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REMEDIATING BYRON

Textual Information Overload during Byron's 1816 Travels

Maximiliaan van Woudenberg



Introduction

ONLINE IDENTITIES, THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY, INFORMATION OVERLOAD are just a sample of terms coined in the twentieth century in order to embody the effects of the communication processes of digital media.¹ For many contemporary critics of digital media, these terms conceptualise experiences specific to communication in a wired world. Paul Duguid has cautioned about divorcing digital media from media history, because in doing so 'we are [...] losing valuable cultural insights gained through old communicative technologies, just as we are trying to build new ones.'² Focusing solely on experiences with 'new' digital media fosters a techno-deterministic approach negating the 'cultural insights' into past communication processes with 'old' media—such as print. In other words, while terms such as Information Overload generally define the experience of being overwhelmed with information from digital networks, the concept of Information Overload itself is not media-specific. Therefore, while the media facilitating communication processes are changing—at times at a revolutionary pace—the effects on our consciousness, culture, and communication processes, need not be media-specific or determined by the 'type' of medium alone. Perhaps, as Duguid points out, past 'cultural insights' into communication processes are being lost due to our jaundiced techno-deterministic view of digital media.³

Cultural insights into the communication phenomenon of textual Information Overload existed during the Romantic period. In 1800, for example, Wordsworth lamented the multifarious transmission and reception of information which, he found, blunted 'the discriminating powers of the mind' resulting in the mind becoming unfit for 'voluntary exertion' because the (over)saturation of print media precludes one to 'think long and deeply'.⁴

It is important to note that Wordsworth's insights into the cultural effects of information dissemination are not ideologically specific. Kenneth Johnston observes that *The Anti-Jacobin; or Weekly Examiner*

decries the contemporary over-production of media in language similar to Wordsworth's. 'Whatever may be the habits of inquiry and anxiety for information upon subjects of public concern diffused among all ranks of people, the vehicles of intelligence are already multiplied in a proportion nearly equal to this encreased [*sic*] demand' [...] Compare Wordsworth: 'the great national events which are daily taking place, and encreasing [*sic*] accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies.' And, back to *Anti-Jacobin*: 'of the utility of such a purpose, if even tolerably executed, there can be little doubt, among those persons [...] who must have found themselves, during the course of the last few years, perplexed by the multiplicity of contradictory accounts of almost every material event that has occurred in the eventful and tremendous period.'⁵

Johnston argues that Wordsworth and *The Anti-Jacobin* 'present their poetry as contributing to future melioration of a presently debased poetry, politics, and, ultimately, human mind and nature'.⁶ Although on opposite sides of the political and ideological spectrum, Wordsworth and Canning and Frere, argue for a centralised communication network that will counter the effects of too much information disseminated in the public sphere. Their comments and concerns are not out of place in our own time to describe the saturation of information via digital media, and one may add their effects on literature, in the contemporary 'wired' public sphere.

Drawing on Duguid and other critics, it is important to examine how our understanding of earlier cultural insights into the communication processes of print media can contribute to our understanding of communication via digital media.⁷ In other words, using our twenty-first century insights into 'new' digital media will allow us to 're-see' the cultural practices with print media as perhaps *prescient* episodes of communication with new media. While hypertext and literary critics often construe Information Overload as a cultural practice specific to the current digital moment, I wish to argue that Information Overload is a communication concept that has been 'remediated' from its print-media counterparts from the Romantic period.

In this paper, I propose to return to a famous episode in British literary history—Byron's composition of *Manfred* (1817)—in order to examine Byron's critique of knowledge in the dramatic poem as an early instance of Information Overload. A commonly accepted interpretation for Byron's critique of knowledge is his attempt to escape the psychological turmoil caused by the scandal of his recent divorce. I would like to shift the emphasis somewhat from this interpretation and offer an alternative. During his 1816 travels in Switzerland, Byron was exposed to too much knowledge causing him to experience an instance of textual Information Overload. Against this backdrop, Byron was simultaneously

composing his dramatic poem *Manfred* and conceptualised the Byronic hero as an intertextual commentary on how to combat Information Overload. The characterisation of Manfred's quest for the mind's independence is a response, a copying strategy if you will, to locate knowledge only within the self.

I intend to argue that the concept of Information Overload is not exclusively an experience specific to digital media, but rather a communication process that has been 'remediated' from the print-media sphere. I will demonstrate this thesis in three parts. Firstly, I will briefly sketch how Byron was overwhelmed with information during the summer of 1816. I will show this by tracing how Byron incorporated these sources directly into his composition of *Manfred*. Secondly, drawing on this case history, I suggest that Byron's interchange with a multifarious array of foreign print media fostered a mental state of textual overload similar to what contemporary media critics now define as Information Overload. Specifically, I examine how the concept of the Byronic hero is an intertextual response to Byron's attempts to escape the oversaturation of too much knowledge during the summer of 1816. Lastly, I will remediate this argument into a Digital Narrative. Moving beyond the textual medium of argument in combining textual, aural and visual narratives, the Digital Narrative aims to show the conflation between print- and digital-media perspectives about Information Overload. This example of 'remediation' of content and argument will allow for a brief analysis of the critical methodology employed in producing the Digital Narrative as representative of the successful interaction between archival research and digital media.

Overwhelmed by Information: Byron's Encounters with Travelling Texts in 1816

It is well known that during the summer of 1816, Byron found himself in a wretched mental state. Haunted by creditors, divorced from his wife and with accusations of incest with his half-sister circulating throughout London, Byron had hoped to escape his psychological turmoil through self-exile in Switzerland. Lesser known is how Byron's wanderings through Switzerland facilitated access to uninvited, yet far-reaching, print media not accessible to the non-travelling writer.

A multifarious array of texts, ranging in content from metaphysics to the *Schauerliteratur* of German culture, travelled to Byron. I refer to these texts deliberately as 'travelling texts' because they literally travelled to Byron across geographical, cultural, intellectual, and linguistic boundaries. Byron's literary fame preceded him throughout Europe, facilitating his entry into intellectual circles—such as Mme de Staël's *salon* at Coppet—as well as attracting figures such as Shelley and Matthew 'Monk' Lewis. Culturally, Byron encountered English translations from French, German, or Greek texts, which either had never been available in English or would not be available in England for several years to come. In the summer of 1816, therefore, Byron found himself in a unique position of information interchange—not many people before or since

interacted regularly with such figures as Shelley, Schlegel and Mme de Staël, over the course of a few months.

