

The Butcher's Shop: Disgust in Picturesque Aesthetics and Architecture

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I

Architecture is yet to overcome some uncertainties concerning its referential and aesthetic capacities which were first explored in the picturesque. Is architecture to please us, or to instruct us? Is it free and parallel to the world of social forms and production, or, is it the material form of that social economy? These problems arose in a double movement at the end of the eighteenth century. First there was the possibility of architecture 'representing' some distant thing, China or an ideal civics. Second there was the picturesque aesthetes' discovery of vernacular building, architecture's silent twin which has followed ever since taking roles as: the material operated on; and the authority for reform; but always something beyond architecture and re-presented by it. From what resources can an architect produce a representation of a building which is produced naturally, automatically, ordinarily? These questions, although puzzling, have not been unproductive: Soane and Nash's agricultural buildings; the suburban cottage-villa; Butterfield's ugliness; Cullen's Townscape,¹ and the Brutalist's cult of the ordinary, are perhaps all more historically important than my present topic. But something of the conceptual economy of the picturesque can be grasped in the idea of cutting an architecture out of something so insistently material, instrumental and disgusting as a butcher's shop.

II

In 1830, after publishing three folios of designs for cottages and ornamental buildings, P.F. Robinson published *Village Architecture* which contains a design for a picturesque butcher's shop (*fig 1*). *Village Architecture* claims to illustrate suggestions by the contemporary aesthician Uvedale Price as to how landlords could have an economical occasion for exercising their taste when upgrading the agricultural infrastructure.² Robinson provides hints to the improving landlord as to how an agricultural workforce could be tastefully housed; considering their needs for a church, a school, an inn, and a butcher's shop. It is hard to know where to begin in

describing Robinson's boorish over-literalness. Is it his insistence on pleasing us with an Olde Englishness which would doubtless extend to the chopping block, the gallows on which the beasts were hung, the buckets that collect the offal and blood? Or, in a period of rural starvation and class war, is it the overdetermination of this proffered ideological instrument? The butcher's shop is trying to speak. What it wants to say is: that while outside the estate, scabrous day labourers starve in mud floored hovels; here loyal estate workers have sound dry cottages, and even money to buy the meat they have been producing. Robinson has misunderstood the logic of mimesis, its economy and its relation to economy. What can a picturesque butcher's shop be but the crudest of ideologies?³

While it has ideological aspects of the kind I describe, Robinson's butcher's shop is probably intended as a theoretical object, a kind of thought experiment on the limit of picturesque taste. In Robinson's literary source, Uvedale Price's *Essays on the Picturesque* of 1810, a view of a butcher's shop plays a crucial role as an example of Price's theory of disgust.⁴ Price has a whole chapter on disgust and a very elaborate, not to say confused, discussion of the implications of the phenomena for aesthetic theory. Price also includes a chapter on architecture, and the two discussions come together in his dramatised "Dialogue on the Picturesque."⁵ If one takes the common view that the picturesque is some sort of proto-modernist reification of the gaze, then in their materiality architecture and disgust might seem odd considerations for the Price. Architecture has been much overlooked in revisionist histories of picturesque which begin in painting and literature. The picturesque is not a theory of composition, of the form of visual experience, it is rather a theory of the form of content: it is not a 'way of seeing' but a "way-of-seeing X" in which X is syntagmatic of a system of genre and taste. Price and his contemporaries saw images as tools which were to be understood in relation to their regimes of materiality, that is landscape and architecture. Given that the site of these material works is the agricultural and scenic improvement of the

countryside, how better could Price concisely state the materiality of buildings and landscape than to analogue them as meat?

Price begins his thought experiment by assuming that a butcher's shop will disgust us in its squeals and smells, in its visceral mess, in the idea of this mess having a logic and necessity; but not in its colours and textures as he can show that these provide a fine occasion for the painter's skills. With this neat paradox, disgust is of value to aesthetics. It explicates the differentiated but paired projects of judging nature and art. As a concept which opposes taste, disgust can help explain and distinguish it. But, this differentiation of art and nature does not suffice to end the paradox of an aesthetic disgust. For the more the concept of disgust is of value to us in discussing taste, the more we need to explain phenomenal disgust; actual nausea. Disgust at art is the opposite of disgust at nature. Bad art disgusts us conceptually precisely because we are being asked to judge something which does not necessitate the judgement of taste, but rather precludes it. But if we remember those occasions when we have had to vomit we cannot but wonder if phenomenal disgust is not the same kind of necessity with which beauty determines the correct judgment of taste.

