nature. Once he arrives in the Valais, he begins to climb its peaks, enchanted by the novelty, variety, and extremity of the landscapes before him. He cannot fall into a Rousseauian reverie even though he wants to because the scenery is so distracting (63).⁷² The ruinous cliffs, impenetrable fog, dense forests, and terrifying chasms captivate him, obscuring his view and limiting his movement. Yet open spaces and delightful scenes also abound: a bright meadow in a valley and evidence of human cultivation everywhere mingled with the wilderness (63). His first interpretive remarks are about this very contrast. Human intervention is not unpleasant or jarring in this natural scene, but rather reflects the same variety in the environment. What is important about this variety is that it is harmonious. The differences are complimentary: everything is a visual analogy. St. Preux sees houses next to caves, grape vines where brambles grow, and fields on the mountain’s slopes that do not deface nature but “cultivate” it (63). The places where savage humans might have found shelter and food in Rousseau’s imagined history in the *Second Discourse* are the same places that these developed humans have created new forms of sustenance – not contrary to nature, but an expansion in accordance with it. St. Preux says that “one would have thought [the hand of man] had never penetrated” this landscape, which at first seems like a comment on the remote ruggedness of the terrain, that it is too difficult for humans to arrive at, take hold of, and cultivate (63). As we will see when it comes to their simple characters and morals, this turns out to be a comment on the organic development of human civilization. The way the Valaisians interact with their environment, simply and in

⁷² For Rousseau’s description of reverie, specifically as free from direction and rational thought, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. Charles E. Butterworth (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1992), 66-69.

accordance with nature rather than against it, reflects a lower level of civilization that is healthier than more civilized peoples. Had more civilized men arrived in a natural setting like the Valais, they would have conquered this wilderness beyond recognition, destroying its natural resources and beauty while foisting artificial institutions onto the environment that take no inspiration from the natural world. The Valaisians have somehow organically developed their civilization and stopped somewhere close to Rousseau's ideal hut society, living in accordance with nature without being entirely natural savages or entirely civilized social humans.

This first tableau, of partially-cultivated nature, gives way to the next tableau: the human civilization that has done this cultivating. The upper Valaisians whom St. Preux stays with are hospitable and welcoming, unlike the lower Valaisians who are mercenary towards the mercenary travelers who pause in their valley (65-66). Since there is no way to exploit those in the upper Valais, there is no fear or disdain of the stranger and the Valaisians happily accommodate him. These isolated people leave St. Preux to be comfortable in his own way for the most part, but are attentive to him in everything he asks for — especially at meals. It is always the women of the house, rather than the servants, who serve dinner and wait on guests (67). They are universally pretty and universally modest, coming up short in perfect beauty only for having large bosoms and unfortunately styled dresses that make them look hunchbacked (67-68). St. Preux is returned to his social concerns and desires, from his initial meditations on nature, but the women he observes do not distract him from Julie. Rather they serve as models for comparison, and St. Preux is left meditating on Julie's beauty.

Kremer points out that this account of the Valaisian rustics reveals a certain ugliness in nature and goodness, that is, it is not beautiful.⁷³ The Valais is a rustic republic, which is inferior

⁷³ Kremer, 36.

to rustic aristocracy where the simple is in service to the sublime.⁷⁴ Valaisian modesty makes the women pretty but not exceptional, whereas Julie's modesty sets off her beauty. St. Preux's impressions of the landscape speak to his higher sentiments, but his interactions with the people are merely friendly and utilitarian. They do not offer moving examples of virtue. These are important for understanding the sublime examples, however, in that they reveal and emphasize the superiority of them. St. Preux writes to Julie:

Everything called me back to you in this peaceful site; the stirring attractions of nature, the unalloyed purity of the air, the simple manners of the inhabitants, their constant and sure propriety, the endearing modesty of the fair sex, its innocent graces, and everything that agreeably struck my sight and my heart, painted a picture of her whom they are seeking. (*Julie* 68)

Once one has developed a sense of there being higher goods, there is no denying their satisfaction, but they must be satisfied in harmony with the simple goodness St. Preux sees around him in the Valais. This example shows what direction their elevated passions should take, but also shows that the passions cannot be reduced to the natural goodness preserved in this basic society. Their situation involves external demands on them in a society with more complicated standards of behavior, so their taste must accord with natural goodness, but they will need to develop their judgment to determine how virtue might approximate it in a very different context.

Two letters from St. Preux arrive for Julie at the same time, this first containing the tableau of the Valais, and the second a response to Julie's previous letter about St. Preux's stipend.⁷⁵ Since she is preoccupied with her "mortal languor" at being separated from St. Preux, she does not give much in the way of a response to his tableau (71-72). She *does*, however, tell him that she finds his travelogue generally to her taste – "it would make [her] love the person who wrote it, even if [she] did not know him" – but she also chides him for sharing his meditations on her body, saying

⁷⁴ Kremer, 35-37, 45.

⁷⁵ See this discussion below, where it relates to Julie's development of judgment.

that these explicit statements are “not to [her] taste” (71). St. Preux, comparing the shockingly ample bosoms of the Valaisian women to that of his beloved, reveals that Julie’s modest dress cannot entirely conceal her body from his eager gaze (67). He quotes Tasso to justify his observations:

Her sharp, firm breast is partially visible,
Yet is mostly covered by a jealous vestment;
But if its jealous purpose is an obstacle to the eyes,
It still does not impede loving desire. (*Julie* 67)⁷⁶

Julie accuses him of hiding behind Tasso “as if behind a rampart,” and tells him that “there is quite a difference between writing for the public and writing to one’s mistress” (71). Good taste dictates that while one must keep propriety in mind when writing for a wider audience, love requires even more “deference” to the beloved (71). St. Preux writes of Julie’s body as a secret intimacy shared between the lovers, but Julie rejects his shared observations as crude and distasteful – especially in their still-chaste relationship. It is not so much that he has seen and imagined her body privately that is not to her taste, nor his observation and descriptions of the Valaisian women, but his admission of it in such bold terms. His meditations on beauty are natural and reflect his good taste, but his style is inappropriate here in a travelogue on the rustic goodness of the Valais and its juxtaposition with his beloved Julie.

Discovering corrupted man in Paris

If the immodest style of St. Preux’s meditations on Julie’s body are inappropriate in his travelogues from the Valais, they are more fitting in his letters from Paris. The corrupt city offers a contrast to the Valais by revealing the problems of allowing the elevated passions to direct us further away from natural goodness rather than bringing these into harmony with each other. St. Preux writes to Julie and Claire about the pleasures and dangers of the corrupt city, all of which culminates in St.

⁷⁶ See also the accompanying editorial note, n.50; the quote comes from *Jerusalem Delivered*, IV, 31.

Preux's unanticipated visit to a brothel (Letter II.XXVI). Julie anticipates the worldly education St. Preux is going to receive firsthand in Paris, being subject to a million temptations and sophistry from every corner trying to justify succumbing to them. She laments she does not have more experience to advise him, but she takes solace in Milord Edward's influence and does in fact have some good advice to give: "never forsake virtue, and never forget your Julie" (183). If St. Preux's tastes are corrupted by Parisian society, virtue will appear naïve and Julie will appear provincial and dull. They would both become "unsatisfying" to a taste that has been introduced to excess and extreme pleasures, confusing these with the sublimity the sensitive soul naturally seeks. Once this taste is corrupted, it is difficult to correct it because the original objects of good taste – virtue, morality, Julie – no longer appeal to it and cannot simply operate on the soul by their mere presence. They must work harder and more intentionally on the soul.

The series of letters from St. Preux about Paris are addressed to both cousins, and both of them are critical of the tone and style of his first (Letter II.XIV). In describing the Parisians' officious politeness, false hospitality, and charming wit, he adopts their style of speaking (190-91).⁷⁷ His aim is no longer to convey the character of this people as accurately as he can, in his simple rustic language, but to convey something of them through both the content and the style of his letter (197-98). Julie and Claire sense this affected language right away and reject it as deceptive as the people he describes: "...any observer who prides himself on wit seems suspect to me: I am always afraid that he will innocently sacrifice the truth of things to the glint of his thoughts and play on his sentence at the expense of justice" (195). Claire is primarily responsible for this initial reaction to St. Preux's affectations, dictating her critiques to the "playful" Julie, but the next

⁷⁷ The editors note that this letter has passages reminiscent of de Graffigny's *Letters from a Peruvian Woman* and La Rochefoucauld, and is also a "pastiche" of Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (673 n.59, n.62; 674 n.71).

critique about the language being unsuitable to lovers follows Julie's earlier criticisms of St. Preux's letter from the Valais (196; 71). Speaking to a lover not only requires deference in excess of what is required for propriety in public, it requires the simplicity of sincere, unpretentious sentiment (196). Julie has captured, in her critiques of both letters, the paradoxical Rousseauian desire for modesty and authenticity – most notably presented in his exhortations to women in Book V of *Emile*, but here addressed to the male lover in Rousseau's epistolary novel. Modesty requires a type of falseness, a pretense to rejection in order to be pursued (*Emile* 359).⁷⁸ The deference and implicitness Julie asks of St. Preux is a veil over his deepest desires, to preserve the innocence of their interactions and maintain the charm of virtue. Yet this "falseness," or concealment of the truth, is in service to and in accordance with sincerity (*Emile* 385-86). Though Rousseau says a young woman has the *additional* concern of pleasing when she speaks, her ultimate standard is the same as a young man's: the truth (*Emile* 375-76). Else Wiestad, for example, takes this to be evidence of Rousseau's double-standards that enforce inequality between the sexes, but he has Julie set the feminine standards of beauty *and* truth for St. Preux as well.⁷⁹ She exhorts him to be virtuous – modest – especially with her.

But again, St. Preux has taken up the tone and style of his hosts on purpose, to give an *example* of their conversation rather than a mere description (197-98). He has not been so foolish to sink to their shallow standards (yet) and is well aware of their language's ridiculousness (198). It would be inappropriate to use it sincerely, but he is giving the women a taste that they reject immediately. His purpose is educational, and if this first letter were designed to test the

⁷⁸ Ingrid Makus, "The Politics of 'Feminine Concealment' and 'Masculine Openness' in Rousseau," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2002), 190-91.

⁷⁹ Else Wiestad, "Empowerment Inside Patriarchy: Rousseau and the Masculine Construction of Femininity," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 176.

development of the cousins' taste, they have passed. Julie was right to admonish him about his letter from the Valais, that it was tasteless and St. Preux ought to have known so, and she is right to more "playfully" criticize this letter for its artificial tastelessness (198).

The worry about St. Preux's adoption of the Parisian style is not entirely unfounded, however. As St. Preux continues to write about his time in Paris, trying to understand the people and make his way in the world in an attempt to become a man worthy of Julie in her father's eyes, he reveals that he must adopt *some* of his hosts' habits and characters to gain further access into this new world. He tries to "[acquire] so well what is good in society that it can suffer [him] without [his] adopting its vices" (202). One can tell already, though, that this is a slippery slope – St. Preux confesses that this new lifestyle is changing him more than he intends:

However I am beginning to experience the intoxication into which this restless and tumultuous life plunges those who lead it, and I am falling into a dizziness like that felt by a man before whose eyes a plethora of objects are rapidly passed. None of those that strike me engages my heart, but taken together they *disturb and suspend its affections, so much so that I forget what I am and to whom I belong...* Thus forced to change the order of my moral affections, forced to attribute a value to fantasies, and impose silence on nature and reason, thus I see disfigured that divine model I bear within me that both served as object of my desires and as rule for my actions, I drift from whim to whim, and *my tastes being constantly enslaved to opinion*, I cannot a single day be sure of what I will love the next. (*Julie* 209, my emphasis)

Pretending to have a taste for the inferior things of fashion leads St. Preux to forget, if only temporarily, his real tastes for higher goods. Though apparently he can revive his good tastes on the basis of remembering his love for Julie when he returns home each night, it is clear that these sublime sentiments take up less and less of his daily life as he becomes more involved in the social scene (210). The divine image within him *is* disfigured, even if he can conjure it back up, but Julie senses that the harm he is suffering is *because* this lifestyle is so repugnant to his true tastes (212). If he were not so angry and critical, she would be far more anxious over the state of his soul. Though it is a dangerous position he has put himself in, Julie asks him to pay even closer attention

to Paris and its ways because she knows he has applied incorrect standards to it, particularly and generally. She accuses St. Preux of “blithely” criticizing the city without knowing “whether it is a case of slander or an observation” (212). He must correct his observations in order to learn what is appropriate in Paris and in cities he easily.

Part of this task means turning to observe the women more carefully, as St Preux did in the Valais but has conspicuously left out of his observations on Paris (213). He has not ignored them up until this point, especially since men and women mix far more frequently in Paris, but he has not given them the same treatment as the rural women he met in Switzerland (191-92, 203-204). Julie deems this “suspect” as it implies he is so seduced by them he leaves them out to keep Julie from feeling “uneasy” (212). St. Preux retorts that he finds “more vanity than fear lurking behind this curiosity” – if the women of the Valais set off Julie’s beauty by “paying tribute” to her, the Parisians will set it off by being vastly inferior to her (217). But discussing either group of women is not simply to meditate on Julie herself, as St. Preux’s taste for Julie is a manifestation of his taste for genuine beauty and virtue. The study and comparison of women is really an examination of what is good – women dictate the tastes of a society and its morality depends on them (*Julie* 226; *Emile* 341; *Letter to d’Alembert* 103).

This is Mark Kremer’s entire point when he focuses on St. Preux’s (and Rousseau’s) depictions of the Valais, Paris, and the women who live there: one must know the women to know the city, even if they are not directly involved in its politics.⁸⁰ Paris tends too far towards civilization and has lost almost everything of nature, meaning its development has strayed from goodness. Kremer notes that Paris is ruled by the arts and sciences, where women are witty and

⁸⁰ Kremer claims that this is partly because Rousseau replaces philosophy with women as the center of community – Socrates is replaced by Julie (xv).

coquettish, and cosmopolitan charm is what is considered beauty.⁸¹ The only natural thing it retains is the “gentleness and commiseration” of women, which Julie points out is present everywhere and in no way reflects any particularity of the city – even with its masculine women (245). Otherwise, it has lost sight of anything with real value. Julie accuses St. Preux of being deceived by these novel tastes in the city, when he serves “etiquette” instead of virtue in the episode of the brothel (246). Etiquette is a highly refined set of manners, meant to elevate good relations between people, but it becomes its own standard rather than adhering to what is good, so it comes into tension with it. Having “good taste” in the city means adhering to the new standard of manners, and St. Preux’s sense of shame is corrupted by this new potential source of social shame. In order to avoid the mockery of his tasteless friends, he opts for the shame of accompanying them to the brothel, and Julie tells him he has avoided a false shame only to suffer from the real shame of offending virtue (246). Good taste must have a standard other than the accidental standards of society, especially when society has gone too far in its attempt to “refine” morals and ends up subverting them in the process. It would be better to have remained simple and somewhat brutish in the natural society of the Valais than to serve the “higher” passions by abandoning their natural standard in highly-civilized societies. St. Preux learns the hard way that there is a false elevation that deceives and destroys virtue, in straying too far from simple goodness.

St. Preux’s report of the Parisian women is not unlike the Tutor’s description in *Emile* or Rousseau’s earlier observations of Paris in the *Letter to d’Alembert* (*Julie* Letter II. XXI; *Emile* 342-55, 389; *Letter to d’Alembert* 92-113). The women make the men effeminate and collect them in their homes (*Julie* 221; *Emile* 350-51; *Letter to d’Alembert* 101-102).⁸² They abandon their “feminine” qualities in favor of “masculine” ones – boldness, immodesty, philandering (*Julie* 218-

⁸¹ Kremer, 9.

⁸² St. Preux will take up this critique again in Part IV (370-71).

22; *Emile* 363-64, 386, 409; *Letter to d'Alembert* 112). But St. Preux also recognizes that they are much better instructed, and therefore are more intelligent and reasonable, than other women elsewhere (*Julie* 191-92, 204, 225, 227-28). They still have vices, and St. Preux does not refrain from listing them, but he also tells Julie that the vices they must adopt to succeed in society hide their virtues: "sense, reason, humanity, natural goodness" (226). Whereas Jean-Jacques disdains "masculine" modern bourgeois women, like Marie de l'Enclos, whom he "would have no more wanted that man for [his] friend than for [his] mistress," St. Preux is understandably more charitable given his bisexualizing educational project (*Emile* 386). He concludes about these Parisian women:

They are more solidly instructed and their instruction contributes more to their judgment. In a word, if I dislike them for all that characterizes the sex they have disfigured, I respect them for relations with ours that do us honor, and I find they make a hundred times finer men of merit than appealing women. Conclusion: if Julie had not existed, if my heart could have endured some attachment other than the one for which it was born, never would I have taken my wife in Paris, still less my mistress; *but I would willingly have made a lady friend here*, and that treasure would have consoled me, perhaps, for not finding here the other two. (*Julie* 228, my emphasis)

They have perhaps lost their feminine virtues, but they do successfully acquire the masculine ones as St. Preux sees it. If Rousseau is concerned with women being *women* and ruling properly within the family in *Emile*, here in *Julie* he indicates they can still have value even if they lose their feminine power and adopt other virtues. They are not appealing lovers, which is why St. Preux's education to virtue focuses on preserving Julie's feminine virtues while cultivating masculine virtues in her as well, but they are appealing in another way. They still have something tasteful about them, and St. Preux can identify and appreciate this – even if Julie is at first confused by it, wondering why he has neglected to speak of "domestic cares and the education of children" in his account of these women (245). It is, of course, because they have abandoned such duties altogether, as Rousseau laments in his editorial footnote to Julie's question (245). Julie is too naïve to

comprehend at first that these cares are not universally pursued by women and that women might think to ever resist such duties.

Bringing politics to the women

In keeping with this gender-bending education, St. Preux expects his female pupils to consider the world comprehensively – the private and public realms are of universal concern, even if the latter is effectually out of reach for the women. Their lives often interrupt their contemplations of the world, but they still seriously reflect on St. Preux's observations and what they mean.

The case of politics is particularly important. Claire groans at having to hear politics discussed between her father and other men, and Julie is adamant that politics "hardly falls within women's competence," but still they recognize its value and Julie rails against St. Preux for leaving it out of his letters to them (*Julie* 138, 540; 250). When Julie sees that the letters St. Preux sends to the cousins about Paris, despite being full of observations of various societies and reflections on the culture, morals, and ideas he finds there, fall short of the deeper discussions of the world he sends to Milord Edward, she adds a postscript to her response:

I have just seen in Monsieur d'Orbe's hands copies of several of your letters to Milord Edward, which oblige me to retract a portion of my strictures on the subject matter and style of your observations. These treat, I concede, important subjects, and strike me as being full of grave and judicious reflections. But on the other hand, it is clear that you greatly disdain us, my Cousin and me, or that you are very unconcerned for our esteem, in sending us only relations so likely to diminish it, whereas you write much better ones for your other friend. It seems to me it does little honor to your lessons to judge your pupils unworthy of admiring your talents; and you should feign, if only out of vanity, to think us capable of understanding you.

I admit that politics hardly falls within women's competence, and my Uncle has so wearied us with it that I understand how you might have feared to do likewise. Nor is it, frankly speaking, the pursuit to which I would give my preference; its usefulness is too removed from me to affect me much, and its insights are too sublime to strike my eyes strongly. Obligated to love the government under which heaven caused me to be born, I little care whether others are better. What good would it do me to know about them, with so little power to establish them, and why should I sadden my soul with the contemplation of such great evils about which I

can do nothing, so long as I see others around me which I am at liberty to relieve? But I love you; and the interest I do not take in the subject matter I do take in the Author who treats of it. I take in with tender admiration all the proofs of your genius, and proud of a merit so worthy of my heart, I ask love to give me only as much cleverness as I need to appreciate yours. Do not therefore refuse me the pleasure of knowing and loving all your good deeds. Do you mean to inflict on me the humiliation of believing that if Heaven united our destinies, you would not deem your companion worthy of thinking alongside you? (250)

This beloved pupil has much to say about her worldly education, whether or not she feels capable of it. As is typical, she emphasizes the general competencies (or incompetencies) of her sex when it comes to certain realms of knowledge — here, politics. Her arguments are complex, however. His portrait of Paris, and his confession of being led unawares into a brothel, is initially received by Julie as “frilly” and unimportant compared to the portrait of the Valais he sent years before, but here she has to admit that these recent letters are still “full of grave and judicious reflections” and perhaps they only appear “frilly” because Paris itself is inferior to the Valais (248, 250). Yet this cannot be the whole reason – even if Paris is full of artifice and vapidness, St. Preux has still been sending different, more important Parisian observations to Milord Edward, about the “masculine” realm of politics.

Does St. Preux think his pupils are stupid, then? Julie hopes not, considering he was the one to give them an education and she is at least confident in it enough that she believes they are capable of *appreciating* his observations even if they cannot *understand* them. When she admits politics is outside the comprehension of women, she does not attribute this reasoning to St. Preux; she only argues that if he chose not to share these observations with the cousins, it was because he thought *they*, Julie and Claire, were incompetent or uninterested – not that he considers it wholly outside of the understanding or interest of women generally. But Julie justifies his omission on this general ground. That is, St. Preux considers the capacity and taste of his particular students

when omitting politics from his letters to them, while Julie considers her entire sex and its capacities and tastes when trying to understand why St. Preux would leave them out.

She admittedly turns to reflecting on herself to provide the evidence, but this turn toward “particularity” is done in a masculine way. Julie’s example of self-awareness and understanding of universality here is not the type Rousseau attributes to women, according to Marso. Their understanding of particularity does not transcend the particular to the universal or abstract. When woman looks at herself, she sees herself. When she looks at others, she sees others. It is man who looks at himself and sees *man* – all men. So when Julie moves between her *personal* boredom with and indifference to politics, and the *general* inability of women to get “into” politics because they cannot choose to move elsewhere nor improve the governments of their homelands, she is doing the same thing Marso attributes to Emile, who “isolate[s] his own experience and place[s] it onto others as the common experience of all.”⁸³ She is not simply looking at her cousin and seeing concordance with her own feelings, she is abstracting on the basis of herself. She “arrogantly projects” like a man, rather than “arrogantly empathizes” like a woman.⁸⁴ She ultimately believes that it is her sex rather than her character that dictates her disinterest in politics because she has universalized her experience and attributed it to her sex.

Yet she argues it is truly her sex – or, more precisely, her sexuality – that will *justify* her receiving lessons in politics. Even if she is, as an individual, unconcerned with learning about those terrible things she cannot hope to avoid or fix, she knows that politics occupies an important portion of St. Preux’s concerns and his consideration of it is one of the best examples of his “genius” (250). If that is the case, she knows she is getting short shrift by being excluded from this

⁸³ Lori J. Marso, “Rousseau’s Subversive Women,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 250.

⁸⁴ Marso, 252-53.

side of her lover. She appeals to him as the right recipient of all his highest faculties, given that she is his Heaven-appointed mate. From love, she does not desire to be capable of understanding or appreciating politics, only to be capable of understanding and appreciating St. Preux's understanding and appreciation. Such an understanding would make her the proper half of the moral whole Rousseau strives for in *Emile*. Julie, as a woman, can only see and relieve the suffering of the small circle of people around her in her town, but this is a crucial ability. She is not helpless. St. Preux, as a man, can see and relieve the suffering of those he has never met if he were to involve himself as a citizen by taking an active role in politics. Together, they can relieve both immediate and universal suffering; Julie can teach St. Preux how to do what it is that he teaches her must be done, and each can work within the sphere available to them.

As in this example, Julie is often seen trying to make herself half of a moral whole, whereas St. Preux's education for her and her cousin should produce more self-sufficient moral beings who can judge and act independently of a moral union with someone else. Even if the realm of politics is prohibited to women, there is a moral education that would at least allow them to comprehend it and judge properly within it. Julie does not want to comprehend (and dwell on) those things she cannot hope to affect, condemned to impotency in the face of great evils. Yet St. Preux travels to learn about the world and the politics of different countries because, as Kremer argues, he "is interested in the best form of human association, and his travels help him investigate this question," not to fix the world or become a better citizen.⁸⁵ Emile does the same thing – his tutor makes him leave his beloved Sophie to test Emile's attachment to her and to teach him about politics. He is to learn what government is generally, what good and bad governments look like, and to willingly choose or renounce his own country by the end of his examinations (*Emile* 455-56). Rousseau's

⁸⁵ Kremer, 11.

male characters (apart from Milord Edward, who is a member of the British House of Lords) are not forbidden from the realm of politics, but are as uninvolved as any woman.⁸⁶ They are effectually just as politically impotent as the women, but are not discouraged from studying politics simply because they cannot affect them. The sexual difference in political impotence is not the underlying cause for women's disinterest in politics. Even if Julie does not appear to desire knowledge for its own sake, just as Rousseau claims women do not, we must also recognize that St. Preux does not either.⁸⁷ Recall: all of their studies are for the sake of beauty, and in turn for the sake of moral understanding. This must include a study of politics for all.⁸⁸

Learning through moral practice

As a moral education is meant for moral action, Julie, St. Preux, and Claire have to apply their cultivated taste and judgment to their own moral dilemmas, but they also learn while working through these problems. Four episodes are particularly illustrative here: St. Preux's refusal of his stipend, Julie's "fall," the despair of Fanchon Regard, and the potential duel between St. Preux and Milord Edward. The former two examples are part of Julie's moral education, whereas the latter two are part of St. Preux's. While they both have something to learn, they also each have something to teach, something of their own taste and judgment that helps develop the other's. Therefore I examine these four examples to show what each of them knows and what each of them has to learn

⁸⁶ Wolmar is formerly a wealthy landowner, likely from Russia, but he loses his fortune and his citizenship so becomes a private man (*Julie* 685 n.37). He loses his political power but is generally unfazed by this, while still maintaining an interest in the political world.

⁸⁷ Rousseau says that "[women's] reason is practical and makes them very skilled at finding means of getting to a known end, but not at finding that end itself" (*Emile* 377). To attribute to St. Preux a desire for knowledge for its own sake, as Kremer does (see above), is to fail to understand the whole point of education for this little group.

⁸⁸ Although politics is explicitly missing from St. Preux's letters to Julie and Claire, as Julie complains, Kremer claims that the letters on Parisian society reflect on its nature as a gynaeocracy, and therefore the letters constitute an implicit study of politics (12, 18 n.19, 25). In this way, St. Preux is already involving his female companions in the studies Julie does not realize she is part of, and which Kremer loses sight of later when he suggests that a discussion of politics has no place in a romantic novel (37).

in order to approach the moral self-sufficiency Rousseau seems to call for through this bisexualizing moral education.

St. Preux's stipend

One of the first moral conflicts Julie and St. Preux face is a seemingly minor one: the question of his stipend from the d'Étange family. St. Preux refuses a stipend on the basis of true honor – the love of virtue. He has not been paid for his tutoring (one assumes he is simply “kept” in the d'Étange household), but upon the Baron's return and subsequent discovery of the young man responsible for his daughter's improvement, he insists that St. Preux be paid – also as a matter of honor (61-62). Both men ostensibly use the same standard, but understand its content and application differently. Julie is not only the interlocutor of both men, but also the mediator between them. She will be the one to send St. Preux his remuneration, and the one who will receive his reasons for declining it. It is she, then, who will hear the reasonings of both and who will ultimately decide the course of action after judging between the two parties.

This episode parallels an earlier one, in which Julie gives St. Preux money for his trip into the Valais and he refuses out of honor until she convinces him it would be dishonorable to refuse it (54-56). This earlier conflict yields a “victory” for Julie, but only insofar as she is on the side of honor in sharing things in common between lovers, which St. Preux concedes. This second incident, however, ends in St. Preux's “victory,” which Julie anticipates and does not dispute. He draws the distinction between “worldly honor” conferred by others and “genuine honor,” based on self-esteem (69). On this basis he argues that worldly honor demands that he refuse the stipend, as society sees his tutoring job as lowly and mercenary if he takes the money, whereas genuine honor sees his honest labor as more than worthy of proper compensation (69). St. Preux still refuses the money, however, and illustrates how this actually is in line with “genuine honor”. Unlike those

model men who use abstract reasoning and principles as their guide, like the husband hosting the dinner party in Rousseau's example in *Emile*, St. Preux turns to the more specific concern of how the stipend functions in his particular relationship with Julie's father (*Emile* 383-84).⁸⁹ In this case, accepting the stipend would make him a real employee of the family, and to continue his romantic pursuit of Julie would make him disloyal to his contracted master (70).

Rousseau explicitly disagrees with St. Preux on this point, even though Julie will not, and argues instead that being paid only in gratitude makes the tutor's amorous pursuit even more criminal since he has not even done what he was engaged to do on his honor: to teach his pupil instead of corrupting her (70). St. Preux has adopted Julie's reasoning from the earlier episode when she convinced him to accept her gift of money for his travels, arguing that honesty, love, and true honor demands he accept the gift (55). He uses this standard to refuse the stipend, but he has deceived himself in applying Julie's judgment here. By not accepting payment for his services, St. Preux deceives and injures Julie's parents even more for having loved their daughter and accepted their gratitude for it (70). Rousseau excuses both lovers for their youthful folly, blaming only Madame d'Étange, but still he points out how the passions can draw even the most sincere lovers of virtue away from their duties to it (70). In this rare explicit comment, Rousseau makes it clear that their sincerity is not enough to make their relationship wholly innocent, even if it partially excuses them. Their passions are salutary but not necessarily in harmony with virtuous action.

Julie, left to judge between the principles of her lover and those of her father, accepts St. Preux's arguments that Rousseau rejects. She believes that St. Preux has reasoned correctly given what he knows about their situation, but Julie knows more. She sees this first struggle between her father and St. Preux as the beginning of endless struggles for the couple, a lifetime of

⁸⁹ See Marso for a description of ideal masculinity and femininity, based on men's and women's different styles of observation, reasoning, and judgment exemplified in this scene from *Emile* (251).

disappointments that she believes will be more trying than the most demanding of sudden moral crises (71).⁹⁰ She already knows she cannot be with St. Preux, but he is still in the dark as to just how proud and prohibitive Julie's father will be. Julie will herself soon know what her exact fate will be: she will have to marry Wolmar. It does not matter whether St. Preux accepts or declines the stipend, nor do his reasons really matter. Nor does it matter for their situation how Julie judges between the two men. Julie does not concede to St. Preux on the strength of his arguments, but rather refuses to continue arguing with him because she sees their fate looming over them. Her father's might makes right in this case, and even if St. Preux were to concede to her and accept the stipend, it would not convince her father to give them his blessing and break his promise to Wolmar. Even if St. Preux were concerned with gaining the Baron's esteem, he can never gain enough of it to be with Julie.

