

Lectures | **Reading**
de | ***La Nouvelle***
La Nouvelle | ***Héloïse***
Héloïse | **Today**

publié sous
la direction de

edited
by

Ourida Mostefai

Pensée libre, n^o 4

Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau
North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Ottawa 1993

**CANADIAN CATALOGUING IN
PUBLICATION DATA**

**DONNÉES DE CATALOGAGE
AVANT LA PUBLICATION (CANADA)**

Main entry undert title:

Vedette principale au titre:

Lectures de la Nouvelle Héloïse =
Reading La Nouvelle Héloïse today

Lectures de la Nouvelle Héloïse =
Reading La Nouvelle Héloïse today

(Pensée libre ; no. 4)
Text in French and English.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-9693132-3-3

(Pensée libre ; no. 4)
Texte en français et en anglais.
Comprend des références
bibliographiques.
ISBN 0-9693132-3-3

1. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 1712-1778.
Nouvelle Héloïse. I. Mostefai, Ourida
II. North American Association for the
Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. III.
Title: Reading La Nouvelle Héloïse
today. IV. Series.

1. Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 1712-1778.
Nouvelle Héloïse. I. Mostefai, Ourida
II. Association nord-américaine des
études Jean-Jacques Rousseau. III. Titre:
Reading La Nouvelle Héloïse today. IV.
Collection.

PQ2039.L43 1993
848'.509 C94-900020-5E

PQ2039.L43 1993
848'.509 C94-900020-5F

Ouvrage publié grâce au concours de l'Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau, grâce à une subvention des Services Culturels français de Boston, et grâce à l'aide de la Faculté des Arts et des Sciences de Boston College.

The publication of this volume was made possible by the cooperation of the North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, by a grant from the French Cultural Services in Boston and by the support of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Boston College.

© Association nord-américaine des études Jean-Jacques Rousseau / North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1993.

ISBN 0-9693132-3-3

Collection « Pensée libre » dirigée par Guy Lafrance.
Revision de textes, typographie et mise-en-page par Daniel Woolford.

Pensée libre series editor: Guy Lafrance.
Text editing, typesetting and layout by Daniel Woolford.

Imprimé au Canada
Printed in Canada

PARTIAL ASSOCIATIONS

IN *LA NOUVELLE HÉLOÏSE*

If, when no adequately informed people deliberate, the citizens were to have no communication among themselves, the general will would always result . . . and the deliberation would always be good. But when factions, partial associations at the expense of the whole, are formed, the will of each of these associations becomes general with reference to its members and particular with reference to the State. One can say, then, that there are no longer as many voters as there are [citizens], but merely as many as there are associations. . . . In order for the general will to be well expressed, it is therefore important that there be no partial society in the State. . . . (*S.C.* II.3)

I. Introduction: The Partial Association Problem

John C. Hall claims that “no part of Rousseau’s *Social Contract* has been so frequently misunderstood”¹ as the passage just cited, which leads to a ban on partial associations. Perhaps the main difficulty is to determine the intended scope of this ban: whether it is to apply to all or only to some partial associations — namely, those which would interfere with, if not altogether preclude, the appropriate expression of the general will in well-formed laws. Given both the stated rationale for the ban and its explicit linkage with the voting behavior of citizens, it is certainly reasonable to adopt the latter interpretation as Rousseau’s true intent.

But if so, the next question is: are there any partial associations that avoid this description? Are there any partial associations that are not factions? In order to answer this question, one might consider Rousseau’s subsequent remarks about voting, about “the simple right to vote in every act of sovereignty . . . and the right to give an opinion, to make propositions, to analyze, to discuss.” (*S.C.* IV.1) The exercise

