

Coercive Pleasures: The Force and Form of the Novel 1719-1740

by

Batya Ungar-Sargon

A dissertation submitted

in partial satisfaction of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Janet Sorensen, Chair

Ian Duncan

Joanna Picciotto

Thomas Laqueur

Fall 2013

Abstract

Coercive Pleasures: The Force and Form of the Novel 1719-1740

by

Batya Ungar-Sargon

Doctor of Philosophy in English

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Janet Sorensen, Chair

Coercive Pleasures argues that the early novel in Britain mobilizes scenarios of rape, colonization, cannibalism, and infection, in order to model a phenomenology of reading in which the pleasures of submission to the work of fiction—figured as analogous to these other coercions—reveals the reader’s autonomy as itself a fiction. This is a project about the novel but also about the way in which literary forms mediate political models of subjectivity. Literary histories of the novel tend to relate its “rise” to the emergence of a liberal subject whose truth resides in her interior, autonomous and private self. I propose instead that privacy and autonomy are the price rather than the payoff of fiction. With its depiction of invasive and coercive content such as rape, colonialism, cannibalism, and infection, and its self-conscious deployment of forms that coerce absorbed reading, the novel reveals the reader’s consent to read to be part of a structure that infracts both readers’ and characters’ autonomy, producing a particularly modern pleasure. As Pamela Andrews complains, pleasure “is not a Volunteer thing.” In its self-awareness of its own captivating effects, the novel distinguishes itself both from seventeenth-century romance but also from modern discourses that disavow fictional absorption altogether, such as empiricism. My reading builds on Victoria Kahn’s and Oliver Arnold’s revisionist accounts of contract theory, in which both have shown that consent and coercion were viewed at the turn of the century not as opposed but rather as complementary concepts that give form to the modern subject. *Coercive Pleasures* argues that the novel intervenes to expose the pleasures of subject formation built on coercive consent. Some early novels identify and coopt the coercive pleasure that contract theory and consent-based models of political subjectivity deploy, while others intervene to disrupt this pleasure, critiquing implicitly, or even explicitly, the fictions of consent.

Dedication

To Amos and Marina, true friends.

Introduction

Accounts of the eighteenth-century British novel have focused on contracts and the individual subject the relationship between representations of privacy or interiority, and a rising middle class anxious to read about itself; or on the credit economy and its epistemological relation to fiction. The so-called “economic turn” has successfully illuminated aspects of the novel such as its status as commodity and the repeated thematization of this status in plot and characterization (Catherine Gallagher, Janet Sorensen, Mary Poovey, Deirdre Lynch), or the language the novel deploys to structure characters and readers who understand their value as interior and private (Ian Watt, Nancy Armstrong, Michael McKeon), or arguments about genre that view contracts as central to the emerging bourgeois subject as appearing over and over in novels to reiterate this concern (Frederic Jameson, Armstrong, James Thompson). Critics by and large have viewed the novel’s task to be the representation of a subject whose truth resides in her interiority, whose feelings are coextensive with her ability to engage in acts of exchange (commodities and sympathies), and whose freedom lies in his ability to consent to contracts.¹

This approach began with Watt’s focus on privacy as a concern shared by British empirical philosophers and early novelists. In Watt’s account, Locke provides the philosophical underpinnings necessary for the rise of the novel with his “philosophical realism,” and his consideration of the pursuit of truth as “a wholly individual matter.” These two facets of the Lockean project lay the groundwork for the novel’s form, according to Watt.² The individual nature of the pursuit of philosophical truth is bound in this account to a philosophical position about language: “the novel is the form of literature which most fully reflects this individualist and innovating reorientation... whose primary criterion was truth to individual experience—which is always unique and therefore new.” The form that this individualist imperative takes is one that Watt calls transparent and concerned with the every day—“formal realism”—which is composed of sentences that approximate spoken language, about content that approximates quotidian life.

Very much in the same vein, Armstrong uses Locke to emphasize the novel’s privileging of interiority: “it is important for Locke and his followers to establish that judgment originates within the individual mind and is responsible for how we understand and ultimately how we feel about the things we see, hear, touch, taste, and smell.”³

¹ Cathy Gallagher, *Nobody’s Story* (University of California Press, 1994), Janet Sorensen, *The New Economic Criticism* (Routledge, 1999), Mary Poovey, *Genres of the Credit Economy* (University of Chicago Press, 2008), Deirdre Lynch, *The Economy of Character* (University of Chicago, 1998), Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (University of California Press, 1957), Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (Oxford University Press, 1987), Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740* (Johns Hopkins University Press 1987), Frederic Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Cornell University Press, 1981), James Thompson, *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (Duke University Press, 1996)

² Watt, 12.

³ Nancy Armstrong, *How Novels Think* (Columbia University Press, 2005) 11.

Armstrong interprets the novel as reiterating this contradiction—that information comes from without, yet the true self is still considered unassailably interior—as the main problematic that the novel struggles to resolve. Thus, "although novels... questioned whether we are in fact individuals for whom interiority is destiny, those novels nevertheless rejoined the mainstream in defending the individual against external assaults, which they portrayed as an assault on humanity itself."⁴

Furthermore, Armstrong's Foucaultian account presents the novel as the discourse that gave form to a domestic sphere centered on the privatized subject. "Moral hegemony triumphed in nineteenth century England largely through consent rather than coercion," she argues in the introduction to *Desire and Domestic Fiction*: "It was precisely because they were leisure-time reading that such books as *Robinson Crusoe* were important to the political struggle between the ruling classes and the laboring poor." Armstrong's analysis sees the novel as granting power to the middle class by constructing a discourse that services their needs by domesticating the feminine.

McKeon's work on the novel is committed to a different set of premises with which I will argue. McKeon argues in *The Origins of the English Novel* that two things should complicate Watt's theory—the persistence of Romance conventions in the novel, and the persistence of the aristocracy in British political and social life. These are to be treated as "the same difficulty" with Watt's triple-rise theory.⁵ The novel emerges as an abstraction of the dialectical tension between aristocracy and middle class, romance and anti-romance. McKeon admits that his argument "entail[s]... the emergence of romance as a simple abstraction in the preceding two centuries," and yet Ian Duncan has persuasively argued that the modern idea of Romance was "modern culture's construction of a symbolic form prior to itself," rather than an actually preexisting abstraction.⁶ But McKeon's argument also relies upon what I will argue is an erroneous interpretation of genre. "Genre provides a conceptual framework for the mediation (if not the "solution") of intractable problems, a method for rendering such problems intelligible. The ideological status of genre, like that of all conceptual categories, lies in its explanatory and problem-"solving" capacities," McKeon argues, in line with the standard Marxist approach that views ideology as the imaginary resolution of real contradictions.⁷ But this analysis of genre only attends to plot, and never to form. His analysis of Pamela, for instance, is entirely composed of attention to the events of the novel, and not at all attendant to its language, or the heroine's relationship to language. McKeon's model, by attending only to story, cannot accommodate a theory of genre as something that happens to the reader. Undergirding his theory of the novel is a tacit assumption that agrees with Jameson's assertion of genre as ideology in *The Political Unconscious*. But genres are made up of forms, identifiable only because of the linguistic choices being made by authors; and these choices must be analyzed for it is they that give the reader her experience of a text.

⁴ Ibid. 25

⁵ Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 4.

⁶ Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel* (Cambridge University Press, 1992); McKeon, p. 19.

⁷ Jameson, 20.

Furthermore, for Jameson, “Genres are essentially literary *institutions*, or social contracts between a writer and a specific public, whose function is to specify the proper use of a particular cultural artifact.”⁸ Jameson’s sole concession to this “social contract” is to give the power back to the interpreting reader; “No small part of the art of writing, indeed, is absorbed in this attempt to devise a foolproof mechanism for the automatic exclusion of undesirable responses to a given utterance.” He goes on to state that this institution, too, falls prey to market pressures.

Coercive Pleasures is my attempt to tell a different story, in which the novel exhibits self-consciousness about fiction’s demands and its role in notions of contract. This story begins with an observation: many of the early British novels of the eighteenth century invoke scenarios with varying degrees and intensities of coercion: from the very physical rape, cannibalism, invasion, infection, and colonialism, to the less intense but no less coercive prostitution and celebrity culture, all of which are imagined and represented in their capacities to coerce. Even more surprisingly, *reading* in these novels is often figured as similar to these other involuntary subjections. If the novel, as critics have suggested, is an agent of bourgeois subject formation, why does it spend so much of its energy on representing infractions of the very concepts that undergird the liberal subject, such as consent and contract? Furthermore, why does it figure reading, and especially, reading fiction, as another one of these social forms? And finally, why does novel often represent not contractual but coercive relations as pleasurable? The early novel, which I will argue is designed to coerce pleasure, cannot be read as part of a narrative that endorses consent, but must be read as a critique of the practices of bourgeois subject building.

In *Coercive Pleasures* I suggest a different political and historical context for the novel’s form and content. Victoria Kahn has suggested that seventeenth-century contract theory doesn’t present consent as the opposite of coercion, but rather portrays these concepts as commensurable; furthermore, certain genres can be viewed themselves as coercive contracts with the reader. In her groundbreaking revisionist history of contract theory in seventeenth-century Britain, Kahn seeks to replace “modern liberal notions of autonomy and formal equality” with the drama of consent and “voluntary servitude” as it haunts the seventeenth-century discourse of contract theory. The sovereign and the passions are comparatively coercive forces both of which are underwritten by the discourse of contracts and consent, for instance, in the work of Margaret Cavendish. At the heart of Cavendish’s narratives, in their very genre, argues Kahn, lies a critique of consent in which it is revealed to be a form of coercion rather than its opposite. “In Cavendish’s hands,” Kahn argues, “romantic love is both a passion (one might even say, a coercion) to which we readily consent; and an interest that allows us to be faithful to our contractual obligations.” Casting passions as coercive is one way to illuminate the relationship between pleasure and coercion. Indeed, Kahn concludes,

one might even say that Cavendish’s conception of romance amounts to an internalization of the Hobbesian theory of contract, according to which we consent to be coerced: whereas in Hobbes’s account coercion takes the form of the sovereign’s power of the sword, in Cavendish coercion takes the form of our very own passions. We are coerced, in short, by ourselves. (193)

⁸ Jameson, 100.

By invoking the genre of romance—the long prose works of fiction of the seventeenth-century—as a critique of contract theory, which may illuminate the suspicion and disavowal of romance over the next one hundred and fifty years, Kahn makes the passions of the characters within the plot part of a conversation about the passions—and by extension, the coercive power of those passions—of the reader and her own capacities for consent. She does this with the concept of mimesis:⁹ the reader sees herself and her own concerns within the text. But even beyond the text’s ability to simply represent the sorts of coercive forces to which our passions subject us, Kahn implies that the passions we experience *while engaging with the text* are the same coercive forces that govern characters within the text. In other words, our encounter with the fictional events of Romance recapitulates the paradox of consent; the conventions of romance “disrupt... the contract of mimesis.”¹⁰ Thus, contrary to Jameson’s account in *Political Unconscious*, which reads genre as a contract, Kahn sees it as the opposite, a model which coerces.

Kahn is arguing for a more complex concept of consent in the early modern period. Her version of the word at this time contains ambivalence and contradiction: one consents to being coerced, but consents nonetheless. This is a phenomenologically complicated subject whose freedoms are compromised yet not absent, when viewed in the larger context of our compulsions and desires.

In *Coercive Pleasures* I make two main claims based on this revisionist account. First, I argue that the novels of Defoe, Richardson and Haywood depict coercive scenarios, exposing to the modern subject her immersion in political, affective, and sexual dynamics which are, in the words of Pamela Andrews, “not a Volunteer thing”, despite their reliance on a machinery of contracts, consent, and exchange. The novels in this study tell stories in which these modern values and practices are portrayed as undergirded by their opposite. However, I also argue that the submission to coercive forces is capable of generating a surplus pleasure, as it does for Pamela, which the novel appropriates as its main *formal* imperative, teaching the reader her enjoyment by coercing her pleasure through absorption in fiction. Ultimately, I argue, the role of realism as it comes to us in Richardson’s *Pamela*, or the appearance of “psychological depth” (which I will define), is to coerce the reader into a kind of pleasure, which she exchanges for her consent. Early novels that don’t court such depth, like Eliza Haywood’s *Love in Excess* and *Fantomina*, are doing not doing so in order to model withholding the pleasures of coercion, thereby exposing the reader’s expectation of depth and absorption, which go hand in hand, and the ways certain forms create coercive yet pleasurable situations. Defoe’s novel *The Fortunate Mistress* uses celebrity as an analogue for the coercive pleasure of fiction, in order to identify and produce, coercively, the kinds of affective responses that underwrite modern life.

⁹ Kahn’s use of the term “mimesis” is problematic. She seems to use it in contradictory ways—at times to refer to the imitation of life (which the novelists claimed romance was devoid of), but at times she uses it to refer to the reader’s imitation of the stories seen in romance, a la Don Quixote mimicking the knights of old.

¹⁰ Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts* (Princeton University Press, 2004).

