

Everyday

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Summary and Keywords

The central issue surrounding the “everyday” in relation to literature and to literary study is etymological: a distinction between the “everyday,” a Romantic-period neologism that names both a site of interest and a representational alternative to both the probable and the fantastic; and “everydayness,” a mid-19th-century coinage, reflecting developments particular to urbanization, industrialization, and the rise of capital. This distinction has largely vanished, reflecting the influence of social science, and theory on the humanities and the flight in general from phenomenology. Nevertheless, as the first discourse actually to register the uncanniness of the everyday, literature provides an approach to everyday life that is not only in contrast to the limitations and routines linked to everydayness but also a reminder of possibilities and enchantments that are always close at hand. Although Maurice Blanchot’s axiom that “the everyday is never what we see a first time, but only see again” is as applicable to “everyday life studies” as it is to literature and to related theories of perception, there are fundamental differences. From the perspective of the human sciences and social theory, this discovery is recursive: “the everyday” proceeds from something that “escapes”—which, like ideology, is never quite seen—to something suddenly visible or seen again but with no alteration apart from being retrieved and corralled as a condition of being understood and in many cases lamented. In literature, the escape is ongoing. A parallel world of which we are unaware, or unmindful, becomes visible *as if* for the first time, but as a condition of remaining missable and always discoverable.

Keywords: everyday, everydayness, emergence, ordinary, probability, possibility, retrospection, the world, the present

The Everyday in Literature

In demarcating, much less thinking about, the everyday, one must first reckon with the encyclopedic nature of the term itself, both as a general concept (there is nothing that we are or do that is not an everyday practice from some perspective) and, more narrowly, as a disciplinary concept, where, in contrast to other key terms—say “plot” or “the novel”—the everyday is neither the property nor the perennial focus of literary analysis and study. In an important issue of *Yale French Studies* on “everyday life,” ostensibly for research in

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literature, literature took a backseat to social and political theory and to versions of representation or performance (e.g., the Situationists in France) where theory, specifically critique, was front and center.¹ An encyclopedia entry could follow in this vein with Henri Lefebvre's three-volume *Critique of Everyday of Life* as a general compass. Here "nineteenth-century literature" is explicitly called to task for "a sustained attack on the everyday" in its preoccupation "with the marvelous in the familiar."² Such an entry would proceed directly to "everyday life studies": a medley of social science and theory, in which "everyday" and "everydayness" are broadly synonymous, where interest is invariably directed to the ceilings and structures that govern life amid domains of both power and powerlessness, and where literature's complicity is as much an issue as its analysis or testimony.

A key purpose of this analysis, with its focus on the literary, will be to keep the terms "everyday" and "everydayness" largely separate, not only because the latter is in many ways a narrowing of the former in the wake of both urbanization and modernization and their related disciplines but also because the discovery of the marvelous in the familiar or the "extraordinariness of the ordinary," as philosopher Stanley Cavell describes it (often with reference to literature), is where the literary and the everyday meet and where the everyday emerges conceptually.³ Something similar could be said of the various methods and disciplines that focus on everyday life—for example, Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*—which follow on the paradigm articulated by Maurice Blanchot, who remarks that "the everyday is never what we see a first time but only see again, having always already seen it by an illusion that is, as it happens, constitutive of the everyday."⁴ From the perspective of the human sciences and social theory, this discovery is recursive: "the everyday" proceeds from something that "escapes" (Blanchot), something that, like ideology, is never quite seen, to something suddenly visible or seen again but with no alteration apart from being retrieved and corralled as a condition of being understood and in many instances lamented.

In literature the escape is ongoing, especially early on. A parallel world of which we are unaware, or unmindful, becomes visible *as if* for the first time (hence the "illusion") but as a condition of remaining "missabl[e]" (Cavell), or "always" discoverable or "something," in Wordsworth's phrase, "evermore about to be."⁵ When Lefebvre laments the *incapacity* to grasp and appreciate "humble, familiar, everyday objects"—"the shape of fields and of ploughs"—that "may be seized and seen again as part of the immense wealth that the humblest facts of everyday life contain," he is proceeding from one model (everydayness), where the subject remains alienated and blinkered under capital ("the pressure of the market and exchange"), to another in which the marvelous and the familiar are phenomenologically conjoined.⁶ The anchor for this transformation is a pre-capitalist, agrarian mode of being and time from which Lefebvre, apparently, is not wholly removed. Nevertheless, the plenitude at hand to which one may potentially bear witness, even from a fallen state, looks very much like the work of what he discredits: namely "nineteenth-century literature."

The Emergence of the “Every Day”

“Everydayness” is a mid-19th-century neologism in English, having been preceded by “everyday,” primarily in adjectival form (in the late 18th and early 19th centuries), where the latter is a register of something striking.⁷ Writing to the novelist Maria Edgeworth in 1814, Ann Romilly commented on “the real natural everyday life” of Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park*, which she found surprising and amusing in contrast to what the novel failed to provide: a “story vein of principle” or “something beyond nature.”⁸ That the most didactic of Austen’s novels elicited this observation upon appearance says something about the contemporary versus the canonical, which would be tied in Austen’s case to the “moral lessons” that, as Bishop Richard Whately noted, her “novels . . . clearly and impressively conveyed.”⁹ What Romilly’s on-the-ground sense of *Mansfield Park* speaks to more immediately is the surplus, the surprise, to which the “every day”—as a referent only recently in search of a name—was tantamount. Whately took cognizance of this as well by instantly downplaying it, insisting (just four years later) that everyday life in Austen was a device whereby “the perfect appearance of reality” both obscured and enhanced a moral or religious message.¹⁰ In contrast to narratives where “the purpose of inculcating a religious principle is made too palpably prominent,” the “lessons of [Austen’s] novels,” he wrote,

are not offensively put forward, but spring incidentally from the circumstances of the story; they are not forced upon the reader, but he is left to collect them . . . for himself: her’s is that unpretending kind of instruction which is furnished by real life; and certainly no author has ever conformed more closely to real life, as well as in the incidents, as in the characters and descriptions.¹¹

It took a century and more for literary study and theory to establish that the “real” in a realistic novel is not “real life” but a naturalizing device that obscures ideology by making the always-limited or partial content of a novel appear representative.¹² At this moment, however, the Romantic moment, it is an understanding that Whately stumbles into by containment. The issue for him, as for many of Austen’s contemporaries, is a *proximity* to “real natural every day life” that is too close. Edgeworth, to whom Austen sent a copy of *Emma*, complained that the novel had “no story in it,” echoing other readers, who were impressed or struck or disturbed by the novels’ “prosing” (Walter Scott).¹³ Edgeworth focused on Emma’s father, whose directives for making “small thin water gruel” stood generally for a reality that went nowhere, forcing her to stop reading after just one volume. Annabella Milbanke (the future Lady Byron) was just as direct, if approving. Commenting on *Pride and Prejudice*’s rejection of the “common” and sensationalistic “resources of Novel writers” (“no drownings, nor conflagrations, nor runaway horses”), she pronounced the book “the *most probable* fiction I have ever read.”¹⁴

Milbanke was far from alone, with respect to Austen and to the issue generally. Frances Burney proclaimed it her goal as a writer to retrieve the novel from the “fantastic regions of Romance” by “taking aid from Sober Probability.”¹⁵ Clara Reeve, writing at almost the same moment, celebrates the novel’s “progress” from a genre that had previously treated

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“fabulous persons and things” to one that adopts “a familiar relation of such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves.”¹⁶ For Reeve, as for Whately, this “perfection” serves a purpose. By “represent[ing]” “things” in “so easy and natural [a] manner” in “making them appear so probable,” readers would be “deceiv[ed] . . . while reading that all is real,” making the novel a deception, a seduction even, that could tame expectations rather than induce them in ways that could likely lead to “injury” (Burney).¹⁷

There are two points about “every day” at the moment it becomes a term—with attention to literature—that must be stressed. The first is that it is no more than a variant of the probable, especially in writings, such as Austen’s, whose “probable” is hyperbolically disorienting. The second is that the “every day” departs from probability not just through what readers perceive as a resistance to a certain kind of story (“romance”) but by the substitution of “no story” for plot in general, allowing “such things, as pass every day before our eyes,” to be isolated or “seen again” and removed from the naturalizing functions that Reeve and Whately assign to them.