1. John C. Hall, *Rousseau: An Introduction to his Political Philosophy* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 131. Hall proceeds to consider several “more or less plausible but mutually incompatible interpretations of what Rousseau is objecting to: (1) factions which would intimidate their fellow-citizens or at worst plunge the state into civil war; (2) groups within the state that would have a permanent

of the various aspects of the latter right is surely essential if citizens are to be 'adequately informed,' and if their deliberations regarding a proposed law are to result in a genuine expression of the general will. Assuming, then, that citizens should deliberate before they vote, and that such deliberation involves — or should involve — sharing opinions about a proposed law, and also analyzing and discussing those opinions, what can Rousseau possibly mean when he suggests that 'the general will would always result and the deliberation would always be good, if, when an adequately informed people deliberates, the citizens were to have no communication among themselves'? Indeed, how can citizens be adequately informed, how can they deliberate at all, if they 'have no communication among themselves'?

These questions, of course, simply replicate the problem of scope with which I began; and so, if the ban on partial associations is to be understood as applying not to all such associations but only to factions, so too the ban on communication should be construed as excluding some but not all forms of communication. For, as Rousseau observes,

when the social tie begins to slacken and the State to grow weak; when private interests start to make themselves felt and small societies to influence the large one, the common interest changes and is faced with opponents; . . . contradictions and debates arise and the best advice is not accepted without disputes. (*S. C. IV. 1*)

common interest and therefore their own general wills, and to which the individual might come to subordinate his own interest rather than to the general will of the whole community; (3) group voting or caucuses; (4) more trivially, given the method of compromise Rousseau sketches in the first two paragraphs of this chapter, that the average of two averages need not be the average of the whole; and (5) interest groups — i.e., either a group formed to promote policies that are equally in the interest of other members of the community, or a group each of whose members promotes, in appropriate circumstances, the individual interest of other members of the group in preference to the interests either of outsiders generally or of a specific class of outsiders." (pp. 131-135, *passim*) Hall suggests that Rousseau, in fact, is objecting only to interest groups of the latter kind. My own approach relies much more on what Rousseau says about voting behavior, and thus cuts across some of the possibilities Hall adumbrates.

Indeed, I suspect that Rousseau's concept of factions is quite similar to that presented by Madison in *Federalist* #10: viz., "By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community." (Cf. Ralph H. Gabriel, ed., *Hamilton, Madison, Jay: On the Constitution — Selections from the Federalist Papers* [Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1954], p. 12.) Rousseau, however, would not view the interests of the community as simply the aggregate interests of its members.

What Rousseau seeks to exclude from public deliberation, then, are “those long debates, dissensions and tumult that indicate the ascendance of private interests and the decline of the State.” (S. C. IV.2) And he is most specific regarding the deleterious consequence of this ascendance of private interests — whether of an individual or of a ‘small society’ (i.e., a faction): namely, that the citizen ‘changes the state of the question and answers something other than what he is asked’ —

rather than saying through his vote it is advantageous to the State, he says it is advantageous to a given man or to a given party for a given motion to pass. (S. C. IV.1)

The well-formed State, Rousseau suggests, will seek to prevent this problem not only by adopting a “law of public order in assemblies: that the general will is always questioned and that it always answers” (*ibid.*); but also, by prohibiting those partial associations which would subvert ‘the state of the question’ citizens should answer with their votes.

So once again, are there any partial associations to which this ban would not apply? Are there, indeed, partial associations that would encourage, rather than subvert, appropriate deliberative and voting behavior by their members? I shall approach this question by considering certain partial associations that Rousseau certainly seems to commend and that are portrayed in considerable detail in his epistolary novel *La Nouvelle Héloïse*.

II. Dyads, Families and a Commune

The chronology of partial associations constructed in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* proceeds from the intimate relationships of lovers and friends, to the formation of conjugal and then nuclear families, and finally to the establishment of ‘our little community’ — as Claire designates the Clarens commune. In addition, Saint-Preux supplies a detailed report of an already existing laissez-faire ‘community’ of peasant-artisans in the High Valais region of Switzerland. But, even though all of these partial associations are presented in the novel with Rousseau’s apparent approval, the question is: which, if any, would be permitted in a well-formed State? which would enable their members to deliberate and to vote in the requisite manner?