In my first chapter, “‘An Enclosure Laid Open’--Locke, Defoe, and the Failure of the Possessive Drive”, I argue that the discussion of enclosure in John Locke’s *Second Treatise* and in Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* represents the first movement towards articulating the coercive pleasures of novel reading. In Locke we find the first expression of a tension that comes to fruition in, even as, the form of the early novel as it is manifested in *Robinson Crusoe*: the tension between the drive to privatize, and its ultimate failure. Through a close reading of Locke’s labor theory of value and early drafts of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, I argue that Locke’s rhetoric transforms the subject from the one who tries (but fails) to appropriate, to the one who is instead appropriated, by the food, labor, and imagination of others. The appropriation of the subject by imagined others is the driving force behind the formal choices of Defoe’s first novel *Robinson Crusoe*, an early instantiation of fiction’s capacity to reveal ruptures in the autonomous self. *Robinson Crusoe* figures the island as an uninhabited waste, not only in order to investigate the autonomy of the individual, but also in order to model the imagination’s encounter with the work of fiction. Robinson’s tenure on the island expresses the *fantasy* of the autonomous and sovereign self, rather than its apotheosis—a fantasy dispelled by the revelation that the island is inhabited. The appearance of the footprint in the sand and the acknowledgment that the island is occupied reveals both the porous nature of the subject and the novel’s own invasive and coercive forces.

This chapter focuses on the boundaries of the self, the self’s porousness to external forces and agencies, and the question of property—how the equation between subject and property does not hold. The question of the boundaries of the self sets the terms for the discussion of contracting to coercive pleasure that is the focus of the rest of the dissertation. This first chapter looks at attempts by Locke and Defoe to think of the self as the solitary, sole, individual, self-possessed and unimpeachable. These attempts fail, and I bring to bear the breakdown of the category of the autonomous subject on the socialized and eroticized dynamics in the following chapters.

In my second chapter, “The Forms of Dissimulation: *Love in Excess* and the Fictions of Consent,” I argue that in Haywood’s fictional world, men insist on interpreting female expressions of physical desire as expressions of consent, despite protests to the contrary, thus decoupling consent from desire. Accordingly, the novel construes consent as the product of a coercive, and yet physically pleasurable, experience. But men, too, are subjected to questionably consensual sexual encounters, when their partners masquerade as other women, linking masquerade and epistemological uncertainty with coercion. The dissimulation of these encounters complicates the enjoyment of these men—their pleasure is a product of having been duped—at the same time that dissimulation is the formal imperative that structures the reader’s encounter with the novel. But the reader’s absorption suggests that the reader’s pleasure is also purchased at the expense of her consent. The form of the novel and the form of consent are mutually implicated in coercive structures, and Haywood’s novels stage a critical intervention in these structures by exposing the pleasure that sustains them. Consent becomes the handmaiden of coercion, successful because of the pleasure it ensures, in a radically anti-modern politics.

In my third chapter, “‘Too Much like a Romance’: Celebrity, Debt, and the Coercive Pleasures of Reading Novels in *The Fortunate Mistress (Roxana)*,” I argue that *The Fortunate Mistress* contains within it an etiology of the pleasures of coercion, appropriated by the novel as its structuring principle. First, Roxana engages in a series of relationships that allow her pleasure precisely because she is not free to choose them—the Dutch Merchant, the Prince, the Landlord, who Roxana chooses because she is destitute, yet whom she nonetheless manages to enjoy thoroughly. The novel then shows Roxana in the thick of early modern celebrity culture, itself a cultural formation designed to delight through a disgusting captivation. When Roxana dances for the court, we look upon her as they do, and the *ekphrasis* begins to show the reader his coercive relationship with the fictional character. This is a turning point in the novel, for as Roxana is reified, the stakes of the novel travel from her pleasure to ours in beholding her. The reader’s position is explored through the characters of Susan and Amy, both readers of Roxana, both subjected to violently coercive rituals. Roxana goes from a pleasure-seeking agent to a reified object—celebrity renders her an explicitly fictional character—that causes the coercive pleasure of her readers (Susan, Amy, ourselves). As Roxana is reified, Amy raped, and Susan killed, the reader’s pleasure is revealed to be the result of a final coercive practice: the captivating prose fiction of the novel.

In my fourth and final chapter, “*Pamela*: Towards a Phenomenology of Reading,” I make three claims. Firstly, from the earliest possible moment in the text, Pamela’s father, Mr. Andrews, instructs his daughter not only on how to behave, but what sort of content he expects to read in her letters: that her virtue be under attack by B’s attempts to do her harm, and that Pamela not consent to these attempts at harm. These formal imperatives on *how* Pamela must narrate her letters are the very structural principles of the novel, as Mr. Andrews’ pleasure is derived from his daughter’s balancing act between coercion and consent. My second claim shows how Pamela, operating under the command of her father, creates a logic of equivalence between harm to her body and harm to B’s reputation. Finally, I argue that the concept of consent is troubled throughout this text not only as it is dramatized as a formal impossibility for Pamela—how can she consent if she *must* say no?—but insofar as the reader is coerced by the invasive tone of Pamela’s letters. Thus, the harm perpetrated on the novel’s characters and readers and the mutual suspension of conditions of consent both within the text and between text and reader, become the very form, but also, as Pamela tells us, the source of pleasure, of the novel.

This dissertation seeks to understand the early novel but also the way in which literary forms mediate political models of subjectivity. Literary histories of the novel tend to relate its “rise” to the emergence of a liberal subject whose truth resides in her interior, autonomous and private self. I propose instead that privacy and autonomy are the fiction established by eighteenth-century novelists, rather than the payoff, of fiction. With its representation of invasive and coercive content and its self-conscious deployment of forms that compel rather than persuade its readers, the novel reveals that the consent to read is part of a structure that undermines both readers’ and characters’ autonomy to produce a particularly modern pleasure. In its awareness of its own captivating effects, the novel distinguishes itself both from seventeenth-century romance but also from modern discourses that disavow fictional absorption altogether, such as empiricism. It is self-conscious about the genre demands of romance, but never to the point of becoming

non-fiction.

Building on the revisionist work of Carole Pateman, Victoria Kahn, and Oliver Arnold, whose work has revealed contracts and consent as compatible with, rather than opposed to, the coercive practices of early modern life, *Coercive Pleasures* argues that the novel exposes the pleasures of coercive consent on which subject formation depends. Oliver Arnold's work contends that consent is a fiction intended to bamboozle English citizens. However, unlike Kahn's narrative, Arnold's is about the tragedy of the subject of political representation, who falsely assumes he has consented where in fact he has been swindled. This model, a binary of freedom vs. coercion in which the latter is true and the former false, is significantly less nuanced than Kahn's. Furthermore, for Arnold, theatrical representation is able to lift the veil of political ideology. My argument uses the troubling of the concept of consent, but does not accept that literary texts can simply reveal the truth, nor does it accept that the truth is that in liberal societies, we are slaves. Rather, my work suggests that the novels mediate political realities, sometimes participating, sometimes probing, and sometimes doing both simultaneously. Furthermore, the kinds of subjectivity offered by the novel are much more complex than the thin unfree subjects of Arnold's work. The novel-reader is both immersed in coercive pleasure, and given a heightened sense of the payoff of coercion, itself a form of consent, as Kahn suggests. This in turn gives the reader a heightened awareness of the payoffs of modern life such as they appear in contracts, consumer culture, and political representation: neither free nor a slave, the modern subject as revealed by the novel is savvy to the pleasures she is granted in exchange for a thin version of liberal sovereignty.

Some early novels identify and coopt the coercive pleasure that contract theory and consent-based models of political subjectivity deploy, while others intervene to disrupt this pleasure, implicitly or even explicitly critiquing the fictions of consent. Haywood's work is a critique of the emerging concepts of consent and contracts, and the way they are being deployed in modern life to promise liberal fantasies. But Richardson coopts these very structures, focusing instead on the reason they work—the pleasure that such coercive models are capable of generating. Defoe's work falls somewhere in between—his work absorbs but also resists absorption in its seemingly meaningless focus on detail. Defoe is the turning point from the critical model to the pleasurable one, containing elements of both, as opposed to Haywood, who eschews those readerly pleasures for the exposure provided by the erotic scenario. For Richardson's model surely wins out as the novel focuses more and more on pleasure, and less and less on critique, as the century wears on. Rather than the rise of the novel, this dissertation outlines its regression from resistance to co-option, through the coercive pleasures of fiction.

Chapter 1: “An Enclosure Laid Open”--Locke, Defoe, and the Failure of the Possessive Drive

Introduction

Michael McKeon has called modernity the “process of ‘privatization’ [that] is also one of ‘internalization.’”¹ The claim that the novel and political economy provided the breeding grounds for the privatized and internalized modern subject, was originally made by Ian Watt, who argued that the early novel imagines the subject as a “possessive individual”—that bugbear of liberalism, according to C.B. Macpherson’s reading of John Locke. According to Watt, the Lockean subject and the novelistic character both find their truth in the private, acquisitive, individual self. In this account, the novel endorses the individual at the expense of the social, the private over the public, the interior over the external manifestations of the self. While aspects of Watt’s “triple rise” formula—of the novel, formal realism, and the middle class—have been challenged, the belief that interiority is the mainstay of the novel is still widely accepted amongst literary critics.

This chapter will question the view that the novel imagines a subject whose truth is inside and private. But rather than severing the link between Locke and the early novelists, I will suggest that in Locke we find the first manifestation of a tension that comes to fruition in, even as, the novel. This tension is created when Locke implies that the possessive imperative, which he certainly endorses, quite simply fails. As a close reading of Locke’s rhetoric surrounding enclosure will reveal, this failure of the subject to enclose and privatize her property extends from her things to herself, and it is this slippage—in which the Lockean subject goes from the one who tries and fails to appropriate, to the one who is instead appropriated—that the early novel dramatizes. I argue that rather than the representatives of the apotheosis of privatization ideology, Locke and Daniel Defoe both struggle, and ultimate failure, to enclose the unenclosable wasteland of the imagination, which is portrayed as a commons. Locke portrays the imagination in similar terms to Robinson Crusoe’s island—as a site of anxiety regarding enclosure rather than a marker of its success. While Locke can only hint at this anxiety through his radically ambivalent rhetoric, Defoe uses the fictional narrative to appropriate his reader, revealing her to be temporarily colonized by the fictional narrative and therefore fundamentally porous.

Critical Approaches to Locke and the Novel

The view that the main imperative of the novel is the construal of a subject whose truth is her interiority began with Watt. In Watt’s account, Locke provides the philosophical underpinnings necessary for the rise of the novel with his “philosophical realism” and his consideration of the pursuit of truth as “a wholly individual matter.” These two facets of the Lockean project laid the groundwork for the novel’s form.² The

¹Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

² Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (University of California Press, 1957), 12.

individual nature of the pursuit of philosophical truth is bound in this account to a philosophical position about language: “the novel is the form of literature which most fully reflects this individualist and innovating reorientation... whose primary criterion was truth to individual experience—which is always unique and therefore new.” The novel for Watt reflects the socio-political concerns that accompany the rise of political economy.

Watt analyzes Robinson Crusoe as the apotheosis of the privatized individual, Locke’s arbiter of truth. Defoe explores Robinson’s “economic individualism” with the technique of “formal realism,” a language which “outdoes other literary forms in bringing us close to the inward moral being of the individual; and ... achieves ... closeness to the inner life of the protagonist.”³ The language of inwardness signals Watt’s conceptualization of the individual as existing *within* the individual, rather than in the signifiers that make him intelligible to others. Watt is moving on the subject of Defoe’s own alienated life, which he sees as autobiographically recapitulated in Robinson’s and Moll’s social isolation. Defoe’s remark in the *Serious Reflections* that “Man may be properly said to be alone in the midst of crowds,” provides textual warrant for Watt’s claim that Defoe “called the great bluff of the novel—its suggestion that personal relations really are the be-all and end-all of life.” Defoe’s fictional characters are for Watt private, inwardly-oriented, acquisitive individuals, radically alienated from the social context in which they find themselves. Locke’s possessive individual thus generates the private, isolated, “inner” subject of the novel.

Very much in the same vein, Nancy Armstrong uses Locke to emphasize the novel’s privileging of interiority: “it is important for Locke and his followers to establish that judgment originates within the individual mind and is responsible for how we understand and ultimately how we feel about the things we see, hear, touch, taste, and smell.”⁴ Armstrong interprets the novel as reiterating this contradiction—that information comes from without, yet the true self is still considered unassailably interior—as the main problematic that the novel struggles to resolve. Thus, “although novels... questioned whether we are in fact individuals for whom interiority is destiny, those novels nevertheless rejoined the mainstream in defending the individual against external assaults, which they portrayed as an assault on humanity itself.”⁵ Armstrong’s Foucaultian account sees the novel as the discourse that gave form to a domestic sphere centered on the privatized subject.

In what follows I will argue that both Locke and Defoe describe not a possessive individual but a possessive drive that tries, and fails, to turn the self into an acquisitive, private locus of interiority. I will suggest that both Defoe and Locke use writing as a means of playing out the drama of failed enclosure: Locke uses ambivalent rhetoric, while Defoe develops the fictional narrative. Defoe’s fiction achieves the deprivatizing effects that Locke’s rhetoric describes. Indeed, I will suggest that for Defoe, the stakes of

³ Ibid. 75

⁴ Nancy Armstrong, *How Novels Think* (Columbia University Press, 2005) 11.

