Chapter Three: Anatomizing the "Demons of Hatred"

Traumatic Loss and Mental Illness in William Godwin's *Mandeville*

> "All that we know of the body, is owing to anatomical dissection and observation, and it must be by an anatomy of the mind that we can discover its powers and principles."
> (THOMAS REID, *AN INQUIRY INTO THE HUMAN MIND*)

William Godwin, who married Mary Wollstonecraft in 1797 in spite of his reservations about the institution of marriage, has long been established as a major political writer. Indeed, the radical theories he expounded in *Political Justice* had an "enormous impact in the tremendously politically-charged atmosphere of the 1790s" (Rounce 1).[1] His first novel, *Caleb Williams*, which is one of the most famous examples of the English Jacobin novel, with its "innovative blend of philosophy and fiction," was also widely read across different levels of society (Clemit, *Godwinian Novel* 1, 8).[2] However, Godwin has also become recognized as a dedicated "mental anatomist," in the words of William Brewer, and even been labelled "the first psychological novelist" (Scheuermann 17). Several critics have noted a shift from the political to the psychological in Godwin's fictional oeuvre, reading *Mandeville* and *Fleetwood* as examples of psychological fiction, while also beginning to acknowledge the psychological dimensions of his political novels *Caleb Williams* and *St*

1 However, Godwin's reputation changed dramatically as the political climate turned: "Just as Godwin's striking thesis had found its appeal in the aftermath of the French Revolution, his popularity would dwindle accordingly as reaction and nationalism increased" (Rounce 2).

2 For an extensive discussion of the Jacobin novel, see Gary Kelly's *The English Jacobin Novel* and Marilyn Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*.

Leon. The exploration of the mind, especially the disrupted mind, is particularly important to *Mandeville*, which, according to Mona Scheuermann, contains "the most finely drawn psychological study Godwin makes in any of his novels" (23).[3]

Following the structure of a first-person confessional tale, Godwin's 1817 novel *Mandeville* is framed around the autodiegetic narrator's meticulous anatomy of his own mind, tracing the causes, progress, and impact of his mental illness in an exceedingly detailed life-story that is, in fact, a trauma narrative. Charles Mandeville's childhood is marked by the trauma of seeing his parents brutally murdered; from that point, his autobiographical narration revolves around what seems to be the core of his mental illness, his "ruling passion" of hatred, although the text suggests that this hatred functions as the displacement of his primary trauma. The novel's psychology of the wounded mind, to use a central metaphor of both *The Wrongs of Woman* and *Mandeville*, resonates with contemporary trauma theory not only with regard to its representation of the pathological, but also with regard to issues of working through. I read Mandeville's narrative as enacting a complex "pornography of writing" (a concept that builds on Joel Faflak's notion of the Romantic "pornography of talking"), characterized by excessive indulgence in written self-expression and closely connected to the desire characteristic of trauma victims to put into words the fragments of the past and the self.

Moreover, the desire implicit in Mandeville's narrative to (re)gain control through the process of writing through points to a core concern of the novel: the text depicts and enacts different attempts at anatomizing, containing, and curing mental illness. Mandeville not only engages in numerous attempts at understanding and explaining his psychopathology, but he also records his experiences of different treatments – "whips and chains" at a madhouse and a domestic talking cure – which reflect different paradigms within the sciences of the mind. Contrasting attempts at containment with attempts at treatment and therapy, the novel negotiates a key issue in Romantic-era psychiatry: the exploration of how madness (now reconceptualized as mental illness and, thus, as curable) should be treated. The history of psychiatry is, as this chapter seeks to show, another context besides trauma theory that is crucial for understanding the novel's poetics and psychology of mental illness.

Mandeville relates to Romantic psychiatry in complex ways. For one, it explores emerging psychiatric trends, including placing increased value on the individual and examining the therapeutic potential of verbal expression. The novel can, in fact, be read as an example of how Romantic trauma fiction takes some of these trends even further than the psychiatric discourses. At the same time, it stages the

3 Even the first reviews of the novel recognized *Mandeville* as an example of psychological fiction (Clemit, "Introductory Note" vi-vii). Pamela Clemit also notes that Godwin's later psychological novels "attracted a more select audience of writers and intellectuals" than *Caleb Williams* and *St Leon* (*Godwinian Novel* 8).

protagonist-narrator's pathological hatred as persistent and recalcitrant, thus, reflecting critically on the period's therapeutic optimism. It is, then, also symptomatic that the tensions between the different patterns of explanation for his mental illness, notably, ruling passions versus the impact of experiences and circumstances, are never resolved – which emphasizes Mandeville's endless but vain struggle to gain control over his mental illness. Both diegetically and textually, the novel expresses that the pathology of the posttraumatic persists through different attempts at dissecting, containing, and healing. Deeply concerned with the psychology of the disrupted mind and the complexities of curability, Godwin's *Mandeville* signals that mental illness may, ultimately, resist all external and internal attempts at management.

WRITING A LIFE, DISSECTING THE MIND

In his 1832 preface to *Fleetwood*, Godwin explicitly justifies his use of first-person narration in *Caleb Williams* and his later novels; he voices an artistic credo that includes the role of psychologist:

> It was infinitely the best adapted, at least, to my vein of delineation, where the thing in which my imagination revelled the most freely, was the analysis of the private and internal operations of the mind, employing my metaphysical dissecting knife in tracing and laying bare the involutions of motive, and recording the gradually accumulating impulses, which led the personages I had to describe primarily to adopt the particular way of proceeding in which they afterwards embarked. (*Fleetwood* 10)

Godwin makes "the hero of [the] tale his own historian" (xi) because it allows him to pursue a psychological exploration of the mind. His phrase "metaphysical dissecting knife" evokes the rhetoric of Thomas Reid, an influential Scottish moral philosopher, who claimed that in analogy to "anatomical dissection and observation" of the body, an "anatomy of the mind" is needed to "discover its powers and principles" (431). Hence, Godwin shares some of the same aims and methods as the "mental anatomists" of his time.[4] As Brewer writes, in Godwin's view, literary works are "imaginary laboratories in which writers can conduct psychological ex-

4 Godwin displayed a strong interest in the scientific discourses and developments of his day. As Angela Monsam stresses, "his knowledge of anatomy and disease is impressive for a non-medical man" (125). He was a great admirer of Erasmus Darwin and closely associated with eminent men of science, including the surgeon Anthony Carlisle and the chemist William Nicholson (125-26).

periments on their characters" (19). The parallel between medico-scientific methods and writing is also crucial with regard to Godwin's *Memoirs* of Wollstonecraft. As Angela Monsam asserts, Godwin's memoirs can be read as a form of "biographical autopsy" (112), in which the author sees himself as a "dissecting surgeon" dedicated to revealing knowledge about the individual being analysed (120). *Mandeville*, then, takes up and develops further the psychological dissection that Godwin had begun to employ in *Caleb Williams* and in the *Memoirs* of his wife.

Mandeville is primarily concerned with the science and observation of the disrupted mind. The novel reflects the Romantic reconceptualization of madness as mental illness, responding especially to the practice of closely and scientifically examining the pathologies of the mind. However, the text does more than simply respond to developments in psychiatry; it takes them further. It is crucial that Godwin chooses an autodiegetic narrator, granting the mentally ill protagonist a voice. The novel, thereby, develops the illusion that readers are being given insight into inner workings of a disrupted mind. Unlike psychiatric case studies, then, the text performs a fictional self-anatomy, pushing the emerging psychiatric emphasis on the individual and his life-story to an even more patient-centred level.

The autodiegetic narrator also explicitly states that his tale is constructed as a psychological study:

> I have committed to paper what, during those years, passed through my mind; I have nothing to do with either vindicating or condemning that of which I am the historian. I may thus perhaps have performed a task of general utility; it surely is not unfitting, that that which forms one considerable stage in the history of man, should for once be put into a legible and permanent form. (61)

Mandeville stresses here that the act of writing his life-story is not meant to serve self-centred interests such as self-vindication but to contribute to a general science of man. He positions himself as an objective "historian" and mental anatomist.[5] Hence, while *The Wrongs of Woman* represents interpersonal and dialogic (though admittedly fractured and problematic) "scenes of psychoanalysis," in the words of Faflak (*Romantic Psychoanalysis*), *Mandeville* can be read as one extended scene of psychoanalysis, with Mandeville the narrating self functioning as the analyst and

5 In that sense, Mandeville's justification for writing his life-story is different from that of the narrator in Godwin's subsequent novel *Fleetwood*: "The topic of the narrative I am writing is the record of my errors. To write it, is the act of my penitence and humiliation" (21). Fleetwood emphasizes the confessional aspect of his tale, writing about his "errors" in the hope of gaining the reader's "commiseration and pity" (22). For a discussion of how the novels by Godwin and Shelley relate to the confessional form established by Rousseau, see Brewer's *Mental Anatomies*, especially chapter 1.

Mandeville the experiencing self functioning as the analysand. However, this psychoanalysis is fraught with problems because the analyst seems too close to the analysand, especially as Mandeville's life-story progresses. The distance between the narrating and the experiencing self repeatedly collapses; as a result, the authority of the analyst is called into question. It is possible, however, to see the reader as being assigned the role of the second or implied analyst. In other words, by constructing the fictional author of the tale as a highly unreliable "self-anatomist," Godwin implicitly encourages readers to conduct their own dissection of Mandeville's mind. Godwin's philosophy of reading encourages active and involved reading, "an intellectually demanding process" (Brewer 33); with its mentally unstable narrator who indulges in repetitions and digressions, *Mandeville* demands much of its readers in terms of filtering and assessing information.

THE FORMATIVE POWER OF EXPERIENCE AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAUMA

Through his dissection, Mandeville emphasizes the formative impact of childhood, especially childhood trauma. Dedicated to a meticulous study of his mind, Mandeville justifies the exceedingly detailed account of his childhood and youth as follows:

> It is the express purpose of the narrative in which I am engaged, to show how the concurrence of a variety of causes operate to form a character: and if I were to omit any circumstance that possessed a very strong influence on my mind, the person into whose hands this story may happen to fall, would have an imperfect picture of the man who is set before him, and would want some of the particulars necessary to the development of the tale. (79)

In this psychological credo, Mandeville highlights the formative power of experiences and circumstances, claiming that readers need to have sufficient knowledge of a multiplicity of external factors to understand how his character was shaped. The profound impact of the environment is one pattern of explanation Mandeville returns to numerous times in order to examine the origins and causes of his mental illness.