A. *Dyads*: Now, it may seem rather odd to classify the relationships of lovers, friends or spouses as partial associations; but

Rousseau's account of how 'the state of the question' might be altered clearly accommodates, even requires, this classification. For, if a citizen's concern for what is advantageous to his lover, friend or wife takes precedence over his concern for what is advantageous to the State, and if he changes 'the state of the question' accordingly when he votes, the dyadic relationship to which he belongs constitutes a dyadic faction. Yet in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau clearly seems to approve the formation of dyadic relationships. As Saint-Preux observes, "it is not good for a man to be alone. Human souls need to be joined together in pairs in order to be worth their full value." (*L.N.H.* II.13)

Now this remark occurs in Part II — that is, after the dyadic relation between Saint-Preux and Julie as lovers has been terminated by the latter's father. And so, they seek to reconstitute their relationship as one between friends. For, Saint-Preux continues,

the united strength of two friends, like that of the bars of an artificial magnet, is incomparably greater than the sum of their individual forces. Divine friendship, this is your triumph! But what is even friendship next to that perfect union which connects the whole energy of friendship with bonds a hundred times more sacred? (*ibid.*)

In addition to the precarious friendship, which continually threatens to revert to a lover's dyad, between Saint-Preux and Julie, Rousseau depicts other, somewhat more stable friendships to which Saint-Preux is a party — with Lord Bomston, with Claire, even (eventually) with Julie's father. But clearly, Rousseau's exemplar of a friendship dyad is that between Julie and Claire. When the former urges the latter to become the first addition to the Clarens commune, she claims that "we have but one family, just as we have but one heart with which to cherish it." (*L.N.H.* IV.1) Not just united strength, but a single heart: these suggest the potential value to those who are 'joined together in pairs.' And though Saint-Preux had acknowledged a feeling of jealousy for 'so tender a friendship' when he was still Julie's lover, he subsequently admits that his own heart "no longer distinguishes between Julie and Claire and does not separate the inseparables." (*L.N.H.* I.38, V.9)²

2. Choderlos de Laclos offers an ironic treatment of close friendship as a moral person, of 'inseparables' who are all-too-easily separated, by chicanery and — to be sure — seduction. Cf. *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (New York: New American Library, 1962), pp. 167-173, *passim*.

What, then, of 'that perfect union' to which Saint-Preux alludes — a union which combines love and friendship, a union between husband and wife? Though the conjugal dyad formed by Julie and Wolmar is rather dispassionate, Julie does claim that:

each of us is precisely what the other needs; he instructs me and I enliven him. We are of greater value together, and it seems that we are destined to have only a single mind between us, of which he is the understanding and I the will. (*L.N.H.* III.20)

This description of a particular conjugal dyad should be compared, and perhaps contrasted, with that which Rousseau offers as he anticipates (and arranges!) the marriage of *Émile* and *Sophie*.

The social relationship of the sexes is an admirable thing. This partnership produces a moral person of which the woman is the eye and the man is the arm, but they have such a dependence on one another that the woman learns from the man what must be seen and the man learns from the woman what must be done. If woman could ascend to general principles as well as man can, and if man had as good a mind for details as woman does, they would always be independent of one another, they would live in eternal discord, and their partnership could not exist. But in the harmony which reigns between them, everything tends to the common end; they do not know who contributes more. Each follows the prompting of the other; each obeys, and both are masters. (*É.* 377)

Rousseau's principle of gender complementarity may well have its difficulties, of course. Julie's version seems to invert the respective contributions to the single mind or moral person, assuming that the eye denotes practical reason and the arm, volition. And despite Rousseau's insistence, in *Émile*, that 'both members of the conjugal dyad are masters,' only the husband can ever become a citizen (in Rousseau's well-formed State) and, in that capacity, will 'represent' the dyad in his deliberative and voting functions.³

-
3. Several years ago, my wife and I purchased the rights to exclusive use of a cabin that (in the end) belongs to a partial association. According to the By-laws of this association, each cabin — and there are eleven included on the property and in the association — has one vote in all decisions. Though two of the cabins are 'owned' by individuals, the remaining nine 'belong' to conjugal dyads. So far as I am aware, each dyad votes after reaching agreement but without any gender discrimination or hierarchy. In effect, each dyad comprises a 'citizen' whose constitutive members are equal, and amicably, represented in its vote. Might there be a way of construing, or perhaps reconfiguring, Rousseau's concept of a moral person so as to overcome its apparent sexist bias?