These first splits, between good taste and disgust; and between an 'animal' disgust and a conceptual disgust at bad taste, is only the beginning of Price's crazy morphology. This is somewhat unexpected if one follows Kant and Derrida who think that disgust has its significance in its absolute singularity and alterity: the impossibility of its signifying anything else.⁶ Jacques Derrida, in his essay "Economimesis," argues that disgust's guarantee of the integrity of aesthetic judgement is in the radical singularity of its outside: the absolute alterity of bodily disgust, the impossibility of any vicariousness of vomit, that is an economy of disgust.⁷ Disgust is actually the answer to the question which Derrida asks about Kant, the question of 'economimesis,' that is: the economy of imitation and how it can be distinguished from economy in general. Derrida's purpose is not to demonstrate a systematic accommodation of a mimetic system to a political system but rather to show on a most general level that there can be no opposition between them. Economy and imitation are the same, or rather they explicate the same hierarchy. Politics and aesthetics have often been thought to be masks one for another. The picturesque is a celebrated example as it has been well established that it functions to ideologize the capitalization of agriculture in Britain. What Derrida

sets out to show in "Economimesis" is that there is no distortion here, no powers abuse aesthetics in this role. The autonomy of aesthetics actually lies in its ability to calculate its 'economimesis.' Derrida insists that Kant is dependent on the radical singularity of disgust, its unnamability. However, Derrida seems to contradict himself by saying that disgust is "a parergon of the Third Critique." By this he means that it frames and ornaments it, supplementing aesthetic's inability to rigorously name the limit to its economy, and he refers to his other work on ornament in Kant. Price's work on disgust as an ornamental relation suggests another logic, a logic of doubling where disgust functions across the bounds of taste in an tactical and localised calculation of its interior and exterior. And this would better serve the consistency of Derrida's argument in the essays "Economimesis" and "Parergon."⁸

Price's proliferation of disgust begins in his aim to split beauty. Most writers and practioners of the picturesque thought of the picture-ing implied as a mode of analysing the beautiful.⁹ Price, however, believed that picturesqueness was an empirically existing aspect of objects in the world. Whereas his contemporaries would approve something as beautiful on account of its picturesqueness, Price insisted that they ought distinguish the picturesque from the beautiful. The representation of unpleasant things, death, cataclysm and tragedy had long been claimed as explicating the representational contract. But the art produced surpasses beauty into the sublime. Hamlet's tragedy, and Shakespeare's telling of it, are not beautiful but sublime. The play does not give us pleasure but a moment of exceeding our self, only one judgement is possible as the sublime places us indubitably before the facts of our mortality and our hopes for transcendence. But Price points out that there are many things which disgust in life and which are commonly enjoyed in representation without the slightest teleological dimension. Rotting and precarious cottages, boorish peasants politicking in ale-houses, mendicant cottage children, all of these would, if met in life, give us feelings of revulsion, sorrow, fear and nausea; yet they make very pleasing pictures. These pictorial imitations ought properly to be called picturesque to avoid any suggestion that one found beauty in dankness, poverty and disease.

Price now has two terms of aesthetic approbation, and although he has used the disgust argument once to show the necessity of this split, he is obliged to do it again to show the difference between picturesqueness and beauty. For although Price's

aesthetics are pluralistic his project is actually a theory of the coherence of taste. Society must be able to agree and police a single standard of propriety in judgment. Therefore Price is worried about how to explain the failure of artworks and bad taste. A failed picturesqueness cannot lie in too much beauty. Price decides to introduce two terms of disapprobation: deformity and an ugliness qualified as insipidity. Ugliness and deformity have the same visual causes as beauty and the picturesque. Were we merely sensual and rational beings, we would group the insipid with the beautiful, separately from the deformed and the picturesque. It is the faculty of judgement which allows us to approve both the beautiful and the picturesque, and to cast out the insipid and deformed. The difference between these two others will better explain the difference between picturesqueness and beauty. The occasions of one's liking the sweet or the sour, can be understood in a refusal of the sickly or the acrid.