Godwin has his autodiegetic narrator repeatedly voice a key idea that permeates much of his fiction, namely that "character must be understood as a function of circumstances" (Handwerk 69). In his exploration of how circumstances shape an individual, Godwin, like Wollstonecraft and Shelley, is influenced by associationist psychology: "In accordance with Lockean and Hartleian psychology, Godwin and Shelley often have the narrators of their works describe, in painstaking detail, the

series of associations that motivate their actions and determine their fate" (Brewer 24). In Godwin's fiction, characterization is constructed "in terms of associational habit," through a detailed recording of the series of thoughts and chains of associations that determine "the course of a character's growth to maturity" (Craig 136). In particular, Mandeville's narrative unfolds along strings of associations that progressively consolidate into a web of destructive convictions, including misanthropy, distrust, fatalism, and religious fanaticism – a web that increasingly takes control of his life.

The novel's emphasis on childhood also conforms to the "Godwinian rule that education and circumstances determine character" (Brewer 98).[6] Exploring the powerful influence of childhood on an individual's development, which is also important in *The Wrongs of Woman,* motivates Mandeville's extensive account of his boyhood. He claims that being raised by his uncle Audley had a profound and lasting impact on his character. He describes Audley, who appeared to him like the mere "shadow of a man" (40), as cultivating a "cult of gloom" (Colmer 334), which is also reflected in the servants' grave and solemn conduct and intensified by the monastic atmosphere of silence pervading Audley's secluded mansion. Feeling a distant awe for his uncle rather than a close emotional attachment, Mandeville soon learns to repress any boyish desires for cheerfulness, liveliness, and interaction and develops a "premature gravity" (Scheuermann 24). In his portrayal of his childhood, he emphatically asserts that he "never was a boy" (43), stressing that solitary reverie and the meditative contemplation of wild and desolate nature scenes were his primary pastimes. Furthermore, Mandeville emphasizes that the spirit of gravity that continuously surrounded him was aggravated by the dogmatic education he received at the hands of his tutor, the stern and authoritarian Presbyterian Hilkiah Bradford.[7] Violently resenting his tutor's displays of authority, he increasingly regards Bradford as his personal enemy, as an "evil genius, poisoning [his] cup of life" (59). Thus, in Mandeville's retrospective psychological analysis, growing up at Mandeville House is figured as a seminal chapter in his life that contributed significantly to the spirit of misanthropy and hatred growing in his mind.

6 As Alan Richardson stresses, the belief in the close connection between child and adult is characteristic of Godwin's view of childhood and character development: "This strong sense of continuity between the child and the adult it must eventually (and in most cases, impatiently desires to) become is what the first-generation Romantics, with their child-angels, and best Philosophers, and spectral children of the woods, habitually repress" (*Literature* 108).

7 Scheuermann points out that, throughout his writings, Godwin displays a critical view of authoritarian forms of education: "Godwin throughout his intellectual life […] insists that the business of the teacher is to share intellectual discovery rather than to impose authority" (29).

Mandeville reinforces this claim by depicting Beaulieu cottage, his sister Henrietta's childhood home, as the counterpoint to his uncle's gloomy mansion. Idealized as an "earthly paradise" (148), the cottage is described as a blissful place of communication, interaction, and harmony. Mandeville's view of Beaulieu Cottage leads him to speculate about how a different childhood environment would have allowed him to become an entirely different human being:

> Oh, had I spent my early years at Beaulieu […] I also should have been the member of a community, I should have lived with my fellow mortals on peaceful terms, I should have been as frank, as I was now invincibly reserved, suspicious and for ever disposed to regard my neighbour with thoughts of hostility! I should have been amiable; and I should have been happy! But my fate was determined, and my character was fixed. The effects of living under such a master of a household as my uncle, with such a preceptor as Mr Bradford, and in the midst of such an establishment as that of Mandeville House, will never be obliterated, as long as one thought exists within this brain, and one pulse beats within my frame of man. (75-76)

Mandeville here conceptualizes the impact of experience in terms of a fatalistic determinism; he expresses the view that, in George Sherburn's words, "[c]ircumstance is the prison house" whose "shades […] begin to close early in life upon all individuals" (73).[8] The emphatic repetition of "I should" in Mandeville's conjuring up of a hypothetical happier self expresses a melancholic regret about the nature of his actual self, which, in the last two sentences, turns into bitter resignation about the inescapability of his fate. At the same time, his deterministic philosophy betrays an unconscious attempt at self-vindication and at denying any responsibility for the course of his life. In other words, if "man is but a machine," if he "is just what his nature and his circumstances have made him" (153), as Mandeville later claims, it follows that he cannot really be blamed for his actions – which will be an important issue to consider in relation to Mandeville's murder attempt at the end of the novel.

While Mandeville puts particular emphasis on the formative impact of his years at Mandeville House, the novel as a whole suggests that the roots of his misanthropy and hatred reach back even further, to his early infancy. As a three-year-old, during the Irish rebellion of 1641, Mandeville witnessed the murder of his parents and hundreds of captives. He, however, was saved by his nurse, who pretended that Mandeville was her own child. The shattering experience of witnessing his parents' tragic death figures as Mandeville's primary trauma, which haunts his life and his

8 As Clemit stresses, Godwin's use of autodiegetic narration is ideal to express this view of the individual as subjected to the forces of circumstances: "Godwin's use of the single first-person narrative permits an unprecedented analysis of character held in thrall by external circumstances" (*Godwinian Novel* 102).

text.[9] Interestingly, the description of this traumatic experience (in chapter 2 of volume 1) is preceded by an extensive historical account that is strikingly impersonal. Mandeville records events, including the cruelty of the Irish towards the English settlers, from the perspective of a detached historiographer, with sporadic references to his father as the only cues to his emotional involvement in the story. The opening of the novel is also significant in this context. The first sentence states Mandeville's year of birth, the second his place of birth, but then Godwin has Mandeville shift immediately from his personal history to an extended family history. From the second paragraph on, Mandeville's narrative essentially reads, contrary to what he claims, like a "piece of national history" (12). This detached historicizing perspective and lengthy introduction preceding the recounting of the traumatic event can be read as a psychological distancing device that allows Mandeville to approach step by step the dark centre of his childhood. It is as if the narrative circles the core event until the narrator finally finds the courage to face it. At this point, however, Mandeville can no longer uphold the posture of the objective historian; his language (e.g., calling O'Neile a "monster" 19) and his struggle to put into words what happened ("I cannot go on with the narrative" 20) convey the intensity of the emotion and pain inscribed in these events.

Mandeville describes his memory of the event in terms of the typical paradoxes of infantile and trauma memory: "I do not remember the scene distinctly in all its parts; but there are detached circumstances that belong to it, that will live in my memory as long as my pulses continue to beat" (19). Mandeville's memories are characteristically fractured and incomplete yet intense and persistent; the traumatic moment is kept alive through its "affective intensity," while it "remains unprocessed" intellectually (Handwerk 77). At Mandeville House, these atrocious scenes haunt Mandeville day and night through intrusions and nightmares; as Mandeville states, they persistently "lived in [his] mind" (44). These "visionary scenes" of his childhood trauma are then conspicuously eclipsed over many pages by Mandeville's narrative, only to erupt with more violence during his first fit of madness:

> My father and mother died over again. The shrieks, that had rent the roofs of Kinnard fourteen years before, yelled in my ears, and deafened my sense; and I answered them with corresponding and responsive shrieks. I forgot the lapse of time that had passed between them. [...] The scenes of unspeakable distress that I had witnessed in my journey from the north of Ireland to Dublin, all assailed me, in their turn. (144)

9 See also Handwerk's "History, Trauma, and the Limits of the Liberal Imagination," which similarly argues for the central importance of Mandeville's original trauma: "*Mandeville* takes its entire plot and structure from an original, inerasable trauma" (76).

Mandeville relives his childhood trauma in his mind, as if past events were happening all over again in the present. This kind of atemporal experience, with its overwhelming vividness and intense auditory or visual quality, is typical of trauma memory, as we have already seen in *The Wrongs of Wom*an when Maria re-experiences her traumatic past. In both narratives, the traumatic past erupts with violent force in moments of crisis, as if the individual's psychic defence mechanisms were too weak at these moments to withstand the constant pressure of trauma.

It is important to note, however, that childhood trauma occupies a marginal position in Mandeville's anatomy of his mind. He analyses in detail the impact of his experiences at Mandeville House and the impact of his various failures in the "theatre of life" (310), all of which he attributes to his schoolfellow and antagonist Clifford, but he conspicuously refrains from psychoanalyzing his primary trauma. However, the novel implicitly suggests that it is precisely because the trauma is not "processed" (in Handwerk's terminology) or, rather, because it is not integrated into Mandeville's autobiographical or narrative memory that he fails to grasp its significance and cannot "dissect" and analyse it in the same way as most other instances in his life. Ironically, the text persistently implies that witnessing his parents' murder is the "wound" that cuts deepest, while Mandeville maintains that other, later wounds have affected him more deeply. The text signals, then, that the impact of Mandeville's childhood trauma is more profound than he is able to see. The violence in Kinnard makes him an orphan, depriving him of his parents and separating him from his sister. In other words, Kinnard is an extreme moment of childhood and family trauma: the nuclear family is destroyed violently and abruptly through external forces entirely beyond the individual's control. In this respect, the nature of family trauma in *Mandeville* significantly differs from the family traumas in *The Wrongs of Woman*, where the family is destroyed more slowly and from within. While the latter tends to be traumatizing over a long period of time, through the erosion of basic relations of trust and a sense of safety as well as through the festering of dilemmas of guilt, Mandeville's childhood experience is a sudden trauma, severely traumatic through its shock impact and relentless finality.

Mandeville's inability to perceive the impact of his primary trauma also manifests itself in his explanation of his religious attitudes. As mentioned above, Mandeville stresses the powerful impact that Bradford's instruction had on his character, arguing that Bradford's extensive sermons about "Popery" led to his own anti-Catholicism. Yet Mandeville's religious fanaticism can also be traced back to his experiences in Kinnard. After stating that his visions of the massacre in Ireland were "all the world" to him, Mandeville writes:

I had hardly a notion of any more than two species of creatures on the earth, – the persecutor and his victim, the Papist and the Protestant; and they were to my thoughts like two great

classes of animal nature, the one, the law of whose being it was to devour, while it was the unfortunate destiny of the other to be mangled and torn to pieces by him. (44-45)

This passage implies that Bradford's teaching feeds into a pattern of thinking that Mandeville had already developed based on the scenes of cruelty in Ireland.

