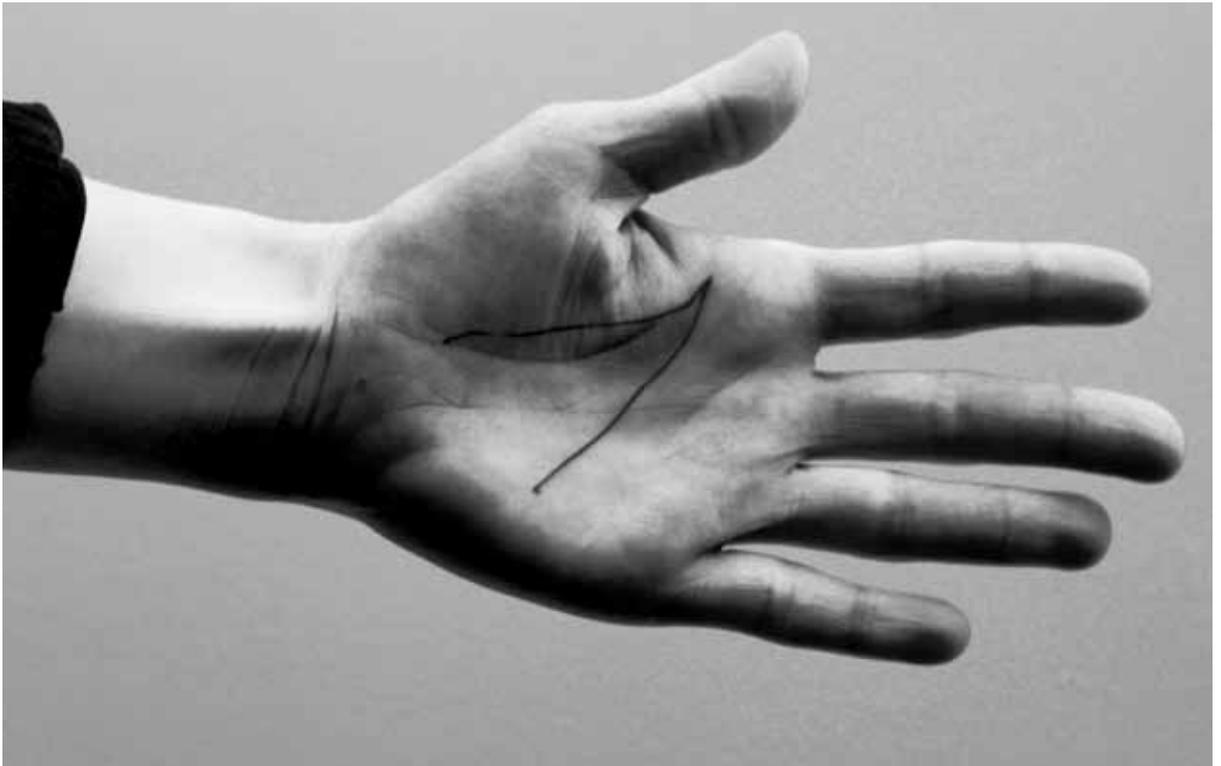
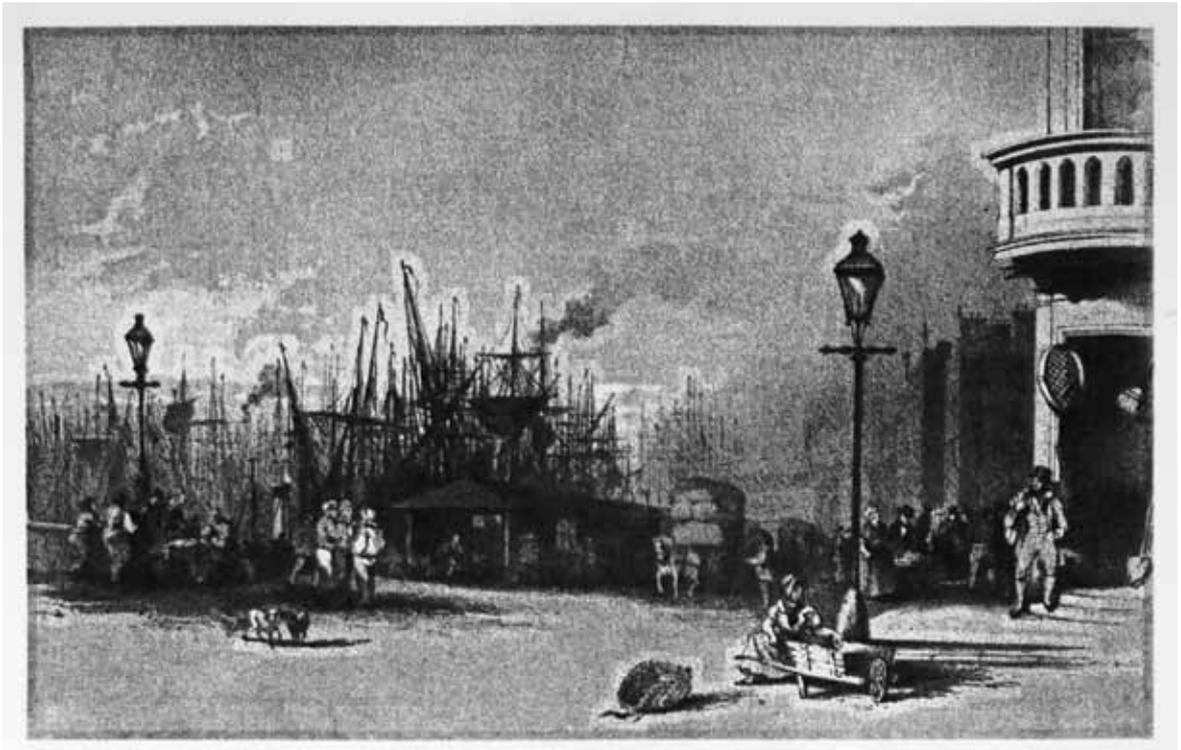