Access to these travelling texts demolished the existing nineteenth-century 'space-barriers' governing the interchange of thought between the continent and England. Richard Holetton defines Information Overload as an inescapable overwhelming of information:

At the dawn of the 21st century, few people in the world's affluent countries are immune from information overload—the feeling of being overwhelmed by information from a variety of sources. TV and radio are ubiquitous, movies and videotapes are more popular than ever, and book publishing is still thriving. TV is probably more to blame than personal computers for a steady decline in the readership of daily newspapers—but computers are increasingly a major source of information overload as more and more people conduct business, do research, communicate, find entertainment, and even get their news online [...]⁸

Drawing on this definition it is certainly no surprise that Byron was induced with an early instance of Information Overload of the textual variety. I have broadly categorised four specific encounters with *travelling texts* from the 'variety of sources' that overwhelmed Byron:

Text 1: 27 May 1816–18 August 1816. Wordsworth/Prometheus

Metaphysical discussions with P. B. Shelley on Idealism, Wordsworth, Prometheus and Greek drama; specifically Shelley's translation of Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound*.

Text 2: 14–18 June 1816. Schauerliteratur / 'L'heure fatale'

The Byron–Shelley circle read ghost stories from *Fantasmagoriana* borrowed from a Geneva library.

Text 3: 21 July 1816–late August 1816. Schlegel / 'Prometheus'

Byron's interaction with Mme de Staël's 'continental' coterie at Coppet fosters his meeting A. W. Schlegel on 21 July 1816 to late August 1816.⁹ Staël sends Byron a copy of Schlegel's *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (1809–11; translated in 1815) on 25 August 1816.

Text 4: 14 August 1816. Goethe's Faust.

Matthew 'Monk' Lewis visits Byron and verbally translates Goethe's *Faust* (1808) from the German.

It is easy to discern that Byron's encounters with these travelling texts all predate the composition of the first two acts of *Manfred* in September and October 1816. That Byron was engaging with these travelling texts is evident from the specific scenes in *Manfred* that draw on, or refer to, these sources. His incorporation

of this textual material demonstrates the intertextual relationship between Byron's own composition and the information he was reading, pondering, and discussing during his travels. I will briefly sketch two specific examples of the intertextual dynamics between Byron's information encounters and his composition of *Manfred*.

The first example of intertextuality concerns the famous ghost-story-telling contest at the Villa Diodati. First published in 1811 as Apel and Laun's *Gespenssterbuch* (1811–15),¹⁰ *Fantasmagoriana* was the 1812 French translation of German ghost stories read by the Byron–Shelley circle.¹¹ While it is widely acknowledged that the reading of *Fantasmagoriana* inspired Mary Shelley's masterpiece, *Frankenstein*, its influence on Byron's *Manfred* is at times forgotten. Included in *Fantasmagoriana* is a short story entitled *L'heure fatale*—or *The Fatal Hour*—a translation of the German original: *Die verwandtschaft mit der geisterwelt* (The relationship with the spirit/ghost world). Manfred Eimer has argued that *L'heure fatale* was 'not [an] insignificant motif' for the Astarte scene in *Manfred*.¹² Indeed, the prophecy of death at a stated hour and the withholding of an answer by the phantom in *L'heure fatale* are motifs used by Byron in the meeting between Manfred and a phantom Astarte.

In Laun's version, the protagonist of the story, Florentine, encounters the phantom of her sister, Seraphine, who prophesises her death and then, like Astarte, also disappears before answering Florentine's question:

'What do you say,' so she [Seraphine's phantom] says to me [Florentine], 'for your own sake [...] to provide the consciousness of your approaching death and to reveal the fate of your house?'

The appearance then disclosed to me herewith what would occur, and when after I had pondered deeply about the prophetic voice and wanted to position a question to the prophet myself, the room was dark and everything disappeared supernaturally.¹³

It is prophesised that Florentine will die three days before her wedding at the fated hour of nine o'clock (hence the translated title *L'heure fatale*) and 'Florentine chooses for marriage and dies at the previously named hour at nine o'clock in the evening.'¹⁴ Note that just as Florentine's marriage is precluded by her death, Byron also pre-empted the union of Manfred and Astarte as the 'Farewell' appears final. Manfred's death also imbues this finality, rather than a pending union:

Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.

Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone. (III.iv.87–90)

The supernatural elements of a prophesised fateful hour in *Manfred* and *L'heure fatale* illustrate the influence of Laun's text on the composition of *Manfred*. Eimer comments that 'In *L'heure fatale* and *Manfred* is [...] something totally hidden and the knowledge of which is a deep spiritual wish of

the questioner, which is withheld by the appeared ghost due to its evil—or in *Manfred*—[withheld] because of punishment or revenge.’¹⁵

All these elements from *L'heure fatale* converge in Act II, Scene iv, with the phantom of Astarte: a) prophesying Manfred's death; b) withholding the answers to Manfred's questions; and c) disappearing supernaturally:

Phan. Manfred! To-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!

Man. Yet one word more—am I forgiven?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. Say, shall we meet again?

Phan. Farewell!

Man. One word for mercy! Say thou lovest me.

Phan. Manfred!

The spirit of Astarte disappears. (II.iv.151–57)

While Byron's poetic genius has gone beyond, indeed transformed, the elements in Laun's story to suit his own aesthetic purposes, the supernatural elements of a fated hour and a phantom nonetheless find their genesis in Laun's story that travelled to Byron. The supernatural and horror elements of Laun's *Schauerliteratur* are reconfigured in the characterisation of Manfred to develop the psychological suffering of the Byronic hero. The withheld answer denies Manfred what he desires most; forgiveness through which he may obtain forgetfulness from knowledge. The intertextuality of *Fantasmagoriana* as a 'travelling text' is obvious: the suspense and horror conventions in Laun's story, read in Eyriès' French translation, provide Byron with a framework from which he develops his own composition.

What I'd like to foreground here in tracing this intertextual influence between *Fantasmagoriana* and *Manfred* is that Byron was *not a passive, but an active* receptor of information. Drawing on the knowledge of a story he had read a few months earlier, Byron reconfigures the popular culture of *Schauerliteratur*—a genre invoking terror through supernatural elements—into Manfred's psychological suffering and the mystery of his relationship with Astarte.