Nevertheless, in saying 'that she and Wolmar are of greater value together,' Julie not only echoes Saint-Preux's thesis — viz., 'that human souls need to be joined together in pairs in order to be worth their full value,' but she also seems to refer to Rousseau's thesis that a conjugal dyad is a moral person. Indeed, whether a dyad is constituted by lovers, friends or spouses, and though it enables its members to attain greater strength and to possess a single heart (or sensibility?) and a single mind (or harmony of understanding and will?), its most critical function lies in the formation of a moral person. For, the two individuals who are thus joined together achieve thereby 'their full value.'

Julie, furthermore, clarifies the value of such a moral person itself, at least in the case of the conjugal dyad, when she claims that "people do not marry in order to think exclusively of each other, but in order to fulfill the duties of civil society jointly, to govern the house prudently, to rear their children well." (*L.N.H.* III.20) But not the least of the civic duties to be jointly fulfilled by the conjugal dyad is that its representative, the citizen, engage in public deliberation and then vote on proposed laws; or at least this will be true in a well-formed State. And since such a State is likewise "a moral person whose life consists in the union of its members." (*S.C.* II.4), the optimal dyad *qua* minimal moral person (assuming, indeed, that no solitary individual can be a moral person *per se*) will be one which sustains the State, *qua* maximal moral person, by encouraging its representative to respond to the appropriate 'state of the question' with his vote.

Insofar, it would appear that dyadic relationships, though in the requisite sense partial associations, are not necessarily or invariably factions, and so would be permissible in a well-formed State. Yet that conclusion must be qualified, since there is always the danger that the members of a dyadic relationship will begin 'to think exclusively of each other' and, as a result, incline its representative to give precedence to the interests of the dyad and thereby subvert 'the state of the question.' Saint-Preux, though intending to praise 'the character of this pair' (i.e., Julie and Wolmar) to his friend Bomston, suggests that "you must picture them taken up with their family and living for each other apart from the rest of the universe." (*L.N.H.* V.5) If even the most exemplary conjugal dyad is portrayed as tempted to abnegate its civic duty, as self-absorbed and detached from the larger society, one must wonder whether any dyad can be exempted from the ban on partial associations.

B. *Families*: Though there are in fact two nuclear families directly portrayed in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, only one receives much attention — that of Julie, Wolmar and their two sons. (The other includes Claire, Monsieur d'Orbe and their daughter; but d'Orbe dies — at the beginning of Part IV.) In a rather lengthy account of the Wolmar family, Saint-Preux indicates that “the first care in which Julie and Wolmar are united, and indeed the chief care of man in civil society, is to provide for the needs of children.” (*L.N.H.* V.2) This observation effectively links the three objectives of marriage as stated by Julie: ‘to fulfill the duties of civil society jointly, to govern the house prudently, to rear the children well.’ That is, providing for the needs of children, for their education and for their patrimony, is itself a civic duty. The Wolmars, ‘by enhancing the value of the Clarens estate rather than purchasing new estates, and by investing their money safely rather than profitably,’ seek to leave their own example of non-acquisitive, prudent household management as the most appropriate patrimony. (cf. *ibid.*) And Saint-Preux supplies a detailed report of the Wolmar’s educational theory — unsurprisingly, a summary of that to be found in *Émile* — which he, Saint-Preux, has been charged to implement, though Wolmar and Julie do not abnegate their own responsibilities in this regard.