Price arrays these distinctions in a linear manner in the story of a woman's face. Price imagines a fine featured picturesque woman, her eyes, eyebrows, hair, and complexion, are more striking and showy than delicate."¹⁰ Were we now to imagine a lessening of these features, finer graduations of skin tones, less eyebrows, and so on, we would have a more finished delicacy which we could call beautiful. But were we to continue the process until the skin lost colour, the eyebrows became transparent; the face would pass through the angelic and become insipid. If, on the other hand, we took the fine featured woman and gave her a dusky complexion, thickened her eyebrows, drew in moles and an arch cast to her gaze; then we would have taken off from beauty what we had given to picturesqueness. Thus we can imagine a taste for wild gipsy women as well as our angelic wives and daughters, but taste tells us not to go further and take pleasure in preposterous eyebrows, squints and smallpox scars.¹¹ What truly disgusts, says Price, what is beyond the territory of art's appropriating powers, is the combination of the insipid and deformed. Imagine, says Price, a man with a face like an oyster, covered in wens and excrescences.

Let me rewrite Price's proliferating terminology with this diagram (*fig 2*). The figure shows the array of the four main terms in a linear sequence described by a range of what Price calls 'visual stimulus' from 'too little' to 'too much.' The standard of taste would span across beauty and picturesqueness and out to a knowledge of what is ugly and what is deformed without allowing a taste for these. Disgust

is the combination of the extremities. Further complications need to be modelled. It is apparent that the range of stimulus is in fact overlapping ranges of the characters of picturesqueness and beauty. The weakened character of beauty, what Price calls ugliness, he also says is informe, unformedness. The excess of the character of the picturesque is an excess of ornamental form. What is unformed does not lack form per se, indeed the fact that it has form is what is disgusting about it, but it is a form without figure, a non-signifying form, specifically a form which does not know what ornaments are appropriate. Deformity is the obverse, the supplement which no longer knows the propriety of attachment, like preposterous eyebrows and warts.¹²

Price goes on to imagine further allegiances; picturesque ugliness and deformed beauty, which takes the count up to five terms for disgust. Whereas ugliness and deformity are merely indifferently unpleasing and material for art, and while their combination is completely beyond the pale, Price is unsure what to make of lightning-blasted trees and ornamented cottage hovels. These paradigmatic picturesque objects do not at all fit his theory. Dosing the unformed cottage with the picturesqueness of exaggerated chimneys and rustic tree trunk posts ought logically to bring it back up to beauty. The lightning strike ought either to make the beautiful oak picturesque or deform it properly. Picturesque ugliness and deformed beauty each stand in the place of picturesqueness itself and Price is torn between including them (at the cost of losing his theory of disgust) or excluding them and thereby losing his certainty on what disgust is. Deformed beauty does disgust, he decides: but differently. It is an aesthetic pleasure which we ought to reject, like a gash on a living animal. Picturesque ugliness is, however, definitely within the realm of taste as it shows the productivity of art in raising ugly things to value. But quickly Price re-introduces deformed beauty into the realm of taste in the figure of the ruin. Price needs time and ruin and deformation in general, because the picturesque's main advantage over beauty in practice is that it is 'œconomical.'¹³ If one possessed a landscape scarred by a quarry it is not only that it is cheaper to convert to picturesqueness than to beauty, picturesqueness has that general aim and meaning of recuperation. But the economy of picturesque improvement is not the symmetry Price would have us believe. Deformed beauty is reincorporated into taste to balance the overwhelming number of projects for improvement that have nothing to do with deformation by time;

these are the ordinary unformed uglinesses of agricultural production and they have been made available to the improver's art not because they have been located by the eye of taste, but because of the unmentionable fact that the aesthete is also the land owner.

What disgusts then is the collapse of the aesthetic economy onto the economy as such: when the talent and refinement required to judge is suddenly equated with the wealth to acquire; when the gentleman used to the double nobility of being born to wealth and to taste loses the space in which to deploy this ideology. If one wishes to do with one's own estate what aesthetes do with the Alps and the Bay of Naples a protocol like the picturesque can serve to evince the liberality of doing so. It is not that judgement is limited by the land. Rather a free choice has led to the unlimited aestheticization of one's own property. This becomes clear in Price's "Dialogue" where with the example of a butcher's shop he makes clear how much is at stake for the noble subject in appropriate feelings of disgust.