Isolated, this example of Byron's intertextuality with cultural and linguistic travelling texts could not have overwhelmed him. Byron, however, *actively* participated in a wide array of such information encounters which were ongoing, often overlapping, and pulling Byron in different directions, as is evident in the following intertextual example of Byron's engagement with the Prometheus myth. The influence of the Prometheus myth on *Manfred* is well established. But how did these influences travel to Byron? In Act I, Scene i, Manfred defiantly responds to the supernatural spirits' mockery of him as a 'Child of Clay':

Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightening of my being, is as bright,

Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay! (l.i.152–57)

Manfred's speech reasserts the power of the 'will', 'mind', and 'spirit' in the face of alienation from a higher sphere. 'Though coop'd in clay', the individual cannot be controlled by outside forces—even supernatural forces. This embodiment of the power of the mind in *Manfred* distinctly echoes some critical paragraphs written by Schlegel on *Prometheus Bound* in his 1809–11 lectures. Clearly, Byron was aware of Schlegel's lectures. The question beckons, therefore, what was the source of Byron's awareness, and how did this source travel to him?

Nancy Goslee argues that 'Byron had read at least the Prometheus paragraphs of Schlegel's lectures in 1816'.¹⁶ Goslee presents three possible 'prose versions of Schlegel's discussions of Prometheus', which directly influenced Byron's *Prometheus*, as well as *Manfred*:

The brief analysis of Æschylus' *Prometheus Bound* in A. W. Schlegel's *Vorlesungen über Dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (*Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*) as translated into French by A. A. Necker de Saussure in 1814 and into English by John Black in 1815 corresponds strikingly to Byron's poem [*Prometheus*] [...] [which] as a whole follows an order very similar to Schlegel's development [...] also William Hazlitt's 1816 review of Black's translation, in which he quotes or paraphrases Schlegel with gusto [...] may have shaped Byron's poem.¹⁷

Hazlitt's review numbers thirty-nine pages. If this section of Schlegel's criticism on *Prometheus Bound* and Romantic individualism (only half a page long) is the only source for Byron's knowledge of Schlegel, it would suggest that Byron was a very careful reader who either took extensive notes or had an extremely good memory. After all, one could easily miss the impact of these two paragraphs with regard to the thirty-nine pages of the full review, let alone recall them six months later when composing *Prometheus* and *Manfred*. Alternatively, a copy of the review could have travelled to Byron from England—perhaps forwarded via the post. While no evidence has surfaced for such an information exchange, it is clear that Byron's characterisation of Manfred's alienation, suffering, and 'unshaken will' embody Promethean characteristics very similar to those espoused by Schlegel.¹⁸

Goslee speculates, therefore, that Hazlitt's review 'and probably also his [Byron's] direct, though stilted, conversations with Schlegel had led Byron to the full text of the lectures'.¹⁹ Also, Shelley's translation of Æschylus' *Prometheus Bound* at the Villa Diodati had rekindled Byron's enthusiasm for the play.²⁰ These discussions with Shelley overlapped with Byron's visits to Staël's literary salon at Coppet, where he personally interacted with Schlegel.²¹ Eisler notes that

Several times a week, setting out in midafternoon, he [Byron] sailed directly across the lake to arrive in time for dinner at Cop-

pet [...] Byron found a welcoming circle of genial spirits [...] He was [...] both awed and irritated by the children's ex-tutor and resident scholar, the German critic, philologist, and poet A. W. Schlegel.²²

Evidence suggests that it was not uncommon for members of the Coppet literary circle to forward reading material to Byron. In a letter addressed to an unknown correspondent, dated 'Diodati.—July 30th 1816', Byron writes:

Dear Sir—I feel truly obliged by the details with regard to Bonnivard which you have been good enough to send me—[...] On Sunday I sent a servant over to Coppet with the M.S.S.—[...] I hope that she [the Baroness] received them in safety.²³

This letter suggests that Byron not only received texts from the intellectual coterie at Coppet, but also forwarded his own manuscripts. One may only speculate to what degree the texts sent to Byron were a response to his literary discussions with the members of Staël's circle. In any case, Byron was actively involved in an information interchange with notable figures at Coppet.

Via this forwarding of texts, Byron received a copy of Schlegel's *Lectures*. Byron wrote to Staël on 25 August 1816 to thank her for sending a book, which Goslee convincingly speculates 'was probably either the 1814 French translation by A. A. de Saussure, Mme. de Staël's cousin, or Black's 1815 English translation'—both translations of Schlegel's *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*.²⁴ The literary *salon* at Coppet placed Byron in a unique interaction with both text and author. Whether it was this interaction which directly led Byron to Schlegel's lectures or inspired Byron to revisit his recollections of Hazlitt's review, it is clear that Byron drew on Schlegel for his Byronic hero.

Byron's actual journey to Switzerland and his social status as an aristocrat invited texts to travel to him. While the intertextual influence of these travelling texts as sources upon which to draw in composing *Manfred* is clear—and indeed, has been mentioned before—my emphasis here is on the quantity and variety of sources that Byron encountered. In particular, the convergence of intellectual discussions (with Shelley and Schlegel); the forwarding of texts (*Fantasmagoriana*, Schlegel's *Lectures*); participation in literary circles (Coppet; literary visitors); travel (Chamounix; Lake Geneva)—all against the backdrop of his own compositions and the unresolved trauma of his divorce oversaturated Byron with information. Clearly, Byron was, in Holeyton's definition of Information Overload, 'overwhelmed by information from a variety of sources'; especially considering that these encounters all occurred over the short time-frame of a few months.

Overwhelmed with information sources of knowledge not accessible to the non-travelling and non-celebrity writer, Byron found himself in a unique position of cosmopolitan interchange of information that demolished the conventional information exchange between England and the continent. While drawing on his personal experience for his compositions was not unusual for

Byron, what is unique about this case history as an earlier cultural insight in the evolution of communication processes, is how the characterisation of Manfred functions as an intertextual commentary, not just on the content of these travelling texts, but because of them, on his experiences of the effects of encountering too much information.