CORRECTING FORTUNE
BY
CORIN SWORN



1834, AS Hamilton, was a female reformer on tour through Scotland.

Her disappearance, happened after she died.



Glasgow 1840, J.D. Nicholl

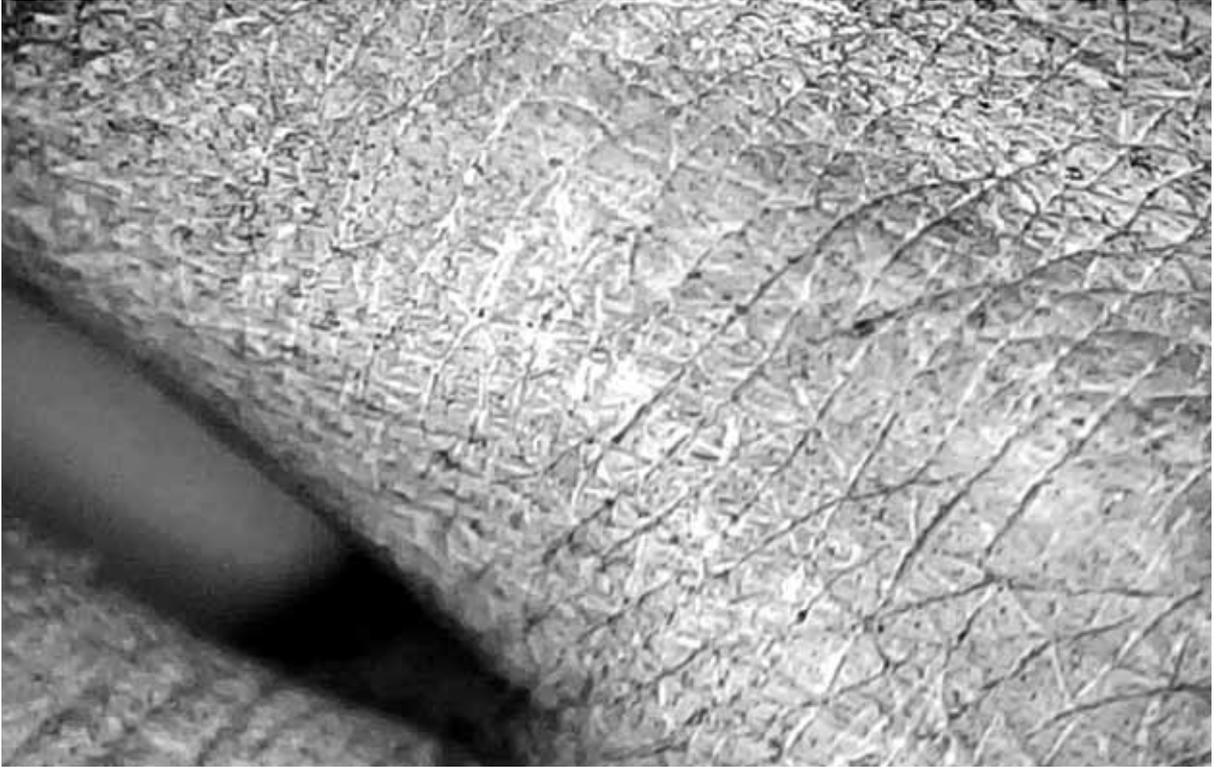
How many past lives are there?