Three gentlemen are out for a walk. They are, covered by pseudonyms, Price, Richard Payne Knight, and an everyman Mr Seymour. Knight was Price's neighbour, sometime friend and rival theorist of the picturesque, and his speech in "The Dialogue" is excerpted from his texts. The Price character is then at leisure to anticipate his friend's arguments and call on the common good sense of Mr Seymour in support. The friends' walk has as its destination the picture gallery of a nearby country house. On their way there the gentlemen experience several scenes in nature which are contrived to provide them with comparisons to the paintings that they will later see. The aesthetes stop to admire a gipsy camp as if it were a painting, praising the tones and textures of objects which disgust Mr Seymour. Seymour thinks that the old gipsy's beard and his hovel are very ugly and no amount of abstraction will allow him to call this beauty. Neither Price nor Seymour mention this but in fact the description of the dirty, godless, squatting, thieving, gypsies is a stereotype of the supposed faults of the dangerous classes during the period of agricultural discontent, so the abstraction being asked of Seymour is not to overcome some sympathy for the gypsies. Knight persuades Seymour that if the scene were painted his disgust would necessarily dissipate; one cannot be disgusted at a representation.¹⁴

When they get to the Gallery all three admire a Claude and it reminds them of the view from a hill

top which they had taken after leaving the Gipsy camp. Seymour is troubled by the suggestion that his enjoyment of the painting is in wishing to be there, in constructing a desire to possess the real scene which it represents. So to return him to the issues raised by the gypsies the aesthetes show him a Teniers of a woman washing pig's guts. Seymour remarks:

*if what the woman is washing and cleaning, were real tripes, guts, and garbage, the sense of smelling, and animal disgust, would prevent any pleasure I might have ... This certainly is merely the pleasure arising from imitation.*¹⁵

And thus Price has the hundredth opportunity to repeat that such pleasures are better called picturesque than beautiful.

Of course picturesqueness is not about the disgusting Price insists, it is just that with the disgusting we can practice certain discriminations which will be useful with proper objects. Seymour wants to know if, having learnt his lesson with this low material, he can then apply the picturesque mode of viewing to objects which he finds valuable. If gypsies and broken down asses, why not gentlefolk and handsome horses gaily caparisoned he asks, and Price rewards his useful interlocutor by ending the gallery tour with a contemplation of a noble hunting party painted by Wouwermans. Seymour says he is "glad to find, that what, according to my ideas, is beautiful and highly ornamented, may be expressed in painting, as well as what is so like dirt and ugliness, that it takes some practice to distinguish in what the difference consists."¹⁶ Disinterest is, of course, a prerequisite for judgement, but how can it be constructed and shown? Seymour's exercises with offal and the poor have not obliged him to remain in bad company: on the contrary they have brought him to a level of evinced autonomy of judgement. Picturesque disgust is an hors d'oeuvre in the project of taste.¹⁷

At the very centre of "The Dialogue" the aesthetes show Seymour Rembrandt's *Slaughtered Ox* (fig 3). This extraordinary painting is notionally within the Dutch genre of kitchenpieces, which has here been transposed as a crucifixion.¹⁸ Although a great lover of Dutch art Price seems entirely ignorant of their iconography and the Dutch painters' generic system. But the placement of this example in "The Dialogue" nevertheless shows his appreciation of the unexpectedness of Rembrandt's elevation of a mean subject. Price has placed the discussion of the Rembrandt between the Teniers kitchen painting of

pigs' guts and the Wouvermanns' game piece. Constructing a series of: pigs, cattle and game; offal, flesh and whole creatures: the discussion sits in the centre of "The Dialogue," the centre of Price's argument and like the picturesque it acts to transcode genre hierarchies into aesthetic experiences.