⁵ Ibid. 25

fiction are precisely in the fictional work's capacity to instantiate in the mind of the reader the drama of unenclosure and deprivatization.

"that added something": Locke's Possessive Drive and its Failure

It is a commonplace that Locke's defense of private property mirrors the private subject of his epistemology, in other words, the subject who acquires and the subject who knows share the quality of being private. In *Two Treatises of Government* Locke argues that the produce of nature becomes a particular individual's private property when he mixes into it something that is inalienably his own—namely, his labor. Labor is so absolutely one's own, its propriety inflects its products. For Macpherson, this amounts to “a moral foundation for bourgeois appropriation.”⁶ According to Macpherson, Locke's labor theory of value instantiates proprietorship as the subject's relation to herself, resulting in a bourgeois subject with no responsibilities to the common from which she extracts her sustenance with her labor: “if it is labor, a man's absolute property, which justifies appropriation and creates value, the individual right of appropriation overrides any moral claims of the society.”⁷ Macpherson's reading of Locke's political economy is the counterpart to Watt's reading of Lockean epistemology: both see in Locke the triumph of the private over the public. But Macpherson's point already suggests a theoretical subject whose privacy is *not* guaranteed, for its subjectivity is a function of possession. This suggests that, even according to Macpherson, Locke describes not a possessive subject so much as a possessive drive, of which the self is both the agent and the idealized end goal. Should this drive fail at any level, it will take the possessive self down with it.

A close look at Locke's labor theory of value will reveal that Locke's possessive individual is not as armored as he at first may seem. For Locke, that something can be removed from the state in which God bequeathed it to mankind in common is a fact that must be *justified*, logically and jurisprudentially. Locke twice mentions the commonness of the gift of the earth; “God,” Locke argues, “who hath given the World to Men in common, hath also given them reason to make use of it.” Locke reiterates the point on the next page: “Though the Earth, and all inferior Creatures be common to all Men, yet every Man has a *Property* in his own *Person*.” Locke depicts property as an intrusion on the commonness of God's present of the earth, which must be justified for infringing on this commonness. The benefits of nourishment provide Locke with the justification he needs: God gave the earth to humans to benefit from it, and this benefit takes the form of the nourishment food gives us; all this implies to Locke that logically and legally, we *do* appropriate. Because God has allowed us to appropriate, and yet what we appropriate was given to us all, property emerges as an unresolved tension between individual and commons.

⁶ *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford University Press, 1962), 221.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Many accounts of Locke ignore, erase, or seek to resolve this tension, for example, Richard Ashcraft's.⁸ In *Locke's Two Treatises of Government*, Ashcraft responds to those who see in Locke's labor theory of value the death of civil society because its subject has allegiances only to himself and his private property.⁹ Ashcraft argues instead that the labor theory of value is a piece of rhetoric meant to bridge the gap between land and trade, in order to separate the gentry's interests from the crown and the Church and enlist them in the ranks of the Whigs. This feat is accomplished, Ashcraft argues, by claiming that unimproved land is "wasted" and thus bad for the public good, and that land is wasted both if an individual possesses more than he can use and if it is unenclosed and thus unutilized. In summary, we might say that according to Ashcraft, Locke's subject is possessive but not entirely individual. It is the public good that justifies and continues to enable the functioning of the labor theory of value. The individual in Ashcraft labors for the common, and this is true for landowners as well as laborers. The tension between individual and common is resolved in Ashcraft by prioritizing the common despite the justification of private property.

Ashcraft's account fails to acknowledge the tension Locke's writing sustains between individual and common. Bearing this tension in mind would mean viewing labor as the boundary between individual and common, insofar as it "removes" things from the common, distinguishing them as the property of the laborer. Property represents an unresolved tension, rather than a resolution, between the ownership of the private and the commons of the public.

The border, which is also the conduit, created by labor and property between individual and common is finally not very strong. First, the enclosure that labor performs upon the commons of nature to make it private property can be undone. Locke imposes a spoilage limit in natural law to prevent the individual from accumulating more than he can use:

whatsoever he tilled and reaped, laid up and made use of, before it spoiled, that was his peculiar right; whatsoever he enclosed, and could feed, and make use of, the cattle and product was also his. But if either the grass of his enclosure rotted on the ground, or the fruit of his planting perished without gathering, and laying up, this part of the earth, notwithstanding his enclosure, was still to be looked on as waste, and might be the possession of any other. (38)

Labor's "enclosure" of the commons is permeable, not definitive: "notwithstanding his enclosure" suggests that it can be overruled: the waste that resumes its hold in the spoiled

⁸ Macpherson's account, for example, erases the fundamental tension between individual and common: because ownership is introduced in Locke as the relationship a subject has with herself, property thereby ceases to be a social function and is now an individual one. Because the relationship of labor and by extension property is private, the commonness of the objects appropriated is cancelled out when private trumps public, individual trumps common.

⁹ London, Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1987.

fruit overrides the enclosure instantiated in it by labor. Waste can return to deterritorialize what had been previously enclosed. Since the labor itself cannot be undone or extracted from the tilled earth or gathered apple—the apple is still gathered, the land still ploughed—we must conclude that something *else* has diminished such that the fruit and land from whence it came have returned from the private enclosure of labor to the waste of the commons. This "something else" is conveyed by labor into the natural resource; when that resource is wasted, the land is no longer enclosed. "It is plain," Locke tells us, "if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could: that labor put a distinction between them and common: that added something to them more than nature, the common mother of all, had done." As we have seen, what distinguishes the apples from the common can be removed if they are not eaten; therefore, it must be that "that added something" is not labor but rather possessiveness itself, a drive that is conveyed through labor to enclose that which is common, but that can also be reassigned, as labor cannot be. In other words, structurally built into and ensuring the possibility of enclosure and the success of the possessive drive to create private property from what was common is also the possibility that that drive will fail to achieve its goal.

Reading Locke's depiction of labor as the conduit of a possessive drive explains another curious tension in the labor theory of value that scholars of Locke have sought to resolve: the slippage between one's "own person" and his work. While the person's labor indisputably belongs to him, it does so in a way that can be separated from him, both when it is invested in natural resources but also when it is sold to someone else. In other words, a person's labor is both alienable and inalienable. It is crucially inalienable from the person; indeed, it is upon this very inalienability that property is predicated: "every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his." However, there is something of this labor that is alienable—it can become part of nature, or someone else's property if sold. Furthermore, as we have just seen, Locke alludes to the fact that something conveyed by this labor can actually be alienated from the object it has been annexed to.¹⁰

¹⁰ Scholars try to resolve this tension by choosing to endorse either the alienability or inalienability of labor. Peter Laslett argues that "property is precisely that part of our attributes which we can alienate, but only of course by our own consent" (*Two Treatises*, 103). This is in line with Charles Taylor's "punctual" Lockean subject whose reality comes from the relationships it establishes with itself. Laslett argues that according to Locke, "we cannot alienate any part of our personalities, but we can alienate that with which we have chosen to mix our personalities." For Laslett, labor represents man as much as rights do, or personal preferences. On the other hand, Karl Olivecrona believes that it is labor's inalienability that makes for private property: "something of oneself is infused into an object" such that "the spiritual personality is extended so as to encompass physical objects" ("Locke's Theory of Appropriation," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 24:96 (July, 1974). This haggling over whether labor is alienated or not simply points to the ambiguity that Locke leaves unresolved.

This tension regarding the subject and her labor is intensified by Locke's use of the word "labor" as a noun. In *Two Treatises*, labor is mixed, annexed, removed, excluded and joined; labor is the object of these verbs of activity. Had Locke used the expected verb form of labor, its subject would then have been the laborer; this would have identified the laborer as the source of appropriation, with nature as the appropriated object. But Locke's formulation obfuscates the relationship between labor, laborer, and natural resource by making labor into an additive:

Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state nature hath placed it in, it hath by this labour something annexed to it, that excludes the common right of other men: for this labour being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what that is once joined to, at least where there is enough, and as good, left in common for others.
(27)

Because labor is a noun and not a verb, it is objectified along with the natural world with which it is mixed. Labor is "his"—and this possession that it passes on to "whatsoever he removes out of the state of nature." When he "mixed his labor with it" he also "joined to it something that was his own." This something is *not* his labor, but the possessiveness or possessive drive that labor conveys. By laboring on a natural resource, "it hath by this labour *something* annexed to it." That this "something" is not his labor but a quality conveyed by it, results in the possibility that this quality may be removed and the property returned to the common waste. Labor is both alienable and inalienable, precisely because it adds possessiveness to nature that can be reassigned. Thus possessiveness as the border between private and public does not stick, and the enclosed is always still threatened by waste.

Further evidence for the porousness of this border between private and public comes from Locke's choice of labor as the source of property, over some of the other choices he alludes to throughout the chapter. Locke stresses the use that justifies God's allowance of appropriation: "The earth...being given for the use of men, there must of necessity be a means to appropriate them some way or other, *before* they can be of any use, or at all beneficial to any particular man,": Locke wants there to be a moment *before* use can justify appropriation: use does not appropriate but indicates the fact of appropriation, or that appropriation has occurred. If one can use something, it must be his, and yet, that use is not what makes it his. Locke takes this logic to the question of food: "He that is nourished by the acorns he picked up under an oak, or the apples he gathered from the trees in the wood, has certainly appropriated them to himself. No body can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, when did they begin to be his? (28)" What is undeniable here is not enough to prove the privateness of property. That the nourishment or use of food is undeniably mine does not in and of itself make it mine. Indeed, asking when they began to be his implies for Locke that the possibility exists that

one might eat something and be nourished by it, but the nourishment would *not* be one's own.

The possibility of eating something that is not one's own, something that would continue to be unappropriated even after eaten, is further demonstrated by Locke's answer:

No body can deny but the nourishment is his. I ask then, when did they begin to be his? when he digested? or when he eat? or when he boiled? or when he brought them home? or when he picked them up? and it is plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could; that labour put a distinction between them and common: that added something to them more than nature, the common mother of all, had done. (§28)

That is, *labor* makes the nourishment his; labor, but crucially *not eating*: "it is plain, if the first gathering made them not his, nothing else could." Rather than arguing that since nature is mixed with the eater's body or annexed to it in a way that would make it impossible for someone else to remove it, Locke argues that the laborer's labor is mixed with nature. Eating *fails* to appropriate nourishment; only labor achieves this goal. Locke externalizes the source of ownership with labor, but still relies on the imagery of eating, evoking a logic of interiority and consumption that he fails to make use of. Rather than using the expected relationship—nourishment as both the physical and logical source of labor—labor and eating exist in a closed economy that reverses our expectations: although nourishment supplies the source of labor, Locke insists that it is labor that ensures that I am nourished by what is mine, opening up the very radical possibility that should I eat something upon which I did not labor, the nourishment I consume is not mine.

By providing a full set of digestive images, and then taking away eating as the proof of the private, Locke seems to be insisting upon the fact that the borders of one's body do not furnish us with an adequate definition of the distinction between private and public, or individual and common. He takes away the body's status as completely and unassailably private by suggesting that my appropriation of nourishment comes from labor, and not from eating, thereby suggesting that another's nourishment could persist as such *within* my body. The body's failure to appropriate suggests a failure of the private. Locke as we have seen makes the public private by allowing labor to come from what is mine and inflect the outside world. Labor as a philosophical concept that justifies private property externalizes the private and internalizes the common. Indeed, unassailably interior privacy seems rather to be the *sacrifice* of property, rather than its product.

One critic has noticed this reversal in Locke. In his essay "The Politics and Philosophy of Mixture: John Locke Recomposed," Wolfram Schmidgen makes the argument that Locke's use of mixture signals a desire on Locke's part to establish "open boundaries between inside and outside."¹¹ He suggests that "instead of ingesting and

¹¹ *The Eighteenth Century* 48: 3 (Fall 2007) 205-223. In an earlier work, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), Schmidgen uses Locke's mixture of thing with thing, labor with natural object, to argue

digesting, Locke's possessive self directs such internal appropriation outward, making objects its own by mixing with them through labor." The stakes of this are that "the outside can become the inside without ingestion" and the "self realizes its collective nature." He concludes from this that for Locke, the nature of subjects and "their constitution cannot be found on the inside." But for Schmidgen, this reflects an uncomplicated politics—"the natural is already social," whereas in my analysis, a high level of anxiety infuses Locke's account of private property, and persists in his epistemology, to which I now turn.