Accordingly, and insofar as care for the patrimony and education of children constitutes the fulfillment of a primary civic duty by the parents in a nuclear family, this partial association would seem to be the positive and desirable foundation for a well-formed State that Rousseau intends it to be. And Saint-Preux certainly seems to reinforce this possibility when he comments that the members of the families he visited in the High Valais “have towards each other an unaffected simplicity; the children of the age of reason are the equals of their fathers; . . . the same liberty rules in the house and in the republic, and the family is the image of the State.” (*L.N.H.* I.23) Such a nuclear family would then constitute another moral person whose younger (male) members have already begun to experience what, in Rousseau’s view, “ought to be the end(s) of every system of legislation: namely, freedom and equality.” (*S.C.* II.11) Thus, if the nuclear family is the State ‘writ small,’ and if it prepares its members to recognize the essential conditions of well-formed laws, it would seem to pass muster so far as permissible partial associations are concerned.

Unfortunately, Rousseau himself unwittingly rejects this possibility when he describes such a laissez-faire ‘community’ of productive and tranquil peasant-artisans near Neufchatel. For, he suggests,

the fundamental rule in this society is for each household to become entirely self-sufficient vis-à-vis both other families and the State: i.e., the rule is that "each is everything for himself, no one is anything for another."⁴ But in that case, the laissez-faire society is neither a partial association nor a moral person; and, what is worse, it is reducible to essentially unrelated households or nuclear families whose members quite deliberately 'live for each other apart from the rest of the universe.' Even if each such family were to be the image of the State, as Saint-Preux claims, this is true because it has a general will of its own 'which is particular with reference to the State.' And, if its (male) head were to engage in public deliberations and then vote on a proposed law, while remaining committed to the operative principle just noted, he would perforce change 'the state of the question' and give precedence through his vote to the interests of his family over those of the State. In short, rather than comprising a positive foundation for a well-formed State, the nuclear family would seem to represent a paradigmatic instance of a faction; and as such, it must be banned.

C. *A Commune*: Julie and Wolmar, whose marriage produces a conjugal dyad and then a nuclear family, also initiate the formation of a still more inclusive moral person at Clarens. That is, they establish a pastoral commune, or partial association, that Claire refers to as "our little community." (*L.N.H.* V. 10) Eventually, the members of this commune will include two distinct groups: its inner circle will consist of Julie (until her death), Wolmar and their two sons, Julie's father, Claire and her daughter, Saint-Preux, and Lord Bomston; while its outer circle comprises an indeterminate, if still limited number of domestic servants and farm workers.⁵ According to Saint-Preux's description,

A small number of good-natured people, united by their mutual wants and reciprocal benevolence, concur by their different employments in promoting the same end; every one finding in his situation all that is requisite to contentment

-
4. Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts: Letter to d'Alembert on the Theatre*, tr. by Allan Bloom (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), pp. 60-62. *passim*.
 5. Wolmar's policy is to maximize farm production in order to employ more workers, so that there will be a continual and reciprocal increase of producers and consumers, of products and labor. But, given that the Clarens estate is finite and that the Wolmars do not seek to increase the size of their estate, this process must eventually conclude with an optimal balance or equilibrium between land and population.

and not desiring to change it, applies himself as if he thought to stay here all his life; the only ambition among them being that of properly discharging their respective duties. (*L.N.H.* V.2)

As with the conjugal dyad, the various members of the Clarens commune share a common end to which they contribute in different, yet complementary ways.

Now, it seems to me that this partial association at Clarens exhibits many of the characteristics of intentional communities, such as the kibbutzim in Israel, Twin Oaks, Oneida and the Shaker communities in the United States, and the Hutterite colonies in Canada. Not least, those in the Clarens inner circle regarded their little community as at once a refuge and a hope, as a retreat from a disordered, corrupt world but also as a kind of mission to that world. Thus, Saint-Preux remarks that

the reason why the inhabitants of this place [i.e., Clarens] are happy...is because they here know how to live; not in the sense in which these words would be taken in France, where it would be understood that they had adopted certain customs and manners in vogue: No, but they have adopted such manners as are most agreeable to human life, and the purposes for which man came into the world. (*L.N.H.* V.2)

But, precisely because the Clarens commune has this ambivalent orientation, of detachment from and exemplar for the world, its status as a partial association becomes problematic.