Probability is central to the empirical project, the result of both an inductive method in which, as David Hume noted, “what we have found to be most usual is always most probable,” and the growing stability of life in Britain and elsewhere, where predictions became increasingly measurable rather than mere guesswork.¹⁸ Still, in describing *Pride and Prejudice* as “the most probable fiction I have ever read,” Lady Byron is doing more than signing off on this development; she is drawing a bright line between the probable and something in the novel that extends to the borders of what Ernst Bloch calls “real possibility.”¹⁹ If probability finds “order . . . in the mass and over the long run,” it simultaneously finds solace in a future framed by precedent.²⁰ We do not know for certain that the sun will rise in the east tomorrow, but we can be confident, based on experience, that tomorrow will resemble yesterday. In the case of literature—specifically the novel—the probabilistic situation and its particular solace are a little different. Here the future is not preordained so much as flattened in the same way that the present is invariably bypassed in a story where diminished expectations, formed in light of mistakes and by the narrowed scope of representation, are the guarantors of happiness.²¹ There are many novels like this at this time: Burney’s *Cecilia*, Edgeworth’s *Belinda*, and even Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*, which was otherwise marred, according to one contemporary, by its regulatory dimension—what she called “its stupid ending.”²² What this reader, Lady Bessborough, recognized, what Lady Byron was getting at in praising *Pride and Prejudice*, what forced Maria Edgeworth to stop reading *Emma* after just one volume, are all versions of the same understanding. The binary choice between the probable and the fantastic provides a clearing for a possible world—call it the present, call it “no story,” call it “amus[ing]” (Lady Bessborough), call it “real natural every day life”—that is striking to readers because they are encountering it “again” and for the “first time.”

Recalling the Present

If the everyday proves an uncanny experience for Romantic-period readers, who were among the very first to name it, writers of the period are deliberately fixated on a present that is continuous with the past, creating a peculiar nostalgia for what “is” that Svetlana Boym describes as “local longing” and that, quoting *Mansfield Park*’s Edmund Bertram, becomes a “retrospect” functionally “of what might have been.”²³ Edmund is referring specifically to a marriage that the novel’s heroine has wisely avoided. But he is all but providing a conceptual framework for the novel’s slow deliberation in “alli[ance] with the experience of [our] social habits” (as Walter Scott termed it), where, as readers like Romilly note, its forward and didactic movement is continually stymied by “scenes,” by “recollection[s],” to which the reader’s “head,” in Scott’s words, is “turned.”²⁴ Featuring heroines “turned” differently for Scott—that is, “wise by precept, example, and experience”—Austen’s “narratives” were probabilistic affairs, as he saw them, that counted similarly on experience, on precepts based on precedent, in prosecuting their claims and conclusions.²⁵ But the novels’ narratives, he notes with particular attention to *Emma*, are consistently challenged by a different sense, in which the prior is sufficiently singular and prosaic that its integration in any form apart from what Romilly calls “every day life” is resisted.

The world and milieu that Austen engaged, reengaged, and made the defining feature of her practice as a writer during the nearly two decades that her first published novels underwent revision owes to more than her acuity as an observer or to her avoidance of the “common resources of novel writers.” It is the product of historical distance, both on a large scale, where a world undergoing “considerable chang[e]” in “manners” and “opinions” (domestic ideology among them) is returned provisionally to a former (and better) state for women, and on a local scale, where reading practices—such practices as her style suddenly demanded—are slowed to the point of similarly looking backward.²⁶ When Lady Gordon observes to Austen “that there is scarcely an Incident, or conversation, or a person [in *Mansfield Park*] that you are not inclined to imagine you have had one time or other in your Life been a witness to, born a part in, & been acquainted with,” she is attesting not simply to the seamless continuity of the world of the novel and “life” as she had experienced it.²⁷ She is remarking on a present—a “thickened present,” in Edmund Husserl’s term—that is visible to readers thanks to narratives that *were* archives.²⁸ By revision and recollection, a world written out of history—whether by novelistic convention or by time itself—is restored to a form, a stratum, a mode of being, for which “every day life” is both a term and increasingly a concept.

Something similar happens in the writings of Austen’s Romantic contemporaries, whose temporal and social fields were more various and wide-ranging. The final line of Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind,” with its famous question—“If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?” (line 70)—incorporates cyclical repetition—the hallmark, for Lefebvre and others, of a world unimpeded by progress—to a linear, seemingly progressive, temporality. Lefebvre associates this latter timescape with reason, repetition, monotony, and ultimately “everydayness.”²⁹ But it remains, the poem demonstrates, regressive and progressive

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in nearly equal measure. The movement forward to a “new birth” that Shelley means to “quicken” (line 64) appears, for the moment, to be compatible with seasonal cyclical change. Yet the “self-accelerating temporality” to which the poem subscribes, discursively and stylistically, scuttles all that. A feature of Revolutionary-era modernity, as Reinhart Koselleck explores it (in his study of the semantics of historical time), the poem’s temporality appears to “transcend the . . . predictable, natural space of time and experience” in postulating a future “characterized by two main features: the increasing speed with which it approaches us, and second, its unknown quality.”³⁰ “Spring,” of course, is far from an “unknown,” and while it is figured less determinately as renewal, it is also “behind” and one of *two* Springs: one that is far behind, from which the speaker is closed off by impending “Winter,” and another that, in the linear interval between an Edenic past and a future marked by an interrogative, is more of a remainder. The accelerating temporality commencing in the late 18th century came with certain costs. It “rob[bed] the present of the possibility of being experienced as the present,” and it “escape[d] into the future” to be retrieved and eventually stabilized by what (to distinguish it from “Revolution”) Koselleck terms “Reaction.”³¹ Shelley’s poem is at a different standstill. Here what stands for Spring, what Spring literally *stands* for, is something close by: a “futureless future” (Koselleck) that *can* be experienced but only, the poem recognizes, by longing locally.