Between Inclosure and Waste

Support for the argument that Locke indeed thought of the subject as constituted by a highly fraught antinomy of enclosure and waste comes from a fruitful opposition Locke makes in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. For Locke it is crucial that truth is pursued only by collective endeavor. In *Laborers of Innocence in Early Modern England*, Joanna Picciotto suggests that by "constantly returning to words like *work, employ, industry, application, exercise* and *pain*, Locke presents the mind as the object as well as the scene of transformative labor."¹² That is, the labors of *Two Treatises* have been not only sublimated but deprivatized. Picciotto tells us that

Locke complained that 'the whole stock of Human Knowledge is claimed by every one, as his private Possession, as soon as he (profiting by others Discoveries) has got it into his own mind,' but such possession could never be 'properly' private, since it was never the product of anyone's 'own single Industry:' the man who 'studies... and takes pains to make a progress' has always to consider 'how much he owes to their pains, who cleared the Woods, drained the Bogs, built the Bridges, and made the Ways passable; without which he might have toiled much with little progress.' The personal identity of the intellectual laborer was a public works project.¹³

Locke opposes the collective nature of intellectual labor performed by the understanding to the whimsical nature of the imagination. Throughout *An Essay*, the imagination is

for a radical literalism at work in Locke's labor theory of value: "Mixing," he says, "is not a metaphor in Locke's account because it captures Locke's literality conception of the appropriating act as a transfer of something human to the thing appropriated" (54). Schmidgen uses this literality to resolve the public/private tension by asserting that "property can be created in complete isolation, independent of all social convention, because it is produced in the transfer of a fundamental human quality to an exterior object." The very social nature of mixture is what is revised in the later article cited above, where he concludes that "the natural is already social." Schmidgen discusses *Robinson Crusoe* in his book, but his discussion focuses on property, rendering the writings of Locke and Defoe on a par, whereas I will focus on the role of fiction in dissolving property in the next section.

¹² *Laborers of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Harvard University Press, 2010), 65.

¹³ *Ibid*, 265.

opposed to the understanding precisely on the point of labor: the understanding labors painfully towards truth, while the imagination muses pleasantly in folly. As Locke puts it playfully,

Who knows not what odd notions many men's heads are filled with, and what strange ideas all men's brains are capable of? But if we rest here, we know the truth of nothing by this rule, but of the visionary words in our own imaginations; nor have other truth, but what as much concerns harpies and centaurs, as men and horses. (III.v.7)

Men's heads are "filled with" imaginations, which follow no rules and know no bounds. The imagination's uncultivated wildness calls to mind the deterritorialized wasteland of pre-industrialized labor in *Two Treatises*. This would suggest that in the most inwardly enclosed of all places—the thoughts that have not been subject to the rigours of common labor represented by investigations into truth—we find another waste.

This opposition between understanding and imagination was not operative in the first drafts of this text. Draft A of 1671 begins with Locke musing:

I imagin that all knowledg is founded on and ultimately derives its self from sense, or something analogous to it & may be cald sensation which is donne by our senses conversant about particular objects which give us the simple Ideas or Images of things & thus we come to have Ideas of heat & light, hard & soft which are noe thing but the reviveing again in our mindes those imaginations which those objects when they affected our senses caused in us whether by motion or otherwise it matters not here to consider, & thus we doe when we conceive heat or light, yellow or blew sweet or bitter &c. & therefor I thinke, that those things we call sensible qualitys are the simplest Ideas we have & the first objects of our understandings.¹⁴

In this passage, Locke conceives of himself as "imagining" the nature of knowledge. Furthermore he finds it conceivable that there is a give and take between sensation and idea that passes from object to imagination. That the imagination would have any role in the understanding gets wholly written out of *An Essay* in its subsequent published edition, which begins with the following:

Since it is the *understanding* that sets man above the rest of sensible beings, and gives him all the advantage and dominion, which he has over them; it is certainly a subject, even for its nobleness, worth our labour to inquire into (I.i.1).¹⁵

¹⁴ *Drafts for the Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Other Philosophical Writings*, Ed. Peter H. Nidditch and G.A.J. Rogers (Oxford University Press, 1990)

¹⁵ *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Penguin Classics, 1997); the edition is based on the 1690 edition.

As opposed to this final version, in Draft A, Locke locates the work of thought, knowledge and understanding in the Imagination, rather than in a separate faculty: “Upon hearing words, every one who understands the language presently frames in his imagination the several simple ideas which are the immediate objects of his sense.” Locke bemoans the imprecision of words, which leads to imprecise thoughts, “because men conveying their imaginations knowledge and reasoning to one another almost only by words.” The imagination in Draft A reasons. That is, the distinction between the imagination and the labor of the understanding is discovered and cultivated very purposively by Locke as he composes *An Essay*, wherein the Imagination comes to refer to a kind of wild, untamable solipsism, a state of “having taken... fancies for realities” (I.xi.13), and thus the opposite of reasoning or understanding. By suggesting in subsequent drafts that the imagination is actually a separate, untamed waste in the subject's deepest self, Locke was designating as fantastical not just the products of the Imagination, but the idea of a self-enclosed, autonomous part of the subject:

Here I must not be mistaken, to think that every floating imagination in men's brains is presently of that sort of ideas I speak of. It requires pains and assiduity to examine its ideas, till it resolves them into those clear and distinct simple ones, out of which they are compounded; and to see which, amongst its simple ones, have or have not a necessary connexion and dependence one upon another. Till a man doth this in the primary and original notions of things, he builds upon floating and uncertain principles, and will often find himself at a loss. (I.xv.28)

Here we see the opposition between the “floating” imagination and the pains of labor. The euphoric imagination is opposed to the laboring of one man's understanding whose aim is to clarify which ideas are true, in other words, truly collective, “for I am apt to think that men, when they come to examine them, find their simple ideas all generally agree.” The products of the imagination result in a loss, not a gain, for the thinking subject. Thus we see that in Locke, the most enclosed, private part of the subject—her imagination—is actually the fiction of an enclosure, revealed to be an unenclosable wasteland that infects the whole. Fantasy, in other words, is not interiority but rather that which unencloses, or reveals the subject at her most secret to be most common. Locke's work in *An Essay* amounts to an attempt to enclose the imagination and its deterritorializing power.

Locke can do little more than indicate his anxiety over the tension between the possessive drive to acquire and privatize, and the stubbornly deterritorialed and deterritorializing wasteland—of the world and of the mind—that it attempts to conquer, but this unenclosed subject whose possessive drive fails to enclose is the subject as early novelists conceived of it. While Locke indexes his anxiety regarding enclosure rhetorically, Defoe constructs characters and addresses readers with the purpose of dramatizing their mutual unenclosure in *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe subjects his readers to a vision of themselves as the unenclosed waste, colonized by fictional narrative.

Defoe's Possessive Drive and its Failure

For Watt as for Marx, *Robinson Crusoe* is the ur-text of bourgeois ideology. “*Robinson Crusoe* has been very appropriately used by many economic theorists as their

illustration of *homo economicus*,” Watt states in *The Rise of the Novel*: “that Robinson Crusoe... is an embodiment of economic individualism hardly needs demonstration.”¹⁶ According to Robert P. Marzec, Daniel Defoe was “a great believer in the power of enclosures to establish a radically new mode of enlightened (imperial) existence that transformed the land into an object to be mastered by humankind.”¹⁷ From this biographical claim Marzec makes the hermeneutic one, that “this same enclosing of the land authorizes Crusoe to spread God's table” and “to occupy the space of the Other. Only from within the pale of enclosures does Crusoe establish a relation to the land.”¹⁸

However, Robinson's relationship to enclosure is far from simple. In the section in which Robinson describes erecting his goat enclosures, he expresses surprise as he realizes that he has come “to praise [Providence] for Dungeons and Prisons” (107). Enclosure is entrapment, which can only be seen by Robinson as praiseworthy if the alternative—that the island is penetrable—is more threatening still.¹⁹ The island is both like a prison, in its desolation and enclosure by water, and unlike a prison, when this enclosure fails. Robinson's very attempts to enclose the island betray his anxiety surrounding his ownership, belying the ideology of the *Homo Economicus* he allegedly represents. One can only enclose what is common; thus, if Robinson were convinced that the island was his “sole dominion,” enclosure would not be in order at all. If Robinson truly believed he had full right and possession of the island, surely he wouldn't need to enclose his goats, his “Country Seat” and his “Plantation.” But enclose he does, via “hedge” and “fence.” Robinson's paradoxical claims to ownership are dogged by precautions that reveal how compromised that very possession really is.

One might find justification for Robinson's enclosures in the very real threat of cannibals on the island. Indeed, the goat enclosure episode directly precedes the footprint episode, which raises the question whether the savages brought the need for enclosure or vice versa. And yet, the island itself seems to balk at being enclosed. Just as Robinson finishes building his first “Compleat Enclosure,” he tells us “I had almost had all my Labour overthrown at once, and myself kill'd... for all a sudden I found the Earth come crumbling down from the Roof of my Cave... I plainly saw it was a terrible Earthquake... with three such Shocks as would have overturn'd the strongest Building that could be suppos'd...” (59). Robinson speaks of the island as trying to dispossess him of his Enclosure and return to its natural state as a waste, exemplifying the first of many instances in which the *fantasy* represented by the island for Robinson—of the self-

¹⁶ p. 63.

¹⁷ Marzec, Robert P. “Enclosures, Colonization, and the Robinson Crusoe Syndrome: A Genealogy of Land in a Global Context.” *boundary 2*.29.2 (2002), 130.

¹⁸ *ibid.* 131.

¹⁹ Schmidgen compellingly argues that Robinson's fear of the island in its unenclosed state reveals the terror of *terra nullis* that pervades economic ideologies of the seventeenth century; however, Schmidgen's argument doesn't take into account the fictional nature of *Robinson Crusoe* and how that might relate to questions of property. He discusses narrative as opposed to description, but not fiction.

enclosed, self-sufficient *Homo Economicus*—fails. *Robinson Crusoe* is itself a series of representations of the failure of this fantasy. Robinson tries repeatedly and nostalgically to enclose the island, as one attempts to enclose the self with the concept of possession or property—a concept that we have seen in Locke is radically compromised because the imagination cannot be enclosed.

The threats to Robinson's enclosure begin when he finds a footprint on what he has fantasized to be "his" island. The terror with which he encounters this evidence of another figure is strange for a man so devastated by isolation. Robinson's terror is somewhat explained when he decides that it must be a cannibal who left the print behind. He comes to this conclusion after the measuring of his foot against that of the print; it fails to measure it (the footprint is bigger and lasts longer), "and I went Home again, filled with the Belief that some Man or Men had been on Shore there: or in Short, that the Island was inhabited" (115). However, what follows from Robinson's neurotic ruminations is surely that if anything is inhabited, it is Robinson's imagination, much more peopled than the island with a family of goats, the Devil, and now twenty savages. The back and forth between affect and the imagination is here not limited to Robinson, but leaks out onto the island. He imagines cannibals, and they appear. He imagines goats, and the whole island becomes chimerical, literally goat-like.²⁰ Insofar as the island bears the mark of at least one foot of another man, so does his imagination construct and lend significance to the random signifiers of the island.²¹ By extending the inhabitation of the island to the inhabitation of the imagination, Defoe uses Robinson's island as the stage on which to dramatize the deprivatized nature of the imagination.

Cannibals provide the perfect figure with which to dramatize the unenclosed subject.²² A large part of the book is about eating or being eaten, with which Robinson is rather obsessed. He seems to draw a lot of his value from what he feels he would be worth consumed—an assumption that is not incorrect for a fictional character, whose existence depends on the encounter between reader and text. But the novel thematizes eating more elaborately than Defoe's pun on the consumption of texts accounts for. There

²⁰ *Oxford English Dictionary*

²¹ Robinson even at one point feels himself on a desert island while still in Brazil ("I used to say, I lived just like a man cast away upon some desolate island, that had no body there but himself." [27]), almost desiring the outcome we know from the title page will appear, just as Moll "commits incest every day in my desires" with her brother in law, and then literally comes to commit incest with her brother later on, both prefigured on the title page.

²² Schmidgen sees in the cannibals the breaking point of natural law: "Countering centrifugal extension with centripetal invasion, the cannibal figures a fundamental threat to the community between person and thing sponsored by natural law. This function of cannibalism as the figural 'other' of natural law is literalized in the model of appropriation that underwrites Crusoe's widening enclosures" (*Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property*, p. 52).

is the goat kid who won't eat so Robinson "is forced" to eat it. There are the cannibals. There is the bear in the Pyrenees whom Robinson warns Friday not to anger for "He will eat you up!" to which Friday responds, "Eatee me up! Eatee me up! Me eatee him up! Me make you good laugh: You all stay here, me show you good laugh" (212).²³ Indeed, the whole final episode of the book is centered around whether Robinson and Friday will be devoured by hungry wolves responsible for "the Man, his Head and upper Part of his Body... eaten off" and a dozen of which were at work "on a Horse, we could not say eating of him, but picking of his bones rather, for they had eaten up all the Flesh before" (214). This passage is reminiscent of the account of cannibalism on the island: recall how Robinson happens upon the horrific site, where "the Place was covered with human Bones, the ground dyed with their Blood, great pieces of Flesh left here and there, half eaten, mangled and scorched" (150), whereupon Robinson promptly vomits. Cannibalism brings the question of the subject's property home to her body.

Defoe, like Locke, thematizes eating to discuss enclosure. If personal property—and, by extension, identity—hangs on the fantasy and ultimate failure of the fantasy of enclosure, what better test case than digestion? As we have seen in Locke, the problematic posed by the incorporation of food into digestion only exacerbates the question of property, for it is simply not self evident that, as Locke put it, what I eat is mine. What for Locke was a political question becomes for Defoe a hermeneutic one. With the cannibals, Robinson must confront the truth about his existence that he cannot possibly accept: that he is a fictional character who only exists insofar as he is consumed, devoured, picked over, by readers; and the reader must correspondingly accept that she has consumed something that will not become theirs, but will persist as other. Through Robinson's insistence on his own desirability as an entrée, *Robinsons Crusoe* opens the very radical possibility that at its core, the subject is porous enough to be constituted by this otherness.