In depicting how childhood trauma gives birth to specific patterns of thinking that are nourished by subsequent experiences, the novel not only resonates with associationism but also with contemporary cognitive approaches to trauma. Anke Ehlers and David Clark argue that individuals with lasting posttraumatic symptoms tend to have "idiosyncratic negative appraisals of the traumatic event/and or its sequelae that have the *common effect of creating a sense of serious current threat*" (320). Such "negative appraisals," which may affect the individual's view of the world, his or her fellow human beings, and the self, can have a persistent impact on the trauma victim's ways of thinking. Because trauma memory is "poorly elaborated in time, place," and other contexts, the threat resulting from these negative appraisals is not limited to the past but may extend to perceptions of the present and future, resulting in a threat that is unrestrained both temporally and spatially (Ehlers and Clark 325, 335). In other words, cognitive psychologists have identified a particular dynamic of associative chains in trauma victims – and such chains, driven by negative appraisals, run through Mandeville's narrative.

The persistent sense of threat encapsulated in Mandeville's view of the world as divided into two antagonistic "species of creatures" (45) results in his obsessive fear of being the victim of a conspiracy against him and in his perception of Bradford and then Clifford as his personal enemies. Mandeville can only construct his view of the world in terms of struggle and antagonism, hatred and enmity. He increasingly reduces relationships to a dynamics of victims and perpetrators, displaying, as Timothy Campbell rightly emphasizes, a "pathological capacity for enmity" (358). The power of negative appraisals manifests itself particularly strongly in Mandeville's fatalistic belief that he is doomed to be a victim of Clifford and of society as a whole. "Clifford was my fate" (253), Mandeville obsessively believes, and he is convinced that the chain that binds him to Clifford also irreversibly determines his position in society:

For me the order of the universe was suspended; all that was most ancient and established in the system of created things was annulled; virtue was no longer virtue, and vice no longer vice. This utter subversion related to me, and me alone; every where else, in every corner of the many-peopled globe, things went on right; I, and only I, was shut out of the pale of humanised society. (253)

Mandeville's pervasive negative appraisals culminate in the belief that he alone is the victim of injustice, that for him alone have notions of right and wrong crumbled.

In this way, the novel shows how Mandeville's entire existence becomes caught up in a paralyzing web of severely distorted and destructive perceptions.

While the primary goal of Mandeville's project is to narrate the growth of his mind and the history of his life, it should be stressed that, as in other novels by Godwin (including *Caleb Williams*, *St Leon*, and *Fleetwood*), the text firmly embeds specific experiences and circumstances within their historical contexts. As Handwerk asserts, Godwin's novels "encode" individual traumatic experiences "as part of a larger historical text" (80). Pamela Clemit similarly highlights the close interrelations between individual psychology and history, stressing that, especially in his later fictions, Godwin's "insight into the formative power of public events invites comparison with the more celebrated historical narratives of Scott and Byron" (*Godwinian Novel* 7). However, as Clemit further argues, an important difference between Godwin's and Scott's historical fiction is that Scott puts the focus on "the possibilities of human greatness liberated by moments of historical crisis," while Godwin investigates the "disabling pressures of politics and history on the individual psyche" (101). *Mandeville* explores these "disabling pressures" through a complex moment in history, the Cromwellian period.[10] As Porscha Fermanis asserts, *Mandeville*, with its "ambivalent representation of the 1641 rebellion," expresses Godwin's "unsettled views on the Irish question" (796). Mandeville is obsessed with the cruelty of the Irish, while entirely evading the brutality of Cromwell and the English settlers; in his narrative, the Irish victims of genocide are represented as the perpetrators.[11] Mediated only through Mandeville's perspective, history, politics, and justice become difficult to judge; politics, as Tilottama Rajan argues, figures as "a scarred and defaced project," which is determined by "[s]heer antagonism rather than ideologically legible differences" and by a "historical scene so chaotic that one cannot tell left from right, right from wrong" (*Romantic Narrative* 141-42).

In *Mandeville*, history is fraught with tensions and uncertainties, and Mandeville functions as a highly unreliable historian. In an ironic gesture, the novel creates a continuous tension between Mandeville's profound interest in historical events and his pressing – but continually frustrated – desire to make history through honourable and important actions. His narrative periodically returns to his anxiety about his blemished reputation and his distress about his "remove from events, his

10 As Rounce stresses, *Mandeville* testifies to Godwin's "enthusiasm" for the period of the "Civil War and Interregnum" (5). His profound interest in this period also manifests itself in other writings, notably, in *Lives of Edward and John Philips, Nephews of Milton*, and in *History of the Commonwealth*.

11 For more detail about how Godwin especially in *History of the Commonwealth* responds to discussions about genocidal theories related to Cromwell's policy in Ireland, see Fermanis 794-95.

highly mediated relationship to his historically eventful era" (Campbell 357). In fact, Mandeville's exclusion from history is reinforced narratively through Godwin's combination of a historical angle with a "characteristic interiorized mode" (Clemit, *Godwinian Novel* 98).[12] While the narrative begins with a "deceptively impersonal account" of a central moment in Irish history (Clemit 100), historical events are throughout reported from Mandeville's subjective and often distorted perspective. As I will discuss in Chapter Six, this type of perspectivism serves as an important contrast to Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*, which also focuses on how a child who has witnessed the murder of his parents views history's scene of ruthless cruelty. In *Fugitive Pieces*, historical events are staged simultaneously as individual and collective traumas; the novel features two autodiegetic narrators, and the perspective of both narrators is repeatedly opened up to the community's perspective. In contrast, Mandeville is too caught up in his own mind and too obsessed with his own presence in (or, rather, painful absence from) history to reflect on how other individuals might suffer under the burden of the past. Mandeville always remains a historian of his own life, trying to understand the factors that shaped the development of his mind.

RECONCEPTUALIZING BAILLIE'S "RULING PASSIONS"

Throughout the narrative, Mandeville seeks explanations for his mental illness. The idea that circumstances and experiences shape character is one important explanation that Mandeville explores, although he avoids examining the impact of his primary trauma. A second explanation, implied rather than explicitly stated, is fatalism: Mandeville believes that he is destined to live a miserable existence as a victim.[13] A third one, and one to which Mandeville devotes considerable attention, is the idea that a passion can develop into an obsession and, thereby, become a "ruling passion." Godwin has Mandeville frequently analyse his actions in light of this theory of uncontrolled passions, using terminology that was, as Brewer emphasizes,

12 Clemit discusses Godwin's use of this "interiorized mode" as another central difference to Scott, arguing that this "exclusive subjective focus underscores Godwin's divergence from Scott's emphasis on moderation and social compromise" (*Godwinian Novel* 98).

13 Handwerk suggests that this mindset can also be seen in connection with Mandeville's religious beliefs, notably, with the "structure of Calvinistic predestination that dominates his mental outlook" (76).

common at the time.[14] In one of her long speeches, Mandeville's sister Henrietta describes the pernicious power of the passions:

> I must be like a great military commander in the midst of a field of battle, calm, collected, vigilant, imperturbable; but the moment I am the slave of passion, my powers are lost; I am turned into a beast, or rather into a drunkard; I can neither preserve my footing, nor watch my advantage, nor strike an effectual blow. (155)

Like several other Godwinian protagonist-narrators, Mandeville repeatedly acts like a "slave of passion," displaying the loss of control that Henrietta depicts through military metaphors. In fact, passions are a crucial theme in several of Godwin's novels. Julie Carlson maintains that "[e]ach focuses on a particular passion that unmans its protagonist – curiosity in *Caleb Williams* and *St Leon*, jealousy in *Fleetwood*, *Cloudesley*, *Deloraine*, paranoia in *Mandeville*, remorse in *Deloraine*" (54). Godwin's fictional oeuvre, as Carlson claims, could even be read as a "Series of Novels on the Passions" (293), an allusion to Joanna Baillie's *Plays on the Passions*. Carlson here builds on the connection to Baillie that Godwin himself acknowledges in the preface to *Mandeville*, where he mentions *De Monfort* and Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* as texts that shaped his novel (*Mandeville* 8).[15]

Baillie's Gothic tragedy *De Monfort* focuses on the passion of hatred. It dramatizes De Monfort's increasingly obsessive hatred for his rival Rezenvelt, which is fuelled by his deluded perception of an attachment between Rezenvelt and his sister Jane, for whom he seems to harbour an incestuous passion. De Monfort's hatred progressively turns into madness and culminates in his murder of Rezenvelt. The parallels to *Mandeville* in terms of basic plot and character constellation are immediately obvious. However, there are important differences in the texts' approaches to passions and madness that provide insights into the psychology of Godwin's novel. In Baillie's "Introductory Discourse" to the 1798 *Series of the Plays*, where she outlines her dramatic credo, she declares that the primary focus of her plays are the passions, "those great disturbers of the human breast" (91), "those terrible ty-

14 In Chapter 2 of *The Mental Anatomies of William Godwin and Mary Shelley*, Brewer explores "ruling passions" in the works of Godwin and Mary Shelley, without, however, expanding on the connection to Baillie in his discussion of *Mandeville*.

15 Godwin read Baillie's *De Monfort* in 1800 and Brockden Brown's *Wieland* in 1816 (see "Diary"). Furthermore, as Clemit emphasizes, "[i]n June 1816 Godwin read the rest of Brown's psychological novels, *Ormond* (1799), *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800), and *Edgar Huntly* (1799), along with Byron's poetic tales of loss and inner torment, *The Giaour* (1813), *The Bride of Abydos* (1813), *The Corsair* (1814), and *Lara* (1814)" ("Introductory Note" v). This selection of texts demonstrates Godwin's interest in literature that explores complex psychologies.

rants of the soul" (95). She further states that delineating a passion is more important than delineating the character who embodies it: "[I]t is the passion and not the man which is held up to our execration" (108). Godwin, however, chooses a different approach: he does not construct his novel around a passion; rather, he uses ruling passions as one element within the complex psychology of an individual character.

The novel suggests that Mandeville's psychology cannot adequately be defined in terms of one single passion. In fact, Mandeville struggles to determine which passion rules him. The first time he refers to the notion of passions, he identifies impatience as dominant ("Fierce impatience was the ruling passion of my soul" 138); however, soon after, he declares (echoing *De Monfort*), "My nature, or my circumstances, seemed to have made hatred my ruling passion" (202), only to shift the focus again later: "Perhaps the ruling passion of my soul was ambition" (310). The list of ruling passions that affect Mandeville at various points in his life could be expanded further to include religious fanaticism, paranoia, misanthropy, and an incestuous passion for his sister. In this respect, Godwin's psychological delineation of his protagonist is broader and more multi-layered than Baillie's, even if, overall, hatred appears to be Mandeville's dominant passion.