Julie's "fall"

The most important and immediate aim of the moral education for Julie and St. Preux is to virtuously restrain themselves from one another – to maintain their chastity. They are to love virtue more than each other, and love each other for their virtue. This is not just a one-time crisis, however. This is an ongoing moral struggle, especially for Julie, who seriously doubts and eventually knows for certain that they will never be able to marry, whereas St. Preux harbors some hope for this possibility because of his ignorance of Julie's family situation (79). She believes that this ongoing struggle requires the most moral strength, because she must be constantly vigilant and make the proper choices to avoid great moral crises (71). But she discovers too late that overcoming an immediate moral crisis demands far greater strength than she anticipated, and that

⁹⁰ As Rousseau notes as editor, it is actually the sudden demand for virtue as St. Preux struggles to restrain himself from Julie that leads her to succumb (71). It is one fraught moment, and not the wearing down of her strength, that leads to her "fall"; she has misjudged the danger.

she lacked it at the crucial moment. Later she will tell St. Preux that when she lost hope of them ever being together, “the very thought of an endless struggle snatched away [her] courage to overcome” (282). Even if marriage were a possibility and she had retained her moral endurance, there are still conflicting salutary desires involved in their relationship prior to marriage. There is the desire to maintain their virtue as the crucial basis for their love, which means maintaining their chastity, but there is also the desire to unite themselves as thoroughly as possible. They want to express their love for virtue and for each other in every possible way.

Julie’s fall is the moral crisis of the novel, and afterwards she turns to the only other person in a position to help her work through her remorse: her cousin, Claire (Letters I.XXIX-XXX). Julie cannot unburden her soul to her lover, with whom she has just consummated her relationship and who laments over Julie’s regrets at so beautiful a union (81-83). She can confide in her cousin, however, who loves her well enough to console and correct her, and who has collected the same resources they have shared over the course of their education. Julie writes to her cousin, condemning her for abandoning her and lamenting over her total ruin. In her moment of greatest danger, she judges badly and falls prey to pity for her lover, who manages to restrain himself repeatedly in her presence but whom Julie allows to possess her to relieve his suffering (78). She has sacrificed herself, by sacrificing her virtue, to save her family and her lover – she could not abandon her parents to elope with St. Preux, and she could not leave St. Preux in despair of ever having her after getting his hopes up (78).⁹¹

After this affair, however, she never equates the loss of her virtue with the further loss of St. Preux – there is no indication that she thinks St. Preux will now see her as unworthy or unlovable because she is not virtuous. Her despair comes only from her own judgment of herself

⁹¹ See also Kremer, 59-60.

as unworthy and unloveable, in which case she would be unable to accept St. Preux's love again. Even if modesty or chastity is not the defining virtue for men, and St. Preux himself has not lost any of his virtue through the affair, we would expect his continued love for a fallen woman to reflect some shortcoming in his character or to indicate that he did not sincerely love virtue in the first place. Yet she does not fault him for still loving her, instead she simply chastises him for trying to console her for her loss – she does not want to forget what she has done, nor be forgiven, but she does want his good character to vindicate her sacrifice. She demands of him: “Be then henceforth my sole hope, it is for you to justify my fault if that is possible; cover it with the honesty of your sentiments; let your merit undo my shame; render excusable by your virtues those you have cost me” (84). According to Julie, he is not at fault for her loss of virtue, he seems not to have lost any virtue of his own, and his continued love of virtue will help elevate her back to some level of virtue.

Julie initiates an examination of virtue, particularly women's virtue, in her despair over her ruin. She implores Claire to maintain her friendship and take pity on her in place of her former esteem, but this is the exact sentimental turn Julie took that led to her downfall – she tells Claire just above, “Love alone might have spared me; O my Cousin, it was pity that undid me” (79). She wants to hear from her dearest friend that she has not lost everything with the loss of her defining virtue, because she cannot see how it could be so without Claire's help. Claire must respond to her cousin's despair, and before she can engage with the idea of virtue, she must examine her duty as friend and confidant: should she be honest with Julie, or tell her what she needs to hear? She appeals to “sacred and pure friendship” to delude her so she can console Julie (79). She warns Julie in this way to be wary of any sophistic arguments she might make out of pity for her, but we must consider whether they are all just dishonest but necessary consolations – especially since she will

also be harsh with Julie later in the letter and give her advice that she must take given her condition (79-80). While love might depend on illusions, friendship cannot survive on it; perhaps Claire's claims of pity and kindness will make her advice to Julie to moderate her grief easier for Julie to accept. Claire does not deny that Julie's loss is a real loss – she cannot make any realistic argument in its favor. But she does call upon all of Julie's other virtues to lessen the sting of this loss. Julie *did* succumb because of love, not simple pity, and she did not succumb after the very first and least temptation (80). Rather, she has been resisting the consummation of a love that is pure, sincere, and based on the mutual respect for virtue in the lover – not a passing lustful fancy with no merit. Claire takes responsibility on herself because she “foresaw it but did not forestall” the fall, and put Julie's physical life ahead of protecting her virtue (80). Julie could not survive without her lover, but Claire had seen her preserve herself for so long that she misjudged the crisis she put Julie in by recalling St. Preux to her side.

There is no recovering what has been lost, nor repairing the damage done, but Claire gives the following advice to Julie, even if the maxims she presents to her would be bad in any other situation:

Take care then lest you fall into a dangerous dejection that would debase you more than your weakness. Is genuine love meant to degrade the soul? Let not a single fault that love has committed deprive you of that noble enthusiasm for honesty and beauty, which always raised you above yourself. Is a spot visible on the sun? How many virtues do you still possess for one that has become tainted? Will that make you any less sweet, less sincere, less modest, less generous? Will you be any less worthy, in a word, of all our praise? Honor, humanity, friendship, pure love, will these be any less dear to your heart? Will you have any less love for those virtues you no longer possess? No, dear and good Julie, while pitying you your Claire worships you; she knows, she feels that there is nothing good that your soul cannot still bring forth. Ah! believe me, you could lose a great deal before any woman purer than you could ever be your equal. (81)

Being satisfied with less than perfect virtue would be harmful for the woman who has not yet lost her virtue, and telling her that one error does not make her entirely corrupt inevitably sets her up

to be less wary and more likely to make that first error. Claire's advice to Julie that she avoid falling further by seeing this as only a small, partial loss is only good for the woman who has lost an important part of her virtue and runs the risk of giving up on it completely. Julie has further to fall and Claire cannot permit this. Julie must strive just as hard, if not harder, than she did before to maintain the rest of her virtue, even if she can never really make up for the crime she has committed.

Claire has chosen to argue before Julie a difficult, practical truth: that she has not lost everything, in spite of losing her most important virtue of chastity. Julie is really only criminal in her own eyes.⁹² Claire still adores her, St. Preux still adores her, and even her husband will adore her despite knowing from the very beginning that her heart and body have already been possessed by another man (404). Though her father beats her almost senseless when he understands her to have any sort of affection for St. Preux, he never suspects nor discovers that she has been unchaste (142-43). And Julie's mother, when she discovers the lovers' letters, blames St. Preux rather than Julie, and even more herself for trusting him (253). They still see Julie as virtuous, and know her to be virtuous. Her fall makes her other virtues all the more touching as she struggles with herself to maintain them. Claire is not entirely deceitful in her advice; Julie does indeed have so many other virtues that the loss of even this seemingly defining one is an invisible "spot on the sun" (81). Claire understands love enough to see its legitimating force, even in the crime it most condemns for the sake of fulfillment in a permanent union.

⁹² It is always Julie, and no one else, who refers to her succumbing as a "crime" and herself as "criminal" (111, 172, 259, 275, 281, 283-84, 289-90, 293). It is worth noting two things, however: first, that "crime" as a translation of the French *crime* has no connotation of "sin" and Julie avoids referring to their affair as a "sin" (685 n.32), and second, that Rousseau himself "was unsure of how often to employ the adjective 'criminelle' when presenting Julie's (retrospective) feelings about the relationship" (Christopher Frayling, "The composition of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*," *Reappraisals of Rousseau: Studies in Honor of R. A. Leigh*, eds. Simon Harvey et al. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 190). Julie's error violates a social standard but not a natural moral standard.

Claire has learned about love exactly the way she should, according to St. Preux's proposed education: she has learned about it through Julie's and St. Preux's example. She has no desire for sublime, passionate love herself, but she has developed the taste for it through her love for the couple (262-63).⁹³ That is, her preference or particular taste is for friendship rather than love, but she understands romantic love's allure. Her tastes do not blind her to the proper moral response to it, whereas Julie's and St. Preux's romantic tastes often mislead them. Claire's letter to Julie means to remove her from the influence of illusions, even the salutary illusions of love. Julie has misjudged how to respond to St. Preux's despair because her taste for romantic love has confused the appropriate response for her.

Yet Claire also draws on a different source from their education at the hands of St. Preux to help Julie: her "poor Chaillot," whom she invokes as she closes the letter (81). Her beloved governess was the first to educate the two girls, and even though Julie believes she told the girls too much about the world without giving them the proper resources to defend against it, Claire learned enough to foresee Julie's danger and, had she been able to stay with her rather than be taken away with her family, would have continued to protect her feeble cousin.⁹⁴ If Chaillot were

⁹³ Claire understands her preference for friendship as strange and perhaps even perverse, calling herself a sort of "monster" for having this preference (146). This does not mean she does not have good taste, however. Good taste distinguishes the high from the low – romantic love from lust, true friendship from casual acquaintances – but good taste also involves recognizing the quality and value of one high thing even while preferring another, different high thing. For example, good taste distinguishes between Pappy Van Winkle and Evan Williams, and Laphroaig and Black Grouse, while also recognizing that the personal taste for Laphroaig does not ignore or deny the quality of Pappy. Claire's preference for friendship of the sublime sort with Julie does not preclude her from recognizing the beauty and sublimity of romantic love.

⁹⁴ Note, Julie thinks Chaillot gave them the *improper* resources to defend against dangerous men, akin to "snares," whereas Claire (see below) thinks Chaillot gave them *inadequate* resources to defend against them (35-36). This once again reflects their different characters and moral needs. Julie understands on some level that she needs more help to overcome her passions, but she also believes that there are virtuous and unvirtuous ways of doing it. Claire does not need these resources and so only identifies a lack of them for Julie without recognizing that there are some strategies Julie cannot bring herself to use. See also Kremer on Julie's rejection of coquetry as a "despicable art that is inconsistent with the honesty of love" (79), and Schwartz on Julie's rejection of "sexual politics" because she wants her total fulfillment in love, not rule (140).

still alive, this duty would have been hers; she would have acted as the continual guardian of the girls even though her educational duties were formally taken over by St. Preux. Instead, Claire acknowledges that Chaillot left them knowing “too much to ever allow [themselves] to be governed by others, and not enough to govern [themselves]” (36). Of course, Julie is the one who has suffered from her inability to self-govern in this moment, and Claire knows she ought to have served her cousin in this capacity as she had promised to since Julie’s first confession of love (36-38). Claire is not merely trying to console Julie in taking partial responsibility for the crime; she has known from the beginning that this was part of her duty to Julie.

Claire’s invocation of Chaillot implicitly recalls to Julie the governess’ lessons about love and how to act in relation to men. This is a defense of the deceptive methods of modesty Julie despises for preserving virtue, and Claire is encouraging her to use them to preserve what remains of her virtue (35-37, 173). Though love demands openness, honesty, and sharing of everything, which Julie serves too much when she succumbs to St. Preux’s struggle, it also demands virtuous restraint and the most efficient means to maintaining this virtue is that modesty that feigns disinterest even at the height of interest. Though Julie alternates between understanding and self-deception on this point, it is enough that Julie has already confessed her love for St. Preux to initiate the danger to her virtue (31-33, 41, 280-81). Claire is not exactly telling her anything she does not know, that transparency eliminates any resources Julie has to protect herself. Julie told St. Preux outright that her admission of love is “fatal” and that his virtue must protect her own since her love for him “corrupts [her] senses and [her] reason” (32-33). She cannot bring herself to deceive him or herself about her love, but she also cannot denounce virtue. It is the foundation of their love for one another, at odds with their desire to join their souls in a “sweet union” that is the natural fulfillment of their love but will not be realized in the bonds of marriage (33). Julie takes honesty

as her rule; she becomes deathly ill every time she is forced to dissemble or keep the truth hidden (Letters I.XXVII, II.XII, VI.XI). She must learn the important lesson for women: that though the truth is the standard for both men and women, women have the additional responsibilities: honesty and love must hide behind the “dishonesty” of modesty.

Helping Fanchon

Although Julie and St. Preux fail to remain chaste, their crucial task in service to the virtue they love in one another, virtue still demands much more of them. Virtue encompasses a whole range of personal duties for St. Preux, Julie, and Claire, beyond sexual continence and regardless of their sexes. Therefore, even if St. Preux’s and Julie’s very first, most pressing duty is to refrain from one another physically, fulfillment of this duty comes nowhere close to fulfilling all their other duties to their friends and family, as evidenced by the incident with Fanchon and Claude Anet (Letters I.XXXIX-XLIV). This betrothed couple, left in Julie’s charge, runs into misfortune shortly after Julie and St. Preux consummate their relationship. Our protagonists have not only failed their duty to be chaste, they have also neglected their other responsibilities while they struggled with their passions, causing harm to others. Claude Anet has enlisted in the army to make money for Fanchon’s survival after her mother suddenly passes away and she must care for her paralyzed father (97-98). They have not had the chance to be married, however, and Fanchon risks losing her potential husband with no continued means of income; she asks Julie to either help them secure a delay in Claude Anet’s departure so they may be married, or else to help pay the young man back for his financial support in the months leading up to his enlistment (98). Julie and St. Preux have been blind to the misfortunes of others, but in Julie’s stark postcoital clarity, she realizes she is responsible for this young woman’s wellbeing and springs into action. To help them, Julie and St.

Preux must forego another tryst they had planned – they must sacrifice their personal pleasures in service to helping others.

Julie's efforts on behalf of this couple, and the resulting sacrifice of precious time with St. Preux is echoed in *Emile*, when Emile and his tutor are on their way to see Sophie but are detained because they stop to help an injured man (439-41). Sophie is worried and upset that Emile does not arrive, but the tutor explains the situation to her the next day and Emile tells her in conclusion, "...do not hope to make me forget the rights of humanity. They are more sacred to me than yours. I will never give them up for you" (441). At this, Sophie gives herself to Emile. She now has definitive proof that his heart "prefers its duty to her and her to everything else," which she knows is the only heart that can properly esteem her an account of her own virtues (439). There is no indication in *Emile*, however, that a man has such a criteria for the woman whom they love and by whom they want to be loved. Emile is "moved" by Sophie's care for the injured man when they all go to see him, but only after she has given herself to Emile exclusively (441-42). Sophie is permitted to care for others once she has cared for Emile; the rights of humanity are not primary for woman on this account, and her virtue does not consist in making them so.

On the other hand, in *Julie*, the roles are reversed. Julie calls off the tryst in order to help the couple, though she must enlist the help of her beloved as she cannot relieve their ills alone. St. Preux reluctantly helps Fanchon and Claude Anet because of Julie's command, and admits he helps them because Julie commands it and not out of virtue (99). Upon helping them, however, he realizes that Julie, "being so sensible to others' woes, and counting [St. Preux's] for nothing," has rewarded him with "an unknown satisfaction" in his soul even though it deprived him of their tryst (99-100). He notes that Julie's "habit of generosity has so well taught the taste one acquires for it" and he for the first time is acquiring that same taste – though in his postscript he still presses her

to meet him anyway (100). He begins to learn the rights of humanity come before one's beloved, but Julie already recognizes this – when her parents leave, creating the conditions for the tryst in the first place, Julie tells St. Preux that her grief at their absence and her feelings of unworthiness before them show that her heart “still respects and cherishes rights more sacred than [his]” (93). St. Preux is eventually moved by Julie's commitment to others before him, but he must learn that this is choice-worthy because this is what virtue demands. From the beginning, they see their love as an expression and result of their love for virtue, but Julie teaches St. Preux how the “rights of humanity” are superior to each other's and compels him to serve them the same way she does. Emile knows this already when he meets Sophie and reveals his commitment to virtue over her; she does not have to teach him this, though his tutor had to. Rather, she knows this as well and once Emile reveals his virtue, Sophie recognizes that he is deserving of her love.

This episode shows Julie returning to her moral senses, regaining her sensibility to others' misfortunes and her desire to relieve them at the expense of her other pleasures. St. Preux evidently still needs to become more sensible to these moral situations, since even after Julie calls the problem to his attention, his focus is still on himself. He requires her command to take action, though helping the couple gives him pleasure in the end. Julie comes to the relationship already with the taste for doing good, though her tastes are occasionally misled as in the consummation of her relationship with St. Preux. She at least recognizes where she can help others and exercise her virtues effectively. Though St. Preux could ostensibly do good on a grander scale, being able to act politically, he must also learn how to apply general principles of virtue to the particular, private situations in which he finds himself. The couple loves virtue but they still have to learn how to express this love more reliably through their actions. Julie must learn to avoid distractions from

her good taste, to judge properly what she must focus on, and St. Preux must learn how to identify the particular cases in which his virtue can operate, and how to apply his general principles.

Preventing the duel

Whereas Claire must reorient Julie towards particular judgment in the case of her greatest moral crisis, and Julie must work on St. Preux's particular judgment in the case of Fanchon Regard, the crisis of St. Preux's planned duel with Milord Edward requires an appeal to general judgment, to the principles of virtue that reject dueling outright. Julie makes principled arguments to appeal to St. Preux with only a last-ditch effort at an emotional personal appeal, and this flurry of letters highlights the success of her education in commandeering masculine judgment to supplement her feminine judgment. Each of the characters must balance generality with particularity, and when they drift too far in one direction, the other characters must help recall them to the proper equilibrium.

After Milord Edward makes indiscreet comments about Julie and St. Preux, St. Preux feels obligated to defend her honor (Letters I.LVI-LXI). Milord Edward, clearly in love with Julie, complains of her coldness then says perhaps she is not so cold to St. Preux, hinting at the relationship between them (123). It is Claire that informs Julie of the original incident, and makes the recommendation that Julie send St. Preux away to dispel the rumors that gave rise to the insinuation in the first place (124). It is up to Julie, however, to first keep the duel from happening – and Claire can only be an accessory to that task. So Julie writes two letters. First she writes to St. Preux a lengthy letter offering several arguments about the difference between real and false honor, the nature of courage, and whether a duel is ever justified, as well as a personal appeal not to leave her a widowed single mother (Letter I.LVII). Second, she writes to Milord Edward, whom she only seeks to sway by means of personal appeals: she is a fallen maiden whom he would ruin

by “proving” his point in a duel, that she will not outlive her lover, and that he will leave her parents entirely childless and heartbroken (Letter I.LVIII).

Kremer makes much of these differing letters, since the appeals seem to be backwards. She sends her lover reason after reason (though perhaps not all clear or proper reason), while she sends his antagonist an emotional appeal.⁹⁵ Kremer explains that the seemingly misguided approach in Julie’s letter to Bomston is effective because it hits the nail on the head: Milord Edward is in love with Julie but can be convinced to spare St. Preux if she can successfully turn his valor towards the couple and use it to defend them rather than harm them.⁹⁶ He does not fully account for her use of rational arguments or references to their studies when she writes to St. Preux, however. What is significant for him there is that she refuses to use her authority over him, and refuses to appeal to love, because both reveal that love does in fact demand vengeance in this case and she wants to avoid the duel for another reason altogether: she is pregnant and still hopes to be honorably united with St. Preux.⁹⁷ He assumes the St. Preux would not be convinced by this letter, and would read it “with a mind to refute it because love is his only reason,” but there is an element of speculation to this.⁹⁸ She does indeed write to Milord Edward as well, but if he were the only one whom she could convince, she might have saved herself quite a bit of trouble by not writing several pages of arguments to St. Preux first. There must have been something valuable in the letter she wrote to her lover. Notably, she refers to her studies of ancient history to help support her arguments against dueling, just as the moral education intended. These are the very studies St. Preux set for her, and himself, so she reminds him that he too was supposed to profit from them since it appears she was the only one to have learned them (126). For her, ancient history presents more than an admirable

⁹⁵ Kremer, 52-54.

⁹⁶ Kremer, 54.

⁹⁷ Kremer, 54.

⁹⁸ Kremer, 52-53.

tableaux of foreign customs – the examples provide principles of morality and the concept of an honor that “depends not on time nor place nor prejudice, it can neither pass nor be reborn, its timeless source lies in the heart of the just man and the inalterable rule of his duties” (126). They do not study bad contemporary examples, but Julie still manages to present the counter-example of contemporary Messina and Naples, where “honor” demands you kill someone else to preserve your name (126). She is no relativist; these people have no sense of real honor and her judgment is sound enough to be able to look upon such examples and denounce them.

She tells her philosophic lover that he is succumbing to opinion and the “insane utterances of the multitude” if he tries to prove his courage by braving death in the duel (127). Everyone fears death, she argues, and therefore to brave the ridicule for being fearful is far more courageous – only forsaking the other virtues out of the fear of dying is true cowardice (127-28). Her arguments become more and more abstract and general as she progresses, until she completely turns to emotional, personal appeals. She says she thought she “should let reason alone speak” given the gravity of the situation, but she notes that her arguments thus far do not reflect how she sees the situation herself, nor do they “give voice to sentiment and humanity” (130). The approaches from reason and sentiment are not in tension, however. They are different means to the same proper end, and Julie will still follow the form of her education when she turns to her personal examples. In doing so, she offers her own tableaux for St. Preux’s judgment: the regrets of her father, who killed his friend in a duel, her personal aversion to cruelty as bestial, and finally, her current state of pregnancy (130-31). She has combined her own resources with those she has acquired, and has laid them out for St. Preux, knowing that he must work through the same questions. The only authority she uses is to request that he wait a week while thinking it through, and he can still choose to respect or defy this authority (131). By using both reason and sentiment, she appeals to his

judgment and his taste. To use reason first is to indicate her respect for his judgment, but the invocation of sentiment is the failsafe appeal to his taste in case his judgment is too compromised, or he has not carefully worked through the appropriate response to Milord Edward's offense in this situation. Taste and sentiment can never drop out entirely of the process of moral decision-making, since it precisely because our judgment is so often compromised by various passions that we must be reminded of the proper passions and work our way back up from them to reason and good judgment.

Indeed, St. Preux is too impassioned even to listen to Julie's reasons – it is her demand that he wait one week before pursuing the duel that makes calling it off possible (132-33). St. Preux admits Julie is right, but her letter was “too wise and too judicious for [his] taste” in his blind fury (133). Julie is correct that the additional time for St. Preux to cool off will restore to him the taste for good reason, though Milord Edward responds to Julie's appeal more readily and calls off the duel while St. Preux is still brooding (133). St. Preux, too, suffers from the confusion Julie did in how to properly serve their love. Or, more accurately, he is too inclined to serve love at the expense of true virtue. The lover serves his beloved by defending her honor, but the duel cannot make Julie truly honorable, even if it could be justified. The duel does not reveal the truth of the matter, it designates a “truth” that may be completely false. Even if St. Preux wins and Julie's name is saved, she still remains dishonorable in fact. There is no way in which dueling fulfills any obligation to love or virtue. It may satisfy the inflamed passions of the defender, who acts sincerely out of love, but it does not properly serve that love. Where judgment fails to point this out to St. Preux, Julie must appeal to his love first then work him back up to the judgment that dueling does not respect this sentiment.

Conclusion

Each individual is tasked with developing their virtue by way of developing their particular taste and general judgment, “bisexualizing” themselves by acquiring and balancing the “feminine” and “masculine” forms of judgment to avoid unhealthy moral dependence on others. This involves the support of others as they begin cultivating these faculties, but the purpose is eventually to be able to judge for themselves. They work together to figure out the dictates of morality, using their studies, their assessment of the world around them, and the challenges of their own lives to determine how to act virtuously.

Yet we see the characters in *Julie* constantly engaging each other’s help not just to understand how they ought to act, but also for the strength to follow through. They are still in the process of learning as they work through their moral dilemmas, but we have not yet seen them reach a state resembling moral independence and they make mistakes that call the success of their moral education into question. If they are not independently moral, still requiring the support of others to determine what is right and follow it, or if they continue to make mistakes, can we say that they have been educated properly or completely? I will take this up in the next chapter, where the question arises whether this education to virtue goes so far as to make them virtuous – whether the taste for virtue and good judgment, which gives us the will to be virtuous, can also provide us with the strength to act virtuously.

As we have seen, Julie and St. Preux appear to have failed their first test of virtue: they have failed to remain chaste, succumbing to a physical love that taints their relationship by tainting its foundation of the mutual love of virtue (especially in Julie’s eyes). As Claire points out, however, there is much life left to live and many more opportunities to practice virtue – as well as many more temptations to forfeit virtue yet to come. There will be another crucial test of virtue for

the couple, Julie in particular: the choice to marry Wolmar. Promised by her father to the man who once saved his life, she must judge whether virtue is served best by obeying her father out of filial love, or by resisting him out of romantic love for St. Preux (164). She will of course choose to marry Wolmar, but will suffer for the rest of her life under the order of Clarens while living with both her husband and her former lover, whom she still loves. I will examine how Julie's conversion and redemption reflects her capacity for virtue in this next chapter, as well as the problems that attend virtue and this particular education to virtue.

CHAPTER 3: EVALUATING JULIE'S EDUCATION AT THE BREAK

In the process of receiving her particular moral education, Julie is faced with a number of moral dilemmas that culminate in the choice of whether to marry Wolmar or not. This fraught decision occurs in the middle of the novel, dividing the book – and Julie's life – into two distinct halves: her romantic youth and her reserved married life. At this crucial juncture, the reader is faced with the task of evaluating the success of Julie's education up until this point, given that it was meant to cultivate virtue in the young lovers but appears to have failed. Julie has lost her virginity and is a "fallen" maiden, she internally resists her marriage until she is walking down the aisle (resolved to it only by an intense religious conversion), and is unconvincing when she tells St. Preux that she no longer loves him with the fervent passion of youth (Letter III.XVIII). Furthermore, in the second half of the novel, she will deceive herself time and again about her being cured of her love and about her happiness at Clarens, and she will ultimately commit a sort of suicide to escape this world (Letter VI.XII). How could her education possibly be successful if she fails to be virtuous before her marriage, and fails to be happy after it? If the education is a failure, is Rousseau's only purpose in presenting it to show us something that does not work to better illustrate a successful alternative? That is, is *Julie* merely preparation for *Emile*? In this chapter, I will argue that Julie's education is *not* a complete failure, and that it is a valuable example in its own right – not just as an alternative to something else.

This question of how successful Julie's education is does not arise in the literature for two reasons: first, no one has actually examined Julie's own education in any systematic way.⁹⁹ The

⁹⁹ When scholars do look at education in *Julie*, they look exclusively at the education Julie and Wolmar propose for their children, St. Preux's role as tutor to the children, or the education of Julie and St. Preux at the hands of Wolmar. See Joseph R. Reiser, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: A Friend of Virtue* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 99, 105; Nicole Fermon, *Domesticating Passions: Rousseau, Woman, and Nation* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 44-50 and Chapter 3; and Mark Kremer, *Romanticism*

novel is characterized by its examination of love, marriage, and family; *Emile* is the book on education, and the tutor-pupil trope in *Julie* is just a trope – or a tempting allusion to the scandalous affair of Heloise and Abelard.¹⁰⁰ Secondly, even if the reader takes Julie’s education seriously as a matter worth considering, its failure seems so obvious as to be absurd. I have already shown in the first two chapters, however, that Julie’s moral education is a crucial component of the text’s project, especially because there are important differences between it and the education Rousseau proposes in *Emile*. Further, I have started to demonstrate that virtue has content beyond the modesty-strength, female-male dichotomy that most scholars focus on. If virtue is something more than sexual continence, even for women, then we must consider whether Julie’s education actually did fail or not.

The question of the “success” or “failure” of Julie’s education involves answering a handful of other questions: what is virtue as St. Preux and Julie define it, and what is it to Rousseau? Do they become virtuous, or capable of virtue? Does the loss of Julie’s virginity constitute some sort of “ultimate” failure of her virtue that reflects the “ultimate” failure of the education? Is such an education good for the individual, society, both, or neither? Could others be educated in the same way with equal or more success? Finally, would a widespread education of this sort help to resolve the problems Rousseau sees plaguing individuals and societies? These subquestions reveal the complexity of the answer to our primary question about the education’s “success” and the implications that has for our understanding of the problems and solutions to those problems that Rousseau spends his entire life trying to explain.

and Civilization: Love, Marriage, and Family in Rousseau’s Julie (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017), 63, 66-68.

¹⁰⁰ See Allan Bloom’s concluding note to his introduction to *Emile*, 29.

I will begin, then, by evaluating Julie's education on the novel's terms, in accordance with the purpose St. Preux ascribes to it when he develops his new curriculum and method. I will then compare St. Preux's understanding of the problems he and Julie face, and his proposed education as a solution, to those of Rousseau elsewhere in his work. Since Rousseau was adamant that all of his individual works formed a coherent whole, an all-encompassing system, this comparison allows us to see if St. Preux's ideas are resolvable with Rousseau's (*Dialogues* 209).¹⁰¹ We must, of course, be careful in this attempt: Rousseau is often accused of being paradoxical, if not self-contradictory in fact, so we expect differences across his work. We cannot simply assume that something that *seems* contradictory actually is something contradictory to his system. At the same time, *Julie* is an epistolary novel and is "written" between a number of characters with different ideas. Just as scholars debate over the congruence between the Savoyard Vicar's and Rousseau's thoughts on natural religion, since the Vicar is a character in a novel who does not necessarily have to present the author's ideas, there are other examples of this throughout *Julie*. The arguments of some characters may not be consistent with Rousseau's thought, but they are not meant to be. We do not necessarily have to resolve every disagreement between Rousseau and his characters to discover his real arguments.¹⁰²

Virtue and the need for education

If Julie's and St. Preux's greatest need is to develop their virtue, primarily in service to resisting one another, then we need to know how *they* conceive of virtue – especially how St. Preux

¹⁰¹ Arthur M. Melzer. *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 4-9.