The Romantic poet most identified with “incidents and situations from common life” (as he terms them in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*) is William Wordsworth, whose engagements in this register are interchangeably outward and inward bound.³² All the same, in Book 11 of *The Prelude* an “ordinary sight” does not enlarge but contracts to a haiku: “[t]he woman, and her garments, vexed and tossed” (line 314).³³ It proceeds in this way because the typically Wordsworthian movement from the “earthly and material” to the “mental and celestial”—from, say, an old man gathering leeches to “a leading from above”—is contained suddenly by the sight or thing in itself so that the movement, retroactively, is a movement to the present.³⁴ The experience—“A girl who bore a pitcher on her head / And seemed with difficult steps to force her way / Against the blowing wind” (lines 305–307)—is linked, very briefly, to a dreary vision that proves ineffable and uncharacteristically unrepresentable. But not because Wordsworth lacks the *imaginative* resources to represent it as anything more. It is because the sight of the girl “was, in truth, . . . ordinary” (lines 307–308, emphasis added). Something similar happens in the “Intimations Ode,” where a personified Pansy—what John Ruskin would call a “pathetic fallacy”—is restored, at the very close, to something altogether veritable: a flower—“the meanest flower that blows”—that, in neither a contradiction nor a mystification, “give[s] / Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears” (lines 205–206).³⁵ The operative word is “often,” and it looks in two directions: to the initial encounter where the Pansy is a thought (a *Pensée*), and to the recognition underway that, in severing thought from feeling and words from wit, narrows and deepens to “what remains behind” (line 183).

This process, where the ordinary comes to view and stays there for the “first time,” is primarily one of recollection. But in contrast to “every day” life in Austen, which emerges through revision as well as regret (in the face of what she termed “considerable

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changes”), the everyday in Wordsworth comes more rapidly in a double take, where the subject “look[s]” and immediately “look[s] again.”³⁶ There is the “heap of garments” in *Prelude* 5 (line 462) that stays long enough, as Wordsworth remembers the event, to be seen twice, becoming more (and less) than the circumstantial accompaniment to a larger, and as it happens traumatic, episode. There is the blooming girl in “The Two April Mornings,” whom a friend encounters by chance at his daughter’s gravesite, and who is released, on second look, from a reverie where she had been hostage to the latter’s grief and longing. There is the blind beggar in *Prelude* 7 whose “fixed face” puts the speaker in contact with a “world” that, unlike the usual conjunction of subject and object, is both near and indisputably “[o]ther” (lines 622–623). And in *Prelude* 4, an episode featuring the poet in a state of youthful self-absorption is interrupted by “a recollection,” to borrow Scott’s phrase, “of the scene through which he has been wandering.”³⁷ Here the poet is directed not just to the immediate environment but to the everyday in general (lines 168–180):

[M]eanwhile
The mountain heights were slowly overspread
With darkness, and before a rippling breeze
The long Lake lengthened out its hoary line;
And in the sheltered coppice where I sate,
Around me, from among the hazel leaves,
Now here, now there, stirred by straggling wind,
Came intermittingly a breath-like sound,
A respiration short and quick, which oft,
Yea, might I say, again and yet again,
Mistaking for the panting of my Dog,
The off-and-on companion of my walk,
I turned my head, to look if he were there.

Wordsworth is remarking, first and foremost, on a parallel world that—amid musings about his own possibilities in life—he has overlooked. But the double take turns out to be the real issue. In “turning” back to something habitually but not factually present, Wordsworth is extending the missable to an entire stratum that he is encountering, seemingly, at last. It is one thing not to pay attention, which Wordsworth often does when he is paying attention (“hedgerows hardly hedgerows”). It is quite another to write an entire reality—lived and living—out of history. In looking back to the “companion” that is not there, Wordsworth discovers a “companion,” a continuum, that *is*, which he conceptualizes by memorializing.

Such memorialization takes a variety of forms at this moment, some obvious, some counterintuitive and some, like realism, that became so entrenched that any immediate relation to “real, natural every day life,” certainly in its Austenian formation, has been either forgotten or deconstructed. The most obvious is that of the continuum itself, whether in daily writing like Dorothy Wordsworth’s *Grasmere Journal*, where form and content are indistinguishable, or as a near-totality (Byron’s *Don Juan*), or even a synecdoche (the Romantic fragment generally). Not only is there almost “no story” in Byron’s long poem, or a

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narrative quickly subsumed by digression; there also is a “companionship,” an interlocution, in its place, that ends only in the death of the author. The poem joins with other, smaller fragments of the period in embracing a present that is ongoing, even intrusive. “Kubla Khan” was famously interrupted by everyday life, by “a person on business from Porlock” who allegedly prevented Samuel Taylor Coleridge from transcribing the Orientalist dream he had experienced into verse. Still and all, the pedestrian fantasy of public adulation into which “Kubla Khan” collapses suggests that this prevention—an ordinary day “between Porlock and Linton”—was well underway and the cause, as well as the effect, of the poem’s form.³⁸

The present is archived in Keats’ Odes as well, specifically “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” and “To Autumn.” All set in real time, these formal triumphs are fragments in a different way, offering a slice of life—an everyday phenomenology—that closure simply breaks with. The speaker hears a nightingale and, in weighing the options of either dying in a state of ecstatic audition or continuing to live with the sensory experience on offer, just keeps going, making the famous ending (“Do I wake or sleep?”), which may be also paraphrased as “what’s going on?,” continuous with what precedes and follows rather than rhetorically discontinuous and decisive. The second poem nicely captures what it is like to look at an object in, say, a museum while moving in and “out of thought” in ways that are alternately clever, mysterious, mocking and even juvenile before ending on a note that is closer perhaps to sublime gibberish than the wisdom and resolve with which it is normally freighted. “To Autumn” closes on a lights-out moment, registering a “willingness for the everyday” (Cavell), a sense of life interrupted, where, in tacit acknowledgment of what literature has recently discovered, life and everyday life finally merge.³⁹

The Everyday in Theory

In an encyclopedia entry titled “Everyday and Everydayness” (*Quotidien et Quotidieneté*), Henri Lefebvre makes a dialectical move that is broadly characteristic of the way social theory—as opposed to literature initially, and, later, to philosophy and theory rooted in versions of perception—contends with everyday life. Noting that “everyday life has always existed, even if in ways vastly different from our own,” Lefebvre nevertheless makes “everydayness,” rather than the “everyday,” the tip of his conceptual spear. “The concept of everydayness does not,” he writes, “designate a system but rather a denominator common to existing systems, including judicial, contractual, pedagogical, fiscal and police systems,” all of which reflect the “monotony” of “modern life” rooted in “repetition.” While the “everyday” has always existed, has “always been repetitive,” it emerges, nonetheless, “at the intersection of two modes of repetition: the cyclical, which dominates in nature, and the linear, which dominates in processes known as ‘rational.’”⁴⁰

There has always been something that the “everyday” can name, even (perhaps especially) early on, when, as historian Fernand Braudel observes, “the fragile lifetime of men” was “greedily and steadily swallow[ed] up” by something “ever-present, all-pervasive,