The very fate of fiction is at stake in *Robinson Crusoe*. After all, the real answer to the question "Who left the footprint?" is of course: Daniel Defoe. Defoe was too invested in print culture for the double entendre to have been an accident. Defoe further associates fiction with the footprint when Robinson analyzes his strange reaction to the evidence that he may have company. "How strange a Chequer-Work of Providence is the Life of Man!" he cries,

and by what secret different Springs are the Affections hurry'd about as differing Circumstances present! To Day we love what to Morrow we hate; to Day we seek what to Morrow we shun; to Day we desire what to Morrow we fear; nay even

²³ Defoe got a lot of flack for Friday's dialect, starting with Charles Gildon's *The life and strange surprizing adventures of Daniel De Foe, formerly of London, hosier, who has lived above fifty years all alone by himself, in the kingdoms of North and South-Britain*, published just after the novel's publication in 1719. I think there is merit to Defoe's representation of Friday's self-abjection in his inability to use the subjective form to refer to himself. There is only one creature beneath him, and there is only one way to prove his superiority to it—to laugh at it.

tremble at the Apprehensions of; this was exemplify'd in me at this time in the most lively Manner imaginable. (113)

Here the storminess of man's emotional life, seemingly governed by contingency and human frailty, is the meeting place of "differing Springs" and "differing Circumstances." The very same circumstance that renders Robinson mad with a fear from which he doesn't recover for nine years, he desires to distraction later in the text when the Spanish shipwreck fails to yield him a single fellow by way of survivor. In an extremely moving passage Robinson bemoans the fact that he has been denied company yet again. While the footprint passage only describes Robinson's emotional response, the stages of fear and relief, interspersed with pontifications on the inner workings of the human heart, the shipwreck episode brings with it actual quotes crashing upon the page:

Such were these earnest Wishings, That but one Man had been sav'd! *O that it had been but One!* I believe I repeated the Words, *O that it had been but One!* a thousand Times; and the Desires were so mov'd by it, that when I spoke the Words, my Hands would clinch together, and my Fingers press the Palms of my Hands, that if I had had any soft Thing in my Hand, it would have crusht it involuntarily; and my Teeth in my Head wou'd strike together, and set against one another so strong, that for some time I cou'd not part them again. (136)

By quoting the actual words Robinson uttered, and providing signifiers of feeling that inarguably index deep levels of emotion, Defoe draws us in, asking us not to *believe* Robinson, as he usually seems to do, but engaging us in his reality, implicating us in his emotions, by creating the same situation for the reader that made Robinson so distraught—an absent object represented by the imagination:

There are some secret moving Springs in the Affections, which when they are set a going by some Object in view; or be it some Object, though not in view, yet rendered present to the Mind by the Power of Imagination, that Motion carries out the Soul by its Impetuosity to such violent eager embracings of the Object, that the Absence of it is insupportable. (136)

The affective intensity produced by the shipwreck's failure to provide Robinson with a companion is overlaid onto the fictional function of representing that which is absent and imaginary: "some Object, though not in view, yet rendered present to the Mind by the Power of imagination." The same emotional charge is brought on by the island's invasion by cannibals, as by the imagination's invasion by fictional fellows. Fiction dramatizes the unenclosure of the self.

The reader, like Robinson and his island, is similarly unenclosed. While playing a kind of host to the fictional "I," lending her body to the experience of having someone else's footprints appear in her imagination, the reader is both helpless and in control—she may after all close the book whenever she chooses. And here is where the cannibals become relevant: this is not a trade or an exchange. Fiction is not, as has been suggested,

a process of sympathetic exchange.²⁴ We are not trading with Robinson or even with Defoe; we are consuming him and being consumed by him. Just as we do not trade with fictional characters, one cannot trade with cannibals, because they don't recognize a difference between the subject and her property; they would just as soon eat Robinson as his goats. In other words, they fail to recognize the alienation between self and property that enables trade, and paradoxically disables enclosure.

But on the island, fiction reveals the truth: that one is not even in possession of oneself, because definitive of being a self is being in a constant state of unenclosure. The imagination unencloses the soul, or as Defoe once said of sex, "It is an Enclosure laid open."²⁵ We might say that fiction is a consumption that opens, *dis*-closes, and thereby dramatizes the failure of the possessive drive that Locke suspected was a structural component of the modern subject.

²⁴ For accounts of the novel as disciplining sentimental exchange, see Lynch, Deidre Shauna, "Novels in the World of Moving Goods," *A Concise Companion to Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cynthia Wall (Blackwell, 2005) and Ballaster, Ros, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Clarendon Press, 1998) and Gallagher, Catherine, *Nobody's Story*, (University of California Press, 1995).

²⁵ *Conjugal Lewdness*, 212.

Chapter 2: The Forms of Dissimulation: Reading and Consent in *Love in Excess* and *Fantomina*

Eliza Haywood's *Love in Excess, or: The Fatal Inquiry* was originally published the same year as *Robinson Crusoe*—1719—and read almost as widely, going into its sixth edition by 1725. Despite that acclaim, critics have treated *Love in Excess* and Haywood's oeuvre more generally with the disdain ordinarily reserved for popular romances today. Phrases such as “female fantasy fulfillment” are thrown around in even the most generous of critical accounts, as though this were a natural or self-evident category, the answer rather than the question. For example, Ros Ballaster argues that “Erotic fantasy on the part of the woman reader, a heterosexual fantasy of subjugation and self-abandonment, is encouraged in the secure knowledge that ultimately female sexual pleasure will be punished or tamed.”¹ Eliza Haywood's work has long been seen as shallow, sacrificing character to bodice-ripping plot, with the single aim of entrapping readers into a quicksand of absorption that will keep them reading—and buying—books. Indeed, when Richetti pronounces that Haywood's “technique (or perhaps instinct is a better word) is to evoke a female ethos to which her readers' response is a moral-emotional sympathetic vibration rather than a self-conscious and deliberate assent to moral ideas” he comes close to the “cow-like udders” and “ox-like eyes” of Pope's infamous attack in *The Dunciad*.² Pope, too, wished to draw a line on one side of which was art and on the other side of which was the female, the bestial, the sub-rational, and the instinctive.

The resurgence of interest in Haywood's work has resulted in some significant revisions to these accounts. Marta Kvande for example has argued that Haywood's narrators are to be understood as inhabiting an outsider's position which “endows them with virtue and makes them uniquely qualified to offer criticisms” in the model of the disinterested civic virtue of eighteenth-century Tory ideology.³ My argument will build on this crucial move towards taking Haywood's narrators seriously, though in my reading, Haywood's narrator is as disingenuous as the worst of her characters. Similarly, my argument takes cues from Kathleen Lubey's insight that “sex, far from being a degenerate literary content, is of great epistemological importance.”⁴ But my argument departs from Lubey's interpretation of this epistemological importance. For Lubey, sex “throws the human passions into relief, allowing readers unadulterated access to the

¹ *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction 1640-1740* (Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 170.

² Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, lines 164-165.

³ Marta Kvande, “The Outsider Narrator in Eliza Haywood's Political Novels”, *SEL* 43:3 (Summer, 2003), 626.

⁴ Kathleen Lubey, “Eliza Haywood's Amatory Aesthetic”, *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39.3 (2006), 321.

workings of characters' minds and bodies."⁵ In my reading, sex allows us to understand just how adulterated the inner workings of characters' minds and bodies are, how unrepresentable because of the "internalization of social and moral precepts" that Lubey sees as the result of Haywood's "amatory aesthetic."⁶ For if at one's innermost self, one finds only social mores, what sort of interiority can be said to exist?

Another crucial step was taken in William Warner's reading of Haywood in *Licensing Entertainment*, which importantly sees in her work a representation of the reader in characters who read, like Melliora. But Warner makes two important category errors. Firstly, he collapses fantasy and dream in his reading of Melliora's dream, further obfuscating the category of fantasy rather than clarifying it. Secondly, Warner elides the question of form when he calls Melliora a novel reader—she very explicitly reads philosophy and poetry—which is why I think he mistakes the role of fantasy in the novels. For Warner, novels are a pathway to freedom; whereas my reading will show that the pleasure experienced is rather an effect of coercion.

In this chapter, I will argue that in Haywood's fictional world, men insist on interpreting female expressions of physical desire as expressions of consent, despite protests to the contrary, decoupling consent from desire. But Haywood goes one step further: consent is not merely decoupled from desire—that which is purportedly represents; rather, her novels construe consent as the product of a coercive, and yet physically pleasurable, experience. But men, too, are subjected to questionably consensual sexual encounters, when their partners masquerade as other women. The dissimulation of these encounters complicates the enjoyment of these men—their pleasure is a product of having been duped—even as it reprises the formal imperative that structures the reader's encounter with the novel. The events of the novel masquerade as truth through their verisimilitude or realism, suggesting that the reader's pleasure is also purchased at the expense of her consent, for consent is not possible when one is compromised epistemologically. The reader is coerced to consent to the suspension of disbelief in exchange for pleasure. The form of the novel and the form of consent are mutually implicated in coercive structures, and Haywood's novels stage a critical intervention in these structures by exposing the pleasure that sustains them. Thus, rather than feeding her reader's an uncritical "fantasy fulfillment" as critics have argued, Haywood is staging a critique of the role of consent, *both* in sexually pleasurable stories, but also in a more general context. Consent becomes the placeholder for its opposite, a conduit of sorts for coercion, which succeeds because of the pleasure it ensures.

Haywood's heroines are a libidinous lot. Yet despite their physical cravings for the men they adore, Haywood systematically represents her women as incapable of consent in order to expose the coercive nature of fiction that lies at the heart of modern coercive consent. In *Love in Excess*, Count D'elmont's first victim is the insipid (according to the narrator) Amena, celebrated by D'elmont and critics alike for her legal-minded bosom, which "beat measures of consent... every pulse confess[ing] a wish to

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ bid.

yield” under D’elmont’s unyielding administrations. For Jonathan Kramnick this suggests that Haywood portrays consent as interpersonal, “at once an index of personal autonomy and something that floats between minds.” However, the opposite seems to be the case. From the beginning, D’elmont’s attachment to Amena begins as a result of misreading—“she was getting out of her chariot just as he alighted from his, and offering her his hand, he perceived hers trembled, which engaging him to look upon her more earnestly than he was wont, he immediately fancied he saw something of that languishment in her eyes which the obliging mandate had described.” D’elmont *misreads* Amena’s bodily response to the proximity of his as referencing a letter she did not write. Volition is wholly absent and irrelevant to this account; he mistakenly reads her body as a signifier the signified of which is the letter. But he also misreads her as the signified of the letter, turning her body into the signified of the letter, hinting that bodies are going to be treated as separable from the intents that allegedly guide them.

Furthermore, the consent represented by heaving bosoms is itself the result of misreading. There is a decided and crucial slippage between the agency of D’elmont’s attacks and Amena’s “tenderness within.” Her defenses flee, abdicate; “left her to her foe.” Amena’s internal betrayal leads to D’elmont’s disregard of the few defenses she has left – which does not mean, however, that she has *no* defenses left. Amena’s complicity in D’elmont’s attacks—they are metaphorically represented as such—is thus obfuscated, and at the crucial moment when her consent should be made clear to us, we are afforded only a glimpse of what D’elmont finds to be the case, as he reads off of her body: “*he found her heart beat measures of consent, her heaving breast swell to be pressed by his, and every pulse confess a wish to yield*” (my italics). These are *D’elmont’s findings*—a soldier’s interpretation of a woman’s body. His interpretation with its military metaphors—she doesn’t just want him, she has a “wish to yield”—crucially serves his soldier’s desire to conquer. A woman to this soldier will inevitably look like a town in need of conquer. The narrator goes on to describe Amena’s body disingenuously: “Her spirits all dissolved sunk in a lethargy of love”—the “of love” here is the interpretive leap; for surely had this been the case, Amena would not have been “roused... from her dream of happiness” only to “blame the Count in terms little differing from distraction.” Had she arisen to blame the Count angrily, despite having been sunk in a lethargy of love during their sexual encounter, this incongruity—love in the moment, blame in the moment after—would only prove the point further that female desire has no volitional avenue. The narrator here facilitates both D’elmont’s misreading, as well as the reader’s acceptance of it.

No centralized, unassailable, autonomous self is available to Amena for Kramnick’s reading to hang onto. Consent is what D’elmont, and her own treacherous body, deny her. Amena is “attacked by such a charming force without” while simultaneously “betrayed by tenderness within.” This tenderness, like her heaving bosom, indicates not an expression of consent so much as of the absence of a unified self capable of representing itself in consenting. Amena, as is classically the case with Haywood’s heroines, is a split subject: desirous physically of D’elmont, she possesses as well a powerful proscription against her ever consenting on these terms. The desiring woman is always split in this context. When Melliora is attacked by D’elmont the narrator tells us that “Restrained by Honor, and enflamed by Love, her very Soul was

torn.” Consent would mean having chosen between physical desire and social constraint. Unfortunately for Amena, “Virtue and Pride, the guardians of her honor fled from her breast, left her to her foe, only a modest bashfulness remained which for a time made some defense.” Amena’s agency is diffused to a series of values and metaphors. It is unclear whether the “foe” is the “charming force without” or the equally dangerous “betray[ing]... tenderness within.” Amena is split, “torn”—there is no unified self which consent might represent. There is also no legal or ontological primacy ascribed to either the willing (physical) parts of her, or the unwilling (social) parts, so the reader can’t decide which is more “true” to her self. Haywood describes this struggle in a way that disables the critically accepted identification of interiority with inner truth and exteriority with outer performance that enables us to identify a female self whose real desires are located inside.