¹⁰² M. B. Ellis, *Julie, or La Nouvelle Héloïse: A Synthesis of Rousseau's Thought (1749-59)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949). Ellis was one of the first scholars to take Julie seriously as the protagonist of the novel that bears her name; earlier scholarship understood *St. Preux* to be the protagonist (4). Ellis goes so far as to claim Julie embodies and is Rousseau's ideal, and that we can take her as Rousseau's mouthpiece and model of perfection to the exclusion of all other characters when they contradict this ideal (10).

conceives of it, since he provides the education that is supposed to develop it. From there, we can compare it to Rousseau's presentation of virtue elsewhere in his works. Yet no one has looked at the acquisition or loss of virtue in *Julie* as a function of her education. On most accounts, Julie's fall is simply a symptom of her feminine susceptibility to that most dangerous of sentiments: sexual desire connected to romantic love. The argument goes, according to Ingrid Makus, for example, that Julie falls prey to her carnal urges more easily, as a member of the sex who has retained more of her natural, amoral sexuality and voracious appetite than her male counterpart – even if she is a model woman (*Emile* 359; *Confessions* 367, 370).¹⁰³ Makus and Carole Pateman argue that this reflects Rousseau's position on women's continence, that he “deems women to be unable to control their passions, sexual or otherwise, through reason; women end up representing the disorder of incontinence.”¹⁰⁴ On their account, Julie's actions are not adequately policed by her family or society, and having little to no moral resources of her own, she cannot resist this most seductive temptation.¹⁰⁵

If this were the case, moral education for women would simply be impossible and the failure of Julie's education would have been inevitable. The *only* solution to women's corruption would be policing them. Yet so much of Rousseau's purported project across his system of thought begins with the proper education of women to set off the chain reaction of individual and social

¹⁰³ Ingrid Makus, “The Politics of ‘Feminine Concealment’ and ‘Masculine Openness’ in Rousseau,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002)..

¹⁰⁴ Makus, 186-87, n. 2. See also: Carol Pateman, “‘The Disorder of Women’: Women, Love and the Sense of Justice,” *Ethics* 91 (1980), 20-34; and Carol Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 97-102.

¹⁰⁵ Julie constantly laments her parents' neglect and the bad influence of Chaillot as making her ill-equipped for resisting temptation when it arises (Letters I.IV, I.VI, III.XVIII). Joseph Reiser specifically blames Julie's fall on her lack of a “wise parent to guide her” (159), just as Rousseau does in an editorial footnote (*Julie* 70). I do not think it is a lack of guidance that Julie needs so much as increased moral strength – or confidence in her preexisting moral strength.

reform, beginning in the “feminine” realm of the family and proceeding to the “masculine” realm of politics (*First Discourse* 52-53, n.7).¹⁰⁶ A successful image of this reform at the family level is implied in Rousseau’s end goal for Sophie’s education: for her to elicit out of her husband the laws she *wants to obey*: “She must have the art to make [men] want to do everything which her sex cannot do by itself and which is necessary or agreeable to it” and must rule in her household “by getting herself commanded to do what she wants to do” (*Emile* 387, 408). Beyond the family, a well-ordered, moral society will “police” its women, but women themselves will still be the sheriffs in town, actually *self-policing* – truly, self-ruling, despite working through another entity. Woman must be “the judge of her judges,” and in corrupt times, that means her “mind and her reason” must be carefully cultivated by an education that extends beyond teaching her domestic skills (382-83). Even if widespread reform is impossible, any reform absolutely must begin with educating women and Rousseau gives them *Julie* for this precise purpose.

We are therefore forced to consider *whether* Julie’s moral education succeeds or fails, since virtue includes but is still more than sexual continence, and *why* it succeeds or fails, since the nature of women does not make them uneducable. Again, we have seen that Julie is less defined by her sex than she is by her sentimental nature and unique capacity for love, which turn out to be the characteristics she shares with St. Preux and the ones that endanger her. In turn, the “monster” of a woman, Claire, seems perfectly capable of her “feminine” duty of chastity – both as a maiden and a wife (before becoming a widow) – by virtue of not being tempted by carnal urges or the illusions of love. One’s sex is not *the* causal variable for morality or immorality in any character’s

¹⁰⁶ See also Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Elizabeth Wingrove, *Rousseau’s Republican Romance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Penny Weiss and Anne Harper, “Rousseau’s Political Defense of the Sex-Roled Family;” Leah Bradshaw, “Rousseau on Civic Virtue, Male Autonomy, and the Construction of the Divided Female;” and Alice Ormiston, “Developing a Feminist Concept of the Citizen,” in *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

case in *Julie*, or it is at most one component of an interactive term. If the potentially corruptible, immoral characters need an education to become virtuous and avoid corruption, then we need to examine the interactions between education and the other variables in the characters' moral lives in order to fully understand the successes, failures, potentialities, and limitations of moral education according to Rousseau.

Admittedly, Rousseau's advocacy of sexual differentiation in Book V of *Emile* should make us wary of a moral education that does not take this as at least part of its foundation. In drawing distinctions between women and men in this account, Rousseau seems to suggest that modesty is the female virtue, and strength is the male one (*Emile* 358-60). These sexually dimorphism ends, we have already seen, are not the ends at which St. Preux aims in creating his moral education for Julie and himself. That is, St. Preux does not explicitly provide a definition of virtue in terms of specific characteristics, but rather as a general activity that both of them need to practice. Really, the goal for *both* is to remain chaste – they must resist one another and they understand that they both have a responsibility to one another. To develop virtue is to develop resiliency against desire in all its misleading forms, and in this case the temptation of erotic love.

This is not to deny the differing importance of male versus female chastity, which is expressed in their “strength” and “resistance,” respectively (*Emile* 358). Rather, this is to show that there is not one virtue alone at which each should aim. Chastity is less important for men as a duty and virtue than for women, but it is still a duty and a virtue (361).¹⁰⁷ The difference is of

¹⁰⁷ Rousseau writes, “Doubtless it is not permitted to anyone to violate his faith, and every faithful husband who deprives his wife of the only reward of the austere duties of her sex is an unjust and barbarous man. But the unfaithful woman does more; she dissolves the family and breaks all the bonds of nature... What does the family become in such a situation if not a society of secret enemies...?” (*Emile* 361). Once love is established, it is a moral relationship and exclusivity is required of both parties. Prior to the establishment of love, exclusivity is nonsensical and virtually impossible. Even though it is women's unfaithfulness that causes profound problems for the family and society, Rousseau never concedes to men the right to sow

degree and not of type. A man's strength must still be exercised in harmony with chastity; his boldness in sexual pursuit should only be used under the proper circumstances. For this boldness to be a *virtue* in a man, it cannot be limited only by a woman's rebuff. It must be self-moderated, because real virtue is necessarily an internal resource and not external control. Likewise, for modesty to be a virtue in a woman, it must not be capricious or reject every bold advance. It must admit of *some* advance, if not *encourage* an advance. To rely on another's behavior to correct one's own behavior is to lack virtue oneself, which is why the creation of moral "halves" of a whole is ultimately so suspect when we consider the project Rousseau undertakes with Emile and Sophie. Enforcing women's *moral* dependence is the most disturbing development from *physical* dependence, and trying to make men into "family men" is unlikely to succeed without a foundation of necessity. While virtue may never be perfect in the individual, enforcing the division of its foundation (taste and judgment) between two people is more dangerous than cultivating the proper full foundation in each and then pairing two individuals for the sake of supplementing their moral strength.

Joseph Reiser elegantly lays out the questions surrounding virtue in Rousseau's work, providing us with a simple definition at the opening of his book: virtue for Rousseau is "the strength of soul or will required to faithfully carry out one's duties to others," and Reiser's "own view is that Rousseau's account of virtue does indeed apply equally to men and women, but... [he] cannot claim to have demonstrated that proposition [in his book]." ¹⁰⁸ On his account, virtue is the way to resolve our competing internal desires for happiness (the "good of a sensitive being") and perfection (the "good of an intelligent and moral being") — not in any which way for the sake of

their wild oats, so to speak, though probably in no small part due to his characterization of *women* as the sexually insatiable sex.

¹⁰⁸ Reiser, 8, n.16. This hole left by Reiser is about the same shape as this dissertation, though I admit the peg is still quite a bit smaller than the hole.

psychic wholeness as such, but to be whole in a particularly balanced way that fulfills both of these desires through self-rule.¹⁰⁹ This understanding would be especially helpful in establishing the equivalency of virtue between men and women, since it avoids the question of human nature altogether in preference for moral psychology. That is, that one's personal moral psychology (either passionate and sentimental, or content and rational) is more important to moral education's content, strategy, and necessity than one's gender. St. Preux fails to take different moral characters into account when he proposes his education, as indicated in the preceding two chapters, but he at least does not instead base it on the gendered view of human nature on which we are so likely to pin education. We as readers, however, cannot so easily sweep human nature under the rug since we must consider Rousseau's own thoughts and other works. The objection still stands from the many other scholars of Rousseau's work who argue that he sees women, "naturally" in society, as more profoundly and permanently divided inside, and more permanently dependent on others for material survival, so they have different duties and lesser capacity for virtue, without the same hope as men to remain entirely natural or become entirely social.¹¹⁰

To establish that virtue is the same for both men and women, in this general ability to judge properly in service to acting morally and in conjunction with one's happiness, would actually call into question Reiser's initial account of education to virtue. His main thesis is that moral education is less about increasing moral knowledge (necessary but not sufficient for moral action) than it is

¹⁰⁹ Reiser, 21. With this, he challenges Melzer's account that psychic wholeness and authenticity are the real human goods, with little respect to what *kind* of whole and authentic person results (Reiser 11-12; Melzer 65). Reiser denies that virtue is "self-forced obedience to law as such" and that it has to have a certain character based on human moral psychology (Reiser 12, 14; quoting Melzer 103). That is, virtue cannot exist while the desires remain in conflict with one another; the love of virtue and *desire* to fulfill one's duty should take precedence over the other desires.

¹¹⁰ Put another way, the female human cannot be a "woman" or a "citizen" the way the male can be a "man" or a "citizen" because the female *always* has a foot in both worlds, dictated by her reproductive power. See Susan Moller Okin, "The Fate of Rousseau's Heroines," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 99.

about increasing our love of duty through the friendship of a virtuous model.¹¹¹ This is all well and good, and is quite evident in the structure of moral education as we have seen it in the first half of *Julie*, but Reisert doubles down on the extent to which one needs a virtuous friend:

Only the exceptional few... have the capacity thus to rule themselves unaided (see D 158). We ordinary people require an authority to rectify our judgment and to strengthen our will, a figure through whose eyes we are enabled to see ourselves correctly. Even the product of Rousseau's ideal education, Emile, continues to require his tutor's guidance once he has become a man. It follows *a fortiori* that those of us who have not received Emile's education will require the guidance of a wise figure of authority if we are to stop loving false goods and are to learn to love what is truly good. (23)

Reisert's understanding of moral education does not simply involve a virtuous friend who engages us in a bounded, short-term moral education that spits us out virtuous on the other end. He reveals the biggest problem with moral education: the perfect one not only requires the initial exercise of authority over another, but requires the *ongoing* involvement and authority of the virtuous friend. If virtue is an internal resource of self-control, then there is apparently no way to cultivate virtue in the unfortunate many, even with the help of a virtuous friend. At best, the unfortunate many can imitate the virtuous actions, they can do so out of a desire to please their exemplary friends (whom they love for their virtue), but this is not the same as putting their own souls in order and cultivating the internal strength virtue takes.

This problem, taken with others' claims of the necessity of even greater authority over women, seriously undermines Reisert's ability to argue that virtue as his Rousseau understands it could possibly be the same for men and women – or even be possible at all. But much of this problem stems from his disregard for the principle of natural goodness. He calls the exemplary friends “virtuous,” but these characters are decidedly *not* virtuous by definition. As explained in Chapter 1, above, these exemplary characters (e.g. Wolmar or Emile's Tutor) do not have inflamed

¹¹¹ Reisert, x, 10, 14, 22.

passions, they are not tempted by those things that would inflame them, and they have no self-overcoming to do.¹¹² They do not need virtue and are not virtuous, so it is no wonder that they do not transform their pupils into truly virtuous (i.e. morally independent and self-sufficient) individuals, instead leaving the pupil dependent on the friend's wisdom and guidance indefinitely. The pupils or Rousseau's readers might "adopt a morally healthy way of life" based on the examples of the naturally good, but Reisert admits that this "is not yet to love virtue" and thereby *be* virtuous.¹¹³ Reisert wants to claim that the love of virtue is the necessary and adequate prerequisite for virtue, rather than the knowledge of what virtue is, but like St. Preux he takes for granted that this love will get us to virtue if only a "virtuous friend" can cultivate love within us.¹¹⁴ Yet this love of virtue is still not enough for an individual to become virtuous – one needs inner strength to be truly virtuous, to act virtuously independent of all external influences. Not only is virtue possible for very few, but it is actually impossible to cultivate in others in the way Reisert describes. At best, he gives us a stepping stone towards virtue through an intermediate imitation phase that will likely never end, but more likely he gives us a perpetual state of subjection to authority.

Reisert fails to consider the exemplary education that could *actually* achieve the cultivation of virtue in others via virtuous friendship: the education undertaken between St. Preux, Julie, and

¹¹² Reisert points out three friendships between "authority figures" who "accomplish their educative work by befriending their pupils": Jean-Jacques, the tutor to Emile; the Savoyard Vicar as friend to Rousseau, and Wolmar as friend to St. Preux (24 n. 53). He also describes this relationship between Rousseau as author and his readers, and much of Reisert's work is dedicated to showing how Rousseau's personal shortcomings in the virtue department do not undermine his ability to teach virtue (ix-x, 24). He would not have to take so many pains if he acknowledged right away that Rousseau *admits* to not being virtuous, but that he is and always has been *naturally good* (*Reveries* 77). This is an important quality on which the ability to educate might in fact depend, but it is important for Reisert's theory to identify that quality correctly. He does eventually admit that Rousseau as author and "virtuous friend" to the reader had never been virtuous, only good, but he does not recognize that Rousseau shares this quality of "goodness" with the exemplary characters in his works (Reisert 176).

¹¹³ Reisert, 23.

¹¹⁴ Reisert, 22.

Claire. He is right to push back against Bloom's insistence that Rousseau has no adequate account of friendship in his works, but Reisert does not analyze Julie's early education in this context.¹¹⁵ His models of virtuous friendship involve great inequality between the friends, which he admits makes the ability of the pupil to ever be independent of the teacher highly questionable.¹¹⁶ He makes Wolmar's "education" of St. Preux the primary case study from *Julie*, the most extreme example of inequality and resulting moral dependence he could have possibly chosen. If virtue is so difficult to come by, and self-rule is only possible for the "virtuous" few, we expect one to be an expert and the other to be almost hopelessly inferior. But again, we have two problems here. First, Wolmar is *not* virtuous but rather a seriously impressive model of maintained goodness, which is not a condition one can aspire to once passions and sentiments become inflamed in one's soul. The only solution for that sentimental or "corruptible" person is to aspire to virtue. This leads to the second problem: it is not at all clear how the naturally good person could understand virtue, especially the sentimental side of it, let alone hope to teach it to another. For virtue to be anything like natural goodness, it would have to eliminate or at least reduce the passions in the soul that necessitate virtuous self-rule in the first place – and that is even more unlikely than simply resisting them in service to something greater. The best Wolmar can do is to modify St. Preux's perceptions of things, to see Madame de Wolmar in the place of Julie d'Étange, to transform St. Preux's erotic

¹¹⁵ Reisert's discussion of friendship among the characters in *Julie* almost exclusively involve their friendship while at Clarens, with few exceptions (78-79, 90-100). See also Allan Bloom, *Love and Friendship* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), 147-48.

¹¹⁶ Reisert 23-24, 143. Bloom argues Emile "emerges from the tutor's hands, 'intellectually and morally self-sufficient'" but Reisert says "Rousseau suggests that Emile never attains moral self-sufficiency, thus outgrowing his need to be governed by the tutor's authority" (Reisert 143, citing Bloom's introduction to *Emile*, 27). Evidence for this includes the fact that Rousseau never claims to have created Emile the way he intends to, that Emile himself implores the tutor to continue advising him and his wife after they marry, and that he makes a series of poor decisions after the death of Sophie's parents and daughter that lead to her ruin (Reisert 143, *Emile* 480, *The Solitaires* 688-90). Reisert misses another key piece of evidence: Emile's tutor *explicitly* transfers his authority over Emile to Sophie, in Emile's presence (*Emile* 479).

love for Julie into a chaste friendship and respect for the wife of Wolmar and the mother of his children (*Julie* 447). Wolmar cannot transform souls, but he can manipulate their surroundings to manipulate them into the right shape – a state approximating virtue, but not a condition where the individual can be willingly and independently virtuous without these external supports.¹¹⁷ And if the surroundings still manage to betray their reality – the lover, Julie, just visible beneath the veil of a devoted wife and mother – then St. Preux’s “virtue” will fail.¹¹⁸ Wolmar thinks he can “cure” the two lovers and safely leave them to raise his children when he is gone, or at least too old to perform his duties. They would continue to rely on the good order of Clarens and the manipulation of its inhabitants, however, and would never be able to free themselves from it.

For this to be the only option, an imperfect solution to the problem of virtue in the human soul, is not really all that surprising. Rousseau is no utopian. Every reasonable Rousseau scholar recognizes that he is deeply concerned with determining what is *possible* in terms of individual healing and social reform, that he recognizes the limits of his proposals. Perhaps he does not believe real virtue is possible, or that it cannot be cultivated in others even if it is attainable by some. But the alternative that Reisert ends up with is that only an illusion of virtue is possible, that the next best thing if we cannot be virtuous is to be manipulated into behaving as though we were virtuous, despite having no internal moral resources upon which to draw. Virtue education on Reisert’s account is the internalization of the “virtuous” friend’s judgment of us; it manipulates our *amour-propre* into doing something salutary for us. If we are condemned to be concerned with how others perceive us, and condemned to act according to our desire to please others, then the

¹¹⁷ Shklar, 161, n. 3.

¹¹⁸ St. Preux can see her as a wife and mother right away, but is “tortured” by the fact that he still recognizes her as his former lover (399). Consider also the fateful boat ride that reveals to Julie and St. Preux that the past is very much alive in their hearts (Letters IV.XVII). Julie never overcame her love for St. Preux and remains Julie d’Étange at heart, always at risk of appearing as she really is (Letter VI.XII). See also Kremer, 93.

solution is to forge a friendship between the “virtuous” and the corrupt so that the corrupt individual’s *amour-propre* can be redirected towards the virtuous friend’s judgment.¹¹⁹ They will want to act in conformity to the wise friend’s judgment, and concern for a good reputation in this particular friend’s eyes serves as the motive for actions the virtuous person would do through self-rule.¹²⁰ This depends almost entirely on chance, and will be as rare as the number of virtuous individuals.¹²¹

Again, however, this is not actually virtue. This is a bizarre approximation that involves only one type of internal cultivation, the cultivation of taste, which is necessary but not sufficient for real virtue. If we want real virtue, the cultivation of taste must work towards the development of judgment that in turn reinforces good taste, and we then need to work on developing moral strength on this double foundation. Reiser’s “virtuous friendship” education works entirely through taste and the substitution of *another’s* judgment for our own, only teaching pupils how to imitate the teacher and never how to be free from that teacher. The education undertaken by St. Preux, Julie, and Claire begins with taste to develop good judgment, with the intention that the virtuous person becomes their own judge, and the judge of their judges.¹²² Their taste is not cultivated by experiencing others’ good opinion of them, but by looking at estimable models and

¹¹⁹ Reiser, 22-24, 171-72.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 23, 161.

¹²¹ Note, as well, that the virtuous individuals – e.g. Emile’s tutor, Wolmar – only befriend one individual at a time, or ever. Rousseau says of the ideal tutor in *Emile*, “One would wish that the governor had already educated someone. That is too much to wish for; the same man can only give one education. If two were required in order to succeed, by what right would one undertake the first?” (51). The “virtuous” do not even achieve replacement rates.

¹²² This is another piece of evidence in support of Morgenstern’s intriguing observation that, to Rousseau, *all* contemporary humans are “women” in the sense of our internal division, which is most strongly felt by women because of their biology and resulting position in the moral social world (139). Because women ought not only to be virtuous but to maintain a reputation for virtue, they are subject to the judgments of others in a way that men are not and should not be. Yet Rousseau still maintains that conscience is still the final arbiter of morality, even in women, and that a woman must be the “judge of her judges” lest she be lead astray by public opinion – she can always “take exception” to bad judges of her character (*Emile* 383). Male and female virtue depends on correct judgment of and for oneself.

learning how to judge them. Over the course of this learning, they will determine whether their models are commendable and worthy of imitation, which cultivates the love of virtue in the pupils and by learning to judge others they learn how to judge themselves. This type of education approaches *amour-propre* from a different direction. Rather than starting with the need for esteem, it begins where *amour-propre* naturally begins in accordance with the *Second Discourse*: judging others and *then* wishing to be judged well among the best (148-49). The first step is figuring out the natural hierarchy, the next step is wanting to occupy a high position within it. If they can thereby judge themselves worthy of judging themselves, they overcome the need for others' judgments to do what is virtuous. In this way, they gain the good judgment Reiser consigns only to the "virtuous" teacher, and the possibility of self-rule opens up to them.

St. Preux's model of education requires friendship among equals, perhaps even among lovers, because the individuals must witness the development of taste, judgment, and virtue in the other to establish their merit and deem them a worthy judge of character. In this model, the true friend of virtue is a companion in the virtuous endeavor; the friend's judgment is a guide only for our weakest moments when our own fails us, but we have to have already deemed our friend's judgment worthy of supplanting ours. We cannot have not been manipulated into trusting an authority who makes us his marionette. It is admittedly unclear how one gets to this point prior to befriending a fellow virtue-lover in the context of *Julie* since Julie's and Claire's childhood education is only rarely mentioned and does not seem to contribute to their recognition and love of virtue. Rousseau avoids this problem by apparently making this orientation to virtue a natural part of their characters. If there is any hope for cultivating real virtue in humans who have not retained their natural goodness, they must be somehow imbued with love of virtue before they can find a friend to work on taste and judgment together. Even if they make it to this point, this still

does not get them all the way to virtue because there is an additional need to cultivate moral strength. This internal strength must operate on one's own sentiments and reason, which is why they have to work through this first stage, but the ability to at virtuously

Does this education get them to virtue?

I have posited that St. Preux's model of education has more potential of cultivating virtue in individuals than the one Reiser describes seeing in Rousseau's thought, since the latter only manages an imitation of virtue. Yet while I think this model of education in *Julie* is quite clearly a better model, Rousseau might *still* think this is aiming too high. That is, Julie's education would be the best education if it actually achieved its ends, but it might not be feasible. We are concerned with its feasibility on two dimensions: first, whether it makes Julie and St. Preux virtuous within the context of the novel, and second, whether it is applicable to human beings without the impressive characters of Rousseau's creations. The characters in *Julie* are quite exceptional, so even if they were to acquire virtue in the way St. Preux proposes, it does not mean we corrupted readers could take up the education with any hope for ourselves.

Rousseau wants at some level to educate his readers, as he claims in his Second Preface to the novel, and he worries about the success of this endeavor. He is concerned about the moral distance between a novel's characters and the novel's readers, arguing that characters who are too lofty are inimitable and discourage the reader who might be induced to follow them (19). This is why he focuses on a "fallen" heroine who is nevertheless "redeemed" over the course of the novel. Human perfectibility is only possible because of human fallibility, and even the great capacity of Julie's soul for love of others and love of virtue is not protection enough against temptations, making her more relatable to the reader. Her virtue and redemption still might be out of reach for her real-world admirers, though. The modern reader, as Bloom argues, is likely to side with the

lovers against Julie's father and the unfair society that subjects women to their families, husbands, and children, against their will and desires.¹²³ They are likely not to understand or accept Julie's later redemption and exemplary life as Madame de Wolmar as the beautiful example of virtue Rousseau offers, or even really care about the question of virtue as it relates to the romantic conflict in the first half. In any case, we must first establish if the education successfully made them capable of virtue and whether Julie's "fall" is a decisive proof of the education's failure before we can determine Rousseau's prescriptions on this basis.

Julie's fall, revisited

The discussion of Julie's fall in Chapter 2 focused on what she, Claire, and St. Preux learn about virtue through this crisis, while I will focus here more fully on the condition of her virtue after this fall. Connected to this episode is the other incident with Fanchon and Claude Anet, which more or less coincides with Julie's and St. Preux's consummation. The sexual activity itself does not keep Julie and St. Preux from serving their friends, but rather their ongoing infatuation with each other – consummated or not – that had blinded them to their other duties. It is *love* (with its accompanying yearning for sex) that directs them wholly towards each other and away from the rest of the world. They could remain "virtuous," i.e. chaste, and still fail to fulfill their other duties because they are still only focused on each other. Conversely, they can fail to be chaste but still take up all of their other duties – as they do in this case. In fact, their physical union makes other virtuous actions easier once their yearnings have been satisfied. Failing to be chaste cannot be the entire loss of virtue, though it does taint the rest of one's virtuous actions if they are only fulfilled once desires have been served and set aside. Being unchaste still does not indicate nor create a complete incapacity for virtue, but it does change the character of one's "virtuous" actions. That

¹²³ Bloom, *Love and Friendship*, 145-46.

is, the goal for the virtuous person is to *love* their duty and thereby weaken or effectually eliminate competing desires, so working against one's inclinations is not an essential component of virtue, but "eliminating" the inclinations by satisfying them in order to then fulfill one's duties is not quite virtuous.

Insofar as Julie's "virtuous" actions after her "fall" are only possible because she is no longer conflicted between her love for St. Preux and whatever duty confronts her at each moment, then her "fall" does pose a serious problem to her virtue beyond the simple loss of her virginity. But again, the distraction from virtuous action began as soon as she fell in love with St. Preux and discovered his love for her; from *that* moment she was "undone" (Letter I.IV). St. Preux's proposed education is not only meant to help them refrain from one another, but to foster a love of virtue and cultivate strong enough judgment that can overcome the distracting power of romantic love and sublimate it into truly virtuous action by reflecting its beauty in other things – or revealing the compelling beauty of virtuous things. Virtue does not require total sacrifice, in the sense that the virtuous action must be completely undesirable in the face of an alternative that is completely desirable in order for it to be virtue. It does not undermine virtue to make it desirable or preferable to alternative desirable actions, because virtue *is* objectively better and more desirable than lesser desires to the person with good judgment. Julie may have had a lapse of judgment in her despair and hopelessness at never being able to marry St. Preux, but her regret is instantaneous, and never truly placated by St. Preux's and Claire's claims that their love is still essentially innocent and has not undermined her love of virtue nor her capacity for virtuous action. Her regret *comes from* her good judgment, developed at least in part through her education, and she fulfills her duties at every point from this moment.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Julie agrees with Rousseau on the point that women's judgment develops sooner and better than men's judgment because of the "dangerous charge" women possess and are forced to protect (*Julie* 45, see also

Julie herself sees her “fall” as absolute in terms of her virtue, though she still maintains that she loves virtue and can appreciate the apparently unaffected virtue of her equally guilty lover. She tells St. Preux after he helps Fanchon and Claude Anet, “...I would like to add to your virtues as many as my irrational love has made me lose, and having lost the ability to respect myself, I like to respect myself still in you” (101). She believes she has lost a defining virtue by forsaking chastity, and with it all other definable “virtues” – but for St. Preux to act virtuously is to allow Julie to recall those virtues he loved in her that he alone now possesses (or at least could come to possess). She does not recognize her own virtuous actions as a sign of her ongoing virtue since she measures virtue discretely rather than continuously. This understanding of her virtue will lead her to seek external control for the rest of her life, instead of seeking to cultivate moral strength in herself or to exercise what strength she has. This imposed order comes from God and from her husband, Wolmar, and her submission to the latter unnecessarily limits her moral freedom. More on this below.

It is in this interim between her “fall” and her marriage to Wolmar where we actually see Julie being virtuous in its fullest form. She still loves St. Preux, still wants to be with him, and yet she makes almost every choice in favor of virtue rather than love. Milord Edward offers the couple sanctuary in England, where they may marry and be happy together forever in innocence, but Julie turns down the generous offer because leaving her parents would kill them and she has a duty to serve them in their old age as their only remaining child, to not forsake them and leave them dishonored and miserable for the rest of their lives (*Julie* 170-71). Julie *does* sleep with St. Preux

Emile 397). This is not to say Julie’s education does *nothing* for her judgment, but she undertakes it with quite good judgment from the beginning. Her passionate nature and capacity for love, however, compete more with her judgment than they do in other women, which is why her judgment needs reinforcement. Claire notes that Chaillot saw this fatal flaw in Julie’s character since her youth and predicts it will be her downfall (Letter I.VII, 36).

again, and even goes so far as to assert her willingness to commit adultery after her marriage, which are certainly serious problems for our evaluation of her virtue, but she is unwilling to completely disregard every duty imposed upon her (Letters I.LIII-LIV, III.XV-XVI; 289-90).¹²⁵ She ultimately *chooses* to marry Wolmar out of duty – she wills herself down the aisle (with some convenient help from God), uncompelled by her father or anyone else. Even with lapses in her judgment, Julie remains capable of judging well and, more importantly, choosing wisely.