Though there is always a quantity of absence,
is it disappearance?
Or are some simply not seen?

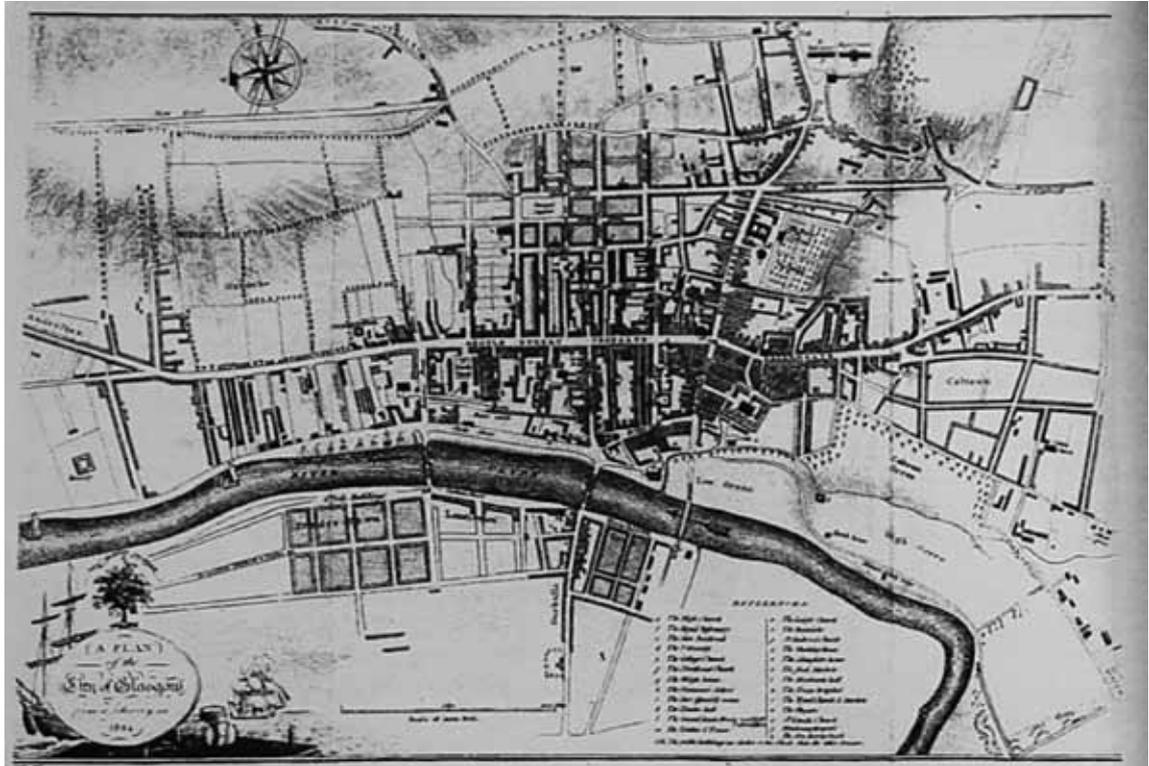


LISTEN
(QUICK RUSTLING)