The Byronic Hero as an Intertextual Commentary: The Independence of the Mind as a Response to the Effects of Information Overload

In his opening monologue, Manfred states:

Sorrow is knowledge; they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life. (I.i.10–12)

Let's think about this: 'They who *know the most* [...] must mourn the deepest'—Manfred's definition of knowledge does not promise liberation, but sorrow and mourning. Moreover, pursuing the 'Tree of Knowledge' does not foster, but rather, precludes life. What in 1816 would bring Byron to characterise knowledge not as promising liberation—which, after all, was part of the Enlightenment and Romantic ethos—but instead as sorrow and mourning?

In addition to being overwhelmed by information, a second characteristic of Information Overload concerns the effects upon the individual in processing information. Kenneth Gergen states that the postmodern condition fosters too much information, forcing the individual to

exist in a state of continuous construction and reconstruction; it is a world where anything goes that can be negotiated. Each reality of self gives way to reflexive questioning, irony, and ultimately the playful probing of yet another reality. The center fails to hold.²⁵

This, I think, is the effect that Byron experiences in 1816. Let's compare Gergen's definition—specifically, each 'reality of self giv[ing] way to reflexive questioning'—to a famous entry in Byron's travel journal written the day before he starts composing *Manfred*:

September 28:

I was disposed to be pleased—I am a lover of Nature [...] I can bear fatigue [...]—and have seen some of the noblest views in the world.—But in all this—the recollections of bitterness—& more especially of recent & more home desolation—which must accompany me through life—have preyed upon me here—and neither the music of the Shepherd—the crashing of the Avalanche—nor the torrent—the mountain—the Glacier—the Forest—nor the Cloud—have for one moment—lightened the weight upon my heart—*nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty & the power and the Glory—around—above—& beneath me.* [my emphasis]²⁶

John Clubbe has argued that *Manfred* was written in the state of mind with which the “Journal” concludes.²⁷ Interpretations of Byron’s ‘state of mind’ have foregrounded his critique of knowledge in *Manfred* as an attempt to escape the psychological turmoil caused by the scandal of his recent divorce. Other critics see the Journal entry indicative of manic depression. I would like to shift the emphasis from these interpretations and offer an alternative reading. Byron’s ‘state of mind’ lamenting his inability to ‘lose my [his] own wretched identity’ comments on his failure to escape ‘too much knowledge’. The characterisation of Manfred’s quest for the mind’s independence is a response, a coping strategy, if you will, to locate knowledge only within the self. This quest for the mind’s independence is autobiographical—finding its genesis in Byron’s wish-fulfilment to escape the knowledge of too much information and personal recollections, that was travelling to him, as well as inescapably accompanying him, in his thoughts.

One could emphasise that Byron’s aim to lose his ‘wretched identity’ is an attempt to escape knowledge about himself, rather than to escape ‘too much knowledge’. However, after our examination of Byron being inescapably overwhelmed with travelling texts during the period leading up to the journal entry, this explanation becomes less convincing. Note, how even within the description of Nature in the journal, there is a multifarious array of stimuli. Byron experiences Nature not in its minutia—such as Wordsworth’s *Daffodils*—but in simultaneous extremes: ‘the Avalanche’, ‘the torrent’, ‘the mountain’, ‘the Glacier’, ‘the Forest’, ‘the Cloud’—everything enacts at once; too much information and thus too many stimuli.

Not only is Byron overwhelmed by textual information, he is also struggling with the ideas generated by these texts. In early 1817, Byron reflects on the collision of his states of mind: ‘I was half mad [...] between metaphysics, mountains, lakes, love unextinguishable, thoughts unutterable, and the nightmare of my own delinquencies.’²⁸ It appears, then, that Byron’s mind was in a ‘continuous [state of] construction and reconstruction.’²⁹ The travel journal entry testifies to Byron’s own ‘reflexive questioning’. Despite Byron’s knowledge of other realities—such as being a ‘Lover of Nature’—these realities fail to alleviate his psychological turmoil. In fact, his knowledge of these realities accomplish the exact opposite because they continually remind Byron of his deficiency in not being able to lose himself in, and fully experience, Nature: as frustratingly voiced in his journal.

The independence of the mind from outside influence and knowledge is the opposite state of mind of Information Overload. Alienated from England and his family, and interacting with foreign landscapes, cultures, and texts, stability in Byron’s life could only be found in his own mind. Thus, in the characterisation of Manfred, Byron creates an independence of mind from outside influence—a defining characteristic of the Byronic hero.

It is significant to note that Manfred specifically desires ‘forgetfulness’ of knowledge. In the ‘Witch of the Alps’ scene in Act II, the Witch symbolises the beauty of Nature and also the means of Manfred’s forgetfulness of knowledge through a communion with Nature. Manfred summons the Witch only

To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
 The face of the Earth hath madden’d me, and I
 Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
 To the abodes of those who govern her—
 But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
 From them what they could not bestow, and now
 I search no further. (II.ii.38–44)

Manfred hopes to find ‘refuge’ in Nature from the ‘earth’ which has ‘madden’d’ him. Specifically, knowledge of the ‘face of the earth’ is traded for ‘refuge in her mysteries’. Beauty is to be the sole and consuming stimulus absorbing Manfred’s self—‘nothing further’ is requested. In this scene, cause and effect collide into an experience which in itself is all. This experience is absorbing because it is experiential knowledge *of* the moment, rather than discursive knowledge that *interprets* the moment (such as being ‘half mad [...] between metaphysics’). Life is that which has to be experienced—not known—and these mysteries are not to be solved because solving them turns them into knowledge. Manfred, therefore, finds ‘The Tree of Knowledge [...] not that of Life’ (I.i.10–12) precisely because discursive knowledge alienates and isolates the self from enjoying the moment. Knowledge is always qualifying, and critically analysing, the moment and must thus be avoided; or, once realised, escaped through forgetfulness in order to (re)establish the ignorance of experiential knowledge.