Choosing Wolmar

Julie's weakness when confronted with her love of St. Preux, though intimately related to her love of virtue, means that she occasionally acts against virtue – as does St. Preux.¹²⁶ Their failure to always act virtuously reflects St. Preux's failure to adequately cultivate moral strength in himself and Julie, as he assumes good taste and good judgment will reliably yield virtuous action. These capacities are, again, the necessary prerequisites for virtue – we would not say a child who follows their parents' rules is virtuous if they do not understand the rules. Yet we also understand taste and judgment are insufficient for virtue – as we see with the child who does not understand the rules and cannot bring themselves to follow these rules that go against their desires in apparently arbitrary ways. Taste and judgment help us come up with the rules that guide our lives, and in this

¹²⁵ Julie more clearly initiates the second tryst, having “initiated” the first one in response to St. Preux's struggle to resist her (Letter I.XXIX). The first incident is much more a lapse in judgment than is this second one, which is far more intentional. This is all the more concerning since it follows quickly after a discussion of her studies in Italian verse and music. She is constantly working on her musical education in the language more suited to their souls, and yet is apparently not reminded of the virtue it ought to inspire in her. If virtue is “discrete” in that the loss of her virginity means she is no longer virtuous and might as well enjoy herself now, then this is not a problem. It is a problem, however, if we understand virtue to be a continuous activity that can allow mistakes but not ongoing disregard. We do not read any letters of regret from Julie after this meeting, but this is partly because St. Preux challenges Milord Edward to a duel and everyone's attentions turn to preventing this conflict (Letters I.LVI-LX). Julie at least demonstrates good judgment in her exhortations to St. Preux, but we ought to be uneasy at Julie's eagerness to sleep with St. Preux again.

¹²⁶ St. Preux acts against virtue far more often: e.g. failing to leave the Parisian brothel once he realized where he was (Letter II.XXVI), attempting to duel with Milord Edward – twice (Letters I.LVI, II.X), his justifications in favor of Julie's lapses in judgment (Letters I.XXXI, I.LIV, I.LV, III.XVI), etc.

way, we become capable of self-rule. But the activity of self-ruling, the execution of and adherence to those rules, is another step in the moral process. We may be capable of it and still not do it.

Yet neither Julie nor St. Preux completely lacks moral strength, and in fact it is Julie's misunderstanding of her own moral strength that leads to her unhappiness in spite of her enduring virtue. Again, this is clearest when we see Julie choose to marry Wolmar and she gives an account of herself to St. Preux thus far (Letter III.XVIII). In this letter, she describes her moral landscape from the moment they met up until her marriage, revealing what she has learned – and not learned – about being virtuous. She is still deceiving herself in this account, being too optimistic about her change of heart, but this letter is key to understanding how she sees her moral capacities. From this moment, she will appeal to external sources for her moral strength, rather than relying on her internal resources.

Julie pinpoints that her weakness, combined with early misjudgments, led her astray and that without strength she was doomed. Juxtaposed with St. Preux and his failings, she has clearly identified her problem correctly; when St. Preux errs, it is always at the lower level of judgment, whereas Julie almost always judges well but cannot bring herself to complete the virtuous action. Take, for example, St. Preux's refusal to be impolite to his hosts when they deceive him into visiting a brothel, judging that staying is the right thing to do as long as he can simply observe (241-42). He ends up drunk and wakes up in the arms of one of the prostitutes, only then realizing that he had misjudged the situation and ought to have left right away (244). Julie, in her response, does not chide him for weakness or corrupted tastes, but instead for his lack of judgment on the basis of altered tastes that made him think he was safe in such a situation (244). It is not that he has developed a taste for immodest women, but rather that his taste for true honor has been gradually reoriented towards the rules of politeness and false honor that reign in Paris (246). Nor

was this lack of judgment limited to just this situation, but rather from the moment he thought he could enter worldly society as an objective observer without succumbing to its vices (244). Julie knows nothing specific about the worldly ways of Paris, but she forewarned St. Preux that he would be subject to temptations that her memory would have to help him resist (184-86). She suggest he use his judgment to anticipate the dangers and the effects on his soul in order to choose the virtuous course of action – to use his foresight to guide him (246). If he cannot reliably discern and choose the good, he might be able to at least avoid the bad consequences of immoral actions.

Julie, on the other hand, misjudges early in their relationship but then later is faced with complicated choices between competing desires or duties that are not so easily judged, though her judgment has developed over this period. She makes the same mistake St. Preux does in Paris: though she initially fears her confession of love to St. Preux will set her on the path to corruption, his love of virtue reassures her and she misjudges the danger (281). With a false confidence, she is less wary about her relationship with him, entrusting her virtue to St. Preux, and though she understands and loves virtue, her passion continues to grow without moral strength growing with it (281, 291). It is weakness that makes her succumb to St. Preux, in the struggle between her love of her parents, which requires her to marry Wolmar, and her love of St. Preux, which requires her to love and be possessed only by him (283). She never fully loses her love of virtue, always despairs of her loss, and implores St. Preux to continue being virtuous so she can at least be vindicated in her submission to him. It was her first admission of love that led to this crisis, as it was for St. Preux, but the problem of misjudgment at one point does not mean they do not have good judgment or that misjudgment will always lead them astray. It is rather the false reliance on future strength that endangers their virtue.

There is but one incident where Julie's taste and judgment completely fail her: her despair upon recovering from the smallpox that she hoped would end her struggle by ending her life. At this point, she tells St. Preux, "...all my good sentiments utterly died out; all my faculties were perverted; crime lost its horror in my eyes; I felt entirely different inside; finally, the unleashed transports of passion made furious by obstacles cast me into the most awful despair that can overwhelm a soul; I dared despair of virtue" (289). This complete lapse makes her suggest the most abhorrent crime: even if she must marry Wolmar, she entertains an adulterous continuation of her relationship with St. Preux (276-77, 289-90). She goes to the chapel still harboring this corrupted taste and reason, after having received philosophic justifications for adultery from her despairing lover (277-78).

Julie is saved just in time. Not by coming to her senses of her own volition, but by a near-miraculous conversion in the chapel where she says God gives her strength and returns her to herself (292). The eternal expresses itself in her friends and family who surround her, in the image of marriage she sees when she glances at Claire and her husband, and in the words of the minister who is to bind her to Wolmar for the rest of their lives (291-92). She acknowledges that this image of beauty and virtue has always been in her heart, but she finds no reliable source inside of her that can always adhere to this image, especially if that image can be reworked imperceptibly and lead one astray in complete ignorance (295). What she needs, she realizes, is a watchful gaze over her heart, reason, and actions. She needs something outside of herself to preserve the internal image of beauty and virtue and to ensure her continued adherence to it because, although she felt she was "born good," free to follow her natural inclinations, her natural inclinations are unlike her cousin's and her husband's (294, 298-99). Instead, St. Preux's and her sentiments are extensive, passionate, and subject to corruption. They need something else to help constrain their actions, with the

healthiest and most reliable source of strength being God. Other humans are too likely to corrupt our internal sources and put us at odds with ourselves. God alone can provide external guidance without dividing the soul through dependence on another.

The divine has the advantage of being immovable and perfect, providing a solid image of the beauty and goodness for the soul. And this rule, this image, has the additional advantage of also springing up spontaneously in us. Though this goodness that naturally speaks to the soul through the sentiments can be mutilated by outside influences and our own rationalizations, to return to this image is as simple as returning to God who puts it there in the first place. Returning to God is a sort of retuning to our selves, keeping us from having to morally submit to another person. Whereas Wolmar is perhaps “god-like,” he is still another person. Specifically, he is a husband to Julie, but they will not have a relationship of mutual dependence like Emile and Sophie. Julie will be entirely dependent while Wolmar will be entirely independent. That is, they do not merely rely on each other for moral strength, but Wolmar’s taste and judgment will supersede Julie’s and limit her ability to act virtuously – to willingly act properly based on her own taste and judgment.

Is this education good for Julie?

Julie’s capacity for virtue in terms of her taste and judgment is a given, and with her religious conversation on her wedding day, she gains the element of moral strength that she and St. Preux had failed to cultivate, but this virtuous capacity makes her marriage unbearable. Living at the carefully-controlled Clarens prevents her from making her own judgments or acting in accordance with them. Even if her *actions* are in accordance with what is right, she is not *free* to choose them. Like Emile, all of her conditions are calibrated to leave only proper actions available to “choose,” but Wolmar also invites Julie’s former lover into their home and in his attempt to “cure” them of

their love, he makes it impossible for Julie to live. If left up to her own good judgment, St. Preux would not be in their home, recalling the past to her and tempting her when she cannot even have the pleasure of refusing him of her own free will. Emile's education will never develop this moral independence in him, while Julie will never be able to lose her moral independence even though she must live under the authority of another. This is the great misfortune of the novel: not that Julie is subject to the whims of her parents and forced to marry Wolmar (she is not forced), but rather that her husband and the estate he runs impose *real* authority over her and her actions, eliminating her freedom and, with it, her ability to act virtuously.¹²⁷

Julie never overcomes her love for St. Preux, which she only admits on her deathbed, but she has been denied the chance to resist him of her own accord. Given her refusal to accept any conditions that would have allowed her innocent union with St. Preux prior to her marriage, it is not at all clear that she could not have acted similarly throughout her life. If her father had simply forbidden her marriage to St. Preux but not made the additional demand she marry another, it is doubtful her life would have become endless debauchery and ruin in the arms of her lover. The account of *Julie* that overemphasizes "redemption" assumes Julie's "fall" is much more absolute than Julie actually experiences, and denies her capacity for virtue that was at least partly cultivated by her education at the hands of St. Preux. That is, such a reading does not see romantic love – even a love that remains chaste – as the real danger to virtue, but rather focuses on the particular failure to remain chaste as the crucial loss of virtue. Such an understanding of Julie's fall does not square with the form of her redemption at her wedding and subsequent life at Clarens. Her

¹²⁷ Jeanne Thomas Fuchs, *The Pursuit of Virtue: A Study of Order in La Nouvelle Héloïse* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 113. M. B. Ellis draws a parallel between Clarens and the ideal republic because Clarens is "well-ordered" by *Julie* and its order follows from the principles of nature that direct the legitimate political society (89), but Schwartz takes exception to this characterization because Clarens is run by *Wolmar* on the basis of "constraint or hinderance" rather than a republic, which is governed by "*moeurs*, by principles, by virtue" (Schwartz 125, citing *Julie* Letter IV.X; 175 n.23).

redemption is based on God's grace that gives her the ongoing strength to fulfill her duties against her inclinations – that is, to be a faithful wife to Wolmar and mother of his children, despite her romantic love for St. Preux. She fulfills every one of those duties, even when Wolmar brings her former lover into their home to “cure” him of his love for Julie and groom him to tutor their children once Wolmar is gone. She is faced with temptation every day, and endures all of Wolmar's experiments to reform St. Preux, but she must ultimately die to escape this world where she cannot act virtuously of her own accord. She only *conforms* to what is right under the authority of her husband; her doing right is not a pure act of will.

Julie's redemption does not – cannot – restore her lost chastity, nor does it restore her capacity for virtue, which she has actually never lost. On the contrary, it gives her consolation for being subject to and having to obey another's will. It is her choice to marry Wolmar, but this is her last act of true virtue; from this point on she will act in accordance with what is virtuous but her actions will be subject to the will of another and thereby will not be virtuous in themselves. She will act in accordance with duty, against her continued love for St. Preux, but not simply because she feels and judges it to be right. Wolmar becomes the judge *of* her and *for* her – as well as for everyone else at Clarens. The strength she receives in the chapel as she walks down the aisle is the knowledge of a judge higher than any human authority. If she must be subject to another's will and judgment, Julie's subjection to the ultimate authority helps compensate her for her loss of freedom. But even with this consolation of subjection to an ultimately good and benevolent authority, to have good judgment and yet be subject to someone else's arbitrary will, no matter how salutary, is for Rousseau the ultimate oppression for a human being.¹²⁸ Though he seems not

¹²⁸ Reisert, 129. Rousseau himself feels this acutely, and even if he is an exceptional human being, it is in the fact that he feels this oppression more strongly than others do – not that he alone feels this oppression (*Reveries* 75-78, *Letter to Malherbes* 573).

to admit that women feel this oppression in his account of Sophie's education and subsequent marriage to Emile, Julie's situation suggests that it is indeed true for women as well and that Rousseau recognizes this problem.¹²⁹ Julie has been capable of virtue the entire time, insofar as she has the good taste and judgment to know what virtue demands, and then gains the strength of soul necessary to act virtuously through her conversion. Yet she cannot have what she most desires – a life with St. Preux as her lover – nor can she serve duty virtuously and reject him entirely of her own free will. Wolmar asks the couple to always behave alone as if he were watching, and to act as if they were alone when he is watching (*Julie* 349-50). Julie's judgments must always pass the test of Wolmar's judgment, even in his absence, and she loses her moral independence by losing command of herself.¹³⁰

When we read Rousseau's works in order, *Julie* preceding *Emile*, we first see a successful education to virtue for women that makes them morally independent. That is, there is a moral education *can* and *does* produce a woman who has a taste for virtue, can judge correctly, and can act accordingly without being constrained by public opinion. Julie can remain morally self-sufficient and whole, subjecting desire to duty according to her good judgment and free will, though divine assistance is required for the strength to do this. This education is inappropriate, however, given Julie's conditions. She is uniquely capable of virtue but is also subject to a uniquely

¹²⁹ He explicitly says in *Emile* that "Woman is made to yield to man and to endure even his injustice. You will never reduce young boys to the same point. The inner sentiment in them rises and revolts against injustice. Nature did not constitute them to tolerate it" (396). Though Julie is not forced to endure a wicked husband's injustice, but rather a good husband's just authority, she is still miserable and her soul resists subjection to imposed external order – even when she supports those external controls herself — e.g. wanting Wolmar to read her letters to Claire, carefully controlling the behavior of the servants through enforced sexual separation, and crafting the Elysium as a refuge of good order based on deceptive manipulation of the environment (Letters IV.VII, XI).

¹³⁰ Morgenstern points to Wolmar's language of submission and domination as evidence for his complete control, even when the other characters think they retain some control over their actions (124-25, citing *Julie* Letter IV.XIV).

good and authoritative husband. Taken as a model for women's education, we see that it is even more limited by the material and historical conditions of the women about and for whom Rousseau is writing. If women are dependent on the will of men for material survival, as Rousseau indicates they are by virtue of their relative weakness, exacerbated by centuries of softening after that fateful division of labor in savage society and the introduction of *amour-propre*-based love to secure those goods, then they are necessarily divided by their desires and duties in a profound way.¹³¹ They depend on men materially, so must subject themselves morally to external judgment so as to induce men to care for them.¹³² They cannot simply be faithful; they must be judged faithful by their husbands *and everyone around them* (*Emile* 361, 383). Subject to public opinion, they must be concerned with what *seems* to be rather than what is, and self-willed virtue becomes impossible for women under these conditions – at least if they want to live, and live somewhat happily. Women cannot be truly happy being subject to opinion, as this oppresses the innately natural human desire for independence and keeps them internally divided forever. Yet they also cannot be happy without relationships to others within which they can be willfully virtuous, as this leaves unfulfilled the evolutionarily natural human desire for real beauty and esteem.

Julie's education could produce a meaningfully whole and self-sufficient human being, if accompanied by some sort of supplemental strength, but this is not the proper product for the time and place Rousseau is concerned with. In his quest to show men and women who they are and what they must do given their historical conditions to be good and happy, he must first give the examples in *Julie* to express the possibility of a good human education – and its limits. When he takes up his pen to create another example, *Emile*, it is in the context of already having shown one possibility. This second attempt means to correct for the shortcomings of the first – not because he

¹³¹ Schwartz, 6.

¹³² Schwartz, 6.

“discovered” in some way that the first was flawed, but because he had to show that flawed example first to prepare the way for the second. He had to show people their sickness first in order to convince them they needed to be cured.¹³³ As I will show in the next two chapters, Julie presents her proposed education for her children, in conversation with St. Preux and Wolmar, and this education looks very much like Emile’s. Jeanne Thomas Fuchs argues that this education might prevent her own moral agonies from arising in her children, and that Julie intends for it to do so.¹³⁴ Julie’s plight throughout her marriage was that she was not prepared to live under authority, the “natural” condition of humans living in contemporary society. Fuchs argues that Julie is not “a product of the Clarens she and Wolmar build together” and yet “[her] individual will, until her death, has been absorbed by the general will... she can violate neither the marriage contract nor her contract in the community with impunity.”¹³⁵ Her children, on the other hand, *will* be prepared to be subject to others’ wills.

Rousseau emphasizes in *Emile* that his young pupil will learn to live in society but as a free man and citizen, but this outcome is highly questionable. Or at least, the way in which Emile becomes and is “free” certainly does not appear to be real freedom. He is made to be half of a moral whole composed of himself and his wife, Sophie, and implores his tutor to remain with the couple and continue advising them, as they are about to become parents as the novel closes (*Emile* 480). Emile needs all sorts of supports, he has been explicitly transferred from the tutor’s authority to Sophie’s, and ends up a “happy slave” in the unfinished *Solitaires* after he has left his wife

¹³³ Reisert, 169. Here Reisert makes the point that *Emile* presents an ideal education based on the premise that we are sick with ills of our own creation, and that *Emile* as a book provides an education to the reader that is less ideal in form but more practically effective in reforming the audience. He also asserts *Julie* does the same thing, specifically for women, but he does not take this up in his discussion. I will take it up in Chapter 5, below.

¹³⁴ Fuchs, 178. Judith Shklar insists that the proper education will be the result. See Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 65.

¹³⁵ Fuchs, 178.

(*Solitaires* 714-21). Though he is able to be “free” even under the strictest of external authority, because he is “whole” in his sense of self, independent of the esteem of others, he demonstrates no ability to govern himself or his family properly because he is never really in a position to do so. When Emile is finally left on his own to order his life with his family, as depicted in the *Solitaires*, he is faced with the tragedies of his daughter’s death and the loss of Sophie’s parents, but “Emile’s good habits are not enough to enable him to make wise decisions when he is faced with new conditions to which those habits are no longer directly applicable... Emile makes a series of unwise choices, which lead to the disintegration of his family and to the loss of his well-being.”¹³⁶

Flawed as Emile’s education might also be, which I will take up in my conclusion, its advantage over Julie’s education is that it produces happiness as well as a form of wholeness and goodness at its conclusion, even if it does not produce real freedom and the capacity for virtue.¹³⁷ The nature of this advantage, however, is important for our discussion here. It might be superior because it produces happiness in any circumstance – at least, any circumstance in the historical period of universal human sociality we are currently in (as opposed to our asocial natural origins or primitive societies) – whereas Julie’s education only produces happiness if the individual is free from authority and is free to self-rule through their own virtue. This is a nearly-impossible

¹³⁶ Reisert 143.

¹³⁷ At least this is the case for Emile; Sophie’s ultimate happiness is questionable at the end of *Emile*, and out of the question in *The Solitaires*. Even if Sophie is educated in such a way as to see the world clearly and without illusion, unlike her husband, it does not follow that such superiority makes her *happy*. Denise Schaeffer argues otherwise. She takes a much more positive view of the education Sophie receives in that it *does* allow her conscience to fully develop and makes her *morally autonomous* in the way that true, full freedom requires – because she must rule the whole that she is a part of and “ruled” by (617-19). Further, Sophie gets to be truly happy because happiness requires self-consciousness to maintain self-sufficiency and equilibrium between desire and strength; only Sophie has this self-consciousness – Emile does not (620). See Denise Schaeffer, “Reconsidering the Role of Sophie in Rousseau’s *Emile*,” *Polity* 30.4 (Summer 1998), pp. 607-26.

condition to come by in our historical and social context, especially for women, so virtue and happiness *could* be incompatible in fact, but not in principle. However, as Reisert argues, “[the] fact that the demands of happiness and moral perfection do not always coincide is the permanent aspect of the human condition as Rousseau understands it.”¹³⁸ Even if virtue and happiness are not mutually-exclusive, we must acknowledge that they often will not coincide and still opt for virtue at the expense of happiness. Even though the aim of St. Preux’s and Julie’s moral education is to cultivate their tastes (i.e. their desires) in order to cultivate their judgments and provide a balanced foundation for virtue, at the end of the day virtue is still the suppression of one desire in favor of something that is in some way less desirable, even if the less desirable thing can actually be more desirable long-term or is the means to something more desirable than itself. Taking pleasure in deprivation requires *some* reward, but the rewards are few and far between. Fuchs points out that virtue is ultimately never its own reward for Julie, try as Julie might to feel that it is.¹³⁹ But again, Fuchs does not recognize that Julie cannot be virtuous in practice while she is at Clarens under the authority of her husband. She may be unhappy there, certainly in part because she cannot overcome her love for St. Preux while being forced to be around him, but profoundly in part because she is not exercising her virtue in resisting him. She mistakenly submits more than necessary to her husband’s authority instead of ruling herself under her conditions — even if her self-rule would accord with her husband’s salutary rule. St. Preux accuses her of fearing too much for her virtue, inventing various threats to it that do not exist, and in so doing, she loses her capacity to resist through her own strength (560-61). Although it might be possible to be virtuous and happy,

¹³⁸ Reisert, 21.

¹³⁹ Fuchs 13, 77, 155, 181. Even though Fuchs argues that Rousseau *wants* there to be an inextricable link between happiness and virtue, it does not follow that one will necessarily be happy because one is virtuous, even if one cannot be happy without virtue.

Rousseau's example of Julie shows how her conditions, and even the conditions of most women and men, prevent it.

Should we be educated like Julie?

We are not simply concerned with whether an education is good for some set of characters Rousseau created, so we must step back to consider whether this education is generally good. On Rousseau's terms, for an education to be good, it must help us approximate our natural goodness or allow us to retain that natural goodness as far as possible. It should make us "good for ourselves and good for others," to make us whole in the sense that we are not perpetually divided between benefiting ourselves and benefiting others, being servile to be self-serving.¹⁴⁰ *Emile* looks at an education that preserves the original human goodness innate in an unformed child as far as possible into that individual's development, with some supplemental virtue at the end, whereas *Julie* is entirely about virtue – the only solution for those of us who have not been raised "properly" to have healthy *amour-propre* and limited desires. Based on much of the literature, across the theoretical camps, this wholeness on the basis of virtue is not available to women.¹⁴¹ Even if they are capable of something like virtue – obedience and fulfilling their duties, as opposed to serving their desires exclusively – they are always internally divided because they are (more) naturally dependent on others in ways that men are not.¹⁴² Their biology (they bear children and are generally weaker than men) and men's psychology (they are stronger and will only serve and protect a weaker woman if they have exclusive access to her and can rule her in some way) mean that a woman must defer to a man in order to deceive and coerce him into caring for her and her

¹⁴⁰ Melzer 1990, 16, 80-81; Bloom 1979, 5; Reisert, 9.

¹⁴¹ That is, critical and non-critical theorists tend to agree that Rousseau paints a bleaker picture of woman's lot, both in terms of her nature and the possibilities for correcting or improving that nature. The main difference between the camps on this question is whether or not they agree with or approve of such a picture and the solutions Rousseau proposes that stem from this understanding of women.

¹⁴² Bradshaw, 66-67.

(their) children.¹⁴³ They must do exactly what Rousseau says is so corrupting and degrading for human beings in bourgeois society – they must constantly dissemble and grovel before others, who are often not their objective superiors, simply to benefit themselves materially.¹⁴⁴

In this view, no education could possibly work for women to make them virtuous and “restore” their wholeness because they have never been and never can be whole unto themselves, nor can they suppress their much stronger sexual desires (*Emile* 358-59). Perhaps the proper education could get them close to this level of virtue, but their intense internal division, material need for others, and more unmanageable passions makes their *moral* independence questionable, to the point of needing public opinion to restrict their behavior.¹⁴⁵ The only “proper” education for them if this is their true condition would be to make them pleasing to others – to fashion them in such a way as to get what they need from others because they cannot use direct force or do it themselves (358, 387).¹⁴⁶ This concedes to their environment the insurmountability of material conditions for the sex closer to nature, which is nonetheless forced to create and conform to society.

Such a view, however, ignores if not denies the importance Rousseau places on educating woman to be the “judge of her judges,” the importance of cultivating her conscience as the final arbiter of her actions on the basis of a standard beyond public opinion – *especially* in these conditions of social corruption and disfiguring dependence on others (*Emile* 382-83). Denise Schaeffer takes seriously Rousseau’s claim that it is *truly* women who rule, by shaping men into what they want them to be and getting themselves “ruled” as they wish to be ruled. But on her account, the basis for women’s moral independence is not the wholeness Rousseau prescribes for

¹⁴³ Schwartz, 12, 24, 35.

¹⁴⁴ Bradshaw, 79-80.

¹⁴⁵ Morgenstern, 132. She points out that women do not receive the proper education to maintain their “selves” while also serving a larger whole – they are educated to one or the other, and they either fail to fulfill their duties or they fail to have any sense of self.

¹⁴⁶ Schaeffer, 615.

Emile, even if his “wholeness” depends on a whole host of illusions, created by the tutor and later by Sophie to maintain his *sense* of wholeness and independence.¹⁴⁷ Sophie is free from these illusions, and is in charge of creating most of them for her husband’s benefit – benefiting herself through him. Even if she has a “partial” soul, as Weiss argues, she at least is self-aware and aware of how the world works, unlike her husband who erroneously *believes* he has an undivided soul and remains free because lacks both types of awareness.¹⁴⁸ Neither men nor women are capable of true psychological wholeness in the way Rousseau seems to describe it, but only women can be *morally* independent because they alone have the self-awareness and control over the moral character of those around them to act “independently” within the conditions *they* create.¹⁴⁹ Wholeness is more complex than the simple “absence of internal conflict or division,” and the example of woman reveals the limits of wholeness for all humans.¹⁵⁰ Wholeness requires the proper external as well as internal conditions. For those with inflamed desires, wholeness requires virtue.

This seems much closer to Rousseau’s view, and Julie seems to fit this mold even though her education is different from Sophie’s in that it explicitly rejects opinion as the basis for morality, even for prudential reasons for women. Julie reminds her lover and her cousin that women have different considerations to make when choosing a moral course of action, demonstrating the self-awareness Schaeffer says is necessary for happiness on top of the moral capacity to rule herself *and* direct those around her to “rule” her properly (*Julie* 104-105, 211).¹⁵¹ But, as Joel Schwartz points out, Julie is also uninterested in and rejects the sexual politics involved with ruling and

¹⁴⁷ Schaeffer, 617-18.

¹⁴⁸ Weiss, 104; Schaeffer, 609, 617.

¹⁴⁹ Schaeffer, 620.

¹⁵⁰ Schaeffer, 608; Morgenstern, 139.

¹⁵¹ Schaeffer, 620.

being ruled in turn within the male-female, husband-wife relationship.¹⁵² She wants simply to rule herself, which she cannot technically do while under the authority of her husband, and she refuses to engage in “ruling” her husband – if she even could, given his moral independence of her by dint of being naturally “good” and whole unto himself, free of illusion. She does not have the pleasure of acting independently and exercising true virtue, nor does she have a relationship of mutual moral support with Wolmar. They do not rule each other using different methods; Wolmar cannot be ruled, and instead adopts the feminine method of indirect rule over his wife, her former lover, and the entire estate. Neither avenue of self-rule or self-rule-through-another is available to her; even though she is *capable* of both, her conditions prevent her from exercising either forms of rule and she is not inclined to exercise the latter even if she could. For her education to work in even a normal context, it would have to teach her the importance and necessity of ruling one’s rulers, to induce her to actually act as the designated judge of her judges, but that does not solve the problem of her being paired with a husband who is beyond human rule.

Even if happiness and virtue are possible only under particular conditions for women, they are still capable of creating those conditions in some circumstances. *Julie* reveals the limits to that capacity, however. Some circumstances are insurmountable, even by the most morally capable. The problem is not that Julie is forced into an arranged marriage (again, she is not *forced*, but willingly enters into it out of love for her parents) since she has the moral capacity to rule herself and rule herself through another. Rather, the problem is that the husband she ends up with is naturally good and beyond any authority other than his own. Julie has a rare expansive soul, unprecedentedly capable of love and deeply sensitive, but is coupled with an even rarer soul capable of complete independence, whose only emotional experience results from seeing Julie

¹⁵² Schwartz, 140.

embrace her father and who has only ever felt love for her (*Julie* 282, 404). He is unmovable, but also does not need to be moved. His rule is salutary, accords with what Julie would and could choose for herself, but she does not act autonomously in her life at Clarens. Again, this is partly because she submits herself excessively to Wolmar's authority out of fear for her own virtue, which St. Preux and Claire warn her against (560-61, 411-15). Submitting to God for strength is one thing, but submitting additionally to the unceasing gaze of Wolmar for strength is another. She believes even the divine aid she seeks to be inadequate for policing her actions, and she overcompensates in drawing Wolmar's authority over herself.

In *Julie*, Rousseau shows the most extreme example of conditions that even the best moral education cannot overcome, but in doing so he reveals that it takes conditions that are this extreme to render such an education useless. Other conditions that do not reach this level of insurmountability may *seem* hopeless for women's moral independence, but it is Rousseau's task to show that they are not hopeless in fact and that Julie's education could produce virtue *and* happiness for women under certain conditions. Even if it "fails" in practice for Julie, this does not discredit the education altogether.

The crucial point is that an education for moral independence in women *must* be accompanied by the same education for men. Julie and St. Preux engage in the same education together – it is a joint venture that should form them each into independent moral beings who love and respect one another for the universal and eternal beauty they embody. This involves a healthy form of *amour-propre*, satisfied by real esteem from someone who themselves is worthy of esteem – not a coupling based on the satisfaction of men's and women's different, mutilated *amour-propre* that seeks to conquer and control, and to deceive and manipulate the other, respectively. Men and women who have cultivated healthy *amour-propre* will be satisfied by the same legitimate esteem

and will not seek to rule or be ruled by another. Each will be morally independent and impress the other with their virtue, satisfying each other's *amour-propre* in this arrangement: someone estimable esteems what is estimable in someone else. If they need additional strength to do what is virtuous, on the basis of their good taste and judgment, their first recourse is to a divine force that defines what is good and not to each other, which would come with the risk of corrupting this taste and judgment in pursuit of mutual desires.

This appears to be an even greater and more complete denaturing than that found in *Emile*, though. If male and female psychology tends towards the methods of control they exhibit in society (force and manipulation, respectively) even in the earliest stages of human sociability, then overcoming such natural tendencies is a tall order and does not lend this “bisexualizing” education an air of “practicability.” Even if the goal is to eliminate ruling and codependency altogether, not just to reduce *misuse* of rule between individuals for the sake of the ruler and ruled, we must take into account the different gendered expressions of domination in order to overcome them. And if women cannot overcome the material need for men that Rousseau attributes to them and suggests is the cause for women “enslaving” men with love and using them for their own ends, then there is no end to codependency in sight. In what way could Rousseau recommend such an education, then?