On the one hand, consider Rosabeth Kanter's claim "that the most critical problem which any community faces is to ensure the commitment of its members — to the community's work, to its values, and to each other." To solve this problem, an intentional community must devise a package of commitment mechanisms: that is, a set of social practices and beliefs which serve "to detach the individual from the larger society and attach/commit that person (instrumentally, affectively, and morally) to the commune."⁶ And clearly, the Clarens commune does employ such a package of commitment mechanisms. To wit: a careful structuring of its physical, social and economic environment; an emphasis upon openness, or transparency, in the relationships among

6. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 65. Cf. Chapter 4 regarding the 'commitment packages' employed by successful (as measured by longevity) intentional communities.

its members (or at least among those in the inner circle); the maintenance of a simple, industrious life-style; and the provision of opportunities to experience communion. This last mechanism is by no means the least important in the Clarens commitment package. The members of the inner circle gather occasionally in silence ('after the manner of Friends' — i.e., the Quakers), which, Saint-Preux claims, enables them to be "friends collected in each other." (*L.N.H.* V.3) That is, they experience a particularly keen sense of their collective identity and purpose. But there is also an occasion, once each year, when the whole commune — inner and outer circles alike — enjoys a comparable experience: namely, the grape harvest which is followed by a festival — with a feast, dancing, whatever. (I don't mean that this harvest celebration would be equivalent to the Druid festivals, of Samhain or Beltane; but, who knows?) This is an especially significant mechanism for creating a sense of community, of communion, and even — albeit temporarily — of equality, within the Clarens commune. Jean Starobinski suggests that "this harvest celebration is reminiscent of the general will of the *Social Contract*. . . . The festival expresses, in the 'existential' realm of emotion, what the *Social Contract* formulates in the theoretical realm of law."⁷ But in that case, no less than when its inner circle engages in silent communion, the Clarens commune will have successfully detached its members from the larger society and secured their primary commitment to itself. In other words, and in the requisite sense, the Clarens commune will have become a faction, a partial association whose members may mimic the general will but thereby subvert that will.

On the other hand, the Clarens commune *qua* exemplar might also encourage civic life, even in a State that is not well-formed. Rousseau, after imagining 'that Émile and Sophie might actually restore the golden age from a simple retreat in the country, were they to do no more than complete together what Sophie's worthy parents had begun,' cautions Émile as follows:

do not let so sweet a life make you regard painful duties with disgust, if such duties are ever imposed on you. Remember that the Romans went from the plow to the consulate. If the prince or the state calls you to the service of the fatherland, leave everything to go to fulfill the honorable function of citizen in the post assigned to you. (*É.* 474)

7. Jean Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and Obstruction*, tr. by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 96.

However, given Emile's character, Rousseau thinks it unlikely that he (Émile) "will be sought out to serve the state." (É. 475) Similarly, Lord Bomston indicates that,

although I no longer have any interest in Parliament, while I am a member that is enough for me to do my duty until the last. But I have a faithful colleague and friend, whom I can empower to answer for me in current affairs. (*L.N.H.* VI.3)

Such comments (but nothing is said about Wolmar's or Saint-Preux's or Julie's father's civic responsibilities) may well suggest that an intentional community, such as the Clarens commune, can tolerate, but is unlikely to encourage, the participation of its members in the affairs of a State that is not well-formed. That is, a state whose 'citizens' are really only subjects, since they are denied 'the simple right to vote in every act of sovereignty and also the (complementary) right to give their opinions, to analyze and discuss' proposed laws. But, were such an intentional community located within a well-formed State, perhaps it might escape the ban on those partial associations that are factions.