Perhaps an extreme exploration of Gray’s notion that ‘ignorance is bliss’, Manfred seeks annihilation, forgetfulness, oblivion from knowledge—‘Earth, take these atoms!’ (I.ii.109)—because it precludes him from naively sharing the Chamois Hunter’s lot. The amalgamation of Promethean tropes in the Chamois Hunter scene, therefore, is twofold. First, it illustrates Manfred’s (and Byron’s) external alienation from society because the individual is no longer able to participate in the conventional codes of society owing to his knowledge. Second, this results in the internal psychological suffering that emerges out of the knowledge of the fallibility of ideals—in this case symbolised by the pastoral. Contrary to Prometheus, whose knowledge brings fire to man, Manfred’s knowledge is potentially destructive to both humanity and himself. The nobility of Manfred’s suffering lies in his awareness of the destructive power of this knowledge, but his refusal to inform others of it. Perhaps a direct comment on Information Overload, this withholding of information testifies to the responsibility of the effects of information upon another person (i.e. the Chamois Hunter) if/when the transformation into knowledge can cause suffering.

It is this innate sensitivity towards the potential suffering of others that ultimately precludes Manfred from sharing in the simplistic rustic life of the Chamois Hunter.

C. Hun. And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear—
In life what other could not brook to dream
But perish in their slumber. (II.i.74–78)

Manfred's respect for the Chamois Hunter, indeed for humanity, illustrates his noble nature and selflessness in carrying the burden of his suffering by himself.

This solitary suffering in refusing to burden the Chamois Hunter with the knowledge of the loss of idealism contextually reverses the Prometheus myth. It is not the positive knowledge of fire that is given to humanity, but the negative knowledge of something destructive that is *withheld* from humanity. Therefore, it is in impulse, not in form, that Manfred embodies the individual suffering of Prometheus 'a being superior to those who surround him, living by his own vision of the right, is set against those who live within the bounds of conventional attitudes'.³⁰ However, it is personal knowledge that alienates the individual from the frameworks of knowledge and values embraced by the masses. Manfred suffers precisely because he once craved to be a part of the pastoral ideal, but realises that this longing is precluded by his knowledge. He cannot go back when something is known, except through a wished for state of sublime forgetfulness. We are reminded here again of Manfred's opening monologue: 'Sorrow is knowledge; they who know the most | Must mourn the deepest o' ver the fatal truth' (I.i.10–11). Thus, the state of mind of Information Overload is a paradox, as once knowledge has been gained, its effects of isolation and alienation become inescapable because this knowledge cannot be shared with others. Consequently, the condition of Information Overload sustains itself precisely because the sorrow caused by knowing too much can only be solved by finding the knowledge that allows the self to forget.

Through his knowledge of Schlegelean concepts of Romantic individualism, Byron aims to ennoble Manfred's psychological suffering and to establish a stability of knowledge solely within the self—free from outside information and influence. The Shakespearean epigraph at the beginning of the poem, 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy', suggests Byron's attempt to move beyond the limitations of adapting a philosophy as an external interpretative framework for experience and feeling.

Ironically, considering his encounters and dislike of the source—Schlegel—Byron successfully rewrites the Schlegelean individualism of Prometheus into a strategy to combat the effects of Information Overload. Clubbe notes that

while Prometheus' fate was symbolic of the general human lot, it was still a fate ennobled by suffering and by a tremendous effort to maintain his mind's independence. Furthermore, the paradox of his existence—extra-ordinary mental energy driven within by enforced physical passivity—could only draw Byron to him.³¹

The mind's independence allows the Byronic hero to operate outside of judgement and knowledge. This is voiced in Manfred's famous speech on his sublime isolation:

The mind which is immortal makes itself
 Requit for its good or evil thoughts—
 Is its own origin of ill and end—
 And its own place and time—its innate sense,
 When stripp'd of this morality, derives
 No colour from the fleeting things without;
 But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
 Born from the knowledge of its own desert. (III.iv.129–36)

Manfred's quest to maintain the mind's independence is a coping strategy to locate an interpretive framework in one's own knowledge. In order to counter the disabling effects of too much knowledge from the outside world, Byron suggests that the individual unplugs from the informational networks of outside knowledge in order to achieve an effect of sublime isolation—in Manfred's case 'forgetfulness' and for Byron escape from English society and too much information. Being placed in an untenable position of 'reflective questioning' initiated by the overwhelming reception of uninvited information, Byron rejects interpretive frameworks that originate from without in order to maintain a sense of self intact. *Manfred*, and the concept of the Byronic hero, document a philosophical discussion in print media about the psychological effects of too much information that travels to the individual. While independence of mind potentially secures the individual from future instances of Information Overload, it is undoubtedly not a comfortable situation. Peter Thorslev states that if the Byronic hero Manfred

has sinned—and of course he insists that he has—the moral code which he has transgressed is his own, and of his choosing, not a set of values imposed upon him outside by any outside force; consequently, if he is damned—and he admits that he is—it is because he is self-condemned. Likewise, he can accept none of the comforts or consolations which are offered [...] there is surely no clearer statement in romantic literature of the ultimate moral implications of a doctrine that the mind is its own place—it is not only its own witness, judge, and executioner, it is its own legislator as well, its 'own origin of ill and end.'³²

That Byron's literary work was accurately prescient in capturing the mental condition of Information Overload as defined by today's media critics is further

evidenced by John Stuart Mill's failure to combat his own nervous breakdown by reading Byron. James Buzard notes:

On English soil, John Stuart Mill had turned initially to Byron for solace in the midst of the well-known 'crisis in [his] mental history', knowing Byron's 'peculiar department [...] to be that of the intenser feelings'; but Mill found that 'the poet's state of mind was too like [his] own [agitated one]' to afford relief. Wordsworth was a domestic tonic; Byron's domain, that of the intenser feelings, was felt to be *outside* England, stretching 'through Europe to the Aeolian shore'. Byron's impassioned persona added a deeply appealing value to the Continental tourist's physical separation from England [...]³³

Mill's breakdown was caused by stress and an abundance of knowledge—in short, Information Overload. Clearly, Byron's work excited the 'intenser feelings' of cosmopolitan interchange of too much knowledge 'outside of England'—which was precisely the cause of Mill's mental agitation.

It is certainly no coincidence that Mill recognised the symptoms of his breakdown in *Childe Harold* and *Manfred*—however, his mental illness was induced not by travel and travelling texts *per se*, but by life within the demolition of Victorian 'space barriers'. It is Nietzsche, an admirer of *Manfred*, who attempts to transform the negative implications of the power of knowledge into a positive force to combat modern society. For Nietzsche, the same power of the mind and will that destroys Manfred can be a bulwark for the preservation of the self amid the chaos of modern techno-capitalist society. *Manfred*, then, is decidedly modern in its presentation of a Byronic hero who encapsulates the over-circulation of information that travels to the individual.