This education is good for human beings' inherent, universal needs, male or female, but is not good in most historical conditions of divided labor and female “weakness.” Where women are weak, limited in skills and abilities, and therefore dependent on men for material security for themselves and for their children, such an education would be unwise and torturous. To make morally independent women in conditions under which they must be morally dependent for their very survival is to render them miserable in every way. If they satisfy their psychology by

remaining morally free, they will be unable to make a match who will materially care for them, so they will be unable to survive physically. If they satisfy their material needs by subjecting themselves to another's will, they destroy themselves psychologically even if their physical needs are met. A proper education under such circumstances, then, looks more like Sophie's, in conjunction with Emile's; men and women must be made more masculine and feminine, respectively, to make them halves of a whole that depend on one another.

Emile's and Sophie's educations have problems as well, however. The illusory wholeness of man is bought at the price of the psychic wholeness of his wife. If she is materially dependent, it is only because of the current historical circumstances of civilized society, a dependency that is natural *now* but not inherent in her. She creates the illusions that maintain her husband's love for her, always remaining aware of the need to subject herself and the underlying hollowness of the relationship.¹⁵³ This education as a solution to the problems of *amour-propre* is imperfect at best, and while it may be the best possible solution given the circumstances, human circumstances necessarily change because of our malleability. Parents educated like Emile and Sophie may be able to educate their children differently, even if the rest of society remains the same, or if technology progresses despite Rousseau's exhortations against it. These parents might be the necessary stepping stone to a new education that corrects for the shortcomings of their own. Even if they cannot be morally independent, they may be able to raise children who can be – or children who can extend this first improved education to their own families until it is widespread enough to allow a further improvement in moral education towards moral independence and truly healthy *amour-propre*.

¹⁵³ Schaeffer, 617.

Conclusion

Julie's moral education makes her capable of virtue, or good for herself and good for others by overcoming her desires to fulfill her duties. It makes her love her duties more than her pleasures, though it falls short of instilling the moral strength to always choose her duties over her pleasures. At least when she fails to remain chaste, she is filled with regret. However, her circumstances as the wife of the wholly independent Wolmar and mistress of the carefully-ordered Clarens complicates her ability to exercise her own virtue. She becomes subject to the salutary but almost absolute authority of another's will. Where Wolmar's authority over her is imperfect, Julie often implores him to take perfect control over her actions. Even in those areas she might exercise her own will and act virtuously, she does not trust her moral strength and seeks strength in both God and in her husband's watchful gaze. In response, Wolmar refuses to take absolute explicit control, but his authority still operates indirectly throughout the estate. She has never overcome her love for St. Preux, so could never be truly happy while separated from him, but she also cannot exercise her own virtue in refraining from him, losing the only other pleasure possibly available to her. Her tearful, fervent prayers are her only consolation, an appeal to the only authority she could subject herself to without psychic harm – the very highest authority.¹⁵⁴ While her education may be a good one, in principle or in practice for real women under other conditions, it is simply unable to make Julie happy and seems to be useless once she is married. Is there really nothing of practical value left of her education, then, if she cannot exercise the virtue it helped cultivate in her?

This will be the focus of my next two chapters. While Julie's education does not end up useful for *her*, it will end up being useful for her children as she comes up with a plan for their moral education. Julie has the intellectual and moral resources to create an educational system that

¹⁵⁴ Morgenstern says that Julie's religious expression is her only autonomous act while in the context of Clarens (126-27).

fortunately coincides with the system her husband will propose. Although she will only be partly responsible for her sons' education, and she declines to detail her proposed education for her niece-cum-daughter, it is the one place in her life where she has *some* authority. The form, content, and purpose of her children's education differs from her own, so we must examine how Julie's education and experiences inform this education, which she comes up with independent of her husband's judgment. I will analyze this new education in Chapter 4, then conclude in Chapter 5 by assessing the ultimate success of all the educations presented in *Julie* – Julie's, her children's, and the reader's – and the possibility of Rousseau's recommending any of them as his best or most practical model.

CHAPTER 4: JULIE'S PRESENTATION OF NEGATIVE EDUCATION

When Julie becomes a mother, her attention turns to her children's education and she is consumed by worry over it until she figures out how she will fulfill these duties (*Julie* 460).¹⁵⁵ St. Preux outlines her project in a letter to Milord Edward, describing a conversation between the friends about this all-important enterprise (Letter V.III).¹⁵⁶ In keeping with Rousseau's use of Julie's, Claire's, and St. Preux's moral education, however, this also serves to present the reader with another "tableau" to cultivate taste and develop judgment. The letter on children's education begins with the scene of a quiet breakfast "in the English manner," with parents, friends, servants, and children occupied with their own activities while in the company of others, the subject of one of the most charming illustrations Rousseau commissioned for his text (458). This letter follows an even longer letter on the domestic economy of Clarens, the well-ordered pastoral estate under the careful control of Wolmar and the beneficence of his wife (Letter V.II). Once these domestic scenes have enchanted the reader, whether urban or rural, she is more receptive Julie's views on education, to consider how this childhood education differs from Julie's own young adult

¹⁵⁵ It is an important rhetorical device in the text of *Julie* that Rousseau refers to her as Madame de Wolmar once she is married; all of her letters are labeled from this point on as either to or from Madame de Wolmar, and this reflects the important transformation she has made – or at least attempts to show a real transformation has occurred. This is also an important element of Wolmar's "project" to cure St. Preux of his love. He must make St. Preux see the wife of his friend and the mother of their children where his lover used to be, and Julie's new title helps reinforce this for the reader (Letter IV.XIV, 299, 417-19). I will not follow suit in the second half of my dissertation, and will continue to refer to her as Julie unless I am referring to her specifically in her role as Madame de Wolmar.

¹⁵⁶ Rousseau as editor notes that this letter is a combination of two "original" letters that described Julie's proposed education, but they overlapped in content so much that the letters were consolidated into one for publication (*Julie* 455). As readers, we are invited to consider why St. Preux wrote *two* letters on the subject, and whether or not the "editor" has consolidated them in good faith. It is also possible that Julie could have written one of the two letters Rousseau refers to, describing her plan with her own hand. Such a letter would likely have been a direct presentation of the education, but it would have been missing the conversation about the men's competing visions of education. It is reasonable to suspect that a letter from Julie full of "preaching" could have been the one "suppressed" in favor of St. Preux's account of the debate. It is important that we see St. Preux "come around" to Julie's educational plan, as *he* will be the one to take it over rather than Wolmar (416, 500-501, n. 137).

education, and the reader who goes on to read *Emile* will likely make the comparison between the different educations the Wolmar children, Emile, and Sophie each receive. None of these tableaux, no matter how appealing Rousseau makes them out to be, are simple examples to imitate. If imitation figures at all, it is the first step from good taste towards good judgment. When confronted with conflicting examples, the reader must decide between them and exercise her judgment. She is aided in this task by the discussion between Julie, St. Preux, and Wolmar; at this early stage, she need not come up with the arguments on behalf of each proposal herself, but gains exposure to argumentation that she can also learn to imitate and then use to develop her own arguments.

We have already examined Julie's and St. Preux's education, and considered how it succeeds or fails on Rousseau's terms. However, if there are problems with this education, particularly for Julie, we also need to see how aware she is of them, and how she might correct for them with her own children. Given that some of Julie's comments on her children's education also appear verbatim in *Emile*, despite her children's education being somewhat different from Emile's and Sophie's educations, it is also worth comparing the various proposals to help determine Rousseau's position on the various models of education he presents to his readers through the two novels and different characters. In this chapter, I constrain myself to the former concern over the purpose and nature of Julie's education for her children, in the context of having seen their mother's education, with preliminary comparisons to the education of children presented in *Emile*. I will reserve the latter question about Rousseau's ultimate proposal about education for the final chapter.

As noted in the preceding chapter, most scholars focus on Julie's proposed childhood education in the context of her unhappy life – her fall from virtue, her arranged marriage, and her internal conflict while the mistress of Clarens – without taking into account her own education or

her understanding of human nature. Here, I will argue that Julie's plan is not merely a reaction to her circumstances, but rather the product of careful consideration and the good judgment her own education helped cultivate. She and her husband discuss education at length, and while she continues to learn from Wolmar, she still disagrees with him on certain points and ultimately undertakes her portion of her children's education according to her own system (473). Julie combines her own "masculine" and "feminine" judgment (general and particular, respectively) to come up with an education that serves her children's nature and their moral capacity, a task Rousseau seems to claim is only possible through the combination of a man's and a woman's knowledge in *Emile* but that is clearly within the competency of Julie herself thanks to her education towards "bisexuality" (*Emile* 387).¹⁵⁷ This is not to deny the need for a second parent, given the difficulty of raising children under any conditions, but rather to point out how exaggerated the sexual dimorphism is in Rousseau's later project that emphasizes and maintains it. Ultimately, Julie comes up with a negative education to preserve her children's natural goodness, which at first glance appears to be the one that will follow in *Emile*, but that is also specifically designed for the context of Clarens rather than as a universal educational proposal.

Why do children need education?

I began this project with the general question of why humans need education, and what sort they need, specifically according to Rousseau. We started, however, looking at characters in the middle of their development, when we see romance arise and begin to cause problems, mirroring the rise

¹⁵⁷ For a discussion of feminine versus masculine/particular versus general judgment, see Lisa Disch, "Claire Loves Julie: Reading the Story of Women's Friendship in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*," *Hypatia* 9.3 (Summer 1994), 26-32, and my discussion above, in Chapters 1 and 2. Again, I am also using Joel Schwartz's term "bisexuality" to refer to the Rousseauian solution of acquiring both feminine and masculine judgments within oneself to eliminate the moral dependency on others that mutilates our souls and leaves us divided, unhappy, and immoral. See Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 7, 107-8, 165 n.50, 171 n.60; and my discussion above, in Chapters 1 and 2.

of *amour propre* in social humans as portrayed in Rousseau's *Second Discourse*. Even if we did not know *Emile* existed, and had up until now only read the first half of *Julie*, we would likely wonder if Julie's education ends up "unsuccessful" in some way because she did not have the proper foundation as a child. We do not typically wait until puberty or young adulthood to start educating humans, so there seems to be a crucial element of childhood education that has been missing and that we only get in the second half of the novel. Suddenly our original question is back on the table, but is focused on human children rather than adults.

We begin again with the why of education, but the question of why *children* need education has an additional dimension. We do not simply need to know what they need their education for, as humans, but we also need to know why such an end requires an education from the beginning of life. The former addresses the question of ends, which I discussed in the first half of the dissertation, while the latter addresses the question of premises. What is it about human nature that needs such extensive education? What Rousseau proposes in *Emile* is that man's natural goodness – and its fragility – is most evident in children, where it exists until misguided adults fill them with all sorts of excess desires and sow the seeds of vice as their children's relative strength wanes with age (165-66). We are going to find, however, that Rousseau presents this theory of natural goodness first in *Julie*, and takes care to couch it in a discussion about children's education. While Julie argues that she feels she was "born good" but also "born for virtue," she does not fully explain what this could mean until she is questioned about her children's education (294, 282).¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Julie also continues to develop rationally what her first sentiments tell her about her natural goodness. She certainly discusses the subject with Wolmar, and she is prepared by her education to taste, analyze, and judge, rather than simply accept others' arguments. Despite Wolmar's sort of omnipotence, Julie never concedes anything to him that her own reason does not support.

Julie has both an understanding of human purpose and of human nature (the “ends” and the “premise”), which inform the means she uses to educate her children.¹⁵⁹ Briefly put, her primary concern is for her children’s “felicity” and their “morals” – she seeks to make them “at once free, patient, affectionate, docile” (439; 466). Rather than being internally conflicted over their personal desires and their social duties, Julie wants her children’s desires to coincide with their duties so they will not feel divided inside or feel oppressed when helping others. They must remain, as Melzer puts it, “good for themselves and good for others.”¹⁶⁰ Though her children’s “felicity” requires some satisfaction of their desires, they could not be happy if this satisfaction came into conflict with their obligations to others, or if they feel that their duties to others are oppressive and demeaning. These things naturally coincide in human beings according to Rousseau – in their historical development (laid out in the *Second Discourse*) and in their individual development (laid out in *Julie* and *Emile*) – at least at first. This is partly because our desires are simple and partly because the demands on us are limited or weak, in both the case of the natural man and the child. And Julie recognizes that this is their natural condition. She expects that “the issue of [her] womb cannot be evil,” that regardless of religious teaching, her children are not marked by original sin (465).¹⁶¹ If humans are naturally good, but are found unhappy and

¹⁵⁹ In *Emile*, Rousseau claims that women have difficulty figuring out the *ends* of things, but once they are informed of them (by men, specifically their husbands) they easily discover the *means* of achieving them (377). As we will see, Julie is perfectly aware of the ends of human life from her own knowledge, but rather fears how difficult it will be to attain that end. Until she discusses it with Wolmar and he reassures her, she is daunted by the task of education. He mostly discusses what human nature is like with her, less about the proper means to educating children, but it will turn out they disagree on this point and that Julie ultimately rejects Wolmar’s understanding of it (465).

¹⁶⁰ Arthur M. Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau’s Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 16.

¹⁶¹ This is reflective of Rousseau’s complete overhaul of our understanding of human nature against the Christian doctrine of original sin. See Melzer, 17-20.

immoral in most circumstances, something must go wrong in their development. We want to preserve the original condition of goodness, and education should act as that preservative.

It is on this point, how natural goodness presents itself, that Julie and Wolmar disagree. Wolmar sees all natural *characters* as good, and that cultivating them at the age of reason as far as possible in the direction to which they tend is the way to make them good for themselves, since nature wants them this way and it cannot be overcome, only disguised or hidden (461). This also makes them good for others, since the fully developed character is not harmful to others but rather contributes something unique to the whole (463-64). The only “bad” characters are those that have been misshapen and coerced, and Wolmar asserts their true characters will inevitably reveal themselves (464). Julie, on the other hand, declares that she does not “presume as much from [their] endeavors as Monsieur de Wolmar does. Despite his maxims, [she doubts] one can ever get much good out of a bad character, and that every natural disposition can be made to turn out well...” (465). Whereas Wolmar claims there are “no mistakes in nature,” which Rousseau as editor finds true but surprising in him, Julie finds in some natural characters natural flaws that make them bad (461, 465). She finds herself fortunate to have “well-born” children with good characters, and this will permit her to use the methods she does in preparing them for their education to reason at their father’s hands (465). A person’s character is separable from their human nature to Julie, in a way they are not to Wolmar.

Julie is the mean between the two men she most cares for. Wolmar finds nature infallible and education simply the means of bringing it to its fullest expression, while St. Preux finds nature wholly inadequate – if not pernicious – and advocates education from the first to “correct” for it (462). Julie is neither as optimistic as Wolmar nor as cynical as St. Preux, and this is unsurprising given how we have characterized each of them all along: Wolmar is naturally good and not

sensitive; he is simply good without making any effort. Julie and St. Preux are sensitive, by contrast, and need virtue to conduct themselves in accordance with the good. Wolmar believes that so long as individuals *know* what they ought to do, and are allowed to be who they truly are, they will *do* what they ought. This ought to surprise the reader who sees him watching and analyzing human beings in all their failings, constantly being brought to ruin not because they are ignorant but because their passions do not allow them to pursue what they deep down know to be good (403-404). He does not acknowledge how *amour propre* or desire can truly misdirect the soul towards doing the wrong thing, even when we very clearly know that it is wrong.¹⁶² If anything goes wrong in the soul, it is because of external elements constraining and mutilating it, and the soul balking at such oppression.

St. Preux believes individuals must be formed into beings who not only recognize what they ought to do and be, they must learn to *love* what they ought to do in conformity with a standard model – a process Wolmar believes is impossible, since the original character will always reemerge, and such manipulation harms that preexisting character (464). St. Preux advocates a single model of human goodness for individuals to aspire to and cannot understand when Julie says individual characters must be taken into account when educating them, in spite of her arguments *against* the cultivation of individuals' particular talents in her discussion of the domestic economy of Clarens (460-62, 439-41). These are not in contradiction with each other, because these talents are independent of character. Our talents have a relationship with the circumstances we find ourselves in, and they do not always align. Cultivating talents we cannot use in our

¹⁶² It is unclear how he would account for Julie's and St. Preux's relationship, however. Either he must think they were too naïve to know what they did was wrong (highly unlikely) or he understands the unfortunate circumstances of the Baron's intractability drove them to despair, through no fault of their own. This latter option is more in line with Rousseau's "interpretation" when he, as editor, blames Julie's parents – particularly her mother – for their daughter's weakness and fall (70). Unlike the former option, Rousseau finds their deceptive passion "pitiable," but they are not ignorant of what they ought to do (70).

conditions make us resentful and restless, either leading us to misery in our current state or leading us to anxiously seek new conditions (439). Individual happiness is easily disturbed this way, and is destroyed entirely if our talents are abused by others for their own purposes instead of our own good (439).

Character, however, must be taken into account. Though Julie is sensitive like St. Preux, and understands through experience the internal disorders that necessitate virtue, she does not advocate the same end of casting individuals in the same moral mold. This is precisely where Julie's understanding of human nature diverges from St. Preux's. Whereas St. Preux sees the infant child as without "any form to destroy," Julie knows they do in fact have a form – "the constitution common to the species" as well as a "particular temperament which determines his genius and character, [which] should be neither changed nor constrained, but formed and perfected" (460-61). St. Preux of course was the tutor to two young women, and his educational principles reflect his understanding of human nature derived from looking at adults. It is no wonder that he thinks nature must be corrected in children when he is used to only seeing what needs correction in their elders. And even when he was looking at adults, he did not take into account Julie's and Claire's different moral characters, the one's sensitivity and need for virtue contrasted with the other's simplicity and goodness.

Julie understands the need to preserve character because she has had her own negative experience in trying to take on a character not her own. When St. Preux first writes to her to confess his love, he describes her confusing familiarity and playfulness with him while in public, and her reticence with him in private (27). After his confession, she becomes cold with him in every situation, public and private, and he cannot help but fear he has displeased her (28-29). It turns out she is in love with him as well, and she eventually returns to her happy familiarity with him, much

to St. Preux's chagrin (38-39).¹⁶³ She later admits to him that she had taken on Claire's playful persona to protect herself from his advances, telling him:

I forced my natural disposition, I imitated my Cousin; I became jocular and frolicsome like her, in order to avoid too serious explanations and pass off a thousand tender caresses under the guise of feigned playfulness. I wanted to make your current state so pleasant that a fear of a change would make you even more guarded. All of that worked out poorly for me; one does not with impunity stray from one's natural disposition. Like the madwoman I was, I hastened my ruin instead of preventing it, I used poison as a palliative, and what should have made you hold your peace was precisely what made you speak out. In vain did I affect coldness to keep you at a distance when we were alone together; that constraint itself betrayed me: you wrote. (280)

Julie's own character cannot be subdued; she thinks by adopting her cousin's innocence and lightheartedness, she can suppress her own feelings and moderate St. Preux's. Her passion wreaks havoc on her, though. Her warm attentions towards St. Preux are not indifferent flirtation, which Claire can innocently enjoy. Julie's flip to coldness also betrays her passion, though it is meant to convince St. Preux otherwise. She has worn down her defenses by play acting and St. Preux's multiple letters eventually break her down. She must confess her feelings, and this is the first step she takes towards her fall (281). Her character is too sincere, too expansively loving, to mask with playful nonchalance. Any correctives to the predicaments she finds herself in ought to conform to her character.

Julie has a foot in both worlds, like her creator; she acknowledges the universal natural goodness of man but also understands its fragility and corruptibility. Julie, whose soul is naturally good (as all human souls are) and expansively loving in accordance with that goodness (her soul's particular character), also has within her the nascent passions that require a moral education to overcome when faced with temptation (594).¹⁶⁴ Her specifically erotic passion is awakened by

¹⁶³ St. Preux disdains Julie's return to health and felicity as it indicates to him that her heart is no longer troubled by their love (38).

¹⁶⁴ This is in contrast to Ellis's characterization of Julie as wholly good but seduced and corrupted by St. Preux, who somehow *imbues* her with dangerous passions she otherwise did not have. See M. B. Ellis,

meeting St. Preux, but it has always been present within her and would always have been at risk of arising and necessitating the development of virtue. She understands, as St. Preux does not, that there is something that must be *preserved* from infancy, that there is a good form all humans take from the beginning and the goal is to maintain that form as far as possible. Human children need a dental retainer rather than braces. However, she also understands, as Wolmar does not, the destructive internal elements that need additional resources and cannot simply be brought to their fullest development without danger. Baby teeth fall out and are replaced by adult teeth, which are just as natural to the human child as the original set, but which may not fit the mouth or remain properly aligned, and so might in fact need corrective orthodontics when the defects begin to show themselves. She understands the appropriate balance between generality and particularity in educating children, and judges where the appropriate mean falls between the extremes of nature versus nurture.¹⁶⁵

What is Julie's proposed education for her children?

How will Julie strike this balance, then, between preserving her children's happiness while making them capable of proper human relationships as they grow older? That is, how will she ensure their desires and their duties align, without causing them inner conflict? I must note here that her presentation is slightly difficult to parse out, as she has discussed it with Wolmar and learned from him, but also says that when she follows "Monsieur de Wolmar's system point by point... the more persuaded [she is] of how excellent and just it is, and how well it accords with [hers]" (473). To a

Julie, or La Nouvelle Héloïse: A Synthesis of Rousseau's Thought (1749-1759) (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1949), 43, 45, 49. This denies the nascent passions of human beings by denying the inherent perfectibility of all humans, explained in Rousseau's *Second Discourse* (115, 193-94 note (i)).

¹⁶⁵ Wolmar does of course advocate for *some* element of nurture, but it is entirely to preserve the original nature and bring it to its fullest expression. It is the most "negative" education on the spectrum, while St. Preux's is most in favor of nurture and presents the most "positive" education. All of these educations are very much "hands-on," even the "negative" one, but they differ in whether they work to preserve or correct nature. St. Preux will eventually come around to Julie's "negative" education.

great degree, her proposals are her own, not Wolmar's, though he was certainly involved with their development. She does explicitly point out in some places where the ideas are Wolmar's, and where she disagrees with him, but we must always keep in mind that her educational proposals include a blend of original and adopted ideas. I will explore in the next section how this blend gets developed, but it is sufficient to say here that it is Julie's own system and not Wolmar's that she lays out for St. Preux, who then reports it to Milord Edward.¹⁶⁶

This plan divides her children's education into two fundamentally different stages. Her most novel proposal is one that Wolmar leads her to appreciate: "...the first and most important education, the one precisely that everyone overlooks, is to *prepare* a child for receiving instruction" because one cannot reason with a child from birth (460). Rather, reason must be developed through other methods and it is the faculty humans "acquire last and with the most difficulty" (460). The Wolmar children's education will be distinctly divided into two parts, with each part directed by each of their parents. Julie will "prepare" them, and Wolmar (really, St. Preux) will take up their rational education when they are old enough (473). Julie explicitly says this division of labor is established along gendered lines: "I nurture children and do not presume to fashion men. I hope... that worthier hands will take on this noble task. I am a woman and a mother, I know how to keep my place. Once again, the role I am entrusted with is not to educate my sons, but to prepare them to be educated" (473). Her distinction between the parts, however, is a little too extreme here. This understanding is in line with Wolmar's ideas, since he denies that this preparatory stage is an education; the teacher should "await the first spark of reason; that is what brings out the character and also what gives it its genuine form; it is through reason also that we cultivate it, and before reason there is no genuine education" (464). Yet Julie's task is not to

¹⁶⁶ Indeed, St. Preux will later refer to it explicitly as Julie's system when discussing it with Wolmar (501). The characters all agree that this is Julie's plan.

merely let her children develop with no guidance whatsoever, but to teach them what is appropriate to them as children. She is in charge of her children's pre-rational education. It is still an *education*, though, and insofar as it is *preparation* for education, it is preparation for a different kind of education. It is a negative form of education in service to a more positive one later, one that develops reason and judgment.

The most important thing they must learn through this "preparation" is that they are weak and depend on others, and that the strength to be free and useful to others is their admirable goal (466-67). All human beings depend on others for at least some physical and psychological needs now that we have become social, and this is most pronounced in children – though they are more physically dependent whereas adults are more psychologically dependent. This dependence hurts us, though, by dividing our souls between our personal desires and what we owe to others. If we are no longer self-sufficient, we rely on relationships with others to serve our interests. But no one desires to serve others' interests for the sake of the other; an element of reciprocity arises in these relationships, which involves duties and obligations to others in order to serve our own interests.¹⁶⁷ This is not ideal, but then the additional problem soon arises that these duties and obligations can also demand things of us that are against our self-interest. Suddenly our inclinations and our duties can be wholly opposed.¹⁶⁸

If we could avoid these relationships of dependence with others altogether, we would have a chance at retaining naturally good souls that are whole and unified. Yet avoiding dependence altogether is impossible. The best chance we have to retain our natural goodness is to keep these relationships as healthy as possible, either by minimizing the interdependence or by developing the proper orientation to this interdependence, where our inclinations are better aligned with

¹⁶⁷ Melzer, 70-74.

¹⁶⁸ Melzer, 75.

others' interests. In terms of childhood education, in *Emile*, Rousseau takes the former tack, whereas in *Julie* he takes the latter.¹⁶⁹ Emile will be restricted to the "world of things" so that he does not feel himself subject to others' wills as a child and does not seek to dominate others by feeling domination over himself (*Emile* 85-86, 64-68). This is highly impracticable, though, and leads to other problems down the road, not least of all that he will not be entirely capable of living in the social world and that maintaining his internal unity will be primary to everything else.¹⁷⁰ By being made ignorant of others' wills throughout most of his youth, Emile will only come to understand that these wills constitute another aspect of "necessity" in the world very late in his development.

Julie wants for her children to be able to harmonize their desires and duties to others, however. They live in a society, albeit a self-contained society that is carefully moderated by their parents. They will not be solitaires or establish households comprised only of the nuclear family, but rather in some degree are expected to take up the task of eventually maintaining this little society. Julie's children must learn their place in this community from the beginning, starting with their childish inferiority. Yet the nature of this weakness is not necessarily clear to a child in just any situation. It is not simply that they need help, but that others are not obligated to help them and the child has nothing to offer those who help them.¹⁷¹ If the child thought they were entitled to others' help, they would begin commanding others to give them things beyond what is necessary. This is why they must be taught that those who serve them serve them out of "pity" and

¹⁶⁹ This is too simplistic since it turns out that, in *Emile*, Rousseau takes both tacks. He minimizes Emile's dependence but tries to harmonize Sophie's dependence. More on this below.

¹⁷⁰ Again, this discussion continues below.

¹⁷¹ Consider how a well-raised toddler will attempt to help others, particularly adults, to do those things that they need help with themselves, e.g. tying their shoes, blowing on food, kissing boo-boos. This toddler does not recognize their own helplessness in relation to the adult's capacity, but they sense that helplessness needs help even if they do not properly identify who is and is not helpless.

not out of duty (467). This lesson must be reinforced by every single relationship with the child, otherwise the child becomes imperious and forces its will upon everyone else (466). Julie does not subject her children merely to the world of things, which demonstrates the harsh necessities of nature on the child, but rather also makes sure her children know that they are subjected to wills – and she must ensure that her children have a proper understanding of wills (465).¹⁷² If they grow up with an image of authority before them, they will aspire to such authority and hope to bend others' wills to their own, rather than seeking to relate to other human beings as pitiable equals. They will aspire to arbitrarily coerce others for their own benefit, rather than adhere to a natural hierarchy that their parents discreetly enforce across the estate for the benefit of both master and servant.

Julie, in contrast to Wolmar, does see this preparation as another education; even he does not see quite how important this overlooked stage really is. Wolmar would be content to have his sons know “the heavy yoke of necessity which nature imposes on man,” to keep their desires in reasonable check, but Julie thinks a child needs to know this “not only so he will be aware of what we do to lighten his yoke, but above all so he will learn early in what rank providence has placed him, so he will not raise himself beyond his reach, and so nothing human will seem foreign to him” (468). As children, they are primarily dependent on others for their physical needs, but even as adults they will need others for those needs and they will be in certain social, political, and historical circumstances that they cannot extricate themselves from, no matter how strongly they want to. They must be made capable of being happy in whatever circumstances they find themselves, and they are going to find themselves in the heart of a well-ordered estate with a number of interpersonal relationships between themselves, family, friends, servants, villagers, and

¹⁷² Wolmar only mentions subjecting children to the “inflexible yoke... of necessity” without mentioning wills explicitly (465). It is Julie who includes wills in this realm of necessity.

strangers. As the Wolmar sons are heirs to this estate, they will have the important task of being its masters – which is most fundamentally a relationship of service to all those who live and work on this estate.¹⁷³ They might have grown into less interdependent circumstances and needed a different education, but they will find themselves in the *most* human of circumstances. Whereas Emile only learns about these human things – interpersonal relationships, with all their attending beauty and horror – when he reaches puberty, the Wolmar children will always be involved with other people (*Emile* 212).

These children learn the most fundamental moral principles about human interaction in this “preparatory” education that Julie administers, beyond what Wolmar emphasizes and beyond what Emile will learn before he reaches puberty. Emile learns that he is weak and subject to the nature’s harsh necessities, but he does not understand how much he is served by others – even out of pity – nor does he care much about the humans around him, only his tutor, Jean-Jacques. He is prepared to maintain a certain independence throughout his life, just as Wolmar remains outside of all his relationships. The Wolmar children will be inextricable from their relationships, so making these relationships healthy from the beginning is the primary task for their education. If they are to continue to maintain the good order of Clarens, they must know their place in it and how to maintain others’ places in it as well.