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repetitive” and “run according to routine.”⁴¹ Nonetheless, it is the linear mode, according to Lefebvre, where “days follow one after another and resemble one another” in a “monotony” authorized by modes of production, that brings the everyday to the fore because it is coincidentally the “deep structure” that is everydayness.⁴² Without the monotony, the rapidity, of *modern* life, where change feels like change when it is just more of the same, there would be no practical, no existential, baseline, from which a concept—the everyday—can be extracted. Nor would there be a concept that can then be retrofitted, backdated, to a moment that, Braudel notwithstanding, was preconceptual all the way down. “There always have been . . . forms . . . and structures” governing “various functions,” including activities like “eating, drinking, sleeping” or “working [and] travelling.” But there was a time, Lefebvre maintains, when these belonged to an “undifferentiated whole”—when they were neither “known” nor “named” as functions but rather part of an endless stream of unalienated, even sacralized, existence. Here “every ‘complex’ whole, from the smallest tool to the greatest works of art and learning, . . . possessed a symbolic value linking them to meaning at its most vast: to divinity and humanity, power and wisdom, good and evil, happiness and misery,” and so forth.⁴³ The timescape for this world was cyclical and equally comprehensive: “nights and days, seasons and harvests, activity and rest, hunger and satisfaction, desire and its fulfillment, life and death” versus the linear trajectory of modernity and rationalization, in which functions are abstracted, desacralized, and “artificially grouped” in what *only then* can be properly termed everyday life.⁴⁴ While it is altogether possible to imagine a different, premodern everyday, and Braudel is doing just that, to do so is also counterintuitive. It is to misrepresent the past with a debased concept, one so predicated on deracination and differentiation that Lefebvre, speaking for social theory generally, views it as the “platform upon which the bureaucratic society of controlled consumerism is erected,” or a “set of functions which connect and join together systems that might appear to be distinct,” and, last but hardly least, “the most general of products in an era where production engenders consumption, and where consumption is manipulated by producers.” His proposition, accordingly—and that of most social theory concerned with the everyday—is to expose it as a product rather than a stratum or, as Lefebvre puts it somewhat representatively, “to decode the modern world, that bloody riddle, according to the everyday.”⁴⁵

Everything about the everyday from the versions represented by and in literature, where it emerges as a designation and a riddle in its own right, runs athwart Lefebvre’s judgments. But not simply because the everyday was operating without the systemic anchors and filiations that later weigh it down. It is because the very linearity that for Lefebvre and others is unidirectional and virtually amnesiac was sufficiently bidirectional to yield a totality, a continuum, as robust as the one Lefebvre privileges. At the very juncture that everything is felt to be moving forward things were just as suddenly moving in the opposite direction. Koselleck terms this (counter)movement “Reaction” and, politics aside, there is a peculiar physics animating a movement that, if not as self-accelerating as the one leading to an “open future,” was isometric enough at the turn of the 18th century to yield a “future anterior”—a “future,” but not a world, elsewhere.⁴⁶ The mechanism for this reaction is the perceiving subject, but in a different formation from the analytic ver-

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sion that challenges premodern totalities, according to Lefebvre. Rather, the post-Cartesian subject “who” eventually succeeds in bringing progress to a standstill, discovering in the process an open present, is the subject for whom individual experience leads to conceptualization not the obverse.

Everyday Life Analysis

Social analysis devoted to the everyday invariably leads with concept, which, on the models directed to an understanding of the structures that shape experience, tends often to avoid the subject, both phenomenally and generally as an agent. There are plenty of persons on view and at issue in these analyses, just as there are plenty of practices and institutions. However, even as the one and the many collide and merge in the “meta-field” of “everyday life studies,” it is the “universal” rather than the particular that prevails, transforming the everyday into an unconscious writ large, an “unmanaged continuation of the past in the present” in contrast to what literature—as an alternative field—exposes.⁴⁷ What happens in literature, and in the philosophy that bears on it (and vice versa), is practically the reverse: a continuation of *a* present, an afterwardness, that, far from “a record of shared domination” (Highmore), is distinctly non-traumatic and a vessel for what Bloch, again, calls “real possibility”: “A retrospect of what might have been” that is both mobile as well as portable.

Bloch’s famous study is about hope, and hope in everyday life studies is synonymous with critique. Here the everyday is invariably exposed and defamiliarized in all its monotony and alienation rather than curated at greater and encouraging proximity. Highmore speculates “that the future of everyday life studies will necessitate a form of articulation built on the fault line that divides the social sciences and art” and he recommends “an inventive ‘blurring of genres’ . . . sociology and literature, for instance” as one possible trajectory.⁴⁸ One can imagine another future, however, where this fault line remains intact, especially if by literature we mean “art” rather than another method—the study of art—inflected by another discipline. When the object of study is the Victorian novel such interdisciplinarity can be extremely useful. When the object, however, is one in which literature is essentially and foundationally a stakeholder, the situation is quite different because, with respect to the everyday at least, there is no endgame in art but a thickened sense of what Heidegger, for all his antipathy to the public-ness of everyday life, calls being-in-the-world (*Dasein*).⁴⁹

Being in one form or another, along with publicness, is a primary focus of “everyday life studies” almost always in partnership with the absent presence of change. This is true for Lefebvre and for fellow travelers like Guy Debord and other members of the Situationist International, whose situations/performances in the 1950s were demonstrations of the “creative aspects of life . . . over the repetitive” in which “everyday life” was restored, temporarily, to what Debord, in his dream for a renovated “private life,” calls “life itself.”⁵⁰ It is the case, too, for Kristin Ross, for whom postwar modernization in France—chiefly the colonization of the center and the management of life and space therein—was not just a problem that gave the lie to decolonialization *tout court* but the beginning of a

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solution in bringing everyday life into view as an object of theoretical reflection and activism.⁵¹

Ross and her collaborator Alice Kaplan are correct to stress the “alternative” that “everyday life analysis offers to a subject / object opposition so basic to postwar continental thinking.”⁵² But its instrumentality as a third way or a right way, much less a royal road to change, is another matter altogether. For in “situat[ing] everyday life somewhere in the rift opened up between the subjective, phenomenological sensory apparatus and reified institutions,” Kaplan and Ross misconstrue “its starting point,” conflating phenomenology on the model that literature stages at a certain moment with “the intentional subject dear to humanistic thinking.”⁵³ They are right that neither the humanistic subject as they construe it “nor the determining paradigms that bracket lived experience” are sufficient in themselves to sustain an analysis that will be transformative and meliorative.⁵⁴ But they are insistent as well on two related matters that—with attention to literature, which is a “starting point”—place them in the structural camp of “everyday life studies.” The first is that “we live [institutions] in historically specific ways . . . as collectively or as virtually collective subjects.” The second (and related) is that “read[ing] everyday life” involves reading in a distinctly extra-literary manner, with an eye specifically toward “the texture of social change” and to “the necessity of its conscious transformation” and not with attention to “some quality . . . in the great realistic or mimetic narratives” or “in those specifically mimetic moments in a given text.”⁵⁵

The particular engagement that Kaplan and Ross are recommending, what they call *poesis*, is a lot closer to the creative analysis of someone like Michel de Certeau, for whom everyday practice, especially within the space of discipline, is a version of what he describes as oppositionality. On de Certeau’s account, the “ordinary man,” whether on the factory floor, or in church, or in the streets, or even with a book in “his” hand that he may be skimming rather than reading, is continually using “imposed systems” against themselves, turning consumption into production, and wringing from conformity a “remainder,” a surplus, that resists modern disciplinarity, notably the panoptical, self-regulating model of Michel Foucault.⁵⁶ Oppositionality is not exactly the telos of “social change” implicit in everyday life studies and even in Foucault later on. But it constitutes—and de Certeau is quite explicit here—an asymmetrical warfare that recognizes and honors the heterogeneity of practices like factory work, where French workers have traditionally made things for themselves, or religious practices, where autochthonic peoples have long turned their colonizers’ faith (with martyrs and miracles) into a liberationist theology. A way of getting on, then, rather than of getting out, the “practice of everyday life” is far from transformative, particularly if one disposes of the adage that all politics are local. But subversive or not, it takes intentionality, and by extension humanism, in a direction that is inclusive not privative and expansive rather than alienating.