Seymour praises the mellow and harmonious tints of the painting and says:

It certainly is very like the thing; and yet though it is so like, and the subject so offensive, I do not look at it with as much repugnance as I would have expected ... Now I recollect that in coming through the village, we passed by a butcher's shop, where a real ox was hung up in this manner; but neither of you stopped to examine it: on the contrary, we all got out of the way. Animal disgust, therefore, prevailed in the one case, and not in the other.¹⁹

Consider what actually disgusts here. What might have happened at the butcher's shop, had our friends not possessed taste? When they saw the ox hung up, they could have gone in and bought steaks for their supper, or queried the butcher on the price of beef. But what is so offensive about that? Had they been hungry, or inquisitive as to the profits to be had from rearing cattle in this neighbourhood, then any disgust at viscera of oxen, would have already exhausted its significations as a cost. "The Dialogue" offers an implausible description of being disgusted as crossing the road near fainting with nausea. In that disgust there is a doubling, a second unlikely disgust at those who do not cross the road, those whose inordinate desires overcome their sensibilities. In the extreme oppositions of the example we have lost any possibility for knowing that gentleman aesthetes can also be cattle breeders, and might also hunger. What has been elided in the description of the characters' reaction to the butcher's shop is the essentially prosaic nature of a plural subjectivity.

What has happened in "The Dialogue" is that nature has been made to imitate art. Price has constructed the experience of the butcher's shop as a direct inversion of the experience of Rembrandt's *The Slaughtered Ox*. In fact the characters are as unlikely to feel disgust at the butcher's shop as they would be to praise the meat for its tones and colours. A single exclusion marks both the descriptions. What Price has excluded in an unlikely way from description of the experience of the butcher's shop, is much more seriously excluded from the gallery. What is excluded is valuing the meat. What would

truly disgust is not the sight of 'real' gore, but Seymour losing patience with his friends' interminable debate and taking the opportunity provided by the Rembrandt to guess the carcass' weight and its price at market. Then two economies which were circulating in parallel would suddenly be tied together. There would be no possible play of reference between the skill of distinguishing different types of objects and values, in painting and in the management of estates. There would be no categorical difference between meat and Rembrandts, between hunger and 'taste' (figs 4, 5).

It is possible that the landscape gardener and theorist Humphry Repton is referring to Price when he describes going to some trouble to hide a butcher's shop in the view from his home in the village of Harestreet. Repton imagines for the reader an example of poor taste: someone who "might not object to the butcher's shop;" some land holder who "condescending to become his own tenant, grazier, and butcher, can have little occasion for the landscape gardener."²⁰ What might seem the common sense wish of his clients, to manage agricultural and scenic improvements together, must be forcibly rejected. Repton expects his clients to be first freed by their wealth so as to then cultivate their taste under his direction. But these remarks on the liberality of art and the salary due to her workers are not the topic here. This is rather a concept Repton thinks completely different, that of 'appropriation;' the profit one might take of landscape with an investment only of taste.

Repton has quite a sophisticated theory of appropriation and Harestreet is intended as a definitive example. Appropriation has three axes. First it removes 'improper' objects so that each element in the view is an ornament appropriate to its genre. Then it involves finding major compositional lines in the view which are familiar from acculturated picturing practices. Lastly it obscures the relation between the composition and the property boundaries. Repton bought twenty yards of road verge to enlarge his garden, but it obtains for him the whole village, and a basket of roses replaces the butcher's shop. What is it about the shop which makes it immutable to composition? Is it an 'animal disgust' at the idea of slaughter, or at the flies and road grime on the legs of mutton? Is it what Repton says it symbolises: the greed of enclosing whig landlords who will not pay his fees? Or is it what Price calls the nauseating repugnance of appetite, the horrid possibility that our nature might lead us astray when visiting Repton's garden and, having seen

the butcher's shop, we might begin to plan our dinner? A proliferation of disgusts which obscure a more obvious one.

The crippled beggar is also removed. The starving beggar looks at Repton and Repton worries about the butcher's shop. Appropriation would demand that we chase away those figures which would want to share our view or objectify us in theirs, to a distance where they 'animate the scene.' But the beggar is cast slightly comic with his loss of an eye, an arm, a leg, as well as the means of his support (figs 6, 7). He is too deformed to ornament this pretty village, but Repton guarantees our disgust through a dreadful metonymy of the cut which links the beggar to the butcher's shop. The formless ordinariness of the butcher's shop thus surreptitiously encourages our disgust at the beggar as an object of taste. The beggar calls for our charity and the butcher displays the joints to whet our appetites. Both pleas must be refused as they are unlicensed evocations of particular economies which threaten the detachment necessary to the judgement of the whole and its character. The poor are not disgusting in the intractability of their problems, but in their appetites.