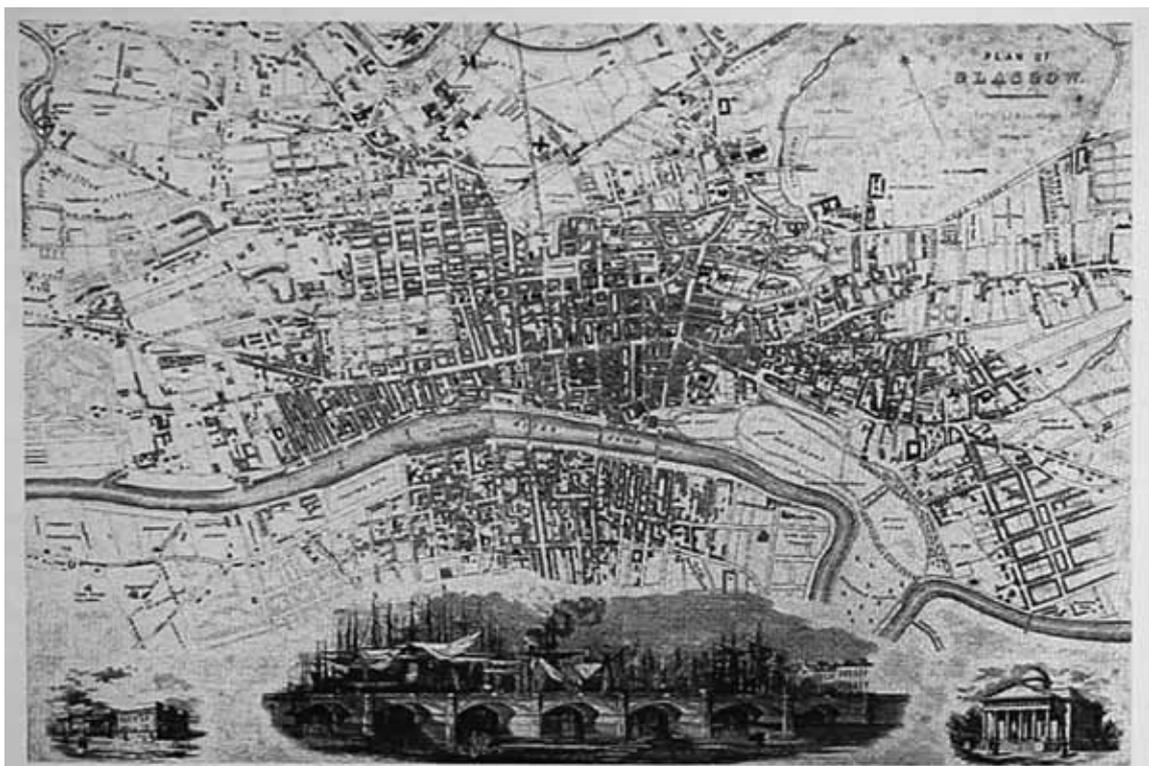
In 1832 Parliament passed the Anatomy Act, this allowed people to exchange a loved one's body for funeral expenses paid.

Whether Hamilton was buried or remained buried depends on money as she had it.



Plan of Glasgow, 1804
(The History of the City, 1804)

Glasgow was the fastest growing city in Europe.
It paid the lowest wages in Britain.
It had the highest rate of dissection.



Plan of Glasgow, 1841
(Hill Collection, Royal Faculty of Procurators)

DISSECTION

This is one street in Glasgow:



130 years earlier it looked like this:



Main St, Gorbals after reconstruction by City Improvement Trust

100 years earlier like this:



Main St, Gorbals before reconstruction by City Improvement Trust

Still, I am skating over its surface.

In the evening
the last thing to do
before leaving the kitchen
is to wipe the countertops.
Small debris mar their even surface.
Then I braid the air.



The topology of the city can be seen as a map, but not flattened, an accrual of lived sediment over time. This is a mistake since some things get wiped down.