At the same time, politics *are* local, indeed intimate, when it comes to everyday life. Thus when the frame shifts to literature—with Austen as a placeholder for the “great realistic or mimetic” narratives—what happens, according to de Certeau’s logic of heterology, takes on an altogether different valence, politically as well as phenomenologically. Oper-

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ating ineluctably within the space of discipline, the “quality” of life in Austen’s novels—a qualia approximated by the terms “real life” or “real . . . every day life” for her early readers—is marked by a sense of possibility, a story independent of “story,” especially on reading or better rereading. It is not just that Austen eschews writing about anything out of the ordinary or that she rejects “the common resources of novel writers”; it is that readers are reminded in reading her of how “the strangest things,” in the words of one character, “do take place,” even if all they are registering is an awareness of “such things as may happen to a friend, or to ourselves.”⁵⁷ But make no mistake: Austen’s world was strange, if not to her initial (generally privileged) readers, who were also experiencing a form of validation, then to the author herself, whose world had undergone “considerable chang[e]” during her two decades as a writer, transforming her work over that duration into what was increasingly an archive. In this “absolute historical pictur[e]” (as the *Literary Gazette* later called it), the “sad story against [women]” under the aegis of domestic ideology was largely suspended, or put on hold, in an environment, where there is suddenly “room for maneuver.”⁵⁸ Some of this was endemic to the courtship plot, where the “historical” status of an unmarried, often-resistant, heroine is both a precondition and necessarily prolonged. But most of it was historically specific. Specific, in other words, to an anteriority—public and private—whose afterlife, or transposition to the present, is additionally guaranteed by the story-less story, the futureless future, where life “before” and without marriage is alternately a milieu (“real natural every day life”) and a metaphor for something larger.⁵⁹

Phenomenology and Redemption

Poised on the schism, then, between the everyday and everydayness, between an existence that was pre-domestic, historically and diegetically, and one that, beginning the day after, is largely posthumous, boring, and unamusing (think Emma Bovary and potentially Emma Woodhouse), the “quality” in Austen’s novels that her early readers generalized and valued as quality of life, was time stamped. But this is to describe in many ways what the everyday either adds to or subtracts from, both at its inception conceptually and as a phenomenon in art. In always being seen again, the everyday lends itself to hyperbole as well as to a utility of sorts, wherein continually “escap[ing]” it is perennially on loan as a resource. Blanchot’s adage about the everyday’s (in)visibility—that it is never “seen a first time, but only seen again”—has immediate application to everyday life studies as an “illusion” that invariably masks its structural “constitution.” Still, in postulating a moment of clarity, where the everyday is eventually seen, Blanchot is underscoring something analogous to the “Austen experience” and to what commentators from Cavell to Jane Bennett are responding to when they elevate the ordinary to the level of the “extraordinary” or, in Blanchot’s term, the “astonishing.”⁶⁰ The vertiginous time warp that the everyday embeds as something seen again *and* for the first time has a special yield, where the world and the subject are mutually redeemed, recapitulating the everyday’s emergence but extending it simultaneously into a practical and existential realm.

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To Cavell, for whom Romanticism is very much a starting point, this redemption is foundationally a flight from skepticism that “our common habitual world” instills by replacing probability or “understanding”—what skepticism gives back in exchange for our not knowing—with what Cavell describes as an “acknowledgment” of “the familiar.”⁶¹ As “a product of a sense of the unfamiliar and of the sense of a return” (much as Blanchot observes), “what we accept as the world,” he writes, “present[s] itself” not only “as a return of the familiar” but as a return “after skepticism” that—unlike the repetitive knowledge linked to probability—“is never (just) the same.”⁶² The dividends of this “uncanny homeliness” are manifold. The most important is “the domestication of the fantastic and the transcendentalizing of the domestic,” where a palpable “degre[e] of freedom” is alternately a payoff and the measure of a “world [brought] back . . . to life.”⁶³ Such a world is not that different from the one in Heidegger where, despite his antipathy to everyday practices like gossip or “idle talk,” the “redemption of things of the world” is simultaneously, Cavell observes, “the redemption of human nature” through “our recogni[tion of] ourselves as mortals, in participation with earth and sky.”⁶⁴ And Heidegger concurs, invoking the everyday (what he calls “everydayness”) as the “mode” in which being “operates . . . pre-eminently.”⁶⁵ Here, a “submission” to the “world” marks a shift from subject to object that is tantamount now to “being with” the environment rather than an “isolable self-sufficient mind” opposed to others and to objects (those “ready-to-hand” for instance) that “involv[e] it.”⁶⁶

The differences between what Heidegger argues with the everyday in view and what earlier writers were disposed to, with the everyday as both a goad and a recognition, are mutually clarifying. Where the everyday remains “the least differentiated and determinate expression of Being’s existence” in Heidegger, the Romantic-period everyday is ambiguously suspended between anticipating this schema and very nearly deconstructing what Heidegger means by a “history of the Present,” chiefly the pervasive anteriority, the “time,” to which “being,” as a distinctly modified subjectivity, is tethered.⁶⁷ This is because the link between what is missed in either Wordsworth or Austen, even as a prelude to remembrance, is a world of possibility (hence the everyday’s emergence) rather than a world to which one need only be reoriented: a world that Heidegger describes as “both ahead of itself” and “not yet” but that Romantic-period writers are inclined to view, when they do view it, as fundamentally in arrears.⁶⁸ The notion of “what might have been” carries the promise of recurrence in the here and now, if only on the evidence or the intuition of its having occurred. But this potentiality in the rear-view mirror, although structurally analogous, is a far cry from the anticipatory repetition on which “being” and the “possibility” it harbors for Heidegger are based.⁶⁹ For it is by retrospection, rather than by the repetition endemic to being, that the everyday emerges in the first place: as a site of possibility and as a “possible world” that, following what analytic metaphysicians call “modal realism,” is disarticulated from the world at hand, which is the very world of *Being and Time*.⁷⁰

It has been the task of political theory, in certain hands, to bridge the gap between what literature stages as a thought experiment and the world in Heidegger, which, depending on how one reads it, is either a sophistication or an actualization of the experiment. Here

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an appreciation of and submission to ordinary actuality holds out what may well be the last promise for democracy and solidarity not just between people but between humans and the environment. More than the redoubt de Certeau's tracks, the everyday is now a proving ground, the site of a politics progressive, ethical and local, on which the usual restraints and proscriptions, including the anomie so essential to everyday life studies, have little bearing. Thomas Dumm regards the ordinary as a "repository of freedom" in which the loss, through boredom, of what is familiar, eventful, and meaningful to most people is compensated in a politics of "resignation," where "anonymity" and "commonality" join in an unprecedented sense of belonging.⁷¹ Jane Bennett goes even further, viewing the ordinary as a site of enchantment, which she defines as "a state of openness" to the "disturbing-captivating elements in everyday experience."⁷² Such openness bears ethical and political potential in making us responsive to persons and things, no matter how contingent, and "more willing," as a result, "to enter into productive assemblages with them."⁷³