The depiction of one of Mandeville's ruling passions, paranoia, evokes a famous psychiatric case that was published a few years before *Mandeville:* the case of James Tilly Matthews. According to Richard Hunter and Ida Macalpine, Matthews' text about his time at Bethlehem hospital (published by John Haslam as *Illustrations of Madness* in 1810), was "the first medical book devoted to a single case of insanity" (634). Matthews' narrative describes his compulsive paranoid fear, which finds its most striking verbal and visual expression in the "powerful figure of the air loom," a device Matthews believed was created to inflict pain on him in various ways and was controlled by a "conspirational gang of operators" (Ingram 116). Similar to *Mandeville*, *Illustrations of Madness* conveys the extent to which paranoid delusions can possess an individual. As Allan Ingram asserts, "political fervor," not unlike religious fervour, "presents a favourable climate for the nurturing of delusions" (142). Several examples of "mad writing" that Ingram discusses are closely connected to political or religious variants of fanatic fervour – both of which play a crucial role in *Mandeville* and feed into his obsessive hatred. Through its representation of paranoia, then, the novel explores a psychological phenomenon that was well known in the Romantic era.

However, a key issue to address with regard to the conceptualization of ruling passions in *Mandeville* is the question of origins. Here, once again, a difference in emphasis between Baillie and Godwin emerges. In the "Introductory Discourse," Baillie, who was conversant with the medical and psychological sciences of her

time,[16] defines the passions as follows: "[T]hose strong and fixed passions, which seemingly unprovoked by outward circumstances, will from small beginnings brood within the breast, till all the better dispositions, all the fair gifts of nature are borne down before them" (86). In other words, passions develop a force of their own in the individual's mind, while external events and circumstances function merely as triggers. As Baillie specifies, passions take possession over an individual "with small assistance from outward circumstances" (94); that is, "it is from within that they are chiefly supplied with what they feed on" (92). In *Mandeville*, however, Godwin has his protagonist-narrator waver between different explanations about the source of his main ruling passion: "My nature, or my circumstances, seemed to have made hatred my ruling passion" (202). Like *De Monfort*, Mandeville's narrative shows how passions are partly nourished from within, how they function as internal enemies, influencing actions and reactions. Yet Godwin's novel, I argue, emphasizes the power of external factors, of experiences and circumstances, to a greater extent. While in *De Monfort*, the origin of the protagonist's hatred for Rezenvelt remains obscure, *Mandeville* suggests that the roots of the protagonist's passions can be traced back to his childhood trauma. Baillie claims that "hatred is a passion of slow growth" and asserts that it would, consequently, be impossible to put on stage the rise of that passion from its beginnings (107). This, however, is precisely what Godwin attempts with the medium of the novel; the comparison to Baillie hence reinforces Godwin's focus on an extensive analysis of the various (especially the early) influences that shape an individual's development.

Implying that Mandeville's hatred for Clifford is driven primarily by his distorted perceptions rather than by Clifford's actions, the novel allows us to read Mandeville's ruling passion as essentially one symptom of posttraumatic suffering. More specifically, I read his excessive reaction to Clifford, in the same way as Handwerk, as a "displacement of Mandeville's primary trauma" (78). Mandeville's memories of how he was "wounded" multiple times by Clifford may be interpreted as "screen memories" in a Freudian sense ("Screen Memories"),[17] that is, as memo-

16 As Frederick Burwick emphasizes, Baillie's *Plays on the Passions* were influenced by the work of her brother: "With her insistence that drama should address the power of emotions to dictate behaviour and to compel the overwrought individual to acts of irrational excess, Joanna Baillie enters into the very same province of aberrational psychology that Matthew Baillie had begun to explore in his 1794 lectures on the nervous system" (51). Matthew Baillie studied with the famous anatomist William Hunter, who, like John Hunter, is an uncle of Joanna's, and he was also in service as a physician to King George III, who suffered from repeated bouts of mental illness (Burwick 64-65).

17 Freud defines the notion of a "screen memory" as "one which owes its value as a memory not to its intrinsic content, but to the relation existing between that content and some other, that has been suppressed" ("Screen Memories" 320). As Freud further specifies,

ries that screen off memories of an earlier, even more profound wounding that is too painful for the psyche to confront. Mandeville's obsession with Clifford, in other words, shields him from his core trauma. The extent to which Mandeville projects all his negative emotions and destructive energies onto Clifford becomes especially clear in Mandeville's account of his conversations with his fellow misanthropic student Lisle: "I could speak of my father and mother: but that not without the greatest difficulty, and with a feeling as if I was somehow violating a secret, which it was the most flagitious of crimes to violate. I spoke of them with a voice, low, tremulous, hollow, and death-like" (132). This passage is the only one in which Mandeville mentions speaking about his parents, and he describes it as almost unbearable; yet to speak about Clifford, as Mandeville laments in retrospect, was impossible for him. Thus, strikingly, his experiences of Clifford come to exceed his original trauma, even in terms of unspeakability. It is Mandeville's fit of madness, as mentioned above, that causes his protective shield to collapse and his original trauma to break forth with full force – in Freudian terminology, a typical scene of the return of the repressed (see "The Uncanny" 241-43).

In its exploration of childhood trauma, Godwin's *Mandeville* puts more emphasis on the impact of the environment than Baillie's *De Monfort*. However, it is important to stress that, ultimately, the tension between explanations based on internal versus external factors, on nature versus nurture, on innate qualities versus experiences, cannot be resolved – in either of the two texts. In the end, it is impossible to determine whether and to what extent Mandeville's character would have been different in other circumstances, especially had he not been an eyewitness to his parents' murder. Furthermore, while often emphasizing the power of circumstances, Mandeville also repeatedly suggests that his actions are heavily determined by his "nature." For example, he compares the hatred he feels for Clifford to the instincts of "those animals, that are said to derive from nature a mortal antipathy to some other species" (162). This ambivalence about the possibility of innate dispositions can be connected to a historical shift in ways of thinking about the mind and character that Alan Richardson explores in *British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind*, namely, the shift from environmental to biological approaches that occurred as Romantic brain science gained influence (94-95). As Richardson asserts, this shift manifests itself clearly in Godwin's changing views, which can be illustrated by the contrast between the "social constructivist account of mind, one obviously indebted to Locke and Hartley" that Godwin advocates in *Political Justice* (1793),

different "chronological relation[s]" hold "between the screen and the thing screened-off" (320). While Freud in "Screen Memories" mainly discusses examples of how childhood scenes function as the screen for later experiences, *Mandeville* focuses on the opposite type of screen memories, with later experiences functioning as the screen for traumatic childhood memories.

and the ideas expressed in *Thoughts of Man* (1831), which shows that Godwin has become convinced that "[h]uman creatures are born into the world with various dispositions," most likely rooted in the "subtle network of the brain" (94). *Mandeville*, written between these two texts, gestures towards this shift: Godwin's conceptualization of the passions expresses both his inclination to hold on to the environmental model he (like Wollstonecraft) had so firmly believed in as well as his growing fascination with the ideas advocated by biological and brain-centred approaches.

Moreover, by maintaining the tension between nature and nurture, Godwin's novel highlights issues that are still important today; experts in the field of traumatic stress studies are trying to discover to what extent predispositions determine which individuals do or do not develop PTSD after certain kinds of traumatic events. In addition, the origin of those predispositions, whether genetic or experiential, is still being contested.[18] Baillie's and Godwin's texts, moreover, anticipate important insights of contemporary trauma theory in their emphasis on the close interrelations between body and mind. Richardson goes as far as to assert that the "interpenetration and mutual interaction of mind and body […] forms the cornerstone of Baillie's dramatic theory and practice" ("Neural Theatre" 132). Likewise, Godwin has Mandeville depict his fits of frenzy as affecting both body and mind: "I was in a raging fever. […] My agonies, and the distress both of my mind and body, were insupportable" (105).

A further implication of the novel's exploration of early experiences and the uncontrollable dynamics of ruling passions is that it reveals cracks in the boundary between sanity and madness. *Mandeville* demonstrates how passions, which are inherent in human nature, can develop a dynamic of their own and become uncontrollable; it also shows how external factors, such as seminal life events, are also largely beyond an individual's control. The novel implies that anyone can be affected either by strong passions or adverse circumstances, thereby creating a sense of fluidity between sanity and madness – in other words, the boundary between the two can dissolve at any moment for anyone. This sense of fluidity is also conveyed through hints at the fragility or even powerlessness of reason. Godwin has Mandeville emphasize, in line with the tenor of Baillie's "Introductory Discourse," how he struggles but fails to control his passions with reason, with the principles of rationality and philosophy: "[T]he passions of the human mind laugh at philosophy, and the events that the course of affairs brings forth to torture us, render its boasts as impotent, as the menaces of a man that had lost the use of his limbs" (174). The passions triumph over reason.

The novel, thus, indicates a shift in Godwin's philosophical views on reason and rationality. While *Political Justice* advocates the power of reason and the doctrine

18 On PTSD and the impact of genes versus environmental factors, see for example Tracie O. Afifi et al.

of the perfectibility of man, *Mandeville* expresses a more pessimistic view, revealing the limitations of reason. As Rounce maintains, "Godwin's fiction moved, to some extent, from mirroring his philosophy to providing negative examples of it: characters like Mandeville and Fleetwood have need of a liberating internal philosophy of rationality, but seem the least likely of people to adopt it" (6). While Godwin's earlier fiction, often discussed within the context of Jacobin fiction, was characterized by "resolute rationality" and a "suspicion of the uncontrollable workings of the unconscious mind" (Butler, *Jane Austen* 33),[19] *Mandeville* marks a shift towards a more critical, pessimistic view of reason, which comes hand in hand with an increased emphasis on the unconscious and irrational: "The recognition of the irrational which we associate with the romantics shows itself in the works of this rationalist philosopher as well" (Scheuermann 22).[20]

The topos of a lack of control over ruling passions in particular and mental illness in general is reinforced at a metalevel by Mandeville's failure to pin down the roots of his fits of fury and obsessive hatred. While the text suggests that childhood trauma plays a key role in Mandeville's psychopathology, his extensive self-analysis leaves the origin of his uncontrollable passions "unaccountable" (Clemit, *Godwinian Novel* 100). This lack of explanatory resolution enacts textually Mandeville's failure to gain control over his mental illness. The autodiegetic narrator extensively or, rather, excessively explores different interpretations, without ever approaching coherence or closure.

A "MARRIAGE OF HATRED"

While the novel offers a complex and multi-faceted picture of the possible sources of his mental illness, Mandeville puts special emphasis on Clifford's role, giving a detailed analysis of his ruling passion of hatred, including its emergence and dynamics. In meticulously recording his various encounters with Clifford, Mandeville

19 Rounce argues, however, that even Godwin's earlier fiction expressed a more critical view of reason than his political writing: "[E]ven at the height of his fame, Godwin's fiction both complemented *Political Justice*, and showed the inevitable limits of its over-reliance on the powers of reason" (2).