III

Since John Nash's borrowing of these ideas in the design of Regent's Street and Park, appropriation has become one of the major mechanisms of the aesthetics of the city. "Position, position, position" as the real estate agents say: to remind the avaricious that views have to be quantified alongside land area. It is widely accepted that to aestheticize a city one treats it as a kind of landscape; forgetting the economic logic of freeways, malls and tall buildings just Price or Repton had to forget the value of the grazing cattle. But the particular facility which architects seek in that much overused word 'urban' is another part of the same picturesque heritage: this is the idea that there is a space of reference between architecture and the 'urban fabric' which is held to be incapable of referentiality; mere mute particularity, a content seeking to be appropriated as form, meat on the butcher's stall.

Today in architectural discourse picturesque attitudes to urban landscape are identified with 'townscape';²¹ a sort of feeble-minded adventure in humanism that assumes that we can agree an image of the good, and then build it like Repton's basket of roses, covering the harsh appearances of the reality of city life. But if one's disgust at picturesque townscape is at its

"softness" then paradoxically this is in its refusal of disgust as an aesthetic concept. It may be pedantic; but one aim of this paper is to remember that Townscape is only one voice in the picturesque dialogue; it is Seymour rather than Price. Both of these attitudes, those who have recourse to visual tricks to improve the image of the city; and those who love it for the actuality of its fetid decay and strident excesses; both are in a way picturesque. Despite the difference between them they are a split description of a picturesque attitude rather than alternative positions.

But I do not wish to revive or hold up for your admiration a hard picturesque. Because in many ways the 'advanced taste' in architecture today is the result of the success of attitudes like Price's, what Ruskin later characterised as picturesque heartlessness.²² And it is easy enough to turn the tables on the high seriousness of 'critical' architecture so as to reveal its shallow vicarious thrills, what it has in common with P. F. Robinson and the Olde English style. To appropriate the smashed buildings of Sarajevo as a kind of architectural pornography; to treat Mike Davis' *City of Quartz* as a brief; one would think that there were not enough butcher's shops in the world for today's architectural aesthetes to sharpen their teeth on. My problem is rather that we have not digested the picturesque and continue in that circuit of: evoking pleasure; a disgust at the facility of doing so; a demanding aesthetics of the unpleasant; and a disgust at the onanism of aesthetic disinterest.

I am not suggesting either that present thinking is so imbued with the picturesque that we are constrained from thinking outside of it. But we might produce a thought to end with by imagining what we have in common with Price's picturesque, despite the complete change of its ideological role. What disgusts us both, now and then, is the collapse of the split between aesthetics and referentiality. For Price aesthetics was a project which (for epistemic reasons) could only happen on the plane of reference and representation. His problem, given that what was there to be represented was the class interests being played out in agrarian revolution, was how those references could be sublated in aesthetics without opening out to a general political economy. Our problem today is a different orientation of the same terms; how can we appear to be in a relation of reference, how can we construct a critical intervention in a largely imagined cultural politics of building, while disguising the fact that our operative concept remains that of taste.

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NOTES

- 1 Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: The Architectural Press, 1971).
- 2 Peter Fredrick Robinson, *Village Architecture, or a Series of Designs ... illustrative of the observations contained in the essay on the picturesque, by Sir Uvedale Price* (London, 1830).
- 3 But even at the crudest level there is more than ideology going on in books such as Robinson's. We could say that the butcher's shop and the possibilities of representing or improving it are an analogue of the 'cottage architecture' going on at this time. Architects such as Robinson published pattern books of designs for cottages, villas and ornamental park buildings which functioned as a space for the invention techniques. The license claimed for such experimentation was both picturesque discourse or the reformist discourse on the condition of the poor; two discourses which were politically, even semantically, incompatible. The space of technical invention seems to be premised on the buildings being an object of both phobic disgust and scenic interest.

This genre of the architectural design of ornamental cottages is the subject of my Ph.D thesis, (University of Cambridge, 1989), and a book in preparation *The Ornamental Cottage, Landscape and Disgust*. For a description of the genre see Michael McMordie, "Picturesque Pattern Books and pre-Victorian designers," *Architectural History* (1975) n. 18, pp. 42-59, and my "The Picturesque Cottage: Genre and Technique," *Southern Review* (1989) v. 22, n. 3, pp. 301-314.
- 4 Sir Uvedale Price, *Essays on the Picturesque* (London: Mawman, 1810).
- 5 "The Dialogue" is a supplement added to the *Essays* in their last, 1810, edition.
- 6 In the essay "Economimesis," Jacques Derrida [*Diacritics* (June 1981), pp. 2-25.] analyses Immanuel Kant's reliance on disgust as the outside of aesthetics. [*Kant's Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), particularly § 48, p. 174.]
- 7 Derrida, "Economimesis," p. 4.
- 8 "Parergon" and Derrida's other essays on the Third

Critique are collected in Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Oddly, given that it is an analysis of the third moment of 'The Analysis of the Beautiful,' "Economimesis" was not republished there.