Bennett's enchanted materialism echoes Cavell—and even Lefebvre—in stressing the "extraordinary that lives amid the familiar and the everyday."⁷⁴ But like Dumm, who takes Cavell's invitation to freedom seriously, her interests are mutually redemptive—personally and environmentally—in emphasizing the degree to which a "subintentional disposition in favor of life" dislodges the subject from its privileged and deleterious centrality.⁷⁵ The issue of subintentionality goes back to both Heidegger and the uncanny retrospection that writing of the Romantic period stages. Thus Bennett's goal is more a leveling or networking than a full-blown reconfiguration of the "subject / object opposition." In treating things as "independent of human subjectivity," Bennett speaks of what she calls "thing-power," where things—in, for example, a collage of trash—are entities no longer "reducible to the contexts in which human subjects set them."⁷⁶ Honoring the "nonidentity" of thing and concept, and the identity by extension of person and thing, such repositioning involves a "slow[ing]" of the crossing of thing to human culture in something like Walter Benjamin's "now-time" and with materials, like Lefebvre's "ploughs," that suddenly demand recognition.⁷⁷ And like Lefebvre, who wants to "see and seize" remainders that "have been torn from us by alienation" and by the current order of "human culture," the slowing that Bennett proposes as a "practical exercise" is motivated as much by the various deposits that persist in slow time as by a political possibility that, in "specifically mimetic moments," literature—phenomenally and in the act of reading—was the first to entertain.⁷⁸

The Everyday Escapes

The theory that comes close, indeed closest, to Romantic-period literature in recognizing the everyday on the basis of an elusiveness, where it is never "just the same" but rather a surplus, is that of affect. Affectively charged cognition is usually understood through its "moments" of apprehension even as these are constitutively missable: fathomable but through an always-preternatural disposition. "Affects," writes Kathleen Stewart (in her theoretical "experiment"), "are not so much forms of signification, or units of knowledge as they are expressions of ideas and problems performed as a kind of involuntary and powerful learning and participation."⁷⁹ And "ordinary affects" are distinctly participatory.

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They “highlight the question of intimate impacts of forces in circulation. They are not exactly ‘personal’ but they sure can pull the ‘subject’ into places it didn’t intend to go.”⁸⁰ Heidegger has a term for this as well. He describes it as “thrownness into the ‘there’” or “they,” which is alternately a problem because, like the everyday, it verges on being (or being-with) in its most “determinate,” least subjective form.⁸¹ Stewart calls this displaced subject the “affective subject,” and it maps on to the genealogy of the everyday, as emanating from somewhere *and* someone, that literature (and its readers) were among the first to track. This “subject,” she writes, “is a collection of trajectories and circuits. You can recognize it through past moments glimpsed unsteadily in the light of the present like the flickering light of a candle. Or project it onto some kind of track to follow. Or inhabit it as a pattern you find yourself already caught up in (again) and there’s nothing you can do about it now.”⁸²

This is an extreme version of the interaction that brings the everyday into view, especially when seen again. For unlike the subject “turned round” to begin with, the affective subject is unmoored from anything that might reliably be termed a self. A “self” is “no match” for the ordinary on Stewart’s formula because its own gyrations—“the forms of attention and attachment [that] keep it moving,” including the “hypervigilance, . . . the distraction, the sensory games of all sorts, the vaguely felt promise that something is happening, the constant half-searching for an escape route”—are usurped by the gyrations of the ordinary.⁸³ “The ordinary is a moving target. Not first something to make sense of, but a set of sensations that incite.” And “It can be traced” in forms that have been noted previously—“in conditions like speedup and the banality of built environments” or “through dull routine and trouble, through drifting, running in place, and downtime.”⁸⁴ However, the point—with bearing clearly on everyday life studies—is that these are “targets,” moving forms, rather than an irreducible ordinary, which “is not so much a deficiency as a resource. . . . Not a challenge to be achieved or an ideal to be realized, but a mode of attunement, a continuous responding to something not quite already given yet somehow happening.”⁸⁵

That the ordinary is interchangeably *the* subject now, “responding” as “something happening” in “attunement” with the perceiving or “affective subject,” is as close to a limit case regarding the everyday, certainly as a felt “resource,” as there probably is. But there is one more turn worth examining on this score, because it takes place not only as a literary exercise, and a rather spectacular one, but as an attempt as well to wrangle the everyday, to comprehend it, that is defeated over and over by a mobility—and by a resource as it “happens”—that lingers in an immovable zone of both time and matter. The work is Georges Perec’s 1978 novel, *Life: A User’s Manual* (*La vie mode d’emploi*), which takes place in a Parisian apartment building at the fictional address of 11, rue Simon-Crubellier at exactly 8 p.m. on June 23, 1975.⁸⁶ Perec is well known to commentators on the everyday through his “obsessive cataloguing and description of the most ordinary elements of life”: a “self-induced hypermnesia” in works such as *Lieux où j’ai dormi* (Places Where I Have Slept); *Je me Souviens*, a “compilation of four hundred fifty-nine ‘micromemories’”; and finally *Lieux* (Places), a much larger, semi-ethnographic project that was never completed but ended up yielding “several years’ worth of descriptions

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express[ing] the fundamentals of change and continuity that make up the fabric of everyday life.”⁸⁷ These projects have been linked by Derek Schilling to Perec’s identity as a Jew, both as a counterpoise to his amnesia over the German occupation that he witnessed as a child and as an embedded injunction, particularly in the “Places” project, to bear “witness to the systematic destruction of a personal and collective site of memory.”⁸⁸

In *Life: A User’s Manual*, however, history or collective memory keeps running up against memory of a different order: a non-indexical memory, or history of the present, of which the everyday is paradoxically a referent. At first, the present in this encyclopedic narrative seems merely a pretext, an invocation of a material moment prefatory to a deep, virtuosic dive into history: a melding here of fact and fiction of the Sebaldian kind, beginning with the apartment, its fixtures, its current and previous inhabitants, and culminating in the intersections of both people and things with the events of modernity, great and small. This process is repeated from room to room, over hundreds of pages, and it is overwhelming. There is an index (not surprisingly) as well as a chart showing the apartments and their occupants, which comports overall with Perec’s ostensible project: a comprehensive view of a moment “in time” through one massive example of the connectedness of things.

But the pattern, this movement, is also reversible, pointing not to a world of comprehensible relation—“that whole sum of minute, nonexistent, untellable events”—but to a materiality or sensation that cycles back to a moment, and to moments within *that* moment, in an ordinary that is alternatively a sublime of the small.⁸⁹ This is a function primarily of method, where a stunning expatiation from an interior described in detail returns over and over to the space and time of rue Simon-Crubellier at 8 p.m. on that June day, where time is always standing and, in effect, waiting:

The furnishing of the flat boldly combines the ultramodern—the armchair, the Japanese wallpaper, three floorlamps looking like large luminescent pebbles—with curios of different periods: two display cases of Coptic cloth and papyri, above which two gloomy landscapes by a seventeenth-century artist from Alsace, with outliners of towns and burning fires in the background, are placed on either side of and show off a plate covered in hieroglyphs . . .⁹⁰

This description, chosen (more or less) at random and highly abbreviated, is characteristic of Perec’s method and it may seem hard to gauge the meaning apart from the hypermnesia that informs his works generally. But there is a protagonist or close to one, the artist Percival Bartlebooth, whose practice brings this movement to and from the moment, and to and from the moment within the moment, into explanatory, even polemical, relief.