20 In this context, Richardson's observations about the unconscious in the field of the mental sciences of the time are revealing. Richardson highlights that contemporary thinkers such as Darwin, Herder, Canabis, and Baillie all "grant a large role to the unconscious and involuntary aspects of mental life." Thus, Richardson concludes, "[c]ontrary to a longstanding critical tradition, the Romantic poets did not 'discover' the unconscious in isolation" ("Neural Theatre" 138).

seems to realize that his reactions to Clifford were extreme. The self-diagnosis that he gives in retrospect is that he suffered from of a particularly severe ruling passion: "In a word, no passion ever harboured in a human bosom, that it seemed so entirely to fill, in which it spread so wide, and mounted so high, and appeared so utterly to convert every other sentiment and idea into its own substance" (106). Such retrospective self-analysing gestures may imply that, by the time Mandeville is writing, he has been able to master or even overcome his passion. However, a closer analysis of how Godwin has Mandeville narrate his ruling passion suggests otherwise. In general, Mandeville's descriptions of Clifford and Clifford's destructive impact on him are excessive in terms of their length and emotional intensity, the striking number of attributes and metaphors they use, as well as their repetitiveness, all of which betray the persistence of Mandeville's obsession with Clifford.

The first section of the novel that describes Clifford is Mandeville's account of his experiences at Winchester school, in which he outlines the emergence of his hatred. The origin of his hatred lies, paradoxically, not in an immediate reaction of dislike and antipathy but in a profound admiration he initially felt for his schoolmate. He perceived Clifford as "the great luminary" or the "sun" that would continuously outshine him, the "dark and malignant planet" (106), and prevent him from being successful and popular at school. Mandeville also describes Clifford as an "evil genius," a "poison-tree of Java," a "milstone hanged about [his] neck" that affected him "worse than all the diseases that can afflict a man," and as the primary "obstacle" that must be "removed" at all cost (106). The tropes in this passage suggest that, from the beginning, Mandeville felt that Clifford had both a highly obstructive and destructive impact on him. Furthermore, the images of Clifford as a "poison-tree" and a disease introduce the rhetoric of contamination to which Mandeville returns numerous times in his portrayal of Clifford.

In the second Clifford-centred episode, Mandeville employs the rhetoric of fatalism in his descriptions of his antagonist. Here, the intensity of his hatred increases dramatically, especially because Clifford, now positioned as his direct rival, is assigned the prestigious post of secretary to Sir Joseph Wagstaff, a post that was half-promised to him. A profound sense of shame and anxiety about his blotted reputation now feeds Mandeville's hatred and leads him to perceive this rivalry fatalistically: "Fate, I was fully persuaded, had bound Clifford and me together, with a chain, the links of which could never be dissolved" (140). The image of an unbreakable "chain" is also translated, as Brewer puts it, into an image of a predestined marital bond based on "true opposition and interdestructiveness," that is, a "marriage of hatred" (100-02). Mandeville's reflections on the involuntary and perverted "marriage" between Clifford and him are followed by a series of striking images: Mandeville compares the "chain" between them to the contaminating link between the living and dead bodies tied together by "Mezentius, the famous tyrant of antiquity" as well as to the destructive bond between twins whose bodies were in-

separable (141). Again, the compulsive nature of Mandeville's attachment to Clifford is here conveyed both diegetically and textually; his urge to verbalize and visualize this attachment in so many different ways signals his obsessiveness. Furthermore, the images of unhealthily attached bodies also convey that Mandeville perceives Clifford as something that has literally entered his body – an idea that is elaborated in his description of Clifford as an incurable disease:[21] "He is part of myself, a disease that has penetrated to my bones, and that I can never get rid of" (176). It is telling that Mandeville describes Clifford as part of his body because Clifford also figuratively represents all that Mandeville rejects about himself, acting as the screen for his negative emotions and destructive passions.

Mandeville's narrative allows us to identify a third step in his history of hatred: a shift from the belief in a fatal and fatalistically determined bond to the desire for revenge. This shift is caused by a combination of three factors: Mallison's treacherous schemes, which stir Mandeville's desire for revenge; the recognition that Clifford's conversion to Catholicism has not blemished his reputation; and his shock upon learning that Clifford and his beloved sister Henrietta are attached. As a result, Mandeville vows vengeance, devoting himself entirely to the idea of destroying Clifford: "I had felt that I had but one vocation in life, the destruction of Clifford" (217). It is at this point that the pathological nature of Mandeville's hatred reaches its full force, manifesting itself in deep embitterment and an uncontrollable desire for revenge.

In its emphasis on embitterment and revenge fantasies, the novel foregrounds two kinds of posttraumatic reaction that have only recently received close attention in trauma psychology. Studies by Michael Linden and Andreas Maercker, among others, highlight that embitterment and revenge are common reactions in trauma victims. Linden et al. identify a "prolonged feeling of embitterment" as a typical psychopathological reaction to events that are "experienced as unjust, as a personal insult, and psychologically as a violation of basic beliefs and values" (160).[22] Em-

21 Through the imagery that Godwin has Mandeville use here to visualize his unwanted, hated attachment to Clifford, the novel can also be seen in connection with a group of Gothic novels that, according to Eve Sedgwick, developed a "tradition of homophobic thematics," including Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (92). *Mandeville* also seems to participate in discourses associating paranoia with homophobia. As Sedgwick argues, "paranoia is the psychosis that makes graphic the mechanisms of homophobia" (91).

22 As Linden and Maercker highlight, "[i]n spite of their very serious psychopathological features, states of severe pathological embitterment have been widely ignored by psychiatry and clinical psychology" ("Introduction" 2). Their collection entitled *Embitterment* is the first systematic investigation of this phenomenon, and it also includes a discussion of the interrelations between embitterment and revenge.

bitterment, as Maercker and Linden emphasize, "is nagging and self-reinforcing" and "goes on and on," even displaying an "addictive quality," and it tends to occur in combination with feelings of revenge ("Introduction" 1). Godwin's depiction of Mandeville's reaction to Clifford, then, parallels this clinical picture in several ways. First of all, Mandeville sees himself as cursed but "blameless" (216), as the victim of a fundamentally unjust world that has made Clifford, undeservedly, more admired and successful. Moreover, he perceives the fact that Clifford's conversion to "popery" has not damaged his reputation (i.e., he is not publically ostracized as a "renegade" 224), and the news about the love relationship between Clifford and Henrietta as deep personal insults; these painful recognitions shatter his fundamental beliefs about the way society operates and destroy his trust in his sister.

The emotional outlets that Mandeville uses to deal with his unbearable sense of injustice and embitterment are revenge fantasies. As Ulrich Orth, Maercker, and Leo Montada maintain, feelings of revenge are often observed in victims of violence, especially when it is possible to clearly assign the responsibility for the traumatic event to someone other than the victim (169). In Mandeville's case, issues of guilt are particularly pertinent with regard to the massacre in Ireland. However, in displacing his primary trauma onto Clifford, Mandeville also redirects his feelings of revenge for the murderers of his parents. It is Clifford who comes to function as the scapegoat for the unidentified perpetrators of the Irish massacre. In Mandeville's distorted perception, Clifford assumes the role of the primary perpetrator who is responsible for all his suffering. Mandeville believes that taking revenge on Clifford, "bath[ing his] arms to the very elbow in the blood of [his] rival" (217), will have a consoling effect. He dedicates himself to revenge with a seriousness that borders on solemnity: "I had taken upon myself a sort of Hannibal-vow for the extinction of Clifford: I had sworn, upon the altar of my revenge, immortal hostility to him whom I regarded as the author of all my woes" (296). The combination of military and religious vocabulary reveals that Mandeville regards the destruction of Clifford as a sacred duty, requiring his full devotion.

While revenge fantasies may function as a source of temporary emotional relief, feelings of revenge that persist beyond the immediate aftermath of a traumatic event should, as Orth, Maercker, and Montada note, be regarded as a "dysfunctional coping reaction" (169). Indulging in fantasies of revenge is harmful because it prevents trauma victims from coming to terms with the trauma (170). As Ira Gäbler and Maercker stress, "both embitterment and revenge focus more on the past than on the present or future" (54), thus, inhibiting a trauma victim's recovery. *Mandeville* draws attention to these psychological dynamics: the text conveys that Mandeville's constant ruminations about revenge push him further and further into the emotional downward spiral of his posttraumatic crisis, allowing the "demons of hatred" to take control of his mind (124). Anticipating Frankenstein's obsession with taking revenge on the creature for killing several of his close relatives, an obsession that

comes to define his whole life as he chases the creature up to the North Pole, the text demonstrates that the protagonist's self-imposed mission to destroy his enemy inevitably causes his own destruction. Both Frankenstein and Mandeville are consumed and driven mad by the desire for revenge.

In Mandeville's case, a vital issue that feeds into his hatred and causes it to become pathological is his incestuous attachment to his sister, which significantly contributes to his violent reaction to discovering Henrietta and Clifford's love relationship. In his narrative, Mandeville never explicitly confesses the incestuous nature of his attachment to Henrietta, yet from the description of their first encounter on, the way Mandeville writes about her betrays that his feelings for her exceed the boundaries of brotherly love. The text suggests that Mandeville's incestuous feelings for Henrietta are nurtured by the fact that, after the death of their parents, she is the only person who treats Mandeville with affection, and after his uncle's death, she is also the only remaining close family relative. Throughout the narrative, Mandeville idealizes and worships her, loving her with the same intensity and exclusiveness with which he hates Clifford, with a fervour that carries overtones of religious devotion. In Mandeville's view, Henrietta's impending marriage to Clifford is, thus, an unimaginable betrayal, "the greatest of crimes" (314). Through its exploration of sibling incest, the novel participates in discourses on what Richardson identifies as "the quintessential form of Romantic incest" ("Romantic Incest" 554). The text reflects on but also departs from the recurring pattern that Richardson describes: a tendency to idealization in combination with a tragic ending (see Richardson 564-70). In *Mandeville*, it is only the unreliable first-person narrator who idealizes and romanticizes incestuous desire;[23] the text as a whole depicts this passion as one-sided, pathological, and thoroughly destructive. The tragic ending seems inevitable.

