"In Remembrance of Susan Manning":

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Diminutive as she was in physical stature, Susan Manning was in all other respects a truly great woman. She was both dignified and unpretentious. At once smart and learned and wise. Tremendously energetic, even in the face of serious debility. Her presence graced any gathering she joined and elevated any enterprise to which she lent her great gifts. This enterprise, CHCI, was lucky enough to have her on its advisory board for most of the last seven year of her truncated life. She was a wonderful presence in our midst: imaginative, steady, principled, humane, and thoughtful. To know Susan was to admire her. To know her well was to aspire to be her friend. To know her work, on the page and in the many institutions she tirelessly served, was to recognize intellectual and academic virtue of the highest order. Our loss is enormous, commensurate with her greatness, and we feel it with special keenness here today.

The passing of great women and men leaves us with a large hole in our lives, but their own lives make for extraordinary reading after they are gone. I've read several obituaries about Susan since her death, and I learned much about her that I hadn't known. I knew that she was born in Scotland and moved to the suburbs of Oxford when she was about nine years old. I didn't know that she was "head girl" at the John Mason High School near Oxford….though, in truth, in Susan's case that is hardly surprising news! She was born to be head girl. I knew that she spent a gap year in Grenoble before attending Oxford, but not that she also later studied at the University of Virginia. I knew that she moved back to Edinburgh after years of teaching in Cambridge, but not that she and her family recently bought and refurbished a place at the impossibly British sounding address--the Old Lobster House, in Lower Burnmouth, near Eyemouth. I knew that Susan made the trip to Australia last year, but not that, in spite of her difficult circulation problems, she undertook a three-hour snorkeling effort at the Great Barrier Reef. I knew about some of her honors but not others: She was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, it turns out, and the Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce [such a British sounding organization]. I was well aware of some of her medical problems, notably her long struggle with lupus, and the lung problems that attended it, but not the full extent of what she suffered so stoically. And I knew about some of the large and onerous tasks she took on in the face of these medical challenges, including, besides CHCI, her robust directorship of IASH (the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at Edinburgh), her membership on the advisory

committee of Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, and her pioneering work in launching STAR (Scotland's Transatlantic Relations) project, which I saw at first hand when I attended the opening conference. I did not know she was also a Trustee of the Kennedy Memorial Trust, which sends scholars to further study in the US, or of the Rothschild Fellowships in Jerusalem.

Many of us in CHCI could tell that Susan was far from hale and hardy when she agreed to host the annual conference in Edinburgh just a few years ago, perhaps even less healthy when she had to make it all happen. Yet it was an enormous success, and she pulled it off with panache and aplomb. Indeed, it set a kind of difficult precedent for later hosts in the way she brought not only the entirety of the host University into play but also the host city, including a memorable musical performance of Haydn's settings of Burns's songs that we all attended at St. Cecilia's Hall in the Cowgate area of Edinburgh. It was at this conference, too, that Susan established the genre of the open dialogue on a particular text that has become part of the standard repertoire for CHCI's Annual Conference. Her choice of text on that occasion was itself a dialogue by Hume.

Susan had such a wealth of talent and breadth of learning that one could almost forget she actually had a field of academic specialization: eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British and American literature. Part of this is my field too - that's how I first met her fifteen or so years ago - and I can tell you she was a superb scholar. She was probably the preeminent Americanist in Britain, but that doesn't seem like enough to say about her, especially in light of her commitment to Transatlantic perspectives, long before they became fashionable. She put a lot of energy into this effort, as well, jump-starting the STAR project with a series of lectures at Edinburgh that she eventually collected into a volume entitled The Atlantic Enlightenment. An essay of mine in that volume was the needful beneficiary of her predictably savvy and generous editorial advice.