This is the sort of conundrum that granting consent is designed to clarify and yet, upon closer examination, we find Amena’s consent to be gravely compromised as a representation of willingness. Firstly, as we have seen, it is the body that desires, and the ethical will that resists. That Amena physically desires or consents is not contested at all, yet it is only the physical body that “consents.” Nothing has developed from the split self, and indeed, nothing can. As we have seen, in the moment at which we should be most clear as to whether Amena actually desires sex with D’elmont, we are afforded glimpses of her lethargy and his misreading. But rather than having the narrator say, “Thus could Amena not consent,” Haywood takes the audacious step of calling the coercive nature of the situation consent, giving that sentiment either to a self-serving D’elmont or to the disingenuous narrator, depending on how one reads that moment. In other words, consent is the name given to the coercive scenario in which one’s expressed wishes are disregarded and one’s ability to know and represent them encumbered by lethargy.

Amena is not the only character in the novel whose desire and consent are teased apart in this fashion. Melliora is chanced upon by D’elmont while sleeping one night. The narrative begins by comparing what was a conflict in Amena’s waking life—honor and virtue vs. desire—as somewhat resolved in sleep, wherein the split dissolves with consciousness:

But whatever dominion, honor and virtue may have over our waking thoughts, ‘tis certain that they fly from the closed eyes; our passions then exert their forceful power, and that which is most predominant in the soul, agitates the fancy, and brings even things impossible to pass. Desire, with watchful diligence repelled, returns with greater violence in unguarded sleep, and overthrows the vain efforts of day. (116)

What the split does is identify virtue and honor as properties of consciousness. When D’elmont reads Melliora’s sleeping body language as consent, he is misreading her as he did Amena. His mistake in both cases is corrected when the women awaken, one from lethargy, the other from sleep. Both are furious with him for reading signifiers of the body as signs of consent, and this is precisely Haywood’s point: consent can never bring together a woman’s physical desire with her will, because she is not allowed to want what her physical body asks for. This doesn’t stop the D’elmonts of the world from disregarding the stated will, in line with social mores, and attacking the desiring body,

but erasing the split in the subject is just another way of coercing women into acts they do not want. Haywood's way of staging this dilemma—that the split in the female subject means that consent is a fiction—is by showing us that heaving bosoms will always be the mislocation of volition, since bosoms can heave in sleep.

Haywood insists that physical desire is not a reflection of consent but simply another avenue whereby the concept of consent betrays not a simply desiring body, but a non-desiring social self; in other words, consent stands in for coercion. But she innovates the most when representing coercive consent not as the exclusive property of female suffering, but an experience familiar to men as well. D'elmont, too, has a murky sexual encounter that we today would certainly define as non-consensual. Having arranged to have questionably consensual sex with Melliora, the object of his affections, D'elmont is outwitted by the raunchy Melantha, who connives to substitute herself in Melliora's place. In the darkness, "tho the Count had been but a very little time in the arms of his supposed Melliora, yet he had made... good use of it." Melantha for her part has no qualms regarding her deception; indeed, "far from repenting, she flattered herself with a belief, that when he should come to know to whom he owed that bliss he had possessed, he would not be ungrateful for it." D'elmont has sex with Melantha while under the impression that she is Melliora. Insofar as he consents physically to the act, he is cognitively duped, since he would never have consented to sleeping with Melantha, his nemesis.

Men, too, are caught in the paradox of coercive consent, or that coercion which consent represents. Haywood teases apart D'elmont's physical desire from his cognitive capacity to represent that desire. Further support for this reading comes from D'elmont's response when he realizes whom he has just had sex with. When Melliora appears at the door behind his wife, "He stood like one transfixed with thunder, he know not what to think, or rather could not think at all, confounded with seeing a seeming impossibility." He looks to the bed! He looks to the door! "Am I awake, said he, or is every thing I see and hear an illusion?" Sleep in Haywood's novels is that condition which most approximates how little power women have over their fates, and how much consent is a place-holder that marks not power but its opposite—coercion.

Haywood luxuriates in the details of Melantha's trickery discovered. When the Count is finally alone three pages later, the narrator bemoans his fate in terms not unlike those she uses to describe Amena awaking from being ruined by D'elmont:

But with what words can the various passions that agitated the soul of D'elmont be described? The transports he enjoyed in an imaginary felicity, were now turned to so many real horrors; he saw himself exposed to all the world... Melantha he had always despised, but now detested, for the trick she had put upon him, yet thought it would be not only unmanly, but barbarous to let her know he did so.

D'elmont's reversal in knowledge is akin to that suffered by any of Haywood's heroines: from felicity to shame, he recognizes his fall from grace, not through the act of sex, but through having been cheated by Melantha. Her conquest of him has forced him into a humiliating position akin to that of women, though not exactly the same. While men are not necessarily torn between social values and a betraying body, as women are,

Haywood's men are repeatedly put in positions where their consent is challenged, in order for Haywood to make clear that it is consent, and not female sexuality, that is the object of her critique. That men too can be compromised in this manner suggests that consent itself works in ways that undermine, rather than undergird, desire and agency, revealing that we are all split, if only because we sleep.

D'elmont is not the only one of Haywood's heroes to be subjected to non-consensual sex. The object of the desires of the titular heroine of *Fantomina*, one Beauplaisir, is similarly tricked into sex through mistaking his partner's identity. As Helen Thompson eloquently puts it, "her triumph proceeds not from the fact that he thinks her a prostitute, but from the fact that she has split into two whole bodies; that he thinks her *both* a prostitute *and* a virtuous lady."⁷ The narrator of *Fantomina* makes clear that Beauplaisir's interest in the Young Lady disguised as Fantomina is the consequence of his mistaking her identity. Her *resemblance* as courtesan to the Great Lady ironically ensures for Beauplaisir that she is not that Lady, while simultaneously ensuring a structure of desire that creates the illusion of enjoying that lady. As Thompson puts it, "the virgin and the prostitute permit him to experience desire and possession at once... possession of the object whose desirability requires that it remain unenjoyed."⁸ What Thompson doesn't point out is that the duped gentleman's ability to consent is compromised when his partner is split, for consent and epistemological transparency are crucially linked.

The story gets under way when a "Young Lady of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit and Spirit"—the narrator dispenses with these superlatives in a short-hand that immediately alerts the reader to the simultaneous utilization and mockery of romance conventions—witnesses some ladies of ill repute at the theater and becomes curious as to in "what manner these creatures were addressed" (258). She decides to dress as a prostitute, and is gratified; indeed, she receives "received no small pleasure in hearing herself praised though in the Person of another, and a supposed Prostitute." This praise consists of a comparison with herself: "*Gad*, was heard, *she is mighty like my fine Lady such-a-one*—naming her own name." This emphasis on resemblance as replacing identity, in which the lady in disguise has a perfect mimetic resemblance with herself, is the very engine of the plot. Like the realist novel—which purports to have a perfect mimetic resemblance with life while being completely apart from it ontologically—the young lady provides Haywood with the perfect conduit for exploring fiction itself.

The young lady soon sees a young man whose particular addresses she desires. He, too, notices how much she "resembled that Lady whom she really was; but the vast disparity there appeared between their characters prevented him from entertaining even the most distant thought that they could be the same" (259). The prostitute's resemblance to "that Lady whom she really was" becomes the enabling conceit of their relationship

⁷ Helen Thompson, "Plotting Materialism: W. Charleton's 'The Ephesian Matron', E. Haywood's 'Fantomina', and Feminine Consistency, *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 35:2 (2002), 200.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 208.

which paradoxically enables both parties to enjoy the distance between her body and her idealized social self.

That Fantomina resembles that lady without being her plays no small part in exciting Beauplaisir:

A thousand Times has he stood amaz'd at the prodigious Likeness between his little Mistress, and this Court Beauty; but was still as far from imagining they were the same, as he was the first Hour he had accosted her in the Playhouse, though it is not impossible, but that her Resemblance to this celebrated Lady, might keep his Inclination alive something longer than otherwise they would have been; and that it was to the Thoughts of this (as he supposed) unenjoy'd Charmer, she ow'd in great measure the Vigour of his latter Caresses. (267)

The disguised prostitute, by keeping the image of the “unenjoyed” court lady alive and viable, enables, even fuels, Beauplaisir’s arousal. To put it rather crudely, for the whore to be enjoyed, the Madonna must remain pure, and the man—must remain deceived. Like D’elmont, Beauplaisir would not have enjoyed enjoying the Court Lady half so much as he can enjoy keeping her image intact.

Interestingly, the Young Lady’s own desires are similarly bound up in a large gap between Ego Ideal and physical body. Her struggles to evade sexual congress are impeded by “the Thoughts...of the whole Affair made a Theme for publick Ridicule” (262). Thus does she sacrifice her actual body to the imperative of maintaining an idealized image of the “Lady,” or, in the narrator’s words, “She had Discernment to foresee and avoid all those Ills which might attend the Loss of her *Reputation* but was wholly blind to those of the Ruin of her *Virtue*.” Fantomina’s efforts to hide her identity by continuing to assume aliases and personae all support the duality or split subjectivity that enable her reputation or ego ideal to remain intact, enabling both parties to enjoy her body without the attendant defamation: “While he laughs at and perhaps despises the fond, the yielding *Fantomina*, he will revere and esteem the virtuous, the reserved Lady.”

The structure of desire for both parties involves splitting the lady in two, and by definition, deceiving the man. Just as D’elmont had non-consensual sex because he was deprived of the knowledge of who his partner was, so too is Beauplaisir subjected to equally questionable consensual acts when his desire and his ability to judge or reason about that desire are separated by the disguise. To be deceived is to be coerced, Haywood argues in both of these scenarios, for these men each desire someone who is different from the person they consent to having sex with. Thus the epistemological stakes of the bedroom reveal the coercive nature of consent—that free consent is knowing consent, and since knowing is often compromised, so is consent. In this way, the reader of the novel is much more like these non-consenting men than like their female counterparts, for the reader is coerced by not knowing—she is at a structurally determined epistemological disadvantage. While omniscience is not necessary for consent, a certain amount of certainty regarding what might be possible is.

The men in Haywood’s novels double for the reader; both agree to be absorbed by what they do not, and cannot, know. This becomes most clear when we compare the

Young Lady's defloration with the scene of revelation wherein Beauplaisir is made aware of whom he has been sleeping with. From the first encounter, Beauplaisir asks to know to whom he owes his pleasure. She tells him "she was the Daughter of a Country Gentleman, who was come to town to buy Cloaths, and that she was called Fantomina." For his part, he "had no Reason to distrust the truth of this story, and was therefore satisfied with it." From the first, even regarding the Young Lady's own curiosity, curiosity and the drive towards its satisfaction are portrayed as libidinal desires. Beauplaisir asks who she is as the necessary prelude to sex. The farce begins because witnessing women of ill repute "excited a curiosity in her to know in what Manner these Creatures were addressed"; curiosity is sexually exciting. Here again, the reader desirous of knowing, curious as to how it turns out, is like the coerced male, unable to consent yet seduced by the pleasure promised by the coercive scenario.

Fantomina cracks the code: she realizes that curiosity, and its conduit, novelty, are not simply *like sex*; they *are sex*: "Possession naturally abates the Vigor of Desire," she realizes, while she is after "a lover always raving, wild, impatient, longing, dying." So when she next encounters Beauplaisir, she does so masked, so that he will *know* he does not know who his conquest is. While at first certain that he will "easily obtain that Satisfaction" for he was "wild with Impatience for the sight of [her] face" (284), yet he finds that "not in the Height of all their mutual Raptures, could he prevail on her to satisfy his curiosity with the sight of her face." Then comes the telling phrase: "It was in vain that he endeavor'd... she was not to be persuaded." Recall that during their original, very explicitly non-consensual encounter, the narrator tells us that "it was in vain; she would have retracted the Encouragement she had given; --in vain she endeavored to delay... she had now gone too far—*He* was bold; he was resolute." Beauplaisir's disappointment and struggles to obtain the young lady's identity are narrated in the exact same terms as his forced encounter with the struggling virgin, only this time, it is he who struggles in vain. Now *he* "longed for the Approach of Day" in a scintillating gender reversal, and out of desperation before her bold resolution to disappoint him, demands that "she should pay the Price of his Company with the Discovery of her Face and Circumstances." After paying *her* for services rendered throughout the novella, he now demands that *she* pay him with information, in an astonishing move that reverses gender norms that equate the masculine satisfaction of curiosity with women's sexual pleasure.