Fearing the loss of his beloved sister, Mandeville indulges in violent revenge fantasies against Clifford and Henrietta. As his feelings for Henrietta transform into hatred, he imagines how he will make their children his "instruments of vengeance," envisioning what satisfaction it will give him to "see their infant fingers stream with their parents' blood!" (312). While this image also recalls Mandeville's primary trauma, some of his particularly disturbing fantasies are centred on their marriage:

> Aye, my story is arrived at a festival; Clifford and Henrietta are one! May serpents and all venomous animals solemnise their union! May toads and aspics mark their path with odious slime! May the sheeted dead arise, in every monstrous and terrific form, and squeak and gib-

23 As Richardson emphasizes, sisters became typically viewed as "ideal affectionate partners" as "sources of inspiration and icons of sensibility, as ideal intellectual companions and ethical guides" ("Romantic Incest" 564).

ber around them! May all the demons of hell celebrate their pomp in emblematic dance, and toss their torches on high, in testimony of their joy! (320-21)

In a series of curses, reinforced by exclamation marks, Mandeville wishes for their holy marriage to be perverted into a hellish feast. It is important to note that in this passage, there are no markers of external focalization, no verbs of thinking that would frame Mandeville's curses as the product of the experiencing rather than the narrating self. In other words, this passage reinforces the sense that Mandeville, contrary to his claims, has not succeeded in mastering his ruling passion, even at the time of writing. As Nathaniel Leach argues, "Mandeville seeks to dissect a still living passion while perversely disavowing that he is still dominated by it" (68). Conveying Mandeville's failure to control his dark passions, the text evokes a psychological vein of the Gothic that Leach terms the "Godwinian gothic": "Gothic horror lies not in external phenomena such as ghosts or corpses, but in the dark passions of the human mind itself" (65).

The horror arising from these "dark passions" manifests itself with particular force at the end of the novel, when Mandeville finally crosses the line from fantasies of revenge to an actual deed of revenge – he attempts to kill Clifford. The murder attempt, along with the revenge fantasies and fits of fury and frenzy, suggests that Mandeville resembles those trauma survivors who Kirby Farrell categorizes as exhibiting "impulsive force (berserking)" (*Post-Traumatic* 7). Farrell describes "berserking" in terms of "murderous frenzy," "'senseless' rampage," and an "intoxicating ideation of rage" (289). Possessed and intoxicated by his desire for revenge and fighting Clifford in a blind and trance-like state, Mandeville is, indeed, "berserking"; he displays the "do-or-die vengeance" and the "combat frenzy" that Farrell identifies as typical of a "berserk state" (290-91).

It is important, however, to distinguish between berserking and legitimate acts of resistance. While *The Wrongs of Woman* demonstrates how a patriarchal perspective (deliberately) misinterprets acts of feminist resistance and rebellion as frenzied acts of madness, Mandeville's self-analysis reveals that his berserking is rooted in compulsive hatred. Maria, who fights furiously to achieve a political goal that exceeds her own interest, and Mandeville, whose rage entirely escapes his control, represent two types of trauma survivors who exhibit very different patterns of posttraumatic behaviours. While Wollstonecraft's novel implies that Maria's fury is justified, Godwin's novel suggests that Mandeville's sense of injustice and resulting acts of rage are, above all, pathological. Berserking, as Farrell further emphasizes, is "charged with ambiguity because it may denote both chaotic madness and exemplary valor" (290). Godwin's novel enacts this ambiguity by showing how Mandeville misperceives his frenzy in heroic terms rather than as "chaotic madness." A tragic irony, then, lies in the fact that his berserking increases his vulnerability instead of leading him to the state of invulnerability often intuitively desired by ber-

serkers; the text shows how Mandeville's frenzied hatred and compulsive desire for revenge increasingly separate him from his fellow human beings and lead to a deterioration of his mental state.

"WHIPS AND CHAINS" VERSUS A DOMESTIC TALKING CURE

While Mandeville's narrative dedicates a lot of attention to the pathological, notably to the complex manifestation of the "demons of hatred," the exploration of how these "demons" can be tamed or exorcized, that is, the investigation of how mental illness can be contained or cured, is another crucial element of the novel's psychology of mental illness. One important topos in this context is Mandeville's representation of his experiences at a "receptacle for lunatics," where he was brought after a fit of frenzy (143).[24] He highlights that the period he spent as an inmate at this institution was, for a considerable time, buried in amnesia, but his memories eventually returned. However, given Mandeville's propensity for lengthy, extensively detailed descriptions, there is conspicuously little detail in his text about the methods employed at the asylum. He sums up the means of restraint that were used on him in one sentence: "All this [his memories] came mixed to my recollection, with the violence, the cords, the harsh language, the blows, it had been judged necessary to employ, for my restraint, or my cure" (144).

Why does Mandeville refrain from writing more about his time at the asylum? The text implies that his experiences at the madhouse remain mostly unspeakable because he experienced them as traumatic. It is telling that his assertion, "perhaps I am in the wrong 'to unfold the secrets of my prison-house'" (144), echoes the words of the ghost of Hamlet's father (*Ham.* 1.5.); in this way the text sets up a parallel between the ghost's suffering in purgatory and Mandeville's suffering as an inmate in the madhouse. Mandeville also implies that even though his suffering may not have been unusual for "that sort of madness, which expresses itself in fury" (144), he experienced it as unbearably intense. Moreover, Clifford once again functions as the screen that shields him from a confrontation with his most unbearable

24 Mandeville also refers to this institution as a "madhouse." In light of the historical context, what is implied here is most probably a private madhouse. As Roy Porter emphasizes, even in Georgian times, "public authorities had no brief systematically to police the mad," so that "[f]ew tailor-made institutions as yet existed for them" (*Manacles* 121). In fact, Bethlehem remained the only public asylum in England until 1713 (129-30). As Porter asserts, "[t]hroughout the eighteenth century, private asylums remained tainted with accusations of neglect and corruption" (148).

wounds: "Enough: to this condition of man I was reduced by Clifford" (144). Instead of confronting the unspeakable, Mandeville resorts to another act of blame.

Although he dedicates few words to his experiences at the asylum, the words he does use are suggestive. Like *The Wrongs of Woman*, *Mandeville* is critical of asylums; however, where Wollstonecraft focuses on corruption and abuse, Godwin directs his criticism primarily at treatment methods. Through terms such as "cords" and "blows," Mandeville unmistakably alludes to the fact that physical restraint and violence were repeatedly used on him. In a later passage, where he once again blames Clifford for all his misery, his language becomes even more explicit: "Was not this the man, for whose sake I had undergone whips and chains, a dark chamber and ignominious cords? Had he not by his machinations reduced me to the condition of a beast?" (184). The "whips and chains" and beastlike condition Mandeville mentions resonate with accounts by historians of psychiatry of how madmen were treated in the classical period. In *Madness and Civilization*, Michel Foucault writes that, at the time, "[m]adness borrowed its face from the mask of the beast" (72).[25] Roy Porter similarly asserts that "[i]t had long been assumed that the mad were like wild beasts, requiring brutal taming"; "physical restraint" was, consequently, often used as a means of "taming," in combination with methods such as "bloodletting, purges, and vomits" (*Madness* 100).[26] Through a few stark images such as "dark chambers and ignominious cords" and through the power of the unspoken, through hints and gaps, Mandeville expresses how deeply humiliating and degrading he felt these methods and his resulting "beastlike condition" to be. In a particularly striking passage, which also connects back to the image of a raging berserker, he visualizes this beastlike state by depicting himself with grinding teeth, his head flailing side to side, and his mouth "scatter[ing] foam, like that of a war-horse in the midst of the din of arms" (144).[27]

25 It should also be acknowledged, however, that from a historical perspective, it is hard to tell to what extent Godwin is drawing on practices in seventeenth-century England, the period of the novel's setting, or on eighteenth-century asylums. As Porter notes, from the seventeenth century, only "shreds of evidence" and "snippets of information" are available (*Manacles* 137). Foucault's discussion of the "classical period," then, also mainly refers to the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

26 In *Mind-Forg'd Manacles*, Porter describes the perception of madmen as "brutes" in even more graphic terms: "Semi-naked, filthy, hirsute, often chained or caged and tamed with whips – lunatics in Swift's age were handled very much like animals. It was often assumed, for example, that madhouses would not need heating, nor their windows glazing, because madmen, like brutes, were insensitive to cold" (43).

27 Mandeville's violent reaction to methods of physical restraint may be read as an illustration of the philosophy of moral management: while eighteenth-century madhouse keepers regarded fear as "the most effectual principle by which to reduce the sane to orderly con-

The text also associates the "receptacle" at Cowley with a pre-Romantic approach to mental illness through its emphasis on restraint and confinement rather than therapy and cure. It is probably no coincidence that, with regard to personnel, Mandeville only mentions the "master of the madhouse" and his "keeper" – and no physicians (146). His statement that he remained "under the discipline of men, whose trade it is to superintend persons in [his] unfortunate condition" (146) once again puts the emphasis on containment and control. While reporting that his mental disturbance was diagnosed as temporary rather than permanent, Mandeville does not mention anything that would imply a therapeutic approach. Blows and chains rather than therapy and medical treatment dominate the depiction of the madhouse.

However, Godwin's novel not only evokes a pre-Romantic approach to madness but, in spite of its historical setting, also reflects on the Romantic period. First of all, Godwin's criticism of asylums may not be directed solely at asylums of an earlier period; it may also express his awareness that some asylums continued to use repressive methods in the first decades of the nineteenth century. As Scull maintains, "during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, conditions in both medically and nonmedically run madhouses generally ranged from the bad to the appalling" (127). John Reid's *Essays on Insanity* – published one year before *Mandeville* – reveals that the moral managers' philosophy of humane treatment was, in fact, rarely implemented in British asylums. Reid laments the deplorable circumstances of the mentally ill, writing that "it is to be feared, that many have been condemned to a state of insulation from all rational and sympathising intercourse, before the necessity has occurred for so severe a lot" (725). Reid goes on to postulate a different approach: "Instead of trampling upon, we ought to cherish, and by the most delicate and anxious care, striving to nurse into a clearer and a brighter flame the still glimmering embers of a nearly extinguished mind" (724-25). This approach illustrates the Romantic-era paradigm shift that championed therapy, humane treatment, and, to some extent, verbal interaction. It is with regard to this paradigm shift that *Mandeville* resonates most clearly with Romantic psychiatry. The novel evokes this approach to mental illness not in an institutional context but in the context of domestic care, mainly through Henrietta, who nurses Mandeville at home and tries to cure him by means of a self-designed talking therapy.[28]

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duct" (Scull 85), moral managers such as Pinel maintained that chains and coercion had the effect of increasing or producing the fury and the ravings of maniacs ("Treatise" 606).