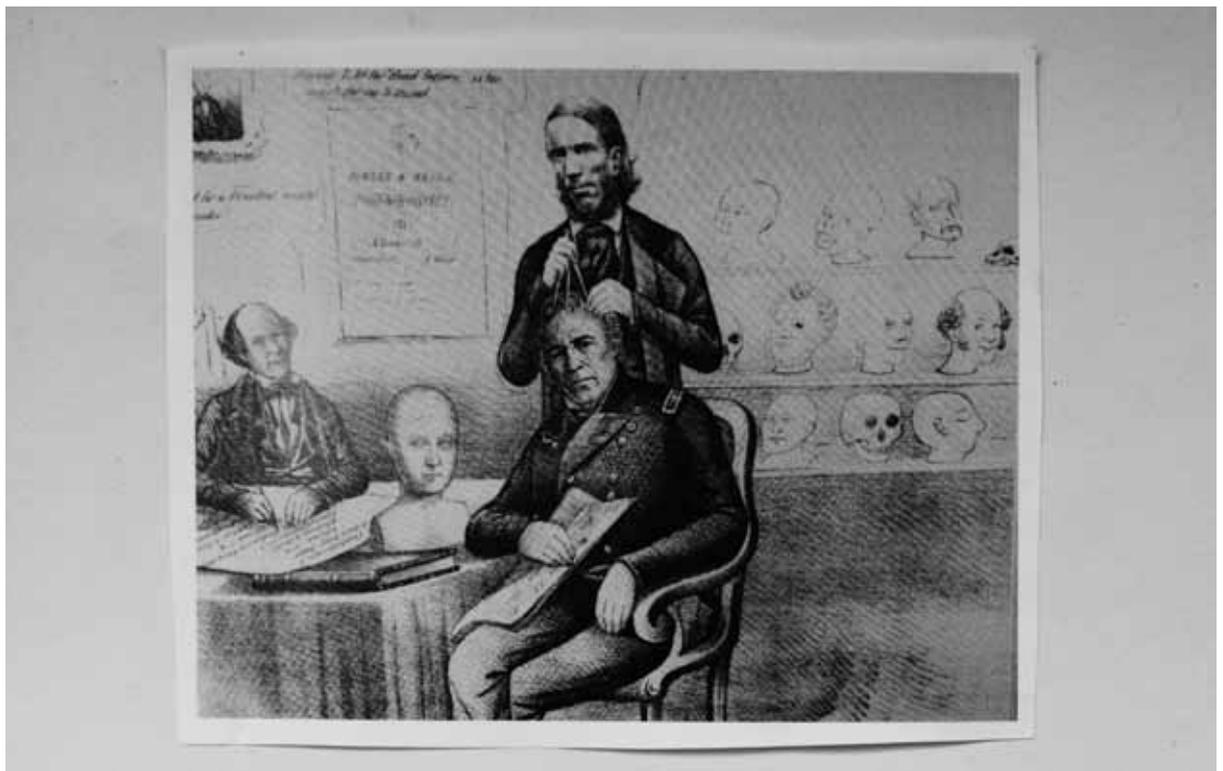


It was to read surfaces that AS Hamilton stopped in Glasgow.
She gave a lecture on Thursday evening (1834):
'Female Emancipation as Necessary, Practicable and Proven
by Phrenology.'



Hamilton offered Phrenological charts:
Basic for 1s or minute detail 5s

The brain was divided into regions, propensity for one personality or another could be read by measuring the overlaying section of the head. Since the brain pushed up from beneath, forming the cranial scull, the head could serve as a map for the mind.



Signature: a 16C Scots legal term meaning a sign manual.

For some the whole world consisted of a network of secret correspondences, one revealing the other through analogy.



I cleaned the dishes away.
They will come out tomorrow.
Whoever cleans up after the others
inadvertently tidies themselves away.



READ:

Prenology's fusion of physiological laws and meritocratic social order was very potent for young physicians with radical sympathies. Oh for a radical sympathy.