Haywood deprives us of a happy ending, delivering instead the nail in consent's coffin when Beauplaisir discovers who she is. He is astounded to discover that the young lady is not only the Young Lady but also the four characters he has slept with throughout the novella. When the Young Lady confesses to her mother and Beauplaisir the narratives of her sexcapades, the narrator tells us,

'tis difficult to determine, if *Beauplaisir*, or the Lady, were most surpris'd at what they heard; he, that he should have been blinded so often by her Artifices; or she, that so young a Creature should have the Skill to make use of them. Both sat for some Time in a profound Revery; till at length she broke it first in these Words: Pardon, Sir, (*said she,*) the Trouble I have given you: I must confess it was with a Design to oblige you to repair the supposed Injury you had done this unfortunate Girl, by marrying her, but now I know not what to say; – The Blame

is wholly her's, and I have nothing to request further of you, than that you will not divulge the distracted Folly she has been guilty of. – He answered her in Terms perfectly polite; but made no Offer of that which, perhaps, she expected, though could not, now inform'd of her Daughter's Proceedings, demand. He assured her, however, that if she would commit the new-born Lady to his Care, he would discharge it faithfully. But neither of them would consent to that; and he took his Leave, full of Cogitations, more confus'd than ever he had known in his whole Life. (290)

The language of being “blinded by Artifices” is usually reserved for the women of Haywood’s universe—the Amenas and Alovisas and Mellioras—who are promised love by men, and then denuded of their virginity. But here, it is Beauplaisir who is shunted into the position of the deceived party, using language that equates non-consensual sexual encounters with Beauplaisir’s unknowing ones. It would seem that another staple of Haywood’s fictional universe is the non-consent of men.

Another term crucial to the way men and women deny each other consent is dissimulation, which also lies at the heart of Haywood’s concept of fiction. For starters, characters dissimulate. Count D’elmont makes quite a career of lying. Upon comprehending that Amena wants a promise of marriage before she will be willing to proceed with their amours, D’elmont conceals his misunderstanding: “He resolved not to seem to understand.” D’elmont creates an ethical and cognitive horizon with his conscious decision to deceive, posited as it is against the true misunderstandings that pepper the novel. Similarly, D’elmont’s marriage to Alovisa is described as having “saved abundance of dissimulation on both sides, and she took care...he should not have it in his power to pretend (as some husbands have done) that his stock was exhausted in a tedious courtship” (77). Courtship, like fiction, like sex, involves lies that give pleasure.

But narrators in Haywood’s fictional universe are also dissimulators, even within the terms set up by the fictional world of each book. The narrator of *Love in Excess*, for example, is squarely in the D’elmont camp, often supporting or reiterating his lies to a reader who knows better. D’elmont lies to and about his wife Alovisa many times, and these lies are supported by the narrator. Soon after D’elmont destroys Amena’s reputation by attempting to relieve her of her virginity, she is sent away to a convent through Alovisa’s interventions. That is, Alovisa intervenes *before* D’elmont is able to actually rape and ruin Amena, though Amena sees herself as ruined by their mutual cahoots: “Do you delight in beholding the ruins you have made?” she cries melodramatically at the pair when she understands what has happened between them. However, despite all this, D’elmont turns on Alovisa after receiving a letter from Amena’s convent, “and Alovisa for whom he never had any thing more than an indifferency, now began to seem distasteful to his fancy, he looked on her, as indeed she was, the chief author of Amena’s misfortunes, and abhorred her for that infidelity” (90). The narrator corroborates D’elmont’s false story that rather than being the only thing to prevent Amena’s ruin, Alovisa was the *cause* of Amena’s ruin. One wonders: If the Count had succeeded in raping Amena as he had planned, would he have blamed this as well on his wife? The narrator similarly construes Alovisa’s jealousy as irrational and unattractive, the unjust barrier between lovers. When D’elmont finally “forgives” Alovisa for keeping from him,

her own husband, a love letter from another woman, he tells her he will forgive her “provided you’ll promise me, never for the future to be guilty of any thing which may give me an uneasiness by the sight of yours” (104). Thus, Alovisa is made to bear the burden of the guilt of D’elmont’s infidelity because the narrator’s dissimulations reiterate those of the Count.

Alovisa’s “too violent affection” for her husband causes her to accept blame where it is clearly D’elmont’s, so much so that D’elmont has to lie not once but *twice* about his own narrative in order to remain sympathetic to his two best friends—the Chevalier Brillain his brother, and Monsieur Frankville, brother to the love of D’elmont’s life, Melliora Frankville. D’elmont is comforted by revealing the “truth” about his failed marriage to his brother, and proceeds to do so “omitting nothing of the story, but his love for Melliora, and the cause he had given to create this uneasiness.” That is, he omits the most important, the only important, part of the story. This line is surely ironic, and yet one gets the feeling that the narrator is not in on the irony, since she treats Alovisa’s jealousy as pathological, though her husband has admitted to loving someone else. Crucially, D’elmont *knows* that he is lying, leaving out the cause of the story, the motivations, everything that would make the story compute. He is treating the story as containing a truth, and yet he keeps the key truth secret.

D’elmont pulls this same stunt with Frankville for obvious reasons. Frankville has received a letter from the angry yet honest father of the near-ruined, exiled Amena describing D’elmont’s sexploits with Frankville’s sister Melliora, and comes to kill D’elmont for this crime. D’elmont must deny his attachment to Melliora in order to save his life but also to incur favor in Frankville, whom he finds very attractive. The letter in question from Monsieur Sanseverin, which contains only truth about D’elmont, is treated by the narrator as a pack of lies, and the narrator along with “the Count swelled with indignation at every paragraph of this letter” (183). Furthermore, Frankville silently observes: “and if before, he were not perfectly assured of his innocence, the agonies he now saw him in, which were too natural to be suspected for counterfeit, entirely convinced him he was so” (184). Frankville totally misreads D’elmont’s show of sincerity as sincere; and why shouldn’t he? The narrator has been convinced by this show. D’elmont however knows himself to be deceiving Frankville, and is therefore lying, concealing what he considers to be the truth of the matter. The narrator’s perception of D’elmont doesn’t change as a result of this fraudulence, precluding a reading that would see this as free indirect discourse ironizing D’elmont’s lies.

These lies, or the fiction’s fiction of D’elmont’s innocence, compound the question of sexual non-consent with the reader’s need to take the coercion they get in exchange for the pleasure offered by the narrative. The reader consents to read, but not to what she reads, for this is already determined by the author. Nevertheless, the reader’s desire, her investment if you will, is a foregone conclusion. The parallel between character and reader is not, as Warner suggests, the freedom to consume, but rather, the relinquishing of consent in exchange for pleasure.

In *Fantomina*, the narrator enters the scene explicitly only in order to inform us that mimesis has exited; Haywood deploys the first person pronoun to denote the

narrator's analysis of how it is Beauplaisir could have been so mistaken in so obvious a point:

It may, perhaps, seem strange that *Beauplaisir* should in such near Intimacies continue still deceiv'd: I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility, and that no Disguise could hinder them from knowing a Woman they had once enjoy'd. In answer to these Scruples, I can only say, that besides the Alteration which the Change of Dress made in her, she was so admirably skill'd in the Art of feigning, that she had the Power of putting on almost what Face she pleas'd, and knew so exactly how to form her Behaviour to the Character she represented, that all the Comedians at both Playhouses are infinitely short of her Performances: She could vary her very Glances, tune her Voice to Accents the most different imaginable from those in which she spoke when she appear'd herself. – These Aids from Nature, join'd to the Wiles of Art, and the Distance between the Places where the imagin'd *Fantomina* and *Celia* were, might very well prevent his having any Thought that they were the same, or that the fair *Widow* was either of them: It never so much as enter'd his Head, and though he did fancy he observed in the Face of the latter, Features which were not altogether unknown to him, yet he could not recollect when or where he had known them; – and being told by her, that from her Birth, she had [Page 275] never remov'd from *Bristol*, a Place where he never was, he rejected the Belief of having seen her, and suppos'd his Mind had been deluded by an Idea of some other, whom she might have a Resemblance of. (274)

The narrator refers to herself explicitly— “I know there are men” and “I can only say” – at precisely the moment in which she chooses to discuss how different from herself *Fantomina* could make herself. The artifice of fiction—a story told by a narrator, constructed by her needs and desires to delight the reader—is exposed in the same speech that explores Beauplaisir's willingness to suspend his disbelief, choosing instead to “suppose[e] his Mind had been deluded by an Idea”. The artifice of fiction and the character's delusion are explored together for they are one and the same. The young lady's arts of feigning denude Beauplaisir of his capacity for knowing his own mind, and the reader is equally denuded, forced to rely on the narrator's dissimulations for her pleasure.

In Haywood's universe, consent is the price paid for pleasure. This is not an ethics but an ontology: consent is the fiction that enables coerced, coercive pleasure in reader and male character alike. For women, it is the placeholder for an impossibility due to the split in their subjectivity. The illusion of consent is a conduit for coercion, which compels because of the pleasure it offers.

Chapter 3: “Too Much like a Romance”: Celebrity, Debt, and the Pleasures of Reading Novels in *The Fortunate Mistress (Roxana)*

Introduction

Defoe’s final novel *The Fortunate Mistress (Roxana)* opens with his heroine in a pickle. Her husband has spent their entire fortune on hunting and carriages and other props supporting his pretensions to aristocracy, before disappearing and leaving her with five children and a maid to feed. Fortunately, Roxana is charming and attractive, and her landlord, after initially demanding the rent she owes him, suddenly changes his tune and seems to imply that he will accept certain favors from her in exchange for the rent. The maid Amy encourages her mistress to accept his terms, insisting, “You will starve if you do not consent,” and Roxana’s virtue is no match for this survivalist logic. She succumbs to the landlord’s desires. However, rather than bemoaning in tragic tones the nature of her entanglement with a man who would leverage survival against sex, or questioning the logic that allows consent to emerge from a set of coercive alternatives—say yes or die!—Roxana discovers a deep pleasure in her relationship with the landlord; his death devastates her, despite leaving her a wealthy woman. This pleasure, which emerges not despite but through the coercive nature of Roxana’s consent, is the subject of this chapter. Victoria Kahn and Oliver Arnold’s insight into consent in the period—that it is entirely compatible with coercion—makes possible a new reading of the novel.¹ In what follows, I will argue that *The Fortunate Mistress* depicts a series of coercive scenarios that constellate around gratitude and celebrity culture, in order to illuminate the potential for pleasure that they conceal. The novel portrays the pleasure it offers in the same light; the pleasures of submitting to the work of fiction reveal the reader’s autonomy as itself a fiction.

The Fortunate Mistress, which has enjoyed a resurgence of critical attention in the last quarter century, has often been read as a text about reading. Critics have been picking up on ambivalence as a structuring principle of the novel’s form and the reader’s experience.² George Starr has alerted us to the ambivalence of Roxana’s narrative style as she oscillates between absorbed story-telling and detached editorializing. The reader

¹ Victoria Kahn, *Wayward Contracts: The Crisis of Political Obligation in England, 1640-1674* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Oliver Arnold, forthcoming.

²See Jesse M. Molesworth, “A Dreadful Course of Calamities: Roxana’s Ending Reconsidered,” *ELH* 74.2 (2007) 493-508. Molesworth argues that *The Fortunate Mistress* is both an early moment of realism as well as “one of the most incisive and troubling critiques of literary realism authored in the eighteenth century” (494). See also Peter New, “Why Roxana Can Never Find Herself,” *Modern Language Review*, 91.2 (1996), 317-29. New argues that “by creating a double for Roxana, Defoe is able to express here the total state of a person wishing both to own and to disown, at the time of the action and at the time of writing, her own desires” (318).

takes her cues from this ambivalence, herself oscillating between sympathizing and judging in step with Roxana's vacillation.³ William Warner has modified this argument, seeing in *The Fortunate Mistress* "a book-length face-off between a desiring subject and an ethical one."⁴ According to Warner, Defoe attempts to rewrite the novel of amorous intrigue such that the moral improvement of the reader is ensured despite the salacious content; however, this project fails, and "the ultimate efficacy of novel writing becomes hostage to the response of that unruly and unpredictable interlocutor, the reader."⁵ Both of these accounts identify a link between the novel's representation of its characters and the experience of its readers, and my argument will pick up on this crucial insight. However, I will argue that the reader neither judges nor sympathizes with Roxana. The reader's edification is also not at stake in her encounter with this text, despite the alibi Defoe plants in the Preface.

This chapter will argue that *The Fortunate Mistress* contains within it an etiology of the pleasures of coercion that the novel co-opts as its structuring principle. First, Roxana engages in a series of relationships that allow her pleasure precisely because she is not free in choosing them, or in her behavior within them. The novel then shows Roxana in the thick of celebrity culture, itself a cultural formation designed to delight through captivation. While Roxana dances for the hordes of partygoers she entertains, we look upon her as they do, and the ekphrasis begins to show us our relationship with the fictional character. This is a turning point in the story, for as Roxana is reified, the stakes of the novel travel from her pleasure to ours in beholding her; our pleasure becomes unhinged from identification with her, to spectatorship of her. This relocation of pleasure is explored through the characters of Susan and Amy, who are both readers of Roxana, and are both subjected to violently coercive rituals. Roxana morphs from a pleasure-seeker to a reified object that coerces the pleasure from her readers (Susan, Amy, us). As Roxana is reified, Amy raped, and Susan killed, the reader's pleasure is revealed to be the result of one final coercive practice: the captivating prose fiction of the novel. Early critics of the novel objected to the upstart genre on these grounds, but *The Fortunate Mistress* reveals this pleasure to be the very lubricant of modern life, insofar as it is the pleasure of coercive scenarios that compels consent.