The aim of my argument is neither trans-historical nor techno-determinist. Rather my purpose is to present a case history that demonstrates how cultural insights about the experience of Information Overload are not specific to digital information networks and media. This literary episode in the history of print-media communication processes shows how Byron found himself in a unique position of information convergence, which anticipated the future norm of such experiences in our own media-saturated society. The effects of, and responses to, being overwhelmed with information are social, cultural, and individual—not medial and technical. Media are merely the vehicle conducive to the effect. In other words, my focus is to explore the cultural practices, and responses to the effects, of 'too much knowledge' (in this case, print media, travel, and intellectual coteries), not the technical networks of communication (such as electronic and mass media), which are clearly removed from the nineteenth century.³⁴

To accomplish this aim, the late-twentieth-century definitions of Information Overload by Gergen and Holeyton are very useful in 're-seeing' contemporary episodes in the Romantic period free from the biases and techno-determinism

of digital media. In fact, against the backdrop of media history, it is clear that the developments within digital media are remediating earlier experiences in print culture. If we accept the premise, then, that the concept of Information Overload can be defined by our own culture, but is not exclusively an electronic or new-media phenomenon, but an effect brought upon by the cultural practices of encountering 'too much knowledge' or information, we can learn from the nineteenth-century literary medium and broaden ('remediate?') our current understanding of digital media.

Byron and Manfred's mutual quest to avoid too much knowledge is a response that has become increasingly more common in today's society. In fact, in 2005, Bill Gates argued that 'Technology must make information overload more manageable.'³⁵ According to Gates, with 'the next wave of Office products [...] it will be easier to set priorities, understanding important data and spend less time organizing information.'³⁶ It is clear that Gates's techno-determinism—that is, only technology can liberate us from technology—exists because Gates has not read his Byron. The Byronic hero finds answers to managing Information Overload not in technology, or in more knowledge, but in establishing knowledge-dependency within the self. In other words, *what information do I need*, rather than *what information must I sort and manage*. Only through setting the independence of our mind as a priority and unplugging from informational networks—not through a dependence on technology, as Gates advocates—does Byron suggest that the individual can unplug him/herself from all networks and achieve sublime isolation. The currency of such Byronic advice resonates with the print media of the early nineteenth century as much as with the digital media of the twenty-first century.

Remediating Byron's Information Overload into a Digital Narrative

Remediation of *Manfred* is not new. Byron's dramatic poem has been adapted to music: Schumann composed an *Overture to Manfred* (op. 115) in 1848, while in 1885 Tchaikovsky composed a complete *Manfred Symphony* (op. 58). Clearly, *Manfred* and the concept of the Byronic hero travelled culturally, intellectually, and one might even say mythologically in different media formats throughout nineteenth-century Europe. In the digital age, remediation has become more widespread. With each new digital medium, from DVD to Blu-Ray for example, the content is remediated at times verbatim; in other instances, undergoing interesting transformations.

The argument presented above had been shaped by my research into information formatted in different kinds of print media. In addition to the textual sources, visual print media such as maps, portraits, frontispieces, and contemporary prints of landscapes shaped my understanding of the material that was overwhelming Byron. This non-textual print media was a significant contributor in shaping my thinking and argument about Information Overload. Some of these were included in the notes to this article, but on the whole these were not

intertwined directly into the argument. Secondly, I felt that I was unable to engage the reader critically with the effects of Information Overload through the reading process. In other words, the method of argument analysed and organised Information Overload into ‘knowledge’ as a concept, but not as an effect that could be ‘experienced’. Specifically, the link between contemporary definitions of Information Overload and being inescapably overwhelmed with print media seemed static at times.

This is not to say that the print medium posed a direct limitation: rather, it is to identify a disconnection between the print media that forged the argument itself and the narrative mode selected to present the argument of Byron’s experiences. In a lecture, for example, one can utilise the combination of text, voice, and visual elements into an argument more fluidly and holistically. Hence, I attempted to remediate this case history into a Digital Narrative, linked to below, which functions as an adjunct to, rather than a supersession of, the print-media argument.

VIDEO I. BYRON AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD

www.cf.ac.uk/encap/fromtext/images/articles/rtr18_03a.html

(Click to here to open a window and play the Digital Narrative in Flash Video Format.)

Firstly, the Digital Narrative is multimodal—layering textual, aural and visual narratives. This allows for the argument regarding Information Overload to be presented in both context and content, but furthermore to be experienced thematically by its twenty-first-century audience. By deliberately creating an ‘effect’ of Information Overload in presenting the argument, I aimed to conflate present-day and early-nineteenth-century practices of Information Overload. Thus Gates’s and Holeyton’s definitions are intertwined with Wordsworth’s to juxtapose the similarities of their experience in being overwhelmed with information, while simultaneously experiencing it yourself. Furthermore, this shows how the currency of these responses to being overloaded with information is not media-specific because they occur in the cultural practices of both print and digital media.

Secondly, I was able to incorporate much of the visual print media that had shaped my thinking: for example, about the impact of Mme de Staël’s literary *salon*. Researching Byron’s letters and correspondence alongside contemporary maps and the milieu of Staël’s coterie facilitated an understanding of Byron’s physical and intellectual visits. The map is crucial in understanding the physical travel and interchange of ideas and texts that Byron experienced. Incorporating the influence of other figures in addition to Schlegel and Staël—such as Mathison, von Mueller, and Bonstetten—enhanced a contemporary depth without immediately distracting from the main argument. These visual elements allowed the case history to be more fully understood in the context of 1816.

Thirdly, the materiality of the Digital Narrative also functions as a text in itself that the scholar can access. The non-linear properties allow the user to engage with sections individually, just as a text or an image. The quotations and images scaffold interaction to allow the user random access to analyse, study, think, and engage with the argument. Thus, the digital and print narratives are not mutually exclusive and instead complement each other.

In this Digital Narrative, remediation functions on several levels. Practically, it allows for the inclusion of aural and visual research material without disconnecting their argumentative force through their inclusion as abstruse footnotes. This material is simultaneously incorporated into the argument. Materially, to remediate the case history from print to a digital narrative allows for a simulation of Information Overload to be experienced by the user—not just presented as a theory. In contrast, simulating the effect of Information Overload in print would undermine the cohesiveness of the argument. Nevertheless, the properties of the Digital Narrative allow for Information Overload to be experienced by the user.