Julie uses her relationship with her children as the primary means of educating them, and indirectly uses their relationships with the Clarens servants as well. Though it is more difficult to oblige “Nurses and governesses” to ignore the crying children, because as Julie argues, “these simple souls never see beyond the present moment,” Julie has still garnered her domestics’

¹⁷³ At least one will inherit Clarens, though it is not clear what little Marcellin will get, if anything.

cooperation by manipulating her own relationship with them (468, 471).¹⁷⁴ Her children are subjected to the world of wills in a way that they equate it with the world of things, of natural necessity, but this method does not hide the fact that it really is wills that are operating on them. They are taught specifically to recognize that the wills that operate on them are not arbitrary, that there is a reason for them granting or withholding things to or from the children, even if the children do not understand the reason (469-70). The secret machinations of others' wills are shown to be "beyond" them as children (470). Of course, others' wills remain incomprehensible to humans throughout their lives, and some of them unfortunately but unavoidably subject us. The education in reason will not make others' wills comprehensible, but will make it clear that there is an element of weakness that endures throughout human life. Julie's love for her children, and her enforcement that her servants' behavior is in her children's best interest as well, sets the initial example that humans are good for one another, and encourages the children to be good to others as a rule, before they discover that this does not always work out in the world – that sometimes others' wills can be arbitrary, harmful to their interests, and cannot be avoided. The reasons behind them are unfathomable, but they too belong in the realm of necessity that human beings must learn to accept.

Rousseau of course has already shown us a tableau of this education in action: the discussion between the friends follows the rare scene in Julie's room where parents, children, and domestics mingle together while engaged in their own activities (*Julie* 457). The children would usually accompany Julie in the gynaeceum after breakfast, but the family has just finished hosting guests for almost a week and all want to enjoy the silence and friendship that they have missed by

¹⁷⁴ It is tempting to also suggest that these nurses and governesses are often the ones actually raising children, making it easy for the mother to blame them for taking shortcuts. Julie does much of the child rearing herself, however, and seems to attribute this shortsightedness primarily to the domestics of other, less well-run households.

entertaining others (455-57). The Wolmar sons study a book of prints, though little Marcellin is distracted by jackstraws, while Henriette practices embroidery and oversees her cousins' entertainments (457). The elder Wolmar boy is trying to explain the illustrations to his younger brother, but he is not always right and Henriette stealthily corrects him by pretending she does not know the print they are examining and joining them to look into it (457). She uses indirect methods, playfulness and setting an example, to teach the boys. When she whispers and tiptoes in response to the room's general silence and contemplation, her cousins imitate her and find their games all the more amusing for having to be careful (457-58). Henriette never forces them to do anything, never points out their mistakes, but gently brings them around through affection.

The peaceful scene is briefly interrupted by the elder boy's frustration with Marcellin's jackstraws. He strikes his brother's hand after he has carefully collected the sticks and scatters them across the room, upsetting the young boy (458). Marcellin begins crying and Julie asks Fanchon to take away the sticks, at which point Marcellin stops crying but does not start up again even though he will not get his toys back (458). Julie does not secretly give this order; she says it in front of the children, they know it is their mother's will that removes the jackstraws from their play, and they know from experience that her every decision is irrevocable (468-69). Though Julie says there is no authority to fight over between domestic and child, that "no one commands or obeys" and instead the children must be kind to others to receive kindness in return, she takes no care to disguise her orders to the servants (468). Even if they are to understand that the servants help their parents out of benevolence as well, just as they care for the children, they surely also see that what their parents ask of the servants is never refused, unlike the children who occasionally cannot get their own way. Their parents certainly depend on their domestics, but they also have a real authority over them. The day before this scene occurs, the elder brother stole Marcellin's drum

and Fanchon took it away to show him that if he believes might makes right, there will always be one mightier who will put him in his place (474). Julie's will intervenes, however, when Fanchon later tries to return the drum to Marcellin, since Julie wants the elder to feel the injustice of the strong taking from the weak, but also wants Marcellin to bear "the harsh law of necessity" (474). It is difficult to see how Julie's authority is obscured enough so the children do not understand that one day they will be in a position to command, and so that this is not the position they aspire to rather than independence. The one safeguard against this is that the children realize they are weak, depend on others, and "there is nothing [the children] can do for [others]," whereas their parents also depend on their servants but benefit them in turn (467). This is a relationship of mutual dependence, of reciprocity. If the children see their parents depend on servants, they must also see the kindnesses their parents can bestow on the servants.

Again, if they are not properly educated to relate to others' wills properly, when the children grow up they will find their new strength and resources not only powerful enough to get much of what they want, but also powerful enough to gain these things from others, at their expense. Yet with this possibility comes danger. The power to get more than one needs out of others corrupts the individual and increases the desire for more, requiring ever more help from others and perpetuating, if not intensifying, our dissatisfaction. On top of this, you do not get anything without giving anything, even (especially) when you use others for your own ends. More must be given in return or the service worsens, decreases, or stops altogether. Duties increase with desires, and the capacity to satisfy both decreases. The well-balanced interdependence that reigns at Clarens, where everyone helps each other to obtain what none of them could obtain on their own, and where no one acquires anything superfluous to their needs, would decay and collapse (*Julie* 433-35). Happiness would disappear from this special haven.

Yet St. Preux is shocked and rather disappointed by this negative education. Julie barely fusses over her children, they cause little trouble, and he doubts they can ever be made to obey given their radical freedom (459-60). He does not understand that the “semblance of negligence” is actually “the most vigilant attention a mother’s tenderness ever paid” (460). Nothing escapes Julie’s watchful eye, and she controls every relationship the children have through her own direct and indirect means.¹⁷⁵ St. Preux must learn that there is nothing at Clarens that does not fit into a cohesive whole, that every dimension of life on the estate supports the other dimensions. He first reports on its domestic economy, greatly impressed with the order and happiness found as a result, and only later discovers that these are the necessary conditions for Julie’s proposed education to work. St. Preux himself is being prepared, having his taste educated, so that he will be able to continue the education when the children are older. It is no coincidence that St. Preux is welcomed into the gynaeceum, where only servant women and the children are typically welcome (371-72). St. Preux’s tastes must be cultivated just like a child’s to be properly oriented to Clarens.

Even though he admires the happy community of the Clarens estate, he argues with Julie and Wolmar that the focus of their children’s education ought to be their particular talents, passions, and intellect, but Julie is adamant that the entire education – even the rational one they will receive later – is oriented towards happiness and morality. She will not sacrifice either of these to ensure her children can read well or speak cleverly (470, 474-77). Neither will she suffer religion to be forced upon them as a series of memorized prayers and unfathomable precepts, since they will be incapable of understanding it until they develop their reason – and even then, like others’

¹⁷⁵ She helps control the Clarens estate and enforces institutions like the separation of the sexes, weekly games and entertainments at home for the servants, and a system of peer policing that affects their character and makes them willing contributors to the good of the whole estate, happy to serve the Wolmar family and avoiding conflict and strife within themselves (Letters IV.X, IV.XI, V.II, V.VII). By working on her servants’ characters, she makes them naturally able to care for her children properly and to obeying her when she has to correct them (478).

wills, some things remain obscure forever (477). It is better that they understand where they stand in relation to the unknowable than to be made to think they know more than they do, lest they abuse their position and avoid salutary submission to others.

What has not come up yet, and which also suddenly appears in the text as a mysterious aside, is that Julie has only proposed an education for her *sons*, not her children generally. Julie's "niece," Henriette, is understood to be one of Julie's own children. Claire entrusts her cousin with her daughter's education, Henriette sees Julie as a second mother (referring to her as "petite maman"), and outsiders often cannot determine whether Julie or Claire is Henriette's real mother (*Julie* 492). While Julie does occasionally refer specifically to her sons when discussing this education, it is not clear that Henriette is truly excluded from this until Julie says so explicitly at the very end of her discussion with St. Preux on education (473).¹⁷⁶ After mentioning how useful Henriette is to her project of educating her sons, Julie says, "As for her [Henriette], her education is my business; but its principles are so different that they deserve a separate discussion. At least I can say in advance that in her it will be difficult to add to nature's gifts, and that she will be as worthy as her mother, if anyone on earth can be" (479). And that is that. We do not get this discussion in *Julie*, as it seems she never discusses it with her loved ones except on her deathbed (578).¹⁷⁷

Stewart and Vaché assert that this discussion appears in *Emile* later, as though Sophie's education is the one Julie has in mind for Henriette (479 n. 77). Julie says herself that Henriette's

¹⁷⁶ Julie most often speaks of children generally when discussing her plan for education (461-62, 465-77), though she occasionally offers specific examples of her son or sons (465-68, 471-74, 476-79).

¹⁷⁷ It is possible a discussion of Henriette's education also appeared in the letter on education that "dropped out" or got consolidated with the one we do have; this is most likely if the other letter was actually from Julie rather than St. Preux, and was sent to Claire as an explanation of how her daughter was to be educated at Julie's hands. Julie is desperate to convey this plan to Claire on her deathbed, so no discussion of it amongst them up until now was adequate for Julie's purposes, but that does not mean the education was a complete secret either.

education is based on very different principles than her sons', making the children's education gendered in a way that Julie's own education was not. However, Julie's sons are educated somewhat like Emile, but not exactly, so there is no reason to assume Henriette will be educated exactly like Sophie either. Really, the boys are raised much more like Sophie than they are raised like Emile: they are all raised together in a well-ordered family, where they learn about human wills and relationships long before Emile will. Even if Henriette's education *is* radically different from her cousins', we do not know what this full education will be. This is a hole in the text the reader must fill in for herself.¹⁷⁸

The reader intent on retrofitting *Emile* to *Julie* will argue, like Stewart and Vaché, that Henriette's education will be like Sophie's, and those intent on misreading both will insist the principle of a woman's education is what is pleasing to others, especially to men, either at the expense of the woman or because women willingly live to be pleasing to men. Further, seeing that Julie forfeits her sons' education to their father once they reach the age of reason because it is "not her place" and Wolmar is "worthier" of the task, but that she is always entirely in charge of Henriette's education, this reader might assume Henriette will not receive an education in reason and that Rousseau thinks it is beyond women, or unsuitable for them to have it, as he suggests in *Emile* (*Julie* 473, 479; *Emile* 377). Both of these readings are wrong: the former on the basis of misreading *Emile* and the latter on the basis of trying to imbue *Julie* with *Emile*. In terms of the former misreading, Rousseau says explicitly that women have a concern with pleasing others in *addition* to always telling the truth, but that the principle of education for both men and women is

¹⁷⁸ Even if Henriette is to be educated like Sophie, the reader does not get this discussion until *Emile*, and must read through the entire book to get to it. This would be further evidence that *Emile* is intended for the same audience as *Julie*, and that *Julie* paves the way for the more clearly philosophical discussion in *Emile*. While I do not think Henriette and Sophie will be educated in the exact same way, the reader familiar with *Julie* will be able to compare the Wolmar boys' education with Emile's, and consider how Henriette's might stand in relation to Sophie's.

to make both honest and both guided by inner sentiment (*Emile* 376, 382).¹⁷⁹ A woman is not to lie, even if the truth is displeasing; it is her task to find the way to make the truth as pleasing as possible. While Julie takes great care to keep Wolmar happy, appealing to his tastes and partaking moderately in those things she gives him gustily, she does not do this at her own expense whatsoever (*Julie* 443-44, 451-52). She enjoys personal pleasures in the “gynaeceum,” Elysium, and Salon d’Apollon, and spends almost all of her time doing things she enjoys, even if it includes serving the poor in her neighborhood, looking after her children, or amusing her husband (Letters IV.X, IV.XI, V.II). It seems highly unlikely that she would teach her beloved niece, essentially her daughter, to forgo a life of happiness and to neglect herself in service to others. She does not even expect such martyrdom from her own lofty soul.

In terms of the latter misreading, when Julie leaves her sons’ education to reason in the hands of her husband, it is not because she is incapable of it. We as readers already know she is capable of particular and general judgment from her own education, and her justification of this arrangement with her husband is based on their roles in the order of their home. Regardless of whether Julie is capable of reason and of educating her sons to reason, it is not in her job description, so to speak. The family, especially of Clarens, is a carefully constructed institution and its members have particular places within it. One’s role in the community is not strictly a question of one’s talents or abilities, nor what others can get out of the individual, but what best suits the individual within their context to make them “as good and happy as is possible” (*Julie* 439). This involves a consideration of the conditions in which the individual finds themselves,

¹⁷⁹ Denise Schaeffer, “Reconsidering the Role of Sophie in Rousseau’s *Emile*,” *Polity* 30.4 (Summer 1998), 613. Here Schaeffer takes issue with Penny Weiss’s claim that Sophie’s education does not practically cultivate her conscience to operate independently of public opinion; Weiss sees the requirement to be pleasing in women’s education as the *essential* principle of it and ignores that truth is the ultimate and common principle to both men and women. See Penny A. Weiss, *Gendered Community: Rousseau, Sex and Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 26.

because only certain things are possible without violating the whole or rendering the individual miserable. Even if Julie is capable of or skilled at certain things, her role as loving mother to her children combines her desires and her duties most completely – it is both the best role to serve their needs and the best role for her personal happiness. On top of this consideration is the other historical circumstance that has arisen: the home has been divided based on sex since humans became social at all, according to Rousseau, and have become an essential feature of the household that constitutes a new nature (*Second Discourse* 132-37, 151-56, 213-20 note (1)).¹⁸⁰ Clarens is the epitome of the sexually-divided household and Julie is perhaps even more adamant than her husband that each sex keep its place in the home (*Julie* 371). So when Julie reserves Henriette's education to herself, it is primarily because of the general separation of the sexes rather than to administer an education solely in taste, frivolity, and obedience instead of judgment and reason. One wonders how different the principles of Henriette's education really are, or if Julie unceremoniously drops the subject to conceal the similarity of the children's educations from the men.¹⁸¹ Her sons are raised very much according to the principles of Sophie's education in *Emile*; how much more "feminine" could Henriette's education be?

¹⁸⁰ Schwartz, 2-3, 12. The references from Rousseau indicate both the natural relationships between the sexes, prior to society, as well as the origins of inequality arising from the division of labor, which falls along gendered lines.

¹⁸¹ Insofar as there is a power differential between men and women in a household, as husbands and wives, Rousseau says this power is expressed in different ways: directly and explicitly by men, indirectly and implicitly by women (*Emile* 358-60). It is crucial to this dynamic that a woman's force is never made explicit, for the sake of its effectiveness by maintaining the love-illusion (Schwartz, 56). Women's possession and use of this indirect power, however, absolutely requires an education to reason that Rousseau admits to even in *Emile* (382-83). If men's love for women and "obedience" to them requires men to have a sense of superiority over women, then the men cannot be made too aware of their shared humanity or their very real inferiority on some dimensions (Schwartz, 35)

How does Julie come up with the negative education?

As she can articulate and create the proper education for her children, Julie appears to be the “judicious mother” whom Rousseau addresses in *Emile*: the woman who understands the principle of natural goodness and who can appropriately respond to this principle as it manifests itself in the world (364).¹⁸² If she is already judicious by the time she is tasked with her own children’s education, without having the same education herself, we must consider how she arrives at it – that is, how and why her own education might produce such knowledge, and how we might be educated in the same way.

Julie is certainly not raised like Emile, Sophie, or her own children. We do not get a full picture of her childhood education, but most of it was conducted by the indiscreet Chaillot while generally neglected by her weak mother and absent, severe father (*Julie* 32, 35, 38). There is no special care taken to keep the passions or the potentially resulting vices from arising in her, so her romantic longings increase and find an outlet when St. Preux reveals his love for her. Her education does nothing in particular to preserve her natural goodness, and soul is such that her passions remain very much oriented towards the proper relationship between humans. She has an “expansive” soul and could only be accused of loving *too much* (457, 484; 83). Julie is particularly exemplary, bordering on the useless example Rousseau says pervades other novels, but she is still imperfect (19). She needs virtue to overcome her desire for St. Preux, and later needs virtue to

¹⁸² Denise Schaeffer emphasizes that *Emile* is addressed to the “mother who knows how to think” and who is transformed by the end of the novel, through the process of education *through* the novel, into the “judicious mother” who learns the principle of natural goodness and how to judge the education she sees in *Emile* (23-24). Julie, however, already understands the principle of natural goodness that *Emile* is written to demonstrate, and she presents her children’s education in response to it – without having recourse to the content of *Emile* nor having seen any education conducted like the one it presents. St. Preux explicitly points out how Julie’s system is “so novel and so contrary to prevailing opinions” and that it took even him some convincing to accept it (*Julie* 474). Rousseau makes this the intellectual contribution of the devoted mother.

choose to marry Wolmar out of love and duty to her parents. Given her imbalance of desires and the capacity to fulfill those desires, Jeanne Thomas Fuchs characterizes the education she comes up with for her children as a response to her internal conflict as a youth. On Fuchs's account, Julie wants for her children never to encounter the conflict between inclination and duty as she did.¹⁸³ They will always want what is good for the whole, which is also ultimately good for them as individuals if they are properly oriented towards the whole. Judith Shklar's account, on the other hand, admits that Julie "has every intention of saving her children from her own conflicts," but when it comes to Shklar's discussion of the education, sees it as a correction for *St. Preux's* shortcomings, completely ignoring that their education to prevent "domination and vanity" is first seriously conducted at Julie's hands and according to her own system.¹⁸⁴

This education, instituted to maintain children's natural goodness while making them capable of subjecting their individual wills to the general will when they necessarily become social animals, part of a family and a political community, certainly aims at eliminating the internal conflict Julie suffered. Yet it is also the result of Julie's good taste and capacity for judgment, cultivated through her own education and independent of her moral struggles. Even if she had not succumbed to St. Preux, even if she had not been "betrothed" to Wolmar, or even if she had been able to marry St. Preux, it is not at all clear that she would not still come up with a negative education in service to natural goodness thanks to her own education. Her personal moral struggles are, at most, only a partial basis for the education she comes up with.

If the education she came up with were only based on her personal experience, she would be trying to educate her children to virtue: to overcome their desires in service to their duties,

¹⁸³Jeanne Thomas Fuchs, *The Pursuit of Virtue: A Study of Order in La Nouvelle Héloïse* (New York: Peter Lange, 1993), 77, 178.

¹⁸⁴Shklar, 65, 146-50.

primarily by reorienting desire towards duty – adjusting one’s taste to prefer the better of two competing options, even if both are salutary. This is again not the object of her children’s education; they are to be educated to maintain their natural goodness. Julie, naturally, finds division in her soul, between her desires and her duties – which she also desires to fulfill. She needs to cultivate her taste and judgment, and needs to find additional moral strength outside herself in order to act virtuously. Like the Savoyard Vicar, she sees in herself that she knows what is good but cannot always pursue it because her passions overwhelm her (*Emile* 278-79).¹⁸⁵ Unlike the Savoyard Vicar, however, she does not see this as a universal human condition (*Emile* 279). How could she, knowing her cousin’s and husband’s characteristic goodness and effortless internal unity? Such unity is possible for some people, but not all – just as her own virtue is possible for some people, but not all. Her task is not to cultivate her own virtue in her children, but to extend their natural goodness as far as it will go in the well-ordered Clarens. She and her husband already create the conditions for happy unity among individuals, now she must raise her individual children to be happy and unified in themselves within this context.

The very structure of her children’s education mirrors her own, though it aims at a different end. The cultivation of taste, or pre-rational education, precedes the development of judgment, or the rational education. Though her children are “prepared” for rational education from their births until the age of reason, this is an essential element of *all* education, and even the adult student who has reached the age of reason must partake in this “preparation” before they can actually *develop* their reason. It is ostensibly more efficient and effective to begin this project with children, but it is effective enough for Julie that she can later determine how and why these are the two necessary stages of moral education. She has, essentially, received the education her children will receive,

¹⁸⁵ Her religious beliefs also correspond to the Savoyard Vicar’s (*Julie* 298-99 n.65).

but adjusted for age, capacity, and experience. While her children receive a “negative” education in preparation for positive, rational education, it is still an education in taste. The only strictness they feel comes from a mother’s love. The only pleasures they partake in are the simple, wholesome ones of country life. They encounter no arbitrary wills to oppress them; rather, their own weakness as children is their only real constraint. If they are subject to wills that seem arbitrary, it is because they do not have the reason to understand the other’s will. They love their place in the world, and look forward to moving up in it when they have the capacity to do so. They enjoy freedom, and others’ freedom keeps the children’s from becoming license (466-79). All of their tastes are cultivated through and towards the peace, order, and harmony of Clarens. They do not seek to rule anyone, nor will they balk at being ruled. They have and enjoy a proper place in the order of things.

Whereas Julie’s needs required her to cultivate a taste for virtue, for exceptional examples to imitate until she could judge what was virtuous, giving an appropriate education to her children means cultivating a taste for simple, innocent goodness in them. She realizes that their status as children, especially as children living in the impeccably ordered Clarens, gives them different needs (461). They will not develop the excessive passions she did if their tastes always remain simple. Yet this is a curious goal for her to aspire to for her children. If she recognizes the dangers of passion and how education should seek to counter it in young souls, unlike the passionless Wolmar, then there is the potential that her children will not understand this problem and will not be capable of raising their own children properly. They may be good for themselves, and not harmful to others, but they will not reach the point of being *good* for others. Perhaps this is the influence of Wolmar and the overall environment of Clarens creeping into the generally well-structured education.

Indeed, in the context of the carefully run Clarens, happiness consists in being a happily obedient member of the community. It is not difficult to be a willingly contributing member of this well-ordered community that looks to the good of the whole, since such a society makes each member believe their individual good is best served by serving the common good.¹⁸⁶ That is, it is easy to be such a member if one's soul is also properly ordered in communion with the whole. Although Julie maintains that she has overcome her passionate love for St. Preux and that her feelings have transformed into a chaste friendship, she still secretly suffers from her sentiments and cannot fully embrace the proper order of Clarens or enjoy the internal peace it produces in its other members (570).¹⁸⁷ She could not rely on her natural goodness to preserve her from vice because of her inflamed passions that required her to cultivate her virtue to overcome them. Julie's children, however, are born naturally good, like all other children. Recognizing this all-important principle, Julie's goal then is to sustain their natural goodness so they do not need the sort of adult education she received because she needed to cultivate additional moral resources. Her children must learn how to always be happy even when they are subjected to misfortunes and others' wills, since this is the unavoidable nature of the world.

The world in which the children are raised, however, is very different from the world at large. Shklar likens Clarens to the ideal republic detailed in Rousseau's *Social Contract*, with Wolmar standing in for the Great Legislator.¹⁸⁸ The children do not encounter arbitrary, harmful

¹⁸⁶ Ellis, 94.

¹⁸⁷ Here, Julie complains of being "too happy," of being "weary of happiness" – and Rousseau as editor calls her claims into question in his footnote. She emphasizes her happiness too much to be sincere, and in other places clearly struggles with concealing her "secret" premarital relations for much of her marriage, and then continues to struggle with Wolmar's atheism for the rest of it (*Julie* 405-406, 481-85). See also Okin, 95-96, and Mira Morgenstern, "Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 123-25.

¹⁸⁸ Shklar, 155.

wills, or disorder, competition, and evil, but rather live in subjection to something like the “general will” (*Social Contract* 59-62).¹⁸⁹ If such a parallel is warranted between Clarens and the ideal republic, then living under such conditions requires a very different education for its members than the one needed for individuals raised to form families in imperfect political societies. Clarens is a world unto itself, a self-sufficient whole where the individual members can subject themselves to the general will because they recognize that it encompasses their own individual good. To so wholly subject oneself in the imperfect existing world, however, would exacerbate the feelings of internal division, slavishness, and resentment towards others. Julie can only propose the education of her children the way she does because she knows she is raising them for these rare salutary conditions.

Had Julie’s life turned out differently, becoming St. Preux’s wife and taking refuge in England thanks to the generosity of Milord Edward, her children’s education still would have taken the same general form with two stages to cultivate taste and develop judgment.¹⁹⁰ But St. Preux is no Wolmar, and only learns what the well-ordered society requires through his time spent at Clarens. At their alternate-universe Yorkshire estate, Julie’s beneficence might have reigned, but the good order found at Clarens would be missing. Julie embraces this good order she finds with Wolmar, and does her part in maintaining it, but she does not spontaneously generate such order herself. It requires the type of absolute rationality of Wolmar to put all the pieces together and subject their individual wills to the general will. If Julie and St. Preux could not create the perfect

¹⁸⁹ Shklar, 156-58, 163. Here Shklar describes how the Great Legislator operates, likening it to Wolmar’s rule of Clarens. See also Fuchs, 153.

¹⁹⁰ Milord Edward had offered them sanctuary in his homeland when they were youths, but Julie turns down his offer without even consulting St. Preux (*Julie* 162-63).

environment of Clarens, their children would likely be educated more like Emile, in order to make them potentially capable of creating this familial haven themselves.¹⁹¹

How does this negative education differ from that in *Emile*?

Though undeniably similar, the literature has not accounted for the differences between the Wolmar children's educations and the educations of Emile and Sophie. Judith Shklar in particular asserts that the Wolmar children's education is "the same as Emile's," that they will "be educated *exactly like* Emile, and by his tutor" (my emphasis), because she sees only the second stage of education as real education and claims that "[no] one, not even the parent, may interfere."¹⁹² Yet the children at Clarens are, again, clearly raised for their particular conditions in a happy, well-ordered household that combines all economic stations, sexes, and generations together in harmony, while Emile and Sophie are carefully raised in the context of imperfect conditions, in the hope that they could create the type of harmonious household Clarens is – a sort of "haven" within corrupt bourgeois society.¹⁹³ It is unsurprising that we find some differences between the two educations for children that Rousseau presents, just as we were unsurprised to see differences between the adult education of Julie, Claire, and St. Preux compared to the typical "models" of Sophie and Emile. The differences between the children's educations deserve an examination, especially as neither seems to produce its desired results: Julie's children will not be capable of reproducing or even maintaining the happy conditions of their childhoods, and Emile and Sophie will not be capable of creating the happy conditions that might shelter individuals from the ravages

¹⁹¹ If the couple had fled to England, Claire promises she would go with them, but this would mean abandoning her future husband and there would be no Henriette to join the family (*Julie* 168-69). The boys would still be raised within the family, but not with the same degree of sexual awareness and proper relationships as they do at Clarens.

¹⁹² Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 65, 146-47.

¹⁹³ See Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World* (New York: Norton and Company, 1977) for a contemporary exploration of the nuclear family and independent household as the refuge for modern liberals to escape the corrupting rat race of public life.

of society. Funnily enough, it will appear that the shortcomings of each are resolved by the strengths of the other, but ultimately the problems of both point to the real success being Julie's own education.¹⁹⁴

Most notably, Julie's children are raised within a family, unlike Emile, who is effectively orphaned and raised entirely by his Tutor, Jean-Jacques (*Emile* 52). It is a bizarre tendency in the literature to ignore this enormous difference. Susan Moller Okin makes the same mistake as Shklar: she notes that "only the women in Rousseau's novels appear to have any parents, and therefore, to be faced with the potential conflict of family duty with their own feelings and consciences," disregarding the Wolmar children who rarely leave their parents' sides.¹⁹⁵ The children at Clarens are not only raised by their real parents, but are also raised among other children. Julie explicitly says that she uses Henriette in the education of her sons, as a way to keep the boys from imitating each other (*Julie* 479). The children not only know and learn from other children, but this is also a co-educational arrangement: Henriette is employed in the education of her younger cousins *because* "she is of a different sex, their elder, since they both love her to pieces, and since she has sense beyond her years," which makes her lessons "less suspect" to the boys (479). Rather than holding off on pointing out sexual distinctions or their importance, as the Tutor does with Emile to put off the "moment of crisis" associated with nascent sexuality, Julie's son and Henriette are "betrothed" to one another and their relationship is always "sexual," insofar as they always relate to one another as boy and girl rather than as human children (*Emile* 194, 211; *Julie* 333, 361-62).¹⁹⁶ When Emile is a child and meets with other children, he only sees himself

¹⁹⁴ Again, this is the subject of my final chapter.

¹⁹⁵ Susan Moller Okin, "The Fate of Rousseau's Heroines," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 110-11, n.20.

¹⁹⁶ This sexual relationship is reinforced by the fact that the elder son who is Henriette's "little hubby" is never actually named in the text, unlike his younger brother, Marcellin. He is only ever referred to as "le petit mali," a mispronunciation of "mari," and so is only ever a boy in relation to a girl (*Julie* 333 n.5).

and others as human beings, not male or female (*Emile* 219).¹⁹⁷ This is crucial for keeping him safe from the world of “wills” and instead keeping him solidly in the world of “things,” so as not to introduce slavishness and dividedness in the young soul before he can learn the proper relationships between humans (*Emile* 85).

Of course, Emile is raised atypically, whereas childhood at Clarens generally looks like any other childhood provided by loving parents.¹⁹⁸ The contemporary reader, however, is likely to miss the fact that the Wolmar children are also quite atypical, and not simply because of the good order that presides over the estate. Rather, the particular care the Wolmars have for their children and their involvement in their rearing is essentially unknown in Europe at the time and is exactly what Rousseau must encourage, especially for mothers, in the first book of *Emile*. He laments over the women of bourgeois Europe who have come to neglect their motherly duties to their children, abandoning them to wet nurses, governesses, and tutors, whereas the children in his romantic vision will be raised in the very heart of their family (*Emile* 44-46). Emile must be removed from his family because this family is a realer, more accurate representation of the families Rousseau seeks to reform, whereas the children at Clarens must stay with their family because they live in the ideal he proposes to create.

But to create such a world in the novel is to obscure how it came to be in the first place. Where do these “great souls” come from, who are so necessary for creating this well-ordered society? They seem to have spontaneously appeared as fortunate anomalies, and Wolmar and Julie’s characters have everything to do with the success of their whole endeavor. Already, before *Emile*, we see just how difficult this project is to undertake, to create unified individuals who are

¹⁹⁷ That is, if he even sees other children as human beings at all; Rousseau says that a child “loves his sister as he loves his watch, and his friend as his dog” (*Emile* 219).