A watercolorist of “seafront scenes,” Bartlebooth is not content to produce what his predecessor John Constable once described (quoting Wordsworth) as “one brief moment caught from fleeting time.”⁹¹ Rather this capture, which Bartlebooth has executed hundreds of times, is simply a prelude to a deconstruction whereby the moment, the representational whole, is dispersed and re-membered: mechanically at first and eventually

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(and inadvertently) through a transfer where the world turns to “ordinary affect.” The process is literally deconstructive. The image is created on site and converted by a neighbor in Paris into a jigsaw puzzle that the artist carefully reassembles before destroying at the very place he conceived it. This looks to be postmodern extravagance: “the gratuitous perfection of a project devoid of utility.” However, along the way, the aim for “nothing, nothing at all, to subsist, for nothing but the void to emerge from it,” is derailed and rerouted: initially, by what is glossed over and eventually by disability.⁹²

Although the *durée* of reassemblage is largely sidestepped, in contrast to *Life*, whose 8 p.m. on June 27, 1975 is reconstituted over and over, the onset of blindness changes things for someone accustomed to dictating what is seeable and what is not. “His field of vision began to shrink” and “in the end it was no more than a tiny crack, which let in a dim fringe of light, like a door ajar in the dark.” Bartlebooth, however, soldiers on, “handling the little puzzle pieces” until “he could see nothing save immaterial spots of brightness quivering and shifting far away.”⁹³

We are at the limits, finally, of a representational order that—whether encyclopedically (for Perec), nihilistically (Bartlebooth), or structurally (Lefebvre)—puts comprehension first, much as “story” did in Austen’s time. And we are at a precipice as well, where—as in Austen—“the everyday escapes” but with enough of a trace, a readable one, that story becomes a threshold experience: a condition in real time of its sudden and generative evanescence.

Bartlebooth has just died. On the tablecloth, somewhere in the crepuscular sky of the four hundred and thirty-ninth puzzle, the black hole of the sole piece not yet filled in has the almost perfect shape of an X. But the ironical thing, which could have been foreseen long ago, is that the piece the dead man holds between his fingers is shaped like a W.⁹⁴

Discussion of the Literature

The literature on the everyday—with bearing on literary study—falls into three main categories: one linked variously to the social sciences and social theory; one focused on questions of perception, phenomenology and, more recently, affect; and a third, concerned primarily with modernist writing, which partakes of the previous two but to combine and to reaffirm the parameters they set forth. In between there are theories, chiefly Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life* that form a bridge between the humanism of the second and the more structural orientation of the first in marking and celebrating the agency of the “ordinary man” in the face of imposed systems.⁹⁵ Henri Lefebvre’s three-volume *Critique of Everyday Life* adopts, as its title implies, a two-pronged approach to everyday life. The first is a critique of the everyday as the site of anomie, alienation, and systematization under modernity. The second mobilizes an agrarian or premodern version of the everyday as an engine of critique, where all that has been taken under capitalism is exposed and provisionally restored, this time as a possibility or thought experiment.⁹⁶

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Other approaches in this vein include those of Guy Debord and members of the Situationist International and, more recently, Kristin Ross who, with Alice Kaplan, edited a special edition of *Yale French Studies* committed to the “necessity” of transforming everyday life in the understanding that to perceive it, at a distance, is to perceive the “texture of social change” that “everyday life harbors.”⁹⁷ Differing approaches, beginning with Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, tend generally to view the everyday or everyday life up-close.⁹⁸ In Heidegger’s idea of being or being-in-the-world, of which “everydayness” (his term) is frequently a prime example, the subject/object dyad is broken down to something more fluid and habitual involving people and the environment as well as things. Stanley Cavell has recourse to Heidegger and other thinkers, notably Ludwig Wittgenstein, and to Romantic literature in fashioning a response to skepticism, or the crisis of knowledge, to which a common, habitual world proves a potent adversary in “bringing the world back . . . to life” and transforming the ordinary into something extraordinary.⁹⁹ Jane Bennett echoes Cavell in stressing the “extraordinary that lives amid the familiar and the everyday,” but as a way now of creating solidarity between people and the environment.¹⁰⁰ For Kathleen Stewart, the everyday is a “collection of trajectories and circuits,” where there is no subject or self but simply an “affective subject” seeking out the world to “nudge it into being.”¹⁰¹ Finally, a number of early 21st-century studies, mostly of modern literature and modernity, explore the everyday thematically as well as polemically. Here there is generally no distinction between the everyday and everydayness, which typically bleed into each other as non-discoveries or as discoveries increasingly immune to either critique or privilege. Andrew Epstein, Rita Felski, Liesl Olsen, Bryony Randall, and Lorraine Sim variously emphasize the ways modern and contemporary writing, much of it by women, turns attention to the common in ways that are of this world—sympathetic, aware, and broadly democratic—rather than a site of possibility and critique and otherwise “transcendent.” Others, including Michael Gardiner, John Roberts, and Michael Sayeau, adopt more familiar positions, incorporating critique, repetition, and anomie to discussions of form, philosophy, ideology, and social change.

Links to Digital Materials

Roberts, John. **Radical Philosophy**

Further Reading

Benjamin, Walter. “Some Motifs in Baudelaire.” In *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 4: 1938–1940. Edited by Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, translated by Edmund Jephcott, 313–355. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003.

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Notes:

- (1.) Alice Kaplan and Kristin Ross, eds., "Everyday Life," special issue, *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987).
- (2.) Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, trans. John Moore and Gregory Elliott, 3 vols. (London: Verso, 1991-2008), 1:105-106.
- (3.) Stanley Cavell, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Lines of Skepticism and Romanticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 154.
- (4.) Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 6: *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1960); and Maurice Blanchot, "Everyday Speech," *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 14.
- (5.) Stanley Cavell, *Philosophy the Day after Tomorrow* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 25; and William Wordsworth, "The Prelude (1805)," in *The Prelude, 1799, 1805, 1850*, eds. Jonathan Wordsworth, Meyer H. Abrams, and Stephen Gill (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), Book 6:line 542. All references to *The Prelude* are to the text in this edition.
- (6.) Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 1:132, 3:57.
- (7.) "Everyday" defined as "of persons and their attributes" first appears in 1763, achieving greater currency in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. "Everydayness" as in the "every-day-ness of this work-day world" first appears in 1840. "Ordinary," by contrast, has multiple definitions going back to 15th century and earlier and becomes a synonym much later.
- (8.) Samuel Henry Romilly, ed., *Romilly-Edgeworth Letters, 1813-1818* (London: John Murray, 1936), 92.
- (9.) Richard Whately, "Unsigned Review of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*," *Quarterly Review*, in *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, vol. 1: 1811-1870, ed. Brian C. Southam (London: Routledge, 1996), 95.
- (10.) Whately, "Unsigned Review," 96.
- (11.) Whately, "Unsigned Review," 95.

