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Amelia Opie. *The Father and Daughter with Dangers of Coquetry*, ed. Shelley King and John B. Pierce. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003. 377pp. US15.95;CDN18.95;UK8.99. ISBN 1-55111-187-X.

Charlotte Smith. *The Old Manor House*, ed. Jacqueline M. Labbe. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002. 587pp. US15.95;CDN18.95; UK8.99. ISBN 1-55111-213-2.

Broadview Press should be commended for its production of affordable paperback editions of earlier literary works. While other presses have also published books by Charlotte Smith (1749–1806) and Amelia Opie (1769–1853), the two texts under review are fine additions to the list of their works available for use in the classroom.

Jacqueline M. Labbe's edition of *The Old Manor House* follows the conventional Broadview format of an introduction, the text of the novel, and then a selection of background materials in an appendix. The bibliography could have been longer to include, for instance, the pioneering books on Smith by Florence Hilbish (1941) and Carroll Lee Fry (1980), and the letters of William Cowper (rather than citing him secondhand). While Labbe's introduction perhaps focuses too much on her own view of the romance elements in the novel, and some of her footnotes continue this emphasis (see 187), she provides a valuable context for reading this important novel.

Smith often used a character's name for the titles of her fiction (such as *Emmeline* and *Desmond*, which are also available in Broadview editions), but the title *The Old Manor House* refers to a place, Rayland Hall. The wonders of the house, its grounds, its various rooms, and, indeed, its Gothic hallways and enclosures are presented against a harsh background of troublesome new neighbours and family conflicts regarding the hereditary line. Its owners are three spinster sisters, only one of whom is alive when the story actually begins. The noble Mrs Rayland is satirized for her pride and her stubbornness, but she is not a cardboard character. Anna Laetitia Barbauld thought of her as the most interesting person in the book (18), and Sir Walter Scott admiringly compared her to Queen Elizabeth in her grasping of all to which she was entitled (531). Her companion and housekeeper Mrs Lennard (who is later fooled into a marriage with the avaricious Roker) also produces some surprises, and Smith's portrayal of the two "old ladies" (314), as they are often called, resists readers' expectations. In the younger generation, the preferred heir Orlando falls in love with the beautiful and gentle Monimia, the housekeeper's niece, and, as Labbe points out, Smith refuses the temptation to make Monimia an heiress in disguise (48).

The Old Manor House is noteworthy for its explicit social critique, dealing with the problems of gambling, patronage, and poverty. When Orlando

actually travels to North America to fight for the British in the American War of Independence, Smith paints the ravages of war in a way that draws attention to the terrible conditions soldiers had to endure. Orlando's encounters with the North American Indians reveal both the brutality of their own practices of war and the example of humanity in the case of one Native leader who helps Orlando. Later, Orlando often finds assistance in unlikely places: a French captain, the young clerk Dawson, and the crippled soldier. In many ways, *The Old Manor House* is about goodness and where one can find it. Orlando demonstrates goodness in his own behaviour, and yet life is often hard for him: the story resembles a parable at times. Reviewers were surprised that the plotting Mrs Lennard was actually brought into the old manor house at the end (528). It might have been more seemly to settle her in a cottage somewhere. But Mrs Lennard repented, she was forgiven, and Smith gave her a place in the near-heavenly mansion of a restored Rayland Hall.

Like Smith, Amelia Opie was also a prolific writer, though Opie's fiction was not as ambitious as Smith's. Opie rightly defined herself as a writer of tales, not as a novel writer (262), and the Broadview edition exemplifies how powerful the shorter genre can be. Shelley King and John B. Pierce have prepared an excellent edition of Opie's work, with a strong introduction and detailed chronology. King and Pierce have made judicious choices in their annotations of the primary texts, with helpful footnotes for literary, biblical, and cultural allusions. They have also included a number of illustrations, including a portrait of Opie and a frontispiece from the novel, both the work of John Opie, the author's famous artist husband.

The Father and Daughter (1801) was a very popular work, frequently adapted by others for the stage (examples are included in the appendix). While *The Father and Daughter* is a paradigmatic story of seduction, it also shows the consequences that a young woman's actions have on those around her. After the lovely Agnes Fitzhenry leaves home (thinking she will be married to her suitor, who then keeps delaying the marriage), her father is so upset that he suffers a breakdown. When Agnes returns home with her illegitimate baby, her father resides in the asylum that he has previously helped found. This is an important part of the plot, and Opie's sympathetic treatment is notable. The editors include comments from Opie's journals about her personal visits to madhouses when she was younger and the effect this had upon her (342–45).

The emphasis on the devotion of father and daughter (also seen in the secondary characters of Mr Seymour and Agnes's loyal friend Caroline Seymour) brings to mind Lear and Cordelia in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Prospero and Miranda in *The Tempest*, and, in one particularly moving allusion, Mr Harlowe and Clarissa in Richardson's *Clarissa*. Dressed now in coarse clothing, the indigent Agnes says, "'My father loved to see me fine,' as poor Clarissa says, and had I never left him, I should not have been forced

to wear such a gown as this" (141). Amelia Opie's tale is a memorable story of a woman's loss of honour. It has counterparts in eighteenth-century poems such as Anne Finch's lyric "There's no Tomorrow" and Mary Jones's ballad "The Lass of the Hill." The Broadview edition contains an early work by Opie called *Dangers of Coquetry* (1790), but the real centrepiece is *The Father and Daughter*, which truly deserves the renewed attention that it will receive.

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