Argumentatively, this remediation illustrates that previous episodes in literary history of print can adumbrate modern experiences. Information Overload is not a techno-determinist nor media-specific phenomenon, but both an intrinsic human experience and a cultural practice of being overwhelmed with media—be it print or digital media. Such remediation of eighteenth-century media practices within literary history provides fresh impetus in our own reading and writing with digital media. Specifically, the advantages of this remediation for scholarly research allows for the application of the analytical tools of digital media to the study of the Romantic text. In the 1960s, this article would perhaps have been written by hand and then typed up as a manuscript for journal publication. This process of composition was still very ‘writerly’ in the nineteenth-century sense, probably written in linear fashion over several sittings. Using word-processors, we have become more ‘editors’ than ‘writers’—by this I mean that we can ‘re-draft’ and write out of sequence in a non-linear manner. In short, word-processing practices have already (and almost invisibly) remediated our approach to the writing process. To paraphrase Marshall McLuhan: ‘we shape our tools, and then our tools shape us’.

Such a paradigm-shift also occurs when moving from linear narratives of reading to the non-linear production techniques of Digital Narratives. The production practices of non-linear video-editing software have similarly remediated the procedures of researching the Romantic era. Most notably, visual print media previously considered external and at best relegated to an appendix are now incorporated directly into textual, aural and visual narratives. Online publications are already utilising the digital advantages in this regard. The production of Digital Narratives will only extend such initiatives and in the process direct archival practices of literary studies to include visual, as well as textual, material.

As a methodology, the production of non-linear editing of Digital Narratives fosters an emphasis on scholarly practices of archival research that yields new insights into, and explorations of textual production, book history, and print culture. The successful interaction between literary and new media studies combines archival research with the production techniques of new media. The twenty-first-century literary scholar will specialise in a variety of disciplines related to literary studies, such as media production and digital rights management, in order to realise the exciting promise of Digital Narratives as an accentuating mode of the traditional textual and academic expertise of previous literary scholars. Ironically, then, digital media return us with renewed vigour to the very *materiality* of print media of the Romantic period. Undoubtedly, our ventures in combining archival research with Digital Narratives to produce new scholarly productions will be successful as long as we heed Byron's advice and avoid being overwhelmed by too much information. 

NOTES

1. By invoking the term 'digital media' I am not referring to a specific type of media or a particular school of criticism (i.e. 'new-media', 'hypertext', and 'communication' critics of electronic media). Rather, I am referring to the general pervasiveness of digital media forms (e.g. television, DVDs, mobile phones, etc.) via digital networks (the internet, satellite broadcasts, etc.) as a distinction from analogue and print media counterparts.
2. Paul Duguid, 'Material Matters: The Past and Futurology of the Book', in *The Future of the Book*, edited by Geoffrey Nunberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 71.
3. The negation of media history often results in techno-determinism, accomplished as Duguid notes, by the 'insistence that history moves by abrupt and sweeping discontinuities' (ibid., p. 10). Duguid observes that through the use of tropes of supersession—'the idea that each technological type vanquishes or subsumes its predecessors'—and liberation, 'the [...] assumption that the pursuit of new information technologies is [...] a righteous pursuit of liberty'—occludes the cultural roles of media in history (ibid., pp. 65–66). Armand Mattelart has termed 'the history of the imaginary of communication networks' to connote the illusion that technology can potentially return us to an ideal form of rational–critical debate, of communication and democracy, in the public sphere—see his *Networking the World, 1794–2000* [originally published as *La Mondialisation de la communication* (1996)], translated by Liz Carey-Libbrecht and James A. Cohen (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), pp. 19–20.
4. *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, vol. 1, edited by W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 128 and 130.
5. Kenneth R. Johnston, 'Romantic Anti-Jacobins or Anti-Jacobin Romanticism?', *Romanticism on the Net*, 15 (Aug 1999). Online: Internet (accessed 3 Jan 2008): <<http://www.erudit.org/revue/ron/1999/v1/n15/005862ar.html>>.
6. Ibid.
7. In addition to Duguid and Matterlart, William Warner has proposed that 'One way to counter [...] [our] techno-determinist ideas about communication is to return to the 18th century, and use our 21st century insight into the centrality of

- networking to re-see a familiar political history as an episode in the history of networking’—‘Declaring Independence as Unlicensed Circulation; or How the Continental Congress Rewired the British Empire Network and Invented the Flat Network Design’, unpublished paper presented on 20 July 2001, at the *Print Culture in the Age of the Circulating Library, 1750–1850* conference at Sheffield Hallam University.
8. Richard Holeton, *Composing Cyberspace: Identity, Community, and Knowledge in the Electronic Age* (Toronto: McGraw–Hill, 1998), p. 291.
 9. August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767–1845), not to be confused with his brother Friedrich von Schlegel (1772–1829). With the founding of the miscellany *Athenäum* (1798–1800) both brothers were instrumental in defining and sparking German Romanticism.
 10. ‘Laun’ was the pseudonym for Friedrich Schulze. I will henceforth refer to this author as Laun.
 11. This text itself is a ‘travelling text’: the English Byron–Shelley circle read a French translation of the German original *Gespens̄terbuch* borrowed from a Swiss library, which in turn is the genesis for some of the most enduring and famous productions in English literature (i.e. *Frankenstein* and *Manfred*).
 12. Manfred Eimer, ‘Einflüsse deutscher Räuber- und Schauerromantik auf Shelley, Mrs. Shelley und Byron’, *Englische Studien*, 48 (1914–15), 241: ‘Dagegen scheint es, als ob eine der Launschen geschichten, *Die verwandtschaft mit der geisterwelt*, ein nicht unwichtiges motiv zu der Astarte-szene in Byrons *Manfred* geliefert habe’. All translations from the German into English are my own, and aim to communicate idiom rather than a literal translation.
 13. ‘“Was zagst du”, so redet es [Seraphine] mich [Florentine] an, “vor deinem eigenen wesen, das nur zu dir tritt, um dir das bewußtsein deines nahen todes zu verschaffen und die schicksale deines hauses zu offenbaren?” | Die erscheinung entdeckte mir hierauf, was geschehen soll, und wie ich nach tiefem sinnen über die prophetische stimme an die prophetin selbst eine frage, *deinetwegen* eine frage richten will, ist das zimmer dunkel und alles übernatürliche verschwunden’ (ibid., p. 242).
 14. ‘Florentine wählt den ehestand und stirbt zu der vorhergesagten Zeit um neun uhr abends’ (ibid., p. 243).
 15. ‘In *L’heure fatale* und *Manfred* ist die sache anders [compared to *Macbeth*]. Hier wird etwas, was ganz im verborgenen liegt und was zu wissen ein tief seelisches bedürfnis des fragenden ist, von dem erschienenen geiste sozusagen boshaft oder—im *Manfred*—strafend oder rächend verschwiegen’ (ibid., p. 244).
 16. Nancy M. Goslee, ‘Pure Stream from a Troubled Source: Byron, Schlegel and Prometheus’, *Byron Journal*, 10 (1982), 21.
 17. Ibid., pp. 20–21. According to Goslee, the three critical paragraphs cited in William Hazlitt’s review of John Black’s translation of Schlegel’s lectures in the February 1816 edition of the *Edinburgh Review* are the most likely source for Byron’s perusal of Schlegel’s lectures.
 18. In fact, Hazlitt’s general synopsis of Schlegel’s comments on Prometheus’s suffering, and the lack of external action, could just as easily apply to *Manfred*—see *Edinburgh Review*, 26 (Feb 1816), 81–82.
 19. Goslee, ‘Pure Stream from a Troubled Source’, pp. 21–22.
It is very probable that Byron was more than casually acquainted with Schlegel’s text and may have read either Saussure’s or Black’s translation. In 1814 Necker de Saussure translates A. W. Schlegel’s *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und*