28 The theme of domestic care of the mentally ill is typical of an earlier period, reflecting, perhaps, the novel's historical setting. Dating Mandeville's birth as 1638 (9), the novel is set even before the period that Foucault in *Madness and Civilization* identified as the beginning of the "great confinement" in the 1660s. Moreover, as Porter argues, Foucault's thesis about the great confinement needs to be relativized: in the Stuart period, and even in the eighteenth century, only a relatively small number of mentally disturbed individu-

Henrietta, whom Mandeville calls his "physician" (178), chooses her approach based on a belief in the soothing and beneficial power of words. In contrast to the "harsh language" of the madhouse (144), Henrietta's language, as Mandeville writes, draws harmonious and peaceful "Arcadian pictures" in a voice that resembles "the song of the Sirens," and "lulled [him] into forgetfulness" (129). Her language is not the language of discipline and control but the language of kindness, sympathy, and affection. While the first stage of her talking cure is focused on calming the turmoil in Mandeville's mind, the second stage relies increasingly on the instructive and educative potential of words. Henrietta tries to cure Mandeville of his ruling passions by means of long talks about principles such as benevolence, sympathy, and a "religion of love" (155). In attempting to teach Mandeville ideas of humanity and morality, Henrietta naturally assumes the role of "moral reformer." In other words, Godwin has Henrietta intuitively choose an approach that is in stark contrast to – and ahead of – the practice of physical restraint and violence; indeed, her approach gestures towards the idea in Romantic psychiatry that the mentally ill need to be morally reformed.[29] Henrietta's approach resonates with the philosophy of the moral managers in terms of the belief that, as Faubert puts it, "the psychologist and the patient could and should communicate" and that "the patient must be taught to look inside [him or] herself, to recognize the impulses that manifest symptoms of madness in [his or] her actions" (82-83).

Although Mandeville depicts Henrietta as a sympathetic physician, who tries to engage with and respond to his mindset, her therapy fails in the long run. Mandeville does suggest that her approach was successful over the short term, stating that "under the fashioning care" of Henrietta, he "could not fail to become peaceful, virtuous and happy" (151). His profound affection and admiration for her allow her to gain the authority that the Romantic-period moral reformers tried to achieve with their patients (see Faubert 111). As Mandeville writes, "every thing that Henrietta did, was right: every thing that Henrietta said, was best" (149). Yet her talking therapy and moral treatment only provide temporary relief and improvement; Mandeville's obsessive hatred soon repossesses him: "Mandeville was himself again – the same pernicious creature that the preceding sheets have described him!" (172). The failure of Henrietta's treatment may signal a criticism of the moral managers' typical method of asserting unquestioned authority; perhaps Henrietta's extensive sermonizing is too intent on encouraging Mandeville to listen rather than speak.

Yet Mandeville himself gives a clear explanation for why Henrietta's talking cure failed: he maintains that his nature, above all his inability to speak, made it

als were institutionalized. As Porter asserts, "[m]anaging madness was allowed to remain *ad hoc,* indeed largely private" (*Manacles* 111); in the 1660s, it was "exceptional for a lunatic to be put in a madhouse" (155).

29 On moral management, see also Chapter One.

impossible for him to respond adequately to her treatment. He does express a belief in Henrietta's approach, repeatedly emphasizing the positive power of language, but he implies that listening is not enough: it must be combined with speaking. As Mandeville reflects in retrospect, "had I poured out the freight of my bursting bosom in all the exuberant rhetoric of vulgar abhorrence, there would have been hope. To the thus venting my passion, it were not unlikely that a comparative temperance might have succeeded" (292). Even though he is unable to experience the soothing power of talking about his sorrows, he presents the cathartic power of verbal expression as commonly accepted wisdom. He supports this philosophy by quoting both Shakespeare ("'Give sorrow words,' says the great master of the human soul") and the Bible ("Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh"),[30] concluding that his "silent nature was an ever-living and incessant curse" to him (59).

Furthermore, Mandeville regards his inability to verbalize his sorrows as closely connected to his inability to find a friend. His definition of friendship is telling: "The true definition of a friend is, he to whom I can bear to speak, and whom I can bear to hear!" (145). Mandeville conceptualizes friendship in terms of verbal exchange and mutual sympathy; his belief in the necessity of having a friend is closely related to his belief about the positive power of communication.[31] Lamenting that he never had a friend, he concludes: "Had I encountered such a friend at my greatest need, I should never have gone mad" (145). The powerful desire for a friend is something that Mandeville shares with Fleetwood and other Godwinian characters. As Brewer emphasizes, "[m]any of Godwin's characters believe that a friend will provide them with much-needed emotional support and enable them to escape the evils of selfhood" (127).[32] *Mandeville*, then, also demonstrates how the protagonist's quest for a friend fails; he repeatedly engages in harmful and damaging relationships with individuals who betray him: Waller, the solitary, cowardly, and selfish boy at Winchester school who blames Mandeville in order to save his own reputation; Lisle, his fellow misanthropic student at Oxford, who lets Mandeville down

30 The quotations are taken from *Macbeth* (*Mac.* 4.1.2) and Matthew (Matt. 12: 34).

31 As Carlson emphasizes, Mandeville's notion of friendship can also be seen in connection with "the impartial spectator posited as internalized by Scottish-enlightened notions of sympathy" (76). The idea is that through his or her different perspective, a friend "also moderates the passions by serving as a mediator of them" (77).

32 Brewer also argues that the depictions of "Romantic solitaries" such as Mandeville, Byron's Manfred, and Baillie's De Monfort resonate with Adam Smith's emphasis on the dangers of solitude: "In solitude, we are apt to feel too strongly what relates to ourselves: we are apt to over-rate the good offices we have done, and the injuries we may have suffered: we are apt to be too much elated by our own good, and too much dejected by our own bad fortune" (qtd. in Brewer 92).

once he hears rumours about Mandeville being a deserter; and the treacherous Mallison and his nephew Holloway, who pretend to nurse Mandeville and to have his best interest in mind, while secretly scheming against him and precipitating his mental and financial ruin. It is particularly striking that Mandeville repeatedly suggests he was aware (or at least partly aware) of these individuals' negative characters, yet he felt drawn to them – as much as he felt compelled to hate Clifford, whose character he saw as admirable. Mandeville even reports that he "never felt so unrestrained of speech" as with the deceitful Mallison, who nursed him after a riding accident (244). Time and again, the novel demonstrates how Mandeville, even though he believes in the therapeutic potential of talking to a kind and understanding listener, fails to engage with those who would listen sympathetically.

THE FAILURE OF ORAL SELF-EXPRESSION AND THE PORNOGRAPHY OF WRITING

Throughout the novel, Mandeville laments that he lacks the ability to express himself, both in public and private settings. His inability to speak contrasts sharply with the abilities of the other main protagonists, Clifford and Henrietta, who are portrayed as particularly eloquent. Mandeville often quotes their speeches at length, including Henrietta's speeches intended to cure him and the speeches Clifford delivers on various occasions. The fact that Mandeville grants the voice of his archenemy so much room in his narrative suggests that he is, against his will, captivated by this skill. This impression is reinforced by the fact that Mandeville not only describes Henrietta's speeches as "divine" but uses the same adjective when referring to Clifford's speeches at school, even while he is critical of Clifford's ideas (89).

Furthermore, the text draws a connection between trauma and the (in)ability to express oneself by constructing both Clifford and Lisle as Mandeville's foils. Mandeville reports that Clifford's father "was among the slain in the first battle" of the civil wars and describes the resulting difficult family situation (84), commenting that all this misfortune seems irreconcilable with Clifford's positive and communicative temper. In contrast, Lisle, whose father was, like Mandeville's, shot to death in a massacre, is obsessed with his father's story and indulges in mourning. Interestingly, Mandeville claims that Lisle has found a healthier way of dealing with his father's death than he has, envying him because Lisle "was blessed in a surprising degree with copiousness of speech, in which faculty [he] was deficient" (130). Lisle vents his emotions through, for example, violent cursing. Mandeville tries to join Lisle in practicing the "art of cursing" (129), but he keeps emphasizing that oral expression does not suit his nature. Through the contrast to Lisle and Clifford, the text

suggests that Mandeville's repressed trauma is "figured in the lack of eloquence that haunts Mandeville throughout the text" (Handwerk 77).

Mandeville's life-long inability to express himself figures, then, as a profound lack, as a deficiency that requires compensation. This compensation, or at least attempt at compensation, is enacted through what I, drawing on Faflak's notion of the "pornography of talking," want to call the "pornography of writing." Faflak describes the "pornography of talking" in terms of a proliferation of speech and a "striptease" of the psyche, identifying "an excess that exposes the Romantic expression of selfhood as pornographic" ("Pornography" 88, 79). In *Mandeville*, the subject's desire to indulge in self-expression, self-revelation, and self-confession is displaced from the scene of speaking to writing. The novel suggests that, for Mandeville, the "pornographic" impulse is particularly strong, both in terms of quantity and content, because he has always desired but has never been able to express himself in speech. Once Mandeville finally begins to verbalize his feelings, thoughts, and memories, the result is an exceedingly detailed, long-winded narrative of his life. He indulges in a retrospective anatomy of his own mind and devotes lengthy sections to periods of his life that seem of marginal importance to readers. Through large sections of Mandeville's autobiographical narrative, text-time seems out of proportion to story-time, which can be read as one marker of a pornographic approach to selfhood. This disproportion can also be illustrated by the fact that he devotes two volumes (about 200 pages) to the first eighteen years of his life, while the protagonist-narrator in Godwin's novel *Fleetwood* describes the first 45 years of his life in less than 150 pages. Reading Mandeville's devotion to self-narration in light of a pornography of writing shifts the focus of interpretation from the pragmatic purpose of writing that Mandeville emphasizes (i.e., the dissection of his mind as a project of general instructive value) to the subject's psychological needs, more specifically, to the trauma survivor's compulsion to express himself in words. Godwin's novel, thus, explores not only issues of therapy and language but also the interrelations between self-therapy and written narration.

The displacement of self-narration and the compulsion to narrate trauma in written rather than oral form is something that we recognize from Maria in *The Wrongs of Woman*, whose primary act of self-narration are her memoirs addressed to her daughter. Maria chooses a more solitary form of self-narration than Jemima, whose oral tale is oriented towards her listener. Yet because Maria's narrative addresses her daughter and is intended as a warning and a means of education, it is less solipsistic than Mandeville's, which addresses an unspecified addressee and claims only a vague, impersonal purpose, namely, psychological insight. Moreover, references to Mandeville's potential readers are scarce, creating the impression that his commitment to write for a public readership is, while self-imposed, secondary or, perhaps, even disingenuous. While Maria's posttraumatic suffering leads to a sense of solidarity and community with other trauma victims, Mandeville's suffering re-

mains self-centred. In Maria's case, then, the relation between the writing self and the addressee constitutes an integral part of the narrative, and cathartic self-expression also serves a larger educative purpose; in contrast, in Mandeville's case, self-absorption and self-obsession result in a pornographic excess of autobiographical writing that fails to produce catharsis.