¹⁹⁸ It is a normal childhood, excepting, perhaps, the well-ordered society ruled by the entirely rational Wolmar, and the mother’s former lover joining the family unit as well...

good for themselves and good for others, because the conditions must be just right and you need the right individuals to create those conditions in the first place. Rousseau takes up the “easier” task of *maintaining* a well-ordered society and naturally good individuals in *Julie*, showing how children would be properly educated if they already enjoy the right conditions for happiness and morality. If it can be done at all, it certainly should be possible there. When Rousseau turns to *Emile*, his task is to show what it would take to do this in the real world – and the answer is to create a carefully-controlled world around the child that keeps him from any real contact with the outside world. So he first asks in *Julie* whether we can raise good individuals in good conditions, and then he asks whether we can raise good individuals in bad conditions, who can in turn create good conditions. The answer to both is an unfortunate no, even though this may not be immediately apparent.

If Julie’s children are to be raised properly and live the rest of their lives with the same wholeness and goodness, maintaining the conditions to raise their children this way as well, it is questionable whether they will ever achieve such a feat. Consider that Julie has two sons; unless the Wolmar holdings get split between the brothers, one acquiring the d’Étange estate while the other keeps Clarens, one brother has the more difficult task of *creating* a well-ordered estate from scratch, whereas his brother will simply have to maintain this little society. Neither task is simple or straightforward, but finding oneself outside of the perfect conditions of the well-ordered society, with no apparent resources for dealing with disorder, makes the task of recreating order almost impossible. We do not see the children’s entire education since they are still in the middle of their pre-rational education at the hands of their mother, but the rational education they will receive from their father will certainly not be the same as his own education.¹⁹⁹ Wolmar has experienced

¹⁹⁹ Not to mention the fact that Wolmar presumes he will not live to see his children to this stage, and his atheism makes him an imperfect model anyway. His plan for bringing St. Preux into his household is not

a whole range of misfortunes, being born a prince and coming to lose his entire fortune, exiled from his homeland (*Julie* Letter IV.XII). Over the course of his life, however, Wolmar has carefully, coolly observed human nature and reaches his conclusions about it based on his experiences. These are experiences that his children will never have in the context of Clarens, lessons they might only learn from hearing of these examples. Their later counterpart, Emile, will only learn through experience, just as Wolmar did, and it seems to be a crucial part of learning how to create order in a chaotic, soul-dividing world.

On the other hand, Emile's experiences are carefully curated and he does not see the hand of his Tutor controlling his environment to keep him from feeling others' wills imposing on him, at least until the Tutor tells him and Emile willingly subjects himself to the Tutor's authority (*Emile* 325). He cannot even comprehend human relationships in any real sense until he reaches puberty, and he is kept in a state of confusion over the aims of his new desires until the Tutor can hopefully cultivate his taste for good relationships and virtuous women in seeking his future bride (316-19). The method of his education changes at this point and for the first time he is *told* what he ought to do and look for in a companion. He does not develop his taste by examining examples; he encounters the women of the world and finds they don't suit the tastes with which his Tutor imbued him (328-33). Even when they finally find the woman intended for him, Emile does not recognize her suitability until he hears her name, Sophie (413-16). He has not developed the judgment necessary even to *identify* the virtuous woman, though he at least recognizes which women are not suitable for him. Then after they have courted and the Tutor makes him leave his beloved to learn about politics and ensure he can psychically survive the loss of his future wife, he returns to her with a questionable ability to live with her and raise their children properly (447-75). He begs

only to "cure" him and Julie of their love for one another, but he does so in order to "groom" St. Preux for the task of educating his children (*Julie* 416).

Jean-Jacques, when announcing his wife's pregnancy, to "remain the master of the young masters" and to "advise" and "govern" them (480). This couple who was raised for each other, to be halves of a moral whole who combine their particular and general knowledge together to acquire complete knowledge of humanity and how to treat it, somehow *still* need some sort of supplement to raise their children properly (387).

Emile's education having to do with other human beings comes at such a late stage, and with so little preparation for it, that he receives his taste as bestowed upon him by the Tutor (*Emile* 328-29). Even if the Tutor gives the boy the taste for the right things, Emile has not grown up with others and learned what good humans are or what healthy relationships between them ought to be. Whereas "nothing human is foreign" to Emile only once he reaches puberty, the Wolmar children are familiarized with everything human from their very first "preparatory" education (*Emile* 212, *Julie* 468). The importance of socialization and where it belongs even in a negative education is shown through Sophie's education, since she is constantly around friends, family, and strangers, but we will see that the healthiest form of this is shown in the education of all of Julie's children. Sophie is raised very much in the world of wills because she is to learn how to subject herself to others, being a woman with material needs and the accompanying moral need to consider public opinion as a means to those ends (*Emile* 361, 365, 387).²⁰⁰ Her education takes place within the family, as opposed to Emile's more or less solitary education as an "orphan," for gendered purposes. Even if the Tutor wants to make a "family man" out of Emile and redirect him towards this small community as opposed to a more natural solitude or more patriotic citizenship, he keeps Emile from too much attachment to the family and ultimately sets him up to flee at the first sign of troubles, as he does in the sequel, *The Solitaires*.²⁰¹ Just as Rousseau shows Thetis dipping

²⁰⁰ See also Schwartz 66, n. 48.

²⁰¹ Melzer 92-93; Senior 528, 531-32; Shklar 22, 150..

Achilles in the Styx in the frontispiece to *Emile*, Rousseau dips Emile into the river of human relations – and leaves one ankle dry (*Emile* ii). There will always be something asocial about Emile that undermines his ability to truly relate to other human beings. He is taught to be able to remove himself from even his most intimate relationship without psychic damage (447-49). Rousseau does not fully commit him to establishing the salutary community of family; his personal psychic wholeness is always primary.

This will not be the case for Julie's sons or for Henriette, who are all raised together, raised for one another, and who will always be members of a community before they are individuals. They will all, in a way, be educated like women (à la Sophie) insofar as women are condemned by nature or prejudice to be social. There will be no escape route. Every part of their education directs them to find personal wholeness in their participation as free members of a good society. But again, their ability to *be* in the well-ordered society as happy and moral members of it is very different from their ability to *maintain* or *create* this order themselves (the problems facing the two Wolmar sons). We are back at square one: where Julie's children are educated in a way that makes them capable of actively enjoying and participating in the salutary conditions they are in, correcting for the shortcoming of Emile's education, it also falls short of Sophie's education in that they will not be able to maintain or create this order – they will never be able to be outside of this order to direct it. Denise Schaeffer argues that this is Sophie's great strength, to be truly in the relationship as well as truly outside of it to judge and direct it, though this ends up being a function of the fact that the relationship is, at bottom, an illusion she has created.²⁰² The Wolmar children are the ignorant participants of this society, who love it and find their fulfillment in it, but who will not be able to step outside of it without danger to its continuation.

²⁰² Schaeffer, "Reconsidering the Role of Sophie in Rousseau's *Emile*," 617-18.

It may be that Wolmar, and later, St. Preux, would have some method and curriculum of their own that would teach them how to maintain or create this order once they reach the age of reason, but we do not get a description of it in *Julie*. The best we get is St. Preux suggesting that he is writing such a plan for Wolmar, telling him:

You know that following our conversations about your children's education I had jotted down a few thoughts derived from them and which met your approval. Since my departure new reflections have occurred to me on the same subject, and I have reduced the whole into a sort of system which I will send to you once I have worked it out better, so that you may examine it in turn... This system begins where Julie's leaves off, or rather it is merely its sequel and development; for everything consists in not spoiling the man of nature by appropriating him for society." (*Julie* 501)

The editors suggest this is a "quasi-announcement of the imminent publication of *Emile*" since the book was forthcoming, but we contemporary readers know the shortcomings of the education it contains, the book not being the treatise it appears to be (*Julie* 501 n.138). Furthermore, Julie's children lose their mother before the age of reason, and are not likely to find a replacement for her who can continue their pre-rational education, even in her cousin, Claire. Claire explicitly entrusted her own daughter to Julie's care and forfeited her task of educating her (361-62). She does not participate, as far as we know, in any of the early conversations on education; she is at least not present for the conversation that St. Preux relates to Milord Edward (Letter V.III, 458, 626). The only conversation she has about education with Julie is when Julie is on her deathbed, urgently relating her sons' educational program and distributing its tasks amongst her loved ones, and even more urgently relating the entire education of Henriette for the first time (578).²⁰³ Even if their education were to conclude properly with Wolmar or St. Preux, to the end of maintaining

²⁰³ Again, not for the reader's benefit, since Wolmar only mentions that she outlines the education – not what she actually says. The editors apparently find that this brief mention of Henriette's education satisfies the promise we would get this discussion later (*Julie* 578, n. 107).

order as found at Clarens, there is an abrupt break in the crucial preparation and no mere adherence to its principles can replace the success it finds being based on a mother's love.

Conclusion

Julie's presentation of her children's negative education presents a useful contrast both to her own education at the hands of St. Preux and to the negative education Rousseau will later present in *Emile*. Though the children's education is similar in many respects to Emile's and Sophie's educations, and portions of Julie's project are restated in *Emile*, there is a significant difference in the administration of it through the family in *Julie*, as opposed to the tutor in *Emile*. By being raised within the family, the Wolmar children are exposed to the world of wills from their infancy, and thereby learn how to relate properly to other people long before Emile will. They are still protected from images of arbitrary authority that would make them seek to impose their own wills on others, and understand the services rendered to them as a benevolent gesture that the children cannot hope to return until they are older. Though the servants must obey the masters of Clarens, the children are shown this relationship is based on mutual need and that the service is reciprocal; the Wolmars need the help of their servants, and the servants need their jobs. They will not, therefore, grow up to be wholly independent, but they will eventually be able to compensate their servants for their help.

Unlike Emile, they will be suited to intimate relationships, and unlike Julie, they will be suited to subordinate their own wills to the general will that prevails at Clarens. They will not endure the conflict between desires, and between desire and duty as Julie did, as these are necessarily in harmony in the context of Clarens for those educated to it. As stated before, Julie embraces the good order and institutional constraints of Clarens but she has been educated to real virtue, to real self-control, to real moral wholeness, and cannot fully subject her will to the general

will, no matter how salutary or how aligned they might generally be with one another. As Schwartz points out, Julie is not satisfied by ruling or being ruled, that is, by “sexual politics,” but finds it necessary to her in her position as Madame de Wolmar.²⁰⁴ Her children will be more capable of these relationships, more satisfied by them, but they will still have the taste and judgment that keeps them from complete subjection to another.

Whether or not they will be capable of maintaining or producing the good order they grow up in is another question. On the one hand, we do not see their education to reason, nor do we get the plan of it in any detail from Wolmar or St. Preux, just allusions to there being a plan. So perhaps the education to reason and judgment is so radically different from the “preparatory” education that it will teach them how to create and maintain order, we simply do not get to see it. On the other hand, despite suggestions from Stewart and Vaché, it is not likely that Rousseau intends their education to reason to be the same as he lays out in *Emile*, seeing as the Wolmar children are already “prepared” for their education in a way that puts them years ahead of Emile and gives them a different character. They are truly created for the family and are ready for human relationships long before puberty. Even if they cannot create the extreme order of Clarens, it certainly appears they will be more successful at raising healthy families and weathering the storms of marriage.

In the next and final chapter, I will take up the question of Rousseau’s intention in giving his readers so many models of education, and what each education might be suited for. Given that Rousseau acknowledges the drastic impact history has on human beings, we must consider whether his recommendations (whatever they are) are suitable only for his particular audience or whether they have some value for us today. What is there for the contemporary woman to learn from Rousseau about her own wholeness, happiness, and morality, and what is there for her to learn

²⁰⁴ Schwartz, 140.

from him about her relationships with parents, friends, lovers, a spouse, and her children? As should be clear from the foregoing discussion, Rousseau is not a simple sexist intent on subjugating women for the pleasure of men. He recognizes the complications that plague modern humans, not least of all women, who are most clearly torn between natural desires and social duties. *Julie* offers more alternatives, and richer alternatives, to resolve these tensions than I think has been recognized thus far.

CHAPTER 5: EVALUATING ROUSSEAU'S EDUCATIONS

Before *Emile*, Rousseau presents *Julie* as an education for women, which in turn contains within it two visions of moral education: one for adults and one for children. While *Julie* certainly fits into the rest of Rousseau's work, there are still differences between the educations it illustrates and that found in *Emile*. In this concluding chapter, then, I will more fully explore Rousseau's purpose in presenting "alternatives" across the two works. While many of the differences between educations come from the material differences between the fictional students – old and young, male and female, rational and sentimental – we have also seen how Rousseau collapses some of these differences in *Julie*'s characters. Whereas gender appears to be the crucial point of difference in educating young people in *Emile*, Rousseau presents an education towards "bisexuality" in *Julie*, at least for his adult characters. While ultimately unsuited to the characters and Rousseau's contemporaries, given their circumstances, we modern-day readers perhaps live under conditions that are more amenable to this kind of moral education that Julie and her companions receive.

So here I am concerned with both Rousseau's intended education for his audience and the actual educations he presents in his novels, where they are in harmony and where they diverge from one another. It could be the case that none of the educations Rousseau proposes are appropriate for anyone as a real education, and that they all essentially serve the purpose of illustrating his principle of the natural goodness of man. At the other extreme, it could also be the case that Rousseau intends for one or a combination of his educational proposals could be practically useful for the reader's moral education. I take a position between the two and argue that the reader is meant to partake in Julie's education with her, and cultivates her taste in service to good judgment through reading the novel. Again, this is similar to Denise Schaeffer's claim that the reader is taught to judge through the process of reading *Emile*, but Schaeffer overestimates the

ability of an inexperienced reader in approaching this more philosophical educational novel.²⁰⁵ Rather, the reader needs to be *prepared* to read Rousseau at his peak, to approach his “best” and “most important” work (*Confessions* 480). And the way to do that is to first learn to appreciate his clearest vision of the tensions within the social human being and his most charming visions of his possible solutions to those tensions – romantic love or the well-ordered family.²⁰⁶ It will turn out that the moral education for Julie and her companions is how Rousseau’s education for his audience also works. The reader’s taste ought to be cultivated through his romantic novel but she cannot simply remain charmed by such a vision. Such enclaves of rustic simplicity were becoming rare even in Rousseau’s time, so the next step of good judgment is necessary for adopting the principles of simple happiness and minimizing internal and external conflict outside of the idyllic conditions *Julie*’s characters enjoy. The reader ought to see Clarens in its perfected order, while seeking out a solution to their selfishness and dividedness that will never reach this perfection but ought to approach or approximate it. If we cannot hope to find a perfect society to live in once we are educated, perhaps we need a model of education that takes place outside of this perfect society, like the one in *Emile*.

Now, it may not be the case that the reader of *Julie* is necessarily expected to go on to read *Emile*. Judith Shklar emphasizes in her conclusion that among Rousseau’s works, *Julie* alone was meant for a non-academic audience, for an audience outside of Rousseau’s intellectual peers,

²⁰⁵ Denise Schaeffer, *Rousseau on Education, Freedom, and Judgment* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 2014), 9-11, 57. See also John T. Scott, “Do You See What I See? The Education of the Reader in Rousseau’s *Emile*,” *The Review of Politics* 74 (2012), 443-64.

²⁰⁶ Rousseau also presents a charming vision of romantic love and the beginnings of a family in *Emile*, but there he explicitly leaves out some of the most touching moments (*Emile* 441, 449, 475). The private, individual solutions of romance and family are only one option Rousseau presents, as well. His political solutions are laid out in other works – *On the Social Contract*, *Political Economy*, and *Considerations on the Government of Poland* – but these are hardly “charming,” though they might be inspiring or moving in their exhortations to patriotism and citizenship.

whereas *Emile* seems written specifically for that intellectual audience with its philosophical content.²⁰⁷ Even though Rousseau claims from the outset that *Emile* “was begun to gratify a good mother who knows how to think,” the project takes on a life of its own and grows beyond its original scope, beyond its original “purpose” of educating this woman (33). What is clear is that for those who were *Emile*’s intended audience, Rousseau either meant for them to read *Julie* first or at least he believes they should have been more receptive to *Emile* given that *Julie* was published first. He claims in his *Confessions*, “Everything that is bold in *The Social Contract* was previously in the *Discourse on Inequality*; everything that was bold in *Emile* was previously in *Julie*. Now these bold things excited no clamor against the two former works; thus they were not the things that excited it against the latter” (*Confessions* 342).²⁰⁸ *Emile* may be the more systematic, fully developed vision of education, but all of its major principles are already expressed in *Julie* and *Julie* was a riotous success. One young man, J.-L. Le Cointe, even wrote to Rousseau to thank him for writing *Julie*, claiming that it had strengthened his marriage, and that he would “follow [Rousseau’s] lessons in order to form [his children] into men.”²⁰⁹ Though Shklar claims that Rousseau’s readers did not necessarily understand the philosophical principles in *Julie*, Darnton suggests that many did and they actively took to incorporate those principles and lessons into their own lives.²¹⁰ Rousseau’s lay audience was friendlier to his fictional writing than were his intellectual counterparts to his ideas in general, and insofar as Rousseau sought to effect real change – however limited – it depended on reaching these “average” people through their taste to

²⁰⁷ Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 222-24. See also Nicole Fermon, *Domesticating Passions: Rousseau, Woman, and the Nation* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 99.

²⁰⁸ Fermon, 19 n.21.

²⁰⁹ Robert Darnton, “The Origin of Modern Reading,” *The New Republic* (Feb 1984), 32. Cited in Fermon, 19. See also Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Correspondance Complète*, vol. 8, ed. R. A. Leigh (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1965), 292-93.

²¹⁰ Shklar, 222-23; Darnton, 32.

develop good judgment (*Julie* 12-17). *Julie*'s audience in particular would be properly educated to read and understand *Emile*, even if they did not ultimately respond to it as enthusiastically as Rousseau would have liked.²¹¹ Perhaps the "man of letters" Rousseau "converses" with in the Second Preface to *Julie* was right: the audience who are given *Julie* as medicine in a cup with a sweetened lip "will lick the edges of the vessel and not drink the liquor" (*Julie* 12). But that does not mean Rousseau did not intend for them to learn, simply that there was no guarantee that his rhetorical strategy would work.

Though *Julie* made Rousseau into the first celebrity author, and women felt vindicated by the novel because of its praise of their power, I am not concerned here with the actual educational result of *Julie*'s publication, especially in relation to *Emile*'s reception.²¹² Rather I am concerned with what their relationship ought to be according to Rousseau's system. Again, Rousseau is more than willing to admit the great limitations to practical reform; there is no magical cure for humanity's ills.²¹³ If his readers do not understand his thought, it is through no lack of trying on his part. Here I intend to show what *Julie*'s readers should learn if they are educated through reading the novel and if they seriously consider Rousseau's educational proposals therein. This in turn has implications for reading *Emile* after it. I will finally turn to *Julie*'s influence on a current-day audience, whether Rousseau still speaks to our worries, conflicts, and hopes about the world, and whether his solutions are at all applicable for us today – especially for us women with a great many more opportunities to live our lives as we see fit in contemporary liberal democracies.

²¹¹ Rousseau tells how his reading of *Emile* to Mme de Luxembourg "did not succeed as well [as reading her *Julie*]; either because the material was less to her taste, or because so much reading bored her in the end," but she nevertheless took it upon herself to make *Emile*'s publication possible (*Confessions* 447).

²¹² Joel Schwartz, *The Sexual Politics of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 175 n.21.

²¹³ Shklar, 163; Arthur M. Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), 89, 281-82.

How is *Julie* meant to affect Rousseau's 18th century audience?

Though the question of precisely who Rousseau's intended audience is for *Julie* remains murky given his differing statements in the Second Preface, discussed in the introduction above, it is expressly meant for women and Rousseau says in a number of places across his works that nothing can be done to reform society before women are educated, that they are the source of corruption but also the first agents of all change (*First Discourse* 52-53).²¹⁴ On the other hand, though "better suited to women with its gothic aura," *Julie* is not meant exclusively for women (*Julie* 3). The fictional form that makes Rousseau's philosophy more accessible makes it more accessible to the general public, men and women alike. When he says that, with *Julie*, he has changed his means of communication, through a novel rather than treatises so as to speak to "children" rather than "men" who do not listen, he is not making a gendered point (*Julie* 12). That is, he is not so much abandoning the effort of speaking to men as *males* as he has given up trying to speak to men as *adults*. Men and women, unable to understand or refusing to assent to the truth of Rousseau's reason are not to be spoken to as adults; they must be spoken to as children, not with the voice of reason but by playing on their sentiments (12). If women must be worked upon first to effect change according to Rousseau's sexual politics, that is one thing, but Rousseau is not equating women with children as inherently incapable of reason by presenting them with a novel rather than a treatise. Nor is he exempting men from this project. Rousseau includes men in his expressly intended audience as half of the rustic couples he envisions reading his novel after a long day's work and devoting themselves to one another and their simple, moral lives (16). Plenty of men read him and wept as much as their female counterparts, overcome with emotion over the story of

²¹⁴ See also his discussion of the disorder of women leading to the destruction of society (*Letter to d'Alembert* 109); the necessity for women simply to be "women and mothers" to ensure their "empire" (*Julie* 479); and the natural order for women to rule men indirectly, therefore necessitating an education to virtue for women in corrupt times (*Emile* 46, 358, 363-64, 382-83).

Julie and her lover.²¹⁵ Both modern men and women are “children” in that they must be taught who and what they are, what problems they face, and how they might solve these problems, but they are not capable of reason yet. Their inflamed passions and internal tensions make them unreceptive to those rational arguments that point out how they are directed towards false goods, and that they destroy themselves and one another in their pursuit of them (*Second Discourse* 179-80).

So when Rousseau tells the “man of letters” that his readers ought to take Julie’s advice on judging what one reads, he is pointing out the significance of Julie’s education for the meaning of the novel, as well as imploring the reader to take this education on for herself (17).²¹⁶ Julie’s own education is a model of educating adults who come to adulthood incapable of the reason necessary to understand humanity, act morally, or be happy under the competitive conditions of modern bourgeois society. That education begins where *Julie* begins with its readers: through the sentiments. Rousseau says Julie and St. Preux “are children” at the beginning of the novel as well, so “will they think as men?... Filled with the single sentiment that occupies them, they are in delirium, and they think they are philosophizing. Would you have them know how to observe, judge, and reflect? They know nothing of all that. They know how to love; they relate everything to their passion” (11). These sentimental, endearing young people “get everything wrong” and yet this is not the condition they remain in (11). They undertake an education to develop virtue, their lives radically change with Julie’s marriage to Wolmar, and even the man of letters notices the change in them from ignorant youths to reasonable, virtuous adults. He tells Rousseau:

²¹⁵ Darnton, 31-33. See also Raymond Trousson, *Lettres à J.-J. Rousseau sur La Nouvelle Héloïse* (Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2011).

²¹⁶ Julie says, “I for one have no other manner of judging my Readings than to sound the dispositions in which they leave my soul, and I scarcely imagine what sort of goodness a book can possess when it does not lead its readers to do good,” to which Rousseau as editor appends the footnote: “If the reader approves this rule, and uses it to judge this collection, the editor will not appeal his judgment” (214).

I admit that a man of twenty and maidens of eighteen should not, however educated, talk like Philosophers, even if they think that's what they are. I also admit, and this difference has not escaped me, that these maidens turn out to be women of merit, and this young man a better observer... Setting out to depict reasonable people, why begin at a point where they have not yet reached that stage? The childish games that precede the lessons of wisdom dissuade the reader from waiting for them; the evil scandalizes before the good can edify; finally, indignant, he gives up and casts the book aside just when he was about to profit from it. (11)

He almost hits the point squarely on the head. He begins by questioning the inclusion of their youthful ignorance before they are reasonable and have something to teach the reader, but he quickly turns to the problem of creating such a scandalous premise for a work apparently made to improve morals. This of course, Rousseau says, is how it works to engage the proper audience – those who have something to learn are those who have a taste for the immoral premise (12). Rousseau then turns to the man of letters' original question, about the inclusion of foolishness before introducing reason, and again connects it to taste – the “children” he speaks to will not drink the “ill-disguised medicines” of “naked reason” without sweetening the vessel it comes in – and the reader cannot love the characters and “appreciate their virtues” in the second half of the book without “deploring their faults” in the first half (12). He must begin by working on the reader's taste because she has not yet been made capable of using her reason for moral ends, only to use reason in service to her corrupted tastes.

But Rousseau hints at something beyond taste here. The reader cannot appreciate, cannot *understand* the reasonable and virtuous adults that Julie and St. Preux become if they do not relate to their same delusions as young people. The reader must begin in the same place as the characters to recognize a somewhat kindred spirit in them, and to see that such a transformation is possible even for herself. What is even better is that Rousseau gives her an example to imitate, but also provides the blueprint for imitation and moral education in outlining Julie's education. *Julie* is a tableau of human virtue that the reader is told how to evaluate and use through the explanation of

Julie's education (Letter I.XII). There is no need to read between the lines: Rousseau provides the content and method of this education explicitly. By the time the reader reaches the second half of the novel, centered on the pastoral idyll of Clarens, she is beginning to develop judgment as her tastes are really refined by an examination of this peak of family life. Even at Clarens, however, things are not always what they seem, and the reader must find the good aspects of it tasteful, while judging what is not good about it.

Of course, Rousseau is a political as well as a social thinker, and his appropriate audience has a certain character that it receives from its political context. Rousseau says *Julie* is not meant for his fatherland; he purposefully abandons his "Citizen of Geneva" moniker for this work, directing it only to "corrupt peoples" (20, 3). That is, it is not meant for Europe's republics, but rather for Europe's monarchies.²¹⁷ Those with wholly corrupted tastes have the most to learn from this romantic moral tale, and they must change the most about themselves to imitate these sentimental characters who love genuinely and seek to be virtuous. Yet the example is also apparently appropriate for the partially-corrupted rustic couple that gets its entertainments from the city and need some reminding of the beauty, virtue, and value of their simple lives (16-17).

What is left ambiguous, however, is the full mechanism of this education. Rousseau wants to improve morals, but by what means? He wants to create moral readers through *Julie*, but does he expect these newly-moralized women to then educate men, as he suggests in *Emile* (390, 392-93)? Or is he just as eager for men to learn directly through his novel as well? What role do sexual relations and the family play in this solution? We have seen that this moral education creates

²¹⁷ Schwartz, 128; Fermon, 99, 158. Mark Kremer does not so strictly define Rousseau's political audience, but rather shows how St. Preux's accounts of different European regions and polities reveal Rousseau's arguments about nature, society, and the proper relations between humans. See Mark Kremer, *Romanticism and Civilization: Love, Marriage, and Family in Rousseau's Julie* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017), 9, 11.

individuals very different from the family-oriented Emile and Sophie in the next work. The moral education in *Julie* is towards “bisexuality,” of taking on masculine and feminine judgment to resist moral dependency, and it makes individuals who might still be intensely capable of romantic love but who are not necessarily prepared or suited for a family and home economy that depends on psychological interdependence and a sex-based division of labor. The moral and psychological independence achievable by the proper education produces *whole* individuals, and while Julie continues to want to expand herself, as a full and whole self, into everything, she is severely limited by the realities of running Clarens alongside her husband and the social realities of the world that made her being a wife necessary (*Julie* 457, 484).²¹⁸ Though she is a beloved ruler at Clarens, her soul is not suited to either ruling her husband or the estate, nor is she capable of submitting to that rule or order without injury to her cultivated moral wholeness that allows her to be judge of herself.²¹⁹

When Julie was educated at the hands of St. Preux, their romantic relationship did not aim at ruling and being ruled in perpetuity, but rather they sought ultimately to subsume or be subsumed (*Julie* 44, 83-84, 121-22). They want to be a single whole, not of merged parts but as

²¹⁸ Shklar, 120.

²¹⁹ Schwartz says Julie “rejects sexual politics” because she wants total fulfillment in love without any ruling (140). Contrast this with his account of Claire, who, “unlike ordinary women... would rather avoid rule than exercise it over another at the price of being ruled herself” (137). Julie rejects sexual politics because she does not want love tainted by power dynamics, while Claire rejects sexual politics because she does not want to be ruled and can be satisfied without ruling others if that it what it takes to remain free. See also Mira Morgenstern, “Women, Power, and the Politics of Everyday Life,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. Lynda Lange (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002). Morgenstern agrees with this distinction and describes their different approaches to dealing with sexual politics and the inauthenticity it forces on individuals as believing versus perpetuating fake transparency/authenticity (125). Julie wants to be authentic and transparent, believing she can be so within the confines of social life (126). This is a soul-destroying delusion, however, and Julie’s constant appeal to her husband’s authoritative presence and the order of Clarens as the sources of her virtue further exacerbate her problem: she cannot exercise her self-rule because of the external rule of Clarens she draws down upon herself (*Julie* Letters IV.VII-VIII, XII-XIII, XVI).

one absolute whole with a single will. This is contrasted with the “inseparable” relationship between Julie and Claire, which Rousseau writes of in his *Confessions*:

I drew for myself the most ravishing images of love, friendship, the two idols of my heart. I liked to adorn them with all the charms of the sex which I had always adored. I imagined two female friends rather than two male friends, because if the example is more rare, it is also more lovable. I endowed them with two analogous but different characters, with two appearances, not perfect but to my taste, which enlivened benevolence and sensitivity. I made one a brunette and the other blonde, one lively and the other gentle, one wise and the other weak, but with such a touching weakness that virtue seemed to gain from it. (361)

The two women are distinguished in looks and in character, love each other intensely, and each cannot be without the other (*Julie* 621, 37, Letter II.V).²²⁰ But for all their love and desire to be with one another, this is not the same as Julie’s desire to be combined with St. Preux: Tony Tanner points out that “Julie calls Claire her “inseparable”; from Saint-Preux she feels “indivisible,”” under which conditions the cousins remain whole beings unto themselves who cannot be separated, while between St. Preux and Julie there is no delineation whatsoever.²²¹ This is why Claire and Julie can speak to each other as independent moral beings, and why Julie can seek advice from her cousin.

The 18th century women who read *Julie* are given the means of moral independence, an education towards reason and good judgment, with a very grave warning: the woman most perfectly educated this way, and who then finds herself under the most perfect order conducive to morality and happiness, cannot find happiness in this world – or at least in this historical period where women’s dependence is a material necessity.²²² No real woman can hope to be as thoroughly

²²⁰ Jeanne Thomas Fuchs, *The Pursuit of Virtue: A Study of Order in La Nouvelle Héloïse* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 139-40.