Still, since it is most unlikely that an intentional community could enhance the commitment of its members to the State without weakening the force of the various practices and beliefs it had instituted in order to commit its members to itself, the very survival of such a community would seem to require that it become a faction. For, were its citizen-members to participate in public deliberations and then vote on proposed laws in the larger community, they would almost certainly give precedence to the interests of their intentional community over those of the State, and would thereby preclude a proper expression of the general will of that State. Consequently, intentional communities such as the Clarens commune would most probably be prohibited by a well-formed State.

III. Conclusion

Though Rousseau claims, in a concluding note (cf. *L.N.H.* VI.13) that *La Nouvelle Héloïse* is not only 'agreeable to him, but will be so to every well-disposed reader because it is pure and not mixed with unpleasantness,' I confess that my own (admittedly focused) reading has a less happy outcome. For none of the partial associations I have considered — dyads formed by lovers, friends or spouses, the nuclear family, intentional communities — satisfies Rousseau's criterion unam-

biguously; none, that is, altogether and straightforwardly eludes his ban on factions, which ban seems required to ensure that the general will is well-expressed in laws adopted by the citizens of a well-formed State. And yet, Rousseau clearly believes that such partial associations are most 'agreeable,' and even indispensable if individuals are to attain 'their full value.'

Now Rousseau does consider, albeit briefly, the possibility of applying the ban quite rigorously to conjugal dyads and families. In the *Émile*, he refers to the second wave in Plato's *Republic*: that is, the 'alleged community of women [and children]' which Socrates recommends for the guardian class. To be sure, Rousseau objects to the 'civil promiscuity which confounds the two sexes in the same employments and in the same labors,' to the fact that "having removed private families from his regime and no longer knowing what to do with women, [Socrates] found himself forced to make them men." (*É.* 362,363) But were this problem overcome, Rousseau almost seems to accept the elimination of private families from his well-formed State. As he remarks, "the often repeated reproach on this point proves that those who make it against [Plato] have never read him." (*ibid.*) Almost, but not really; for he then argues "that the love of one's nearest is the principle of the love one owes the state; that it is by means of the small fatherland which is the family that the heart attaches itself to the large one; that it is the good son, the good husband, and the good father who make the good citizen!" (*É.* 363)

And so, Rousseau would much prefer (as would I) not only to permit, but even to encourage the formation of conjugal dyads and families. Moreover, this preference could be extended to intentional communities, given the pastoral commune he would have liked to establish, were he to become a rich man (cf. *É.* 345-354) — a commune very much like that formed by Julie and Wolmar at Clarens.

Perhaps, this preference accounts for Rousseau's alternative to the ban on partial associations that are factions: namely, that "if there are partial societies, their number must be multiplied and their inequality prevented." For, he claims, this alternative is another "valid means of ensuring that the general will is always enlightened and that the people is not deceived." (*S.C.* II.3)

The argument of this paper, in fact, has involved a review of some of the difficulties to which the ban leads, as illustrated in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, in order to supply oblique support for the multiplication alternative. But of course, this alternative has difficulties as well. How,

for instance, can a well-formed State effectively prevent inequalities among the various partial associations that have been multiplied? How can it ensure that the members of such associations will question the general will and hear its response? How, indeed, can it ensure that citizens — who are also sons, husbands, fathers and, perhaps, lovers, friends, and members of intentional communities — will avoid the deception involved in the ascendance of private interests and, instead, contribute through their active participation in public deliberation and then, with their votes, to appropriate expressions of the general will? These are issues that I hope to address on another occasion.

Howard R. Cell
Glassboro State College

Works Cited

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, with *Geneva Manuscript* and *Political Economy*. Edited and translated by Roger D. and Judith R. Masters. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*. Translated and Abridged by Judith H. McDowell. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Eloisa: Or a Series of Original Letters Collected and Published by J. J. Rousseau*. Translated by William Kenrick. London: Printed for C. Bathurst *et al.*, 1795.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, or On Education*. Translated by Allan Bloom. New York: Basic Books, 1979.