As Faflak asserts, some Romantic writers, including William Wordsworth, evoke the topos of the pornography of talking in their texts, but these texts simultaneously contain or "manage" the pornography and its excess (82).[33] However, with *Mandeville*, Godwin shows precisely how his protagonist-narrator fails to control his pornography, which connects to Mandeville's more general failure to control his disrupted psyche. His countless – and rather compulsive – psychological self-diagnoses never result in any conclusive interpretations, oscillating between theories of nature versus nurture, and ruling passions versus environmental factors. While Mandeville's narrating self, the analyst, attempts to investigate madness from a position of sanity, the text implies that he may never reach any conclusions because, as we have seen in several contexts, the analysing self is too close to the analysand, the experiencing self. As Leach emphasizes, the "Godwinian narrator's attempts at self-anatomy invariably run aground on the recognition that the self is Gothically Other to all attempts to reduce it to a language of stable, rational knowledge" (77-78). The psychoanalysis enacted by Godwin's trauma narrative is, hence, in Faflak's terms, characterized by "interminability" rather than "terminability" ("Pornography" 83);[34] even the ending of the novel does not gesture towards an end or a conclusion, towards closure or control. Mandeville's self-narration, then, can be read as pornographic in Faflak's sense, as producing "a profligate talk that leads nowhere, an orgy of self-confession and self-exploration pornographic in its extravagance" (93), which demonstrates how the pathology of the mind refuses to be rationalized and contained by language.

THE BATTLE OF HATRED AND THE FINAL WOUND

Mandeville's mental illness persists through attempts at both therapy and self-therapy. The sense of incurability conveyed through his inability to express himself in speech and his pornography of writing is reinforced by the novel's ending, which

33 For example, in "The Ruined Cottage," as Faflak argues, the narrator and the pedlar "rationali[ze] away Margaret's madness"; they displace madness "into the woman's symptomatic body," thereby attempting to contain and manage it ("Pornography" 84).

34 For a discussion of "terminability" versus "interminability," see also Faflak's *Romantic Psychoanalysis*.

expresses the culmination of his ravings both textually and diegetically. The final chapter focuses on his attempt to murder Clifford to prevent him from marrying his beloved sister. Mandeville attacks Clifford with uncontrollable fury, forcing his brother-in-law – the marriage has, in fact, already taken place – to engage in a frenzied duel to the death. While Clifford survives unhurt, he delivers Mandeville a "deep and perilous gash" (325). Thus, the topos of wounding that plays an important role throughout the text is here enacted on a physical level, through a wound that leaves Mandeville disfigured and half-blind: "The sight of my left eye is gone; the cheek beneath is severed, with a deep trench between" (325). This injury is both a literalization of Mandeville's figurative blindness, of the distorted vision he expresses throughout the text, and a literalization of the metaphor of anatomy and dissection. The notion of figurative cutting (the etymological roots of both "anatomy" and "dissection" point to the verb "to cut") for the sake of rational analysis is here translated into a physical cutting that has no meaning except to mark the consequences of Mandeville's obsessive hatred. Mandeville perceives the "trench" on his cheek as the inerasable mark of his enemy; Clifford, whom he had earlier imagined as a disease infecting him, is now literally "branded" into his body (325). Mandeville's detailed description of his scar and his lexicographical analysis of what the words for "scar" signify in French, Latin, and Italian once again testify to his obsession with the state of woundedness.

Moreover, in the description of his disfigured face, Mandeville resorts to a rhetoric of monstrosity: "When I first looked in my glass, and saw my face, […] I thought I never saw anything so monstrous. […] The sword of my enemy had given a perpetual grimace, a sort of preternatural and unvarying distorted smile, or deadly grin, to my countenance" (325). The text here introduces the thematic conjunction of trauma and monstrosity, which plays an important role in Shelley's *Frankenstein* and, in different ways, *Mathilda*. In the final pages of *Mandeville*, the notion of the monstrous that the protagonist evokes with regard to his changed facial appearance implicitly connects to a different kind of monstrosity: Mandeville's murderous hatred, which is monstrous in the way it leads to a complete disregard for the value of life and kinship. Mandeville is blinded by his obsession with extinguishing Clifford to the extent that he cannot see how the act will not only make him a murderer but also destroy his sister's happiness. Furthermore, in his state of "berserking," he does not even shrink from imperiling the lives of innocent victims: "I shrunk from no violence, I was willing to engage in the widest scene of blood and devastation, rather than suffer that event to take place, which I regarded with more horror than the destruction of millions" (321). Through this psychology of incurable madness and monstrous violence, the text may here be said to reproduce for the reader a series of sensations that are akin to Maria's experience of the "neural sublime," in Richardson's terminology. The text evokes mingled feelings of fascination and ter-

ror, leaving us with a sense of profound awe at witnessing the mind and psyche in such a deeply disrupted state.

Beyond this sense of awe, the last pages of the novel also confront readers with issues of guilt and responsibility and with the psychology of victims and perpetrators. Throughout the text, Mandeville describes the numerous times he was or felt victimized; however, by the end, he transforms from trauma victim to perpetrator of trauma, enacting his desire for revenge. As readers, we are left with the question of how to react to the narrator's final revelation, how to respond to the recognition that Mandeville, who has outlined in detail the emergence and progress of his mental illness and thereby tried to evoke our understanding and sympathy, is capable of murder. The novel hence raises crucial questions about ethics, about the relations between explication and justification as well as understanding and moral judgment.[35] We are forced to examine our response as readers: if we sympathize with this mentally ill trauma victim, to what extent do we respond to his implicit appeal to be regarded as merely a victim of his passions and circumstances, and to what extent do we judge his actions and attitudes critically, even if we understand what drives them?

A central consideration in this context is the narrator's attitude towards his murder attempt. Does the description of his facial features as monstrous symbolically express an awareness of the monstrosity of the murder attempt? Does it suggest that Mandeville feels a sense of guilt? The text implies that a sense of guilt might play into the narrator's confession, yet the absence of any direct expression of regret and remorse is conspicuous, even more so because he emphasizes that the murderous scheme was, in fact, Holloway's plan, who cleverly tricked him into believing it was his own plan (322). Thus, the act of confession is connected to a gesture of self-vindication and, it seems, an inability on Mandeville's part to assume responsibility for his actions. This impression is reinforced by the final image of his narrative, which once again underlines his self-perception as a victim: "Even as certain tyrannical planters in the West Indies have set a brand with a red-hot iron upon the negroes they have purchased, to denote that they are irremediably a property, so Clifford had set his mark upon me, as a token that I was his for ever" (325). It is crucial that Mandeville's narrative breaks off with this striking visualization of

35 Implicitly, the text also calls attention to the complex relationship between mental illness, criminality, and (in)accountability. In this context, Porter locates the emergence of forensic psychiatry in the early decades of the nineteenth century: "Distinguishing criminality from insanity was not traditionally considered a matter of medical expertise. From the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, the insanity defence was increasingly likely to involve medical testimony" (*Greatest Benefit* 501). In other words, the intersections of criminality and insanity became contested territory, determined by "conflicts between legal and psychiatric models of consciousness and conduct" (501).

what he perceives as the permanent mark of his victimhood. Furthermore, while the rhetoric of colonialism evoked in these paragraphs is displaced from an Irish to a more distant setting, it functions as a final reminder of how much Mandeville's psycho-history is embedded in political circumstances. Hence, the text implicitly signals how – like his intricate psychology – the historical moment of which Mandeville is the victim refuses to be rationalized and resolved. By ending with this comparison to the victims of colonialism, which expresses Mandeville's sense of eternal enslavement, the text breaks off at a moment when reconciliation and recovery seem impossible, although it makes no gestures towards suicide or death. The text, then, ends abruptly at a moment when mental illness manifests itself at its most powerful.[36]

As this chapter demonstrates, Godwin's *Mandeville* depicts the profoundly damaging effects of childhood and family trauma: the traumatic loss of his parents haunts Mandeville throughout his life; the violent destruction of his family precipitates his mental and emotional decline; and his attempt at coping with the loss of his parents results in a dysfunctional and destructive relationship with his sister, marked by incestuous desire and jealousy. A deeply psychological novel, *Mandeville* reflects the Romantic-era interest in anatomizing the disrupted mind, investigating the sources, progress, and dynamics of mental illness and exploring possibilities of therapy and cure. Throughout, Godwin's "metaphysical dissecting knife" operates behind the scenes of Mandeville's autodiegetic narrative to expose a complex psychology of mental illness, which simultaneously responds to and moves beyond the mental sciences of its time, resonating in multiple ways with contemporary trauma theory. In comparison to the other trauma narratives discussed in this study, the repercussions of trauma are here represented as particularly pathological, while, at the same time, the investigation of curability is a core concern of the novel. *Mandeville* sets up a contrast between the containment approach of the classical period and the Romantic-period emphasis on curing the individual; it depicts the treatment common in madhouses as inhuman, cruel, and humiliating, in contrast to a more humane and progressive therapy approach based on verbal interaction and moral management. Nevertheless, the text departs from the period's therapeutic optimism, showing how all internal and external attempts at management fail. Henrietta's version of the talking cure has positive short-term effects, but it eventually proves powerless against Mandeville's inability to express himself verbally and the persistence of his obsessive hatred. Moreover, the text signals sceptically that an extensive self-anatomy is also not an adequate means for a mentally ill individual to come to terms with the disruptions of his or her mind.

36 According to Rajan, most of Godwin's novels are "significantly unended," having "unconcluded endings" (*Romantic Narrative* 122, 140).

However, the text also encourages us to question whether or not Mandeville's writing, in fact, deserves to be labelled self-anatomy. Mandeville indulges in the process of life-writing, devoting himself to the act of self-revelation and self-expression using a "pornographically" excessive volume of detail. While his self-narration seems to represent an attempt at writing through, the dynamics of displacement at work in his narrative make the process one of writing around or writing over his core trauma, producing a kind of screen narrative. His obsessive focus on Clifford as the cause of his failures and sufferings, his compulsive hatred, and his desire for revenge indicate his inability to confront the core issues of his wounded mind, above all, his childhood trauma. Internalizing the historical and political dynamics of antagonism, he primarily displays affects that are directed outward rather than inward, that are other-related rather than self-related, notably, hatred and revenge. The novel can, then, be read as a testament to the destructive power of displacement, suggesting that Mandeville, while focused excessively on his life-story and writing extensively about the psychology of his mind, in the end fails to confront his self analytically and critically. His disrupted, alienated self emerges as Gothically uncontrollable and uncontainable. His goal of performing a self-conducted psychoanalysis always remains in tension with his tendency to cling to a state of woundedness and victimhood and with his absorption in self-pity and embitterment. Mandeville's final inability to confront his own guilt and his fixation on his permanent facial disfigurement underscore the limitations of his self-anatomy. The psychology of Godwin's *Mandeville* is, thus, characterized by a fundamental tension that runs throughout the text: the tension between the urge to analyse and penetrate into the complexity of mental illness and the impossibility of containment, management, or cure. Ultimately, the novel betrays a strong fascination with the pathological as uncontrollable: the "demons of hatred" (124) persist until the very end.