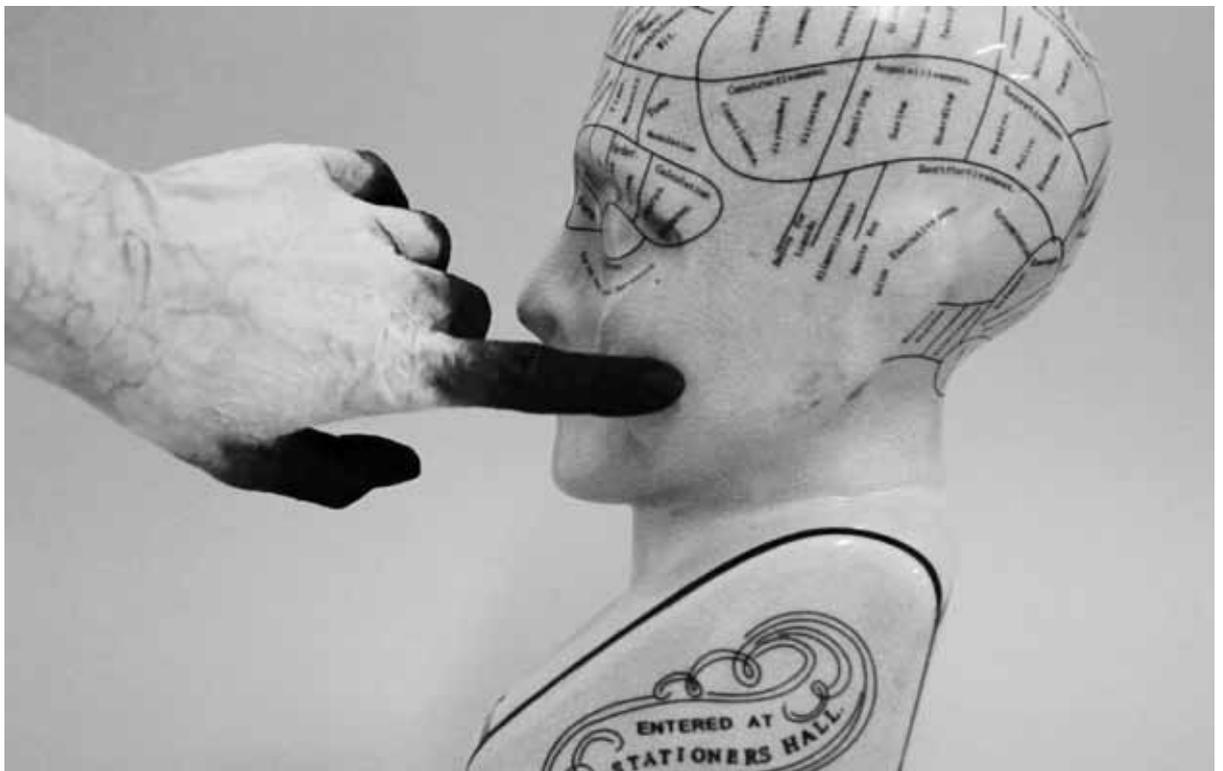
READ:

Hamilton was a follower of Robert Owen.

READ:

While Prenologists respected Owen, they did not believe in the plasticity of human nature he supported.

Hamilton, dissected both and stitched them together her way.



Still Phrenological narratives of ideal form became more strident.

Mischief delights in playing with surfaces.



Elaborate hairstyles and hats were used to augment or disguise the shape of the head.
Were these practices of popular resistance?



On an average Sunday, Owenite orators addressed audiences totalling 50 000.*

TED Talks LIKE LIKE



* "Owenite women had three different types of grievance relating to work: that women were being expelled from the labour force into domesticity, that they were being sucked into the labour force at starvation wages, and that their traditional domestic duties (carried out whether they were in the labour force or not) were frequently taken for granted and often consisted of drudgery."

Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the 19th Century,
Barbara Taylor, Virago 1983

Robert Owen considered the unequal demands domestic labour placed on the sexes. It was unusual, for these considerations often come in passing, in waning light, behind hidden erasure.

He hoped machines would relieve the burden of domestic work.