Susan died about a month after she completed her third monograph, The Poetics of Character. The manuscript, already under contract with Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, was actually sitting on my desk when I got word of her death. It is a book that took fully a decade to complete, partly because of the many large tasks Susan took on while battling all the health problems in those years, but also partly because it was the biggest written project she ever attempted, one she had long been mulling over. The seeds of this remarkable book can be found much earlier in her work, especially in her comparatist transatlantic study of 2002, Fragments of Union. The Poetics of Character, however, is a much more ambitious book, in both its range and approach. To use a term that Susan herself deploys for the work of Burns and Emerson, the brilliantly coupled writers in whom her argument culminates, The Poetics of Character is "provocative."

Its challenge derives from the fact that she is trying to think something quite unusual in this book, and to think it in an unusual way. One might say that she seeks to produce an account of transatlantic literature in the decades that follow the first stirrings of the Romantic period, but without relying on the historicist and

philological methodologies that were themselves generated in that period. She relies instead, very self-consciously, on a pre-Romantic conjuncture of moral topics and comparative procedures that she rightly associates with two large discursive constellations of the Scottish Enlightenment: the discourse of analogy and the discourse of character.

These two concepts, analogy and character, may not seem intuitively to go hand-in-hand. Susan integrates them by reference to a broader framework of Scottish Enlightenment moral thinking, where, as she persuasively shows, they are powerfully imbricated. In particular, she invokes a Scottish Enlightenment notion of human character as a formation that takes shape in relationships of sympathetic correspondence from David Hume to Dugald Stewart. These sympathetic correspondences, she shows, ultimately depend on relationships of similarity, what Hume called "resemblance," and thus are necessarily involved in processes that she wishes to call "analogical." To solidify this connection, she further mobilizes the considerable resources amassed by the field of rhetoric in its glorious Scottish Enlightenment heyday, especially the contributions of Adam Smith and Hugh Blair, who became so important for what we might call the development of "humanities" on both sides of the Atlantic. Thinking of literary relationships in a rhetorical field, rather than in a historicist chain of causation, proves to be productively revelatory for the writers she discusses in these pages, and this is partly so because of their own residual commitments to the Scottish-Enlightenment paradigm Manning excavates here.

In recent years, many scholars (and not just in Scotland) have been pressing for the Scottish-Enlightenment origins of this or that feature of modernity, and of literary modernity in particular. Manning herself notes more than once that Hugh Blair's course in rhetoric and belles lettres became standard for the educational formation of many of the authors she considers here, especially the American ones. No less a self-reliant American than Emerson is a recurring case in point. The importance of this underlying argument about the cultural influence of her Scottish Enlightenment paradigm in Britain and America means that there is a sense in which she is in a certain way relying on the sort of historiographical impulse that she polemically pooh poohs. But the fact of Emerson's reliance, as it were, on Blair is only part of the story. Her deeper purpose is to establish a large-scale field of reference among her writers in which the "poetics of character" seems to trump all other considerations: the "original character" of Melville's elusive Confidence Man, Keats's account of the chameleon poet as a figure of "no character," the "characterless women" in Margaret Fuller's problematically transcendentalist writings, the redoubled character of Poe's William Wilson, the emblematic characters of Emerson's own "representative men."

Susan's notes and observations from this constructed field of reference energize this book, and they will fuel new work for years to come. Further, studying nineteenth-century transatlantic literature as a massive rhetorical field this way, with character centrally at stake, including and especially "national character," she

has remapped this enormous body of writing by the logics of contagion, sympathy, correspondence, and analogy. The result is not just a different map, but a different kind of map, and a different kind of book, one we ought to be very grateful to have in such a finished form, even as we regret not having her around to engage about it, engageable as she always was.

During Susan's last ten years, fascinated audiences heard her deliver tantalizing bits and pieces of the book in transatlantic venues from Berkeley and Eugene to London and St. Andrews. Soon they will see it all put together in published form, a remarkable assemblage that retrospectively turns its title - The Poetics of Character - into an unintended but poignant act of self-reference. Susan's own impressively-formed character as a scholar tellingly unfolds in its pages, even as it did before our eyes in the too-brief time we had the good fortune to have her by our side, and on our side.