We do not have to agree with everything Cottle asserts but his main points are salient, and his use of ‘ingenious’ repeats Hall’s assessment of Coleridge in 1794, just as his plea for maturity would be echoed in the 1840s in Robinson’s *Reminiscences*. Without question, at some point a certain ‘reason’ did establish itself in Coleridge’s mind about Pantisocracy, much like another ‘reason’ prompted him to forego becoming a Unitarian minister, neither decision regretted later by Coleridge or any Coleridgean since. Coleridge’s changeability in the 1790s cannot be denied, nor his desire later in life to be known by a different set of political opinions than those he held, as Cottle gently reminds us, at the tender age of twenty-three.

But this brings us back to what Johnston proposes in his coda about these suspects and what was lost in their subsequent careers by Pitt’s ‘Alarm’: ‘What does it signify’? (323). Johnston ponders the overall effect of Pitt’s repressive policies on the development of Romantic literature, arriving at the conclusion that it was ‘not good’, but ‘just how bad was it’ may be a question difficult to answer, since it is largely circumstantial. Johnston suggests that ‘there is (or was) a good deal of writing that we do not have, or can recover only with considerable research outside the usually established bounds of canonical legitimacy’, including giving more attention to the lesser known writings of many of the individuals of ‘the lost generation’ he has discussed in his book. He confesses that ‘what was lost was more the promise of their achievement than, in most cases, an extant, recoverable body of fully realized work’, but nevertheless believes that ‘It is recoverable to a degree, but what is recovered is discouraging, because we can see how it failed – was not allowed – to develop’ (326). Johnston has done an immense amount of ‘recovering’ himself, and in so doing has created a panorama of intellects converging in a critical period in British history, from which lives were unquestionably altered. Johnston’s volume demonstrates most effectively the value of uncovering and recovering published and unpublished writings from the 1790s, both from formal and informal sources, and their power to reshape our perspective of the interplay of reform politics and Romantic ideology during that critical decade. What we might hope from Kenneth Johnston would be a second volume on the 1790s to serve as a bookend to this exceptional study, only this time recreating the lives of those who, like the journalists Benjamin Flower, John Foster, William Hazlitt and other ‘unusual suspects’, did not alter their opinions and who not only survived the ‘Alarm’ but, in some cases, lived to see a remarkable decade of reform, 1823-33, which included the formation of the Abolition Society (1823), repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts (1828), and passage of the Catholic Relief Bill (1829), the Reform Bill (1832), and the Slavery Abolition Bill (1833), the seeds of which, no matter how imperfectly, were sewn in the 1790s, a legacy we now see more clearly as a result of Kenneth Johnston’s *Unusual Suspects*. 