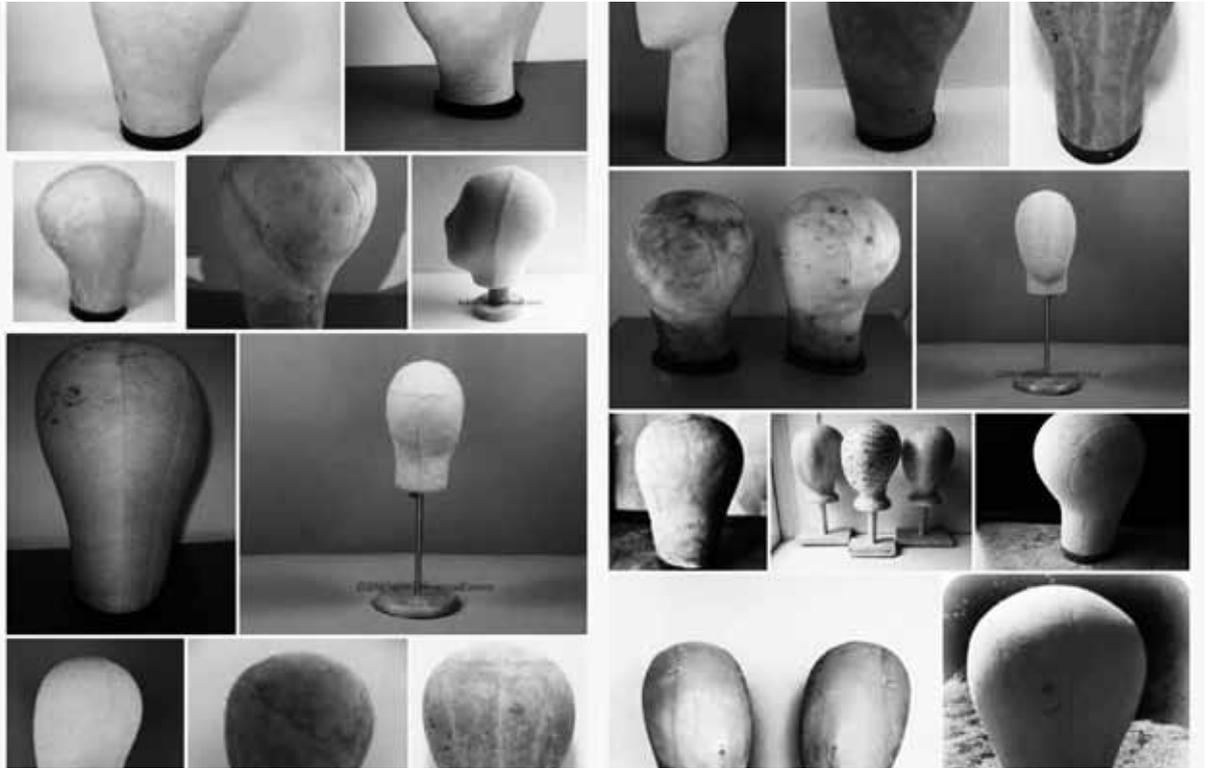


In the evening, having wiped the countertops,
They are left even and empty.



In 1850 Charles Worth introduced the living mannequin, a dummy in human form. Later, mannequin parades visualized a system of bodily equivalence – each figure moving forward in repeat calibrated movements.

A sign is often understood to be consubstantial with the thing or being it represents. In fact they are rivals.



The lecture announcements stop. AS Hamilton trained as a midwife, though some will not let her practice. Staged snow covered what earth she saw, a murderously gentle exile.



Some reproduction is a form of erasure.

Though there is always a quantity of absence,
is it disappearance or are some simply not seen?



LISTEN
(QUICK RUSTLING)

Within these pages lies the script for a forthcoming zombie film. At present the script is partially formed, either emerging (from recent research) or composting, (slowly shifting from specific research to moving image and sound).

While investigating Glasgow as an historic industrial centre moving toward economies of service, culture and heritage, Sworn stumbled upon a scant reference to AS Hamilton. Little is know of this woman who in 1834 was described as a female reformer on tour through Scotland. From the announcements she placed in newspapers, it seems Hamilton extracted a wage through the Victorian love for public lectures and providing Phrenological Charts.

This reference to Phrenology drew Sworn to her own mistaken attempt to read Glasgow's history through its physical outgrowth – the buildings and structures that surrounded her. Just as the brain does not push up from beneath to form the skull, as Phrenologists believed, architecture is not a perfect sediment left by previous lives in the city.

How do we find the hidden underpinnings?
For both industrial and cultural economies there is too frequently an unnoticed form of reproduction that supports them – care work is both an outstanding example of the impossibility of separating material form from immaterial labor and a precondition for every other form of capitalist production. Though becoming less 'hidden' Sworn decided to focus on this restless energy still partially buried beneath...

Hence to accompany the present research a gauzy silk scarf with the arms of past, unnoticed labour can be purchased to wrap round the neck.

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