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- (12.) See, for example, Roland Barthes, "L'effet de reel," *Communications* 11, no. 1 (1968): 84–89; and see also Christopher Prendergast, *The Order of Mimesis: Balzac, Stendhal, Nerval, Flaubert* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
- (13.) Marilyn Butler, *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 46; and Walter Scott, "Unsigned Review of *Emma*," *Quarterly Review*," in *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, vol. 1: 1811–1870, ed. Brian C. Southam (London: Routledge, 1968), 68.
- (14.) Malcolm Elwin, *Lord Byron's Wife* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1962), 159.
- (15.) Frances Burney, *Evelina or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, ed. Edward A. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 7–8.
- (16.) Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance and the History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt* (Colchester, 1785), 111.
- (17.) Reeve, *Progress of Romance*, 111; and Burney, *Evelina*, 7.
- (18.) David Hume, "Of Miracles," in *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955), 124; and see also Lorraine Daston, *Classical Probability in the Enlightenment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).
- (19.) Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, vol. 1, trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 195–223.
- (20.) Daston, *Classical Probability*, 183.
- (21.) For more on this see Douglas Lane Patey, *Probability and Literary Form: Philosophic Theory and Literary Practice in the Augustan Age* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- (22.) Castalia Countess Granville, ed., *Lord Granville Leveson Gower: Private Correspondence, 1781–1821*, vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1917), 418.
- (23.) Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 11; and Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ed. Robert W. Chapman, rev. Mary Lascelles (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965–1966), 455.
- (24.) Scott, "Unsigned Review," 68.
- (25.) Scott, "Unsigned Review," 64.
- (26.) In the "Advertisement" to *Northanger Abbey*, Austen explicitly notes the "considerable changes" in "places, manners, books, and opinions" in the years separating the novel's conception and what turned out to be its posthumous publication. Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey, Lady Susan, The Watsons, and Sanditon*, ed. John Davie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), xliii.

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(27.) Richard Whately, "Opinions of Mansfield Park: Collected and Transcribed by Jane Austen," in *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, vol. 1, ed. Brian C. Southam (London: Routledge, 1996), 51.

(28.) Edmund Husserl, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, trans. John Barnett Bough, ed. Rudolf Bernet (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), 37.

(29.) Lefebvre, "The Everyday and Everydayness," *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 10-11. References to "Ode to the West Wind" are to the text of the poem in Donald Reiman and Sharon Powers, eds., *Shelley's Poetry and Prose* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), 221-223.

(30.) Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 22.

(31.) Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 22-23.

(32.) Stephen Gill, ed., *William Wordsworth: The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 596. All references to Wordsworth's writings (exclusive of *The Prelude*) are to the texts in this edition.

(33.) Wordsworth, *Prelude*.

(34.) Paul de Man, "Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image," in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 13.

(35.) "Ode," *William Wordsworth: The Major Works*, 302.

(36.) "The Two April Mornings," *William Wordsworth: Major Works*, 142.

(37.) Scott, "Unsigned Review, 68.

(38.) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *A Critical Edition of the Major Works*, ed. Heather J. Jackson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 102.

(39.) Cavell, *In Quest*, 178. For a fuller a discussion of the emergence of the everyday during the Romantic period, see William H. Galperin, *The History of Missed Opportunities: British Romanticism and the Emergence of the Everyday* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017).

(40.) Lefebvre, "The Everyday," 9-10.

(41.) Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: 15th-18th Century*, vol. 1: *The Structure of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible* (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), 28.

(42.) Lefebvre, "The Everyday," 10-11.

(43.) Lefebvre, "The Everyday," 7-8.

(44.) Lefebvre, "The Everyday," 10.

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(46.) For discussion of the "future anterior" at this moment, see Emily Rohrbach, *Modernity's Mist: British Romanticism and the Poetics of Anticipation* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

(47.) Ben Highmore, "Questioning Everyday Life," in *The Everyday Life Reader*, ed. Ben Highmore (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 2.

(48.) Highmore, "Questioning," 20.

(49.) See especially Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

(50.) Guy Debord, "Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life," in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. Ken Knabb (Berkeley, CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1989), 75, 72; and see also Edward Ball, "The Great Sideshow of the Situationist International," *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 21–37.

(51.) Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995).

(52.) Alice Kaplan and Kristin Ross, "Introduction," *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 3.

(53.) Kaplan and Ross, "Introduction," 3.

(54.) Kaplan and Ross, "Introduction," 3.

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(56.) Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press), 2, 18, 60. For Foucault, see especially Michel Foucault, "Panopticism," in *Discipline and Punish*, by Michel Foucault, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979), 195–228.

(57.) Jane Austen, *Emma*, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 60.

(58.) *Literary Gazette*, March 30, 1833, 199; and Austen, *Emma*, 217. Ross Chambers encapsulates De Certeau's theory of oppositionality, in this case as a reading phenomenon, with this term. Ross Chambers, *Room for Maneuver: Reading the Oppositional in Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

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(60.) Blanchot, "Everyday Speech," 14.

(61.) Cavell, *In Quest*, 154, 8, 166.

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- (62.) Cavell, *In Quest*, 166.
- (63.) Cavell, *In Quest*, 129, 27, 9, 53.
- (64.) Cavell, *In Quest*, 66; and Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 210.
- (65.) Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 86.
- (66.) Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 121; and Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time, Division I* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1991), 76.
- (67.) Harry Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 113; and Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 445.
- (68.) Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 288.
- (69.) Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 309.
- (70.) Harootunian, *History's Disquiet*, 99. For a discussion of modal realism, see especially David Lewis, *On the Plurality of Worlds* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).
- (71.) Thomas Dumm, *The Politics of the Ordinary* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 33, 63, 70.
- (72.) Jane Bennett, *The Enchantment of Modern Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 131.
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- (76.) Jane Bennett, "The Force of Things: Steps Toward an Ecology of Matter," *Political Theory* 32, no. 2 (2004): 351.
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- (78.) Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 1:132, 168; and Bennett, "Force of Things," 362.
- (79.) Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 40.
- (80.) Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*, 40.

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- (86.) Georges Perec, *Life: A User's Manual*, trans. David Bellos (Boston: David R. Godine, 1987).
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- (88.) Schilling, "Belated Jewish Modernism," 741.
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- (90.) Perec, *Life*, 174.
- (91.) John Constable, *John Constable's Discourses*, ed. Ronald Brymer Beckett (Ipswich: Suffolk Records Society, 1970), 9–10.
- (92.) Perec, *Life*, 442.
- (93.) Perec, *Life*, 443.
- (94.) Perec, *Life*, 565.
- (95.) See de Certeau, *Practice of Everyday Life*. For a related, less charged discussion of practice or habitus, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977). By way of contrast, see Foucault, "Panopticism," 195–228.
- (96.) See Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*. For a broad overview of the largely structural or cultural approaches to the everyday, see also Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2002).
- (97.) Kaplan and Ross, "Everyday Life"; see also Ken Knabb, ed., *Situationist International Anthology* (Berkeley: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1989); and Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*.
- (98.) Heidegger, *Being and Time*; see also Harootunian, *History's Disquiet*; and, for a more empirical instance of the up-close approach, see Walter Benjamin, "Some Motifs in Baudelaire," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 4, 1938–1940, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), 313–355.

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(100.) Bennett, *Enchantment*; and see also Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2010).

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