²²¹ Tony Tanner, “Julie and “La Maison Paternelle”: Another Look at Rousseau’s “La Nouvelle Héloïse,”” *Daedalus* 105.1 (Winter 1976), 30.

²²² Shklar notes: “Domestic life is not enough for a woman of Julie’s emotional energies and the society in which she must live allows her no scope beyond it” (120). Schwartz agrees and concludes it is the intensity of the superior woman’s feelings of the conflict between society and self that leads to their self-destruction (138 n.47). Kremer notes that *Julie* “stands alone as the fountainhead of romanticism” (1). The heroines of

educated or naturally impressive as Julie, who could find her happiness outside of domestic life, though not outside of love, nor could this reader ever escape the material need to get married in the social context in which she found herself. Of course, condemned to marry and raise a family, no real woman could hope to find herself at Clarens, either, which at least could make life harmonious and fulfilling for the woman who was educated to be a part of its well-ordered whole instead of a whole herself. This is the point of Julie presenting her children's education: she indicates how we might be properly educated to fit into the bigger picture, to have healthy relationships to one another while also being happy ourselves. This still requires a well-ordered whole to become a part of, however. Again, these harmonious communities do not spontaneously arise and so the education for the Wolmar children is not exactly an education we could use outside of Clarens.

Rousseau's next work, *Emile*, takes this to the opposite extreme, and presents an education to interdependence, which can easily turn sour for the properly-educated interdependent individual who does not have all of the institutional constraints that Clarens provides or the continued guidance of the Tutor, Jean-Jacques. Emile and Sophie establish their family, but misfortunes and their freedom to make bad choices lead them to the corrupt society of Paris where their marriage falls apart in *The Solitaires*. There must be a proper education for each context, and Rousseau shows how they can fail to coincide in two different ways. Either the education makes this individual capable of freedom in a context that does not afford them freedom, or the education makes them dependent in a context where it is not safe to be dependent without eventually risking one's morality and happiness. Julie and St. Preux would never have made the choice to relieve their sadness in Paris, nor would Emile and Sophie be oppressed by the good order of Clarens.

those novels to follow in this romantic tradition fit this mold as well, for example Emma Bovary and Anna Karenina.

Julie presents the dangers of the “bisexual” education while *Emile* presents the dangers of the “sexed” education. Both educations are tested in the context of extreme conditions: the former in the impossibly well-ordered Clarens among exceptional characters, and the latter after Emile and Sophie suffer a number of catastrophes.

This leaves the reader of *Julie* and *Emile* with a sort of chicken-and-egg problem, or at least a question of how we ought to understand Rousseau’s presentations of two apparently imperfect educations. *Julie* leads us to *Emile* because of its imperfections, but *Emile* is flawed, too. On the one hand, it may just be the case that there are problems with both educations because neither takes place in the proper contexts. If instead we administered them to individuals under the right socio-political-historical conditions, they would succeed in making bisexual or sexed beings who are capable of happiness and wholeness in their specific circumstances. There is the issue, however, of Julie’s education being somewhat incomparable to Emile’s or Sophie’s in that one is an education for an essentially formed adult and the other is for wholly unformed children, respectively. There remains the possibility that Julie’s education could follow from an education more like Emile’s and Sophie’s, as a further adult education to supplement their youthful one.

What can *Julie* say to women today?

As the first philosopher to take a step toward historicism, insofar as Rousseau argues our social conditions affect our characters, his educations must take these conditions into account and their failures are partly a result of inadequately responding to them. In this way, we are not unreasonable to balk at his educational proposals that seem wholly out of sync with our political, social, and economic environment today. The artificial barriers to equality in each of these realms have been or are increasingly being removed and women are allowed by the law and by the greater part of public opinion to take part in the world outside of her home. Women’s material dependence on

men no longer exists in the West as a result of express laws, and the resulting moral dependence, or subjection to moral opinion, has declined with increasing economic independence and the sexual revolution. The creation of family-oriented moral halves we find in *Emile* is repulsive to those who refuse to see raising a family or managing a household as a fulfilling life. This is generally the case in Lockean liberal societies that think private family life is unfulfilling for humans compared to meaningful labor in the political and economic realms. Even if they recognize that Rousseau wants to reorient women *and* men towards the family, they reject this as a good life for anyone. There is additional rejection from those feminists who agree that human fulfillment is not found in the home, and that Rousseau lauds the family as a way of cloistering and oppressing women specifically. They do not believe Rousseau intends really to reorient men towards the family but rather to rededicate women to it to free the men for public life.²²³

Yet it is hard to deny the prescience of Rousseau's diagnosis of modern bourgeois ills, especially as they manifest themselves today. Cranky Baby Boomers eagerly point out the *amour-propre* of Millennials with their selfies, "reality" stardom, and bullying in all forms, which are expressions of our vanity, falseness, and competitiveness. We want to appear beautiful, successful, happier than everyone else, but depend on everyone else to witness and confirm it. We exist in self-selected communities, we believe in laissez-faire sexuality, and we are getting married and having children later than preceding generations, if at all. These laments over rugged individualism and immorality are of course the perpetual complaints of older generations, but Rousseau really pinpoints the confusion, pain, and viciousness of our modern situation. We find ourselves, men and women, in contemporary society completely unmoored in a sea of desires and possibilities.

²²³ See, for example, Susan Moller Okin, "The Fate of Rousseau's Heroines," 99, and Sarah Koffman, "Rousseau's Phallocratic Ends," trans. Mara Dulcats, 230, both in *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*.

Material survival is significantly easier with our technological advances, and even our most intimate relationships have changed. Widely-accessible contraception and the sexual revolution allows both men and women the freedom to sleep with whomever they want without the lopsided risk of pregnancy that naturally accompanies sex.²²⁴ We are increasingly able to have whatever and whoever we want, but we continue to chase the elusive approval and esteem of others, and deep down we must admit that it is uncertain whether any of these things we want are good for us – we might even be able to admit to ourselves that they quite likely are not, but we have no idea what else there could be.

Whereas at least some men historically have been able to access a liberal education to discover how to live their lives properly as free individuals, access to this freedom and accompanying education is a much more recent development for women, and formal admission to higher educational opportunities were marked early on by a rejection of such a classical education in favor of postmodern identity studies.²²⁵ It is not politically correct to pursue anything that sees itself as objectively superior, unless it is diversity, pluralism, relativism. Women have been brought into the fold only to receive a second-rate education for the most part. Those who celebrate this either do not recognize it as second-rate, or they do recognize it as such and allow it to keep women out of more serious pursuits. Our educational climate tells us to reject philosophy and an understanding of a superior liberal education out of hand, while enclaves of serious study still linger out of reach. In our minds, Rousseau's apparent sexism makes him an outdated, useless teacher for our young women today who want to live fulfilling lives in private and in public.

²²⁴ Schwartz puts this in Rousseauian terms: contraception eliminates the sexual double standard (at least those parts related to the difference in physical repercussions) and leads to a universal promiscuity where everyone can treat everyone else as objects (146-47).

²²⁵ Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 336-47; Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7-8.

If we women do find ourselves compelled by philosophy, rejecting the relativist zeitgeist, and finding ourselves able to pursue truth in any serious way, we then find ourselves confronting many of those who agree with the critical camp that Rousseau is indeed sexist — but who believe that the world ought to reflect the reality of sexual difference. The argument goes: “It is too bad that women do not have the elevated reason or general judgment that men have for higher pursuits, and perhaps they may even feel that inferiority painfully, but we cannot change human nature and the more we push back against it, the more we destroy our humanity and true virtues respective to our sexes.”²²⁶ Denying and fighting this reality ruins society and leaves us unhappy. Our present circumstances confirm it. Perhaps if we can escape our contemporary understanding of human fulfillment as something selfishly, individually pursued out in the public realm, we would be able to put out our inflamed desires and “rekindle” the natural sentiments that women have abandoned.”

Does Rousseau then have nothing to offer the contemporary female reader but an exhortation to put down his books, drop out of school, and take our place in Julie’s gynaeceum? Only the most extreme of his readers would suggest this is possible in our current context, even if it were desirable. It is not likely women’s liberation can be put back in the box, so to speak, though there are certainly attempts to curb its expansion and to rein it in where possible. Women will continue to get an education and enter the workforce, but they will also continue trying to have families as well. Julie’s education certainly is not designed to prepare her for the economic and civic arenas, but it does cultivate in her and St. Preux the balance of particular and general judgment necessary for healthy private and public lives. Insofar as there are still those who bristle at women’s involvement in the public realm, and claim they will always be inferior in it, *Julie* shows us the possibility of properly educating individuals for the demands of both. On the other

²²⁶ Rousseau warns the judicious mother in Book V of *Emile* not to make a man out of her daughter, for she will never be a good man and loses her ability to be a good woman in the process (364).

hand, even if Rousseau's recommendation is to ultimately focus on the private realm, this comes from his acknowledgement that we desire something beyond false public esteem and he reminds us of our forgotten need for solitude and intimacy, particular judgment, and the "feminine" virtues.

Where Rousseau is strongest in his assessment of human nature and thereby strongest in his position to persuade, is in his acknowledgement of the complicated nature of our desires and the conditions that inflate and confuse them. Even though it appears in Book V of *Emile* that Rousseau does not believe these internal struggles really affect women, or at least they are naturally docile and willing to obey others instead of working through their struggles themselves, I have shown in the preceding analysis that his example of Julie contradicts this common misunderstanding of Rousseau's sexual theory (*Emile* 368-70, 396).²²⁷ Julie struggles between her love for St. Preux and her love of virtue and her parents. She succumbs to sexual temptation; she repents bitterly. She is not forced to marry Wolmar; she chooses to marry him. She is not just pained by her failure to fulfill her duties or her subjection to duty at the expense of desire, but rather she most clearly exemplifies the tensions between conflicting salutary passions when one is aligned with a duty or would be in accordance with duty. Whereas it would be easy to see her struggles simply as desire versus duty, and in our postmodern liberalism reject duty out of hand as something oppressive and soul-destroying, Rousseau shows us that there is something inherently beautiful about our duties. That there is something lovable in what we ought to do, and that we are conflicted precisely because we feel the legitimacy of the claims on us by those things we call

²²⁷ The passages referenced in *Emile* point out the natural docility of the female sex (368), and questions whether the constraints on women really are felt as constraints to them (369), but he also emphasizes the need for more authority when educating girls than ought to be used with boys because docility *comes from* external constraint (370, 396). This is one of many examples in Book V of *Emile* where Rousseau asserts that something is natural to women, then has to admit that their education must create it in them.

duties while also feeling the legitimacy of the claims of nature when their simplicity contradicts society's more complicated and abstract demands.

Rousseau proposes an education for taste and judgment, especially for women, because women feel this tension most acutely, as Morgenstern suggests.²²⁸ They need the most knowledge and resources to navigate their salutary passions, and to avoid developing inflamed and selfish passions. The hope is that they can develop real taste for what is good – for what is best – so that those things that seem to be bitter medicines are found to be more complex than that, more subtle and unexpectedly sweet when properly savored. Rousseau does not want social humans to lose their taste for the healthiest and most fulfilling relationships between humans. If this taste is already lost, he hopes it can be regained or acquired. There is no denying this is part of his project. What is less clear is his recognition of the accompanying bitterness. Something bitter is still bitter even if you develop a taste for it – in spite of or because of its bitterness. He does not simply present the sweetness of private family life as his appeal to women. First of all, it is not simply sweet. It is rife with bitter personal struggle for Julie, even though she is uniquely loving and cherishes her children and husband. Even a family that is not plagued with members' intense moral struggles still takes work and sacrifice to maintain. Second, a simply happy and moral tableau is unappealing and saccharine. It smacks of the artificially sweet rim on the cup of medicine – which is just as

²²⁸ Morgenstern, 139. See also Leah Bradshaw, "Rousseau on Civic Virtue, Male Autonomy, and the Construction of the Divided Female," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 66-67. For a contrary argument, see Alice Ormiston, "Developing a Feminist Concept of the Citizen," *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Here, Ormiston argues that this intense feeling of the tensions is not inherently or universally true of women. Women who remain in the family are less dominated by *amour-propre*, which is the driving passion of the public realm, and therefore less conflicted than men (153). Women's power to mitigate *amour-propre* in men only works in the family, however, since women become corrupted by *amour-propre* once they enter the public realm just as men did when they formed political societies (154). While this might not make women *more* sensitive to the tensions all humans feel, the tensions they would feel entering society would appear to be more acute because of the freshness of them, whereas this has been the condition of men for much longer. Men still feel the tension painfully but have learned to ignore it.

likely poison for all its bitterness. Disguising the medicine is the first step to administering it, but we must then learn to enjoy taking it on its own, to taste the subtle sweetness of the medicine itself.

Conservative readers of Rousseau are likely to overemphasize the sweetness of family life, while progressive readers are likely to overemphasize the bitterness. Both need to develop their taste and judgment through *Julie*. First, for those conservative readers, acknowledging Julie's education means acknowledging the difficulties of moral life in society and the very real need for women to be the "judge of her judges" as Rousseau argues in *Emile* but perhaps fails to accomplish with Sophie (*Emile* 383).²²⁹ Women, though their social happiness depends in part on others' recognition of her virtue, are still not wholly social creatures in that they have individual, private desires and a need for wholeness just as men do. They cannot be wholly subject to public opinion, the great destroyer of internal peace. Rather, they must know whose opinions are important, who is a worthy judge of their character – and to know that, she must have a standard of judgment and character outside of public opinion. She must be morally independent so that her actions are in harmony with what is truly good and not just apparently good. To be morally independent is not to disregard the judgment of others, but only to discern whose judgment is the proper measure of real virtue. It is to avoid the trap of public esteem in those unrelated areas of beauty and wit that tempt women away from real esteem for their real merit, for which they are then condemned by the public opinion that led them astray in the first place. Without good judgment, a woman will not be able to navigate the complicated demands of society in accordance with what is good.

The development of such judgment, then, requires an education that Julie receives in a blend of intellectual and moral exercises. A purely intellectual education is rejected for *all* characters, male and female, in favor of moral education, but this does not eliminate intellectual

²²⁹ Penny A. Weiss, *Gendered Community: Rousseau, Sex, and Politics* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 26, 104.

pursuits – it just changes their orientation. As Rousseau writes to “Henriette,” a reader of his who asks him how she ought to pursue her intellectual life while exhorting him to reconsider his arguments against women’s learning, he believes “one does not take off one’s head like one’s bonnet, and one does not return to simplicity any more than to childhood. Once it is in effervescence, the mind always remains that way, and anyone who has thought will think for his whole life.”²³⁰ Women, once permitted to think, be free, and judge for themselves, cannot simply return to the world of simply caring for children and a husband, and remaining obedient to others. Rousseau might regret the first movements towards material and moral independence for women, but there is no going back. The solution must now address their new freedom.

On the other hand, those progressive readers who also fail to see this liberating side of Rousseau’s education for women and who reject his sexual politics as oppressive and outdated, must learn to see Rousseau offers a form of the freedom they are looking for while also discovering – or rediscovering – the beauty and goodness of the familial life he offers as a tableau. This exhortation is not unheard of in feminist circles, either. It is in fact the main catalyst of third- and fourth-wave feminisms, in response to the second wave that emphasized competitiveness in the public sphere and encouraged the development or unleashing of traditionally “masculine” traits in women as key to equality. This implicitly (sometimes explicitly) denigrates those traditionally “feminine” traits that misogynists agree make women inferior, and later movements in feminism have worked to correct the “internalized misogyny” of second-wave feminism. Rousseau takes this position and lays the foundation for modern feminism in this way.²³¹ The traditionally

²³⁰ “Letters to “Henriette”,” *Rousseau on Women, Love, and the Family*, eds. Christopher Kelly and Eve Grace (Hanover, NH: New England University Press, 2009), 148-50.

²³¹ This point is acknowledged in Lynda Lange, “Rousseau and Modern Feminism,” 24-25, and Penny Weiss and Anne Harper, “Rousseau’s Political Defense of the Sex-Role Family,” 42, 59-60, 62, both in *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*. Else Wiestad agrees with this point, but only because Rousseau first inspired a number of *anti-feminist* movements in Europe which led to feminism. See Else

feminine traits are not to be denigrated or suppressed, but instead celebrated and nurtured as a way to resolve our inner tensions and heal social relations among individuals. Compassion, love, and beauty, all associated with the realm of women, must be reintroduced into social life, which has become vicious, competitive, and ugly.

There are two ways of doing this, however. *Emile* favors sexual differentiation – the educations for men and women there enforce differentiation even where it is unnatural or exaggerated. The two are combined by bringing the two halves together to rule one another in different ways, creating a harmonious and cooperative whole (*Emile* 387). This is the solution we are most familiar with from Rousseau, and the one most readily rejected in a world of new political, economic, and social freedoms for women. He presents an alternative, however, which I have shown in the foregoing analysis. We can instead attempt to incorporate the feminine and masculine in individual souls, to “bisexualize” men and women to make them wholes unto themselves with good particular *and* general judgment. It involves a certain hardening of women but also a certain softening of men, not to the point of becoming the other but of having the two halves rule inside one soul.²³²

Here the objection arises that Rousseau specifically argues against women’s adoption of masculine traits as deforming to her soul and her relationships with others by using the example of Ninon de l’Enclos (*Emile* 364). In attempting to become a man, she fails to actually become one and in the process loses everything valuable and powerful about her own sex (363-64). This

Wiestad, “Empowerment Inside Patriarchy: Rousseau and the Masculine Construction of Femininity,” *Feminist Interpretations of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, 170-71.

²³² Schwartz is careful to point out that effeminacy for men, which leads to this sort of bisexual wholeness, is more easily obtained since a man simply has to reduce his strength to become effeminate, whereas a woman, to become more masculine and thereby whole, would have to “add strength she does not have” (107 n.60). Schwartz must also acknowledge, however, that “Rousseau emphasizes that most women are able to take care of themselves most of the time” and that, while women are “handicapped” without technological advances, these handicaps do tend to disappear or are at least significantly reduced (144-45).

example, however, is not about women adopting masculine traits generally, but adopting the bad traits of intellectual men in society who put on airs, vie for attention, and try to elevate themselves above others. Initially he does not specify particular male traits that ought not be adopted by women, but his further discussion of Mademoiselle de l'Enclos reveals that it is the intellectualism of urban men that he exhorts women not to imitate and men to abandon (409). A woman who pursues these things “is always ridiculous and rightly criticized” because she is “not fit for the station [she] wants to adopt” – but, Rousseau admits, if she *were* fit for that station and had “some true talents, her pretensions would debase them” (409). It is the *amour-propre* of intellectual social climbing that is renounced for women *and* men. He argues that it is women who educate men, and therefore women must be educated in greatness of soul and virtue in order to pull men away from their vainglorious pursuits towards what is truly good and worthwhile for human beings (*First Discourse* 52-53). Men ought to be drawn away from the typically “masculine” towards the typically “feminine” insofar as men’s *amour-propre* is piqued in society and needs to be tempered by the more “naturally” private feminine influence. But a woman cannot do this without also knowing how to be virtuous in the public realm so as to educate her husband properly. She must have masculine knowledge as well. Not every form of “bisexualization” is appropriate, nor is the attempt to wholly be what one is not, but Rousseau provides us with the subtle guidelines to an appropriate bisexualization to make individuals whole and able to interact with one another morally.

Let us not think, however, that the foregoing option is generally possible even in our current conditions of more or less material equality, or that it is necessarily desirable. Even if the conditions are such that this is a possibility *at all* for women, given their new economic

independence, it is still not a solution for *most* people of either sex.²³³ The most extreme and full independence is achievable only by the very rare individual, and more or less depends on the rejection of sexuality, or at least sexuality with any attachment and love.²³⁴ It is not just women who want spouses and children; men fall in love and care about their children as well. Humans are social and cannot go back to asociality or comfortably approximate it in most cases. Perhaps the best solution for social humans is a combination of mutual rule between husband and wife and a partial bisexualization of both to mitigate the psychological harm of this rule. St. Preux's education towards bisexualization of both himself and his female pupils is not to make them capable of forsaking love, but rather to make themselves worthy of each other's love and to maintain the virtue of physically abstaining from one another. If there were no extenuating circumstances, Julie and St. Preux would have married and become parents, not just remained lovers. They likely would have to incorporate some form of mutual rule to practically navigate their relationship and raise their family, as in Emile and Sophie's marriage, but they would also be uniquely outfitted to weather the difficulties Emile and Sophie are not. Neither Julie nor St. Preux would feel the pain of being ruled since their internal rule would be in harmony with external rule – if they have the opposing element in their souls already, the reinforcement of that element from their partner is not an imposition but an invocation. Nor would they be as tempted by external things, as they have the good judgment to avoid them as false goods that cannot cure ills or fulfill their souls.

It is unsurprising that Julie, over the course of her education, understands the possibilities and the limits of the education towards bisexuality. These same concerns are raised in Plato's *Republic*, which she points out in a disagreement with St. Preux, in which they “disputed the moral difference between the sexes” (*Julie* 104). Julie argues that there is no common model for men and

²³³ Schwartz, 8.

²³⁴ Schwartz, 8.

women, who have naturally opposite rules of audacity and modesty, respectively (104). She claims, “A perfect woman and a perfect man must be no more alike in soul than in countenance; such vain imitations between the sexes are the height of unreason; they make the wise man laugh and cupids flee” (*Julie* 105; c.f. *Emile* 357-58). St. Preux must believe the opposite, in “accordance” with the letter of Plato’s *Republic*, which abolishes sexual differentiation and the family. His education, too, works in favor of such an arrangement if taken to the extreme. But again, there is no intention of taking it to the extreme where they would reach total independence and Julie is right in seeking to maintain some differences between them for the sake of prudence and love. These differences of occupation and intellectual pursuits are still secondary to the common standard of virtue and morality they must share and owe to one another. As stated above, the requirement of modesty for women does not permit men to take license and commit adultery. Men do less harm by committing such a crime, but they still do harm and it is still a crime (*Emile* 361).

Rousseau’s recognition of the painful choices women must make to be happy, moral, and whole, even in conditions that do not allow her much choice and that work to divide her and suppress important parts of her, is crucial to his importance for women who are in the position of making choices about their lives, no longer subjects to their husbands for their very survival. Material needs are not the only thing that drive us to seek another with whom to share our lives. Even if marriage and birthrates are down among younger generations, so are divorce rates.²³⁵ We have not eliminated love or the family yet, and so it still presents obstacles to a fulfilling public life, but also still presents the opportunity of a fulfilling private life. There are few women who

²³⁵Philip N. Cohen, “The Coming Divorce Decline,” *Socius* 5:1-6 (September 2018).

are not conflicted by this choice, and while the yearning for more has always existed among women, the possibility of having more makes the choice a real problem.

Insofar as women – and men – will continue to demand supports from the government and employers to make working motherhood possible, like free contraception and access to childcare, our solutions stray very far from Rousseau's. It is a continuation of a type of selfish pleasure-seeking and paid child rearing he saw in the 18th century that made families weak and disrespected in bourgeois society (*Emile* 44-46). But these are not the only solutions that liberate women for participation in the marketplace, and the others are much closer to Rousseau's proposals, particularly paid family leave and social movements to change the culture surrounding fatherhood. Paid family leave, increasingly for men as much as women, serves the double purpose of rededicating parents to their families, allowing them to take the time they want and need to look after their young children, while also removing them from the rat race of economic life, mitigating their competitiveness and constant worry over status. If it were possible in the 18th century, paid paternity leave might have offered a surer way to create "family men" whose fulfillment was found in the family just as much as women's. Combined with the increasing celebration of fatherhood and reduced stigma surrounding the domestically-involved father, these are serious efforts in the Rousseauian spirit to rediscover the peace, happiness, and fulfillment of family life for men and for women. Increased paternal involvement in the family and domestic life may still be desirable for its ability to make increased maternal involvement in the public and economic realms possible, but the goal tends to be towards balancing the two for both parties, not to entrap the father in the household for the sake of the wife. It is, as Schwartz puts it, a way to "enslave" men for women's

use so that women are not the only slaves to domesticity all the time; both become “partial slaves” so that both can be partially free.²³⁶

If we are mostly average people, not savants, statesmen, or saints, our reduced public life as a result of taking time out to raise a family is not so damaging to the individual and rather keeps the individual from a distorted view of what is important in this world. Insofar as it still balances work and family life, however, it does depart from the Rousseauian ideal of having the mother fully dedicated to the enterprise of raising the children, and having the father dedicated to this enterprise both materially as the breadwinner and psychologically by finding the family to be the source of his happiness and fulfillment as well. This arrangement can still undermine the importance of the family in favor of public life, but it certainly tempers the fervor for public life so family life can retain its charms even if it is not the only thing being pursued. But it still takes moral strength to choose the bittersweet rededication to family that limits involvement in public life, and good taste and judgment to know that it is bittersweet to pursue certain forms of happiness that also involve difficult obligations.

And if Rousseau is correct in his presentation of moral education in *Julie*, then we ought to consider how effective a model Julie is herself. There is something deeply compelling about her, in spite of our other prejudices. Even St. Preux tells Milord Edward:

...nothing relative to Julie is outside the scope of virtue. Her charms, her talents, her tastes, her struggles, her faults, her regrets, her home, her friends, her family, her pains, her pleasures, and her entire destiny make of her life a unique example, which few women will wish to imitate, but which they will love despite themselves. (437)

It is difficult to see the good Julie does for others, and how generally happy (though discontent) she is, and not admire her expansiveness of soul. Though she cares for everyone, she is completely self-composed and does not care about others' opinions. Though she is moderate in taking her

²³⁶ Schwartz 152, n.22.

pleasures, she is enthusiastic in enjoying them. Though she is modest and is concerned with her chastity, she is a magnetic lover. She has it all in terms of her character, and we long for her to be able to have it all in her life. We are not natural Julies, nor can we be perfectly educated to be her, but she might be a compelling enough example for us to want to take charge of our souls.

Julie is not the only rare example in the novel, though. Claire is even more rare for her “monstrosity” that makes her naturally “bisexual” and free of sexual desire, like Rousseau near the end of his life (*Julie* 146).²³⁷ Of the two women, let me assert that we today are far more likely to admire Claire’s reason and independence, rather than Julie’s overwrought sensitivity. Yet Claire issues the contemporary woman two significant challenges to her idolization: first, that Claire is *wholly* independent and uninterested in sex, romance, and family. She only marries because it is her only means to escape the paternal home, and she has some respectful affection for Monsieur d’Orbe (334-35, 146). She does not like married life but she still gets married; she is not rebellious against her circumstances, and she is no revolutionary model of feminine liberation. She maintains her psyche by wearing a “mask” throughout her marriage, and secures her freedom only through widowhood.²³⁸ Second, she adores Julie and acknowledges Julie’s superiority over herself. She does not wish to be Julie, but she does admire and love her even more completely than we can. Claire is fascinating, but we must recognize that really we are not Claire, do not want to be Claire, and do not even fully admire what this impressive soul is able to admire.

Looking forward: future work on Rousseau, *Julie*, and education

This project has primarily focused on an analysis of *Julie* and the two educations we find within it, with only preliminary connections to the educations we find in *Emile*. In the next iteration of this work, however, I will conduct a fuller examination of *Emile* in light of *Julie*, a project I hope

²³⁷ Schwartz, 8.

²³⁸ Morgenstern, 126-28.

to have justified in the foregoing chapters. If *Julie* is written to educate its audience in some way, and ought to make the reader capable of a more philosophical account of the same questions and principles first found in this novel, then we must also look at what effect it has on our understanding of *Emile* as a sort of sequel to this work.

Insofar as the editors are right that some of the passages in Letter V.III of *Julie* appear in *Emile* and that there are oblique references to the upcoming publication of it, this raises an interesting question about the mysterious origins of the proper education and the proper educator (*Julie* 704-707).²³⁹ There seems to be a suggested parallel between St. Preux and Jean-Jacques the tutor. In *Emile*, Rousseau says it would be preferable if the tutor had already raised another child, but that such an arrangement is not possible, as no tutor could ever justify teaching his first pupil and he is only capable of raising one child from birth given the constraints of time and resources (*Emile* 51). However, St. Preux is groomed to educate the Wolmar children after he has educated Julie and Claire as adults, in a way resolving this problem of finding a tutor properly prepared to administer the correct education. He is justified in educating children because he has already properly educated adults. This, of course, requires his own extended education at the hands of Wolmar and in the context of Clarens. It is still a question of how to educate the educator outside of these conditions.

There also remains the question of how Rousseau's proposed educations might form a sequence in relation to one another, whether an adult education like Julie's is still an appropriate continuation either of her own children's education, or a childhood education like Emile and Sophie's. Neither of these educations for children appear to fulfill their aims in creating whole, happy, moral individuals, and we are confronted with this problem most clearly in *The Solitaires*,

²³⁹ See Stewart's and Vaché's notes on these pages: n.38-42, n.44-45, n.49, n.53, n. 58-60, n. 66-68, n.70-75, n. 77; 711 n.132, n.137-138.

the sequel to *Emile* in which misfortune befalls the couple and their young family, leading to Sophie's infidelity and Emile's abandonment of his wife and children. If their educations were meant to make them virtuous and capable of enduring hardships without losing their good natures, what went wrong to produce such a tragic failure? Had their education continued, would they have been made truly capable of maintaining their family and their personal virtue? Or would they always need the supplemental help of some wise figure, like Wolmar or the Tutor? Answering this question requires both a fuller analysis of *Emile* in light of *Julie*, and a consideration of how Julie's education might supplement the negative education to produce a surer result.

My interest in Rousseau's views on education are not simply in service to understanding Rousseau and what he can teach us about ourselves, our problems, and the potential solutions to those problems. Beyond expanding this particular project into a fuller examination of Rousseau on education, in the ways suggested above, this project provides the basis for a fuller research agenda on concepts of women's education in modern political thought. Given Rousseau's popularity and the controversy surrounding his works since their publications, few of his contemporaries and successors remained unaffected by his influence. On the basis of my reading and understanding of Rousseau on women's education, I am also interested in how other thinkers engaged and responded to him on this subject, especially Denis Diderot, Alexis de Tocqueville, Mary Wollstonecraft, Louise d'Épinay, and John Stuart and Harriet Taylor Mill. There is a rich conversation between these thinkers, and much to learn about educating ourselves and others to be good and free.

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