- Literatur* into French. It was reviewed in the October 1814 issue of the *Quarterly Review*, which presents itself as another, and more likely source for Byron's awareness because preceding this review on Saussure are reviews of Byron's own *Giaour*, and *Bride of Abydos*. Moreover, the *Quarterly Review* was a publication owned by John Murray. It seems highly probable, therefore, Byron would have been aware of Schlegelian concepts of Romantic Individualism prior to Hazlitt's review and before revisiting these ideas in Geneva in 1816.
20. 'A fine Greek scholar and a translator of genius, Shelley no doubt translated the play for Byron in 1816 as fluently as he was to translate it for Medwin in 1820. It may well have been the most important service he rendered the older poet that summer'—John Clubbe, '“The New Prometheus of New Men”: Byron's 1816 *Poems* and *Manfred*', in *Nineteenth-Century Literary Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Lionel Stevenson*, edited by Clyde de L. Ryals (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1974), p. 21.
 21. The Shelleys had departed for a tour of Switzerland on 21 July 1816, returning on the 27th of the same month.
 22. Benita Eisler, *Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), pp. 529–30. See also Byron's letter to Samuel Rogers written at 'Diodati—nr. Geneva July 29th 1816', which documents the *salon* at Coppet.
 Leslie Marchand notes Byron's mention of 'Schlegel is in high force' that Schlegel's 'egoism caused Byron to dislike him'—Leslie A. Marchand (ed.), *Byron's Letters and Journals*, 13 vols (London: William Clowes & Sons, 1973–94), v, 86. It is clear from this letter that Byron encountered other literary personages such as 'Charles Victor Bonstetten (1745–1832), a Swiss man of letters, [who] met Thomas Gray in [...] 1769, and had an extended correspondence with him' (*ibid.*, v, 86). Byron himself notes that 'Mathison—Muller the historian [...] is a good deal at Copet—where I have met him a few times.' Marchand further notes: 'Friedrich von Matthisson (1761–1831), a German poet' (*ibid.*, v, 85). 'Johann von Müller (1752–1809), author of a *History of the Helvetic Confederation*, was a lifelong friend and correspondent of Bonstetten' (*ibid.*, v, 86).
 23. *Ibid.*, v, 87.
 24. Goslee states that it 'seems unlikely, though, that Byron used the German text directly: instead the text Mme. de Stael [*sic*] sent him was probably either the 1814 French translation by A. A. Necker de Saussure [...] or Black's 1815 English translation [...]. In several phrases [in *Prometheus*], Byron [...] seems closer to the French than to either the German or the English [...]. In another case, at the beginning of Schlegel's third paragraph, Byron again seems to follow the French translation instead of the English one as a model for his phrasing of lines 15–16 [...] I am still drawn to Black's English text as a full source, however, by its puzzling translation, almost a mistranslation, of a sentence early in the second paragraph' ('Pure Stream from a Troubled Source', pp. 31–32).
 25. Kenneth Gergen, *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life* (1991; New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 7.
 26. *Byron's Letters and Journals*, v, 104–05.
 27. Clubbe, 'The New Prometheus of New Men', p. 31.
 28. Byron is specifically referring to the period when he was writing Canto III of *Childe Harold*, from early May until late (27th) June 1816—see *Byron's Letters and Journals*, v, 165.
 29. Gergen, *The Saturated Self*, p. 7.

30. Clubbe, 'The New Prometheus of New Men', p. 21.
31. Clubbe, 'The New Prometheus of New Men', p. 17.
32. Peter L. Thorslev, Jr, 'The Romantic Mind Is its Own Place', *Comparative Literature*, 15 (1963), 264 and 266.
33. James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 116–17.
34. See also Warner, 'Declaring Independence as Unlicensed Circulation': 'I accept Michael Warner's caution that we should not conceptualize terms from the history of media culture, like print (or I would add "network") as having a general trans-historical meaning or influence, or in his terms "an ontological status prior to culture." Neither "print" nor "the network" is, again in his words, a "hard technology outside of the political–symbolic order." Instead, we need to understand them [print and network] within the specific meanings given them by a particular culture's practices, ideologies, and historical machinery. Here, a term like "network" ends up being as much social as it is infrastructural; as linked to styles of sociability as to the post and turnpike.'
35. 'Gates: Technology must make information overload more manageable'. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* website, 20 May 2005. Online: Internet (accessed 23 January 2008) <<http://pittsburghpost-gazette.com/pg/05140/507602.5tm>>.
36. Ibid.

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