- 9 The Picturesque is a very large and diverse field of study and no characterisation could be short enough to be useful in this paper. I am not suggesting that Price's theory of disgust is definitive of picturesque theory, nor does it explain the whole of Price's theory. Price does give positive definitions of the picturesque in its irregularity, intricacy and variety which I have not discussed here. Before doing so I would need to first establish the importance of genre hierarchies and ornamentation in Price's 'aesthetics.' Christopher Hussey's *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View* (London: Frank Cass, 1967) remains the best overview and introduction. There has been much revisionist work on the politics of the Picturesque. An excellent recent collection is *The Politics of the Picturesque* eds. Stephen Copely and Peter Garside, (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). There has been less work on the picturesque as aesthetics. A useful exception is Kim Ian Michasiw's "Nine revisionist theses on the Picturesque," *Representations* (1992), n. 38, pp. 76-100.
- 10 Price, *Essays* v. I, p. 204, 207.
- 11 Price, *Essays* v. I, p. 206-7.
- 12 The surrealist Georges Bataille much later defined *informe* as the idea that some *-thing* could be spit, or it could equally be a spider. Price would correct him, the incomprehensible body product is *informe*, but the spider, that super-figural image of malevolent nature, is a necessary partner to spit in making up the conditions of a thorough disgust. Georges Bataille, "Formless," *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1989).
- 13 Price, *Essays* v. I, p. 195-196.
- 14 Here Price quotes Burke's idea that we can be sure that our judgement is purely aesthetic when we have no wish to see a represented object in reality: "so it is with most of the pieces the painters call still-life: in these a cottage, a dung hill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen are capable of giving us pleasure." Burke quoted, Price, *Essays* v. iii, p. 324.
- 15 Price, *Essays* v. III, p. 302.
- 16 Price, *Essays* v. III, pp. 328-329.

- 17 There are several reasons that the picturesque does not achieve the abstract concept of disinterest which Kant does about the same time. These are: political theory of disinterest; the necessity of maintaining space for a genre hierarchy; and the particular politics of landscape improvements in agricultural estates.
- 18 Dutch kitchen paintings typically included biblical scenes partially obscured in the background and thus had the general meaning of warnings against gluttony and worldliness. An famous example is Pieter Aertsen's *Butcher's Shop* (Uppsala University, 1551) which includes an ox on a gallows (viewed from the same angle as the Rembrandt) as part of an allegory about the Prodigal Son. Rembrandt reduces all of the figurative and spatial complexity of such paintings to the one monumental image of the ox and thus transcodes its genre with paintings of higher status. Scott A. Sullivan, *The Dutch Game Piece* (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Allanheld, 1984); Kenneth M. Crag, "Pieter Aertsen and *The Meat Stall*," *Oud Holland* (1982), n. 96, pp. 1-15.
- 19 Price, *Essays* v. III, p. 315-316.
- 20 Humphry Repton, *The Lanscape Gardening of the Late Humphry Repton Esq.* (London: 1840), p. 568. Repton also proclaims "I have never admitted the word *ferme orneé* into my ideas of taste, any more than a butcher's shop or a pigsty, adorned with pea green and gilding." p. 472.
- 21 The word 'townspace' was popularized by Gordan Cullen in the *Architectural Review* from the late forties, and became the title of his book, (London: Architectural Press, 1961). Nikolas Pevsner had written a number of articles on picturesque theory for *Architectural Review* in this period [collected in *Studies in Art, Architecture and Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968)] and is said to have suggested to Cullen that he popularise picturesque theories and practices to assist in the design of New Towns.
- 22 John Macarthur, "Ruskin and Barrell on the Heartlessness of the Picturesque," *Australasian Victorian Studies Association Conference Papers 1991* ed. B. Garlick, (Brisbane: 1992).