The pre-modern alternative story—that traditional, patriarchal society had plenty of coercion which was eradicated under the magical sign of consent—is revealed for the fiction that it is. Defoe uses two historical periods to invoke this fictional Whiggish narrative of progression—the Restoration and Georgian—conflated in *The Fortunate Mistress* in order to reveal how infested the allegedly modern England is with its coercive past. Celebrity culture provides the turning point: ostensibly in line with consumerist tendencies, which the Whiggish narrative would associate with market

³ George Starr, *Defoe and Casuistry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

⁴ William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 174.

⁵ *Ibid.*

economies, exchange, and consent, Defoe locates the reification of celebrities in the Restoration, identifying it with coercive attachments that linger in the allegedly free market. The consumption of novels is another instance of such a coercive attachment.

The Coercive Nature of Gratitude

Roxana has a penchant for finding herself in coercive situations. As I have mentioned, Roxana's life as a prostitute begins when she is forced to find some way to feed herself and her maid Amy.⁶ Roxana swears to Amy that she would "die before [she] would consent" to having sex with the landlord; however, one "Joint of Meat" and "Loin of Veal" and "three of four Glasses of Wine" later, Roxana finds herself gushing to the landlord, "how [she] should ever make him a Return in any way suitable."⁷ Roxana eroticizes her debt to the landlord, even before she is certain that this will be his price for delivering her. Indeed, at this point, he insists "that his Reward would be, the Satisfaction of having rescued me from Misery."⁸ But soon enough, the landlord does hope for a greater reward, though he insists "he would no more oppress my Gratitude now, than he would my Necessity before, nor ask any thing, supposing he would stop his Favors, or withdraw his Kindness, if he was deny'd."⁹ Roxana's response is as follows:

I confess, the terrible Pressure of my former Misery, the Memory of which lay heavy upon my Mind, and the surprising Kindness with which he had deliver'd me, and withal, the Expectations of what he might still do for me, were powerful things, and made me have scarce the Power to deny him any thing he wou'd ask... I must acknowledge, I was so overcome with his Goodness to me in those many kind things he had done, that I not only was easie at what he did, and made no Resistance, but was inclin'd to do the like, whatever he had offer'd to do... and indeed, I began at the time not only to be much oblig'd to him, but to love him too.¹⁰

⁶ In classic Defoean style, the children are quickly dispensed with; children seem to be a coercive force incapable of producing any pleasure.

⁷ Daniel Defoe, *Roxana*, ed. John Mullan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 29-30.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 34-5.

Roxana progresses from indebtedness to gratitude, then from gratitude to obligation, desire, and finally, love. She goes to great lengths to hide this from herself and the reader—she blames rhetoric, Amy, and even the devil—but at the heart of her connection with the landlord lies a desire and even love that are the products of the coercive nature of her obligation to him.

Contracts, too, become the handmaidens of coercive encounters in *The Fortunate Mistress*. The landlord goes so far as to produce “a Contract in Writing” that he claims “shall make an Equality” between himself and his erstwhile-starving companion, while in effect it merely reproduces the unequal nature of their relationship—he provides for her a certain amount of money, and she must “cohabit constantly...in all Respects as a Wife.”¹¹ The contract, like the consent Roxana swore she would never give and then gives, is entirely compatible not only with the coercive conditions that produced it, but with pleasure and love. It is this sort of contract—born of coercive conditions, generative of pleasure—that I will argue is the model for the relationship between novel and reader in *The Fortunate Mistress*. Warner argues that “*Roxana* overwhelms the implicit contract between novel reader and novel writer,” but the opposite seems to be the case: contracts are themselves seen to be the product of an overwhelming situation.¹² As Kahn has argued, seventeenth-century contract theorists such as Hobbes, Milton, and Cavendish portray “the contracts of genre and society as vehicles of coercion.”¹³ The very nature of romance *as a genre* participates in the larger debates about consent and coercion:

one might even say that Cavendish’s conception of romance amounts to an internalization of the Hobbesian theory of contract, according to which we consent to be coerced: whereas in Hobbes’s account coercion takes the form of the sovereign’s power of the sword, in Cavendish coercion takes the form of our very own passions. We are coerced, in short, by ourselves.¹⁴

For Kahn, the genre of romance bears the same relationship with its readers—a coercive one—as do the contracts represented within the text, and it is this model that I seek to develop by thinking about *The Fortunate Mistress* as a novel. Over and over, Roxana presents herself as enjoying coercion, or even instigating it, and I will presently argue that this pleasure travels from Roxana to her readers.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹² *Licensing Entertainment*, 175.

¹³ *Wayward Contracts*, 193.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 192.

Kahn shows how the generic contract of romance, the marriage contract and the political contract all participate equally in establishing this model of coercive consent within modern life. Defoe, too, is committed to representing marriage as a potential site for coercion. A third of the way through the novel, a Dutch Merchant helps Roxana out of a sticky situation and, as a reward, seeks her hand in marriage. But Roxana soon sets him straight:

I told him, I had, perhaps, differing Notions of Matrimony, from what the receiv'd Custom had given us of it; that I thought a Woman was a free Agent, as well as a Man, and was born free, and cou'd she manage herself suitably, might enjoy that Liberty to as much Purpose as the Men do... That the very Nature of the Marriage Contract was, in short, nothing but giving up Liberty, Estate, Authority, and everything to the Man, and the Woman was indeed, a meer Woman ever after, that is to say, a Slave.¹⁵

The Dutch Merchant attempts to convince her but to no avail—he is no match for Roxana's diatribe, and she eludes his grasp. He offers somewhat weakly that, “they had the Name of Subjection, without the Thing,” a saucy reversal of the conditions whereby another Dutchman entered London with an army of 40,000 soldiers, in the name of consent, without the thing. Since 1688, with only twelve years left to go of the seventeenth century, the Glorious Revolution had been viewed as inaugurating a new world of consensual government; however, Arnold has persuasively argued this to be a piece of rhetoric, a fiction that disguises the fact that the consent of the convention was produced through coercive means.¹⁶

Although Roxana seems to be critiquing such a model here, the critique is not sustained, and Roxana's wonderful anti-marriage jeremiad is not allowed to stand. In hot pursuit of Roxana, the Dutch Merchant arrives in England, and is not above using the debt of gratitude Roxana owes him to strengthen his suit. Roxana “had no inclination to be a Wife again” and even “hated the very thought of it.”¹⁷ It is not easy for Roxana to decline “my Merchant of Paris; my Benefactor; and indeed, my Deliverer” (recall that William of Orange was repeatedly referred to as England's deliverer), yet without understanding why, she is certain that she does not want to marry him. “I cannot consent to marry,” she tells him.¹⁸ Because she owes him too much, consent would be

¹⁵ *Roxana*, 148.

¹⁶ Oliver Arnold, forthcoming.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 135, 143. For William of Orange as Deliverer, see for example, *An Account of the life and glorious actions of William the Third, late King of England, &c. Containing his princely birth, royal marriage, famous expedition into England, his being proclaim'd and*

impossible. For a moment, this logic stands, and it looks as though *The Fortunate Mistress* means to mount a full-fledged critique of consent based in coercion. But Roxana then tells us that the “true” reason she didn’t want to marry again was simply that “I wou’d not give up my Money, which, tho’ it was true, yet was really too gross for me to acknowledge”; therefore, “I was oblig’d to give a new Turn to it, and talk upon a kind of an elevated Strain, which really was not in my Thoughts at first, at-all.”¹⁹ Roxana’s moving speeches about the coercive nature of contracts are simply a cover story: she is still too wounded by her recent misfortunes to allow anyone to threaten her economic security. Furthermore, and perhaps more disturbingly, she *does* marry the Dutch Merchant. She regrets refusing him more than anything else she does, until she finally accepts him eleven years later. The marriage contract, far from precluding coercion, rather reveals a kernel of pleasure hidden in its folds.

While Roxana does finally opt for marriage with this Dutchman, he is himself not unscathed by the narrative, despite his status as the paragon of economic virtue in critical accounts of the novel.²⁰ Roxana meets him while attempting to leave Paris with jewels she has reported stolen from her murdered paramour the Landlord-cum-Jeweler—jewels which are unfortunately recognized by a Jew, who infers that Roxana must be the jeweler’s murderer. The Jew, of course, is partially right—though Roxana is not guilty of murder, these *are* the same jewels, and Roxana is terrified that she will be discovered. Fortunately for her, the Dutch Merchant is on her side, and his already tender feelings for Roxana are affronted by the Jew’s accusations. “The honest *Dutchman*,” Roxana notes sheepishly, “fill’d with Indignation at the barbarous design, came directly to me and told me the whole story.”²¹ His honesty makes him credulous, and his credulity makes him ridiculous: “poor Gentleman! thought I, you know little of me” is Roxana’s summary of the matter.²² His credulity is represented as having a dampening effect on his erotic appeal, and as readers, we must agree. Surely Defoe the canny author who, in George Starr’s formulation, “was able to appreciate an ingeniously contrived or deftly executed theft on aesthetic grounds... quite apart from its moral status” did not expect us to embrace a character bamboozled by this damsel not quite in distress.²³ But in his credulity, the Dutch Merchant is not more boobyish than the reader, forced as she is to

Crown'd King; his great victory at the Boyne, and conquest of Ireland, &c. With the particulars of his sickness, and lamented death. Edinburgh: London. printed, by James Read, and Edinburgh reprinted by George Jaffrey, 1702, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 147.

²⁰ See for example Robert Clark, Introduction, *Roxana*, Everyman Edition (London: Dent and Charles E. Tuttle, 1998), for whom the Dutch Merchant represents “an attempt to establish an ideology of honest capitalism” (xxxiv).

²¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

²² *Ibid.*, 137.

²³ *Defoe and Casuistry*, 184.

accept the captivating powers of Roxana's narrative. Though we are told how Roxana comes to have the jewels, we are in no better position than the Dutch Merchant to challenge her story, and like the Dutch Merchant, we derive pleasure from submitting to her narrative. In the next section, I discuss precisely how our attachment to the narrative is figured.

The Coercive Nature of Celebrity

One of the most explicit if mysterious formal features of the narrative is its ambiguous temporal setting. The narrator tells us she was born in 1673, which would place most of the novel's events squarely in Georgian England. But references are also made to Restoration characters and Restoration scenes: for example, after providing three different names, the title page of the first edition states that all these names refer also to "the Person known by the Name of the LADY ROXANA, in the Time of King Charles II" specifically associating the racy moniker "Roxana" with the Restoration.²⁴ Similarly, during the climax of her career as a courtesan, Roxana claims to have danced for the "D—e of M—th" and the "King" at a time which, according to the novel's own cheeky calculations, should have been circa 1715: these two would have been dead for over thirty years. While most critics have identified these discrepancies with the same sort of clumsiness that allowed Defoe to misplace Moll Flanders' children, Paul Alkon has argued that Defoe purposely doubled the story's temporal setting in order to achieve

²⁴ In "Roxana's Georgic Setting," Rodney M. Baine argues that Defoe probably had very little to do with the original title page, which would have been the bookseller's jurisdiction (*SEL* 15.3 [1975]: 459-71). He finds evidence for this in certain discrepancies between the text and the title page: for example, while Defoe insists on withholding all names throughout the text besides the nickname "Roxana" and later Susan, the original title page provides three. Among the 1724 bookseller's other mistakes Baine counts referring to Roxana as a Countess in Germany instead of Holland, and locating the narrative temporally "in the time of King Charles II." The novel belongs fully in Georgian London, according to Baine, and this "mistake" of referencing the Restoration is then corrected in subsequent editions that remain closer to the text; that is, Baine views these bookseller-cum-title-page-composers as *readers* of *The Fortunate Mistress*, and because Baine is convinced that the story is set in Georgian England, he privileges later editions as corrections of a primary error in reading. Rather than interpreting Roxana's story as *itself* ambivalent about its temporality, Baine reads the discrepancy as existing between author and bookseller. While Baine's understanding of the title pages as primary readings of *The Fortunate Mistress* is inspired, it seems to me that rather than correcting an error in reading comprehension, the 1742 bookseller was attempting to do just what Baine himself does—put the tension between fortunes and time periods under erasure. Baine, along with the 1735 and 1742 booksellers, is struggling to resolve a tension that is central to the novel's plot.

a very specific aesthetic effect: the Restoration setting distances the reader, Alkon argues, even as the Georgian setting compels identification.²⁵ In this way, Defoe gets the benefits of identification without the moral costs. The double time scheme is for Defoe a *solution* to the literary “problem of portraying ethically deficient characters without losing either human sympathy or moral perspective.” Alkon’s phenomenology of reading double introduces the crucial perspective of the reader, asking what effect seeing double has on readerly sensibilities, and what the upshot of these effects might be.²⁶

While importantly allowing the Restoration to be part of the design of the text, rather than a mistake, Alkon’s account of *The Fortunate Mistress* reduces the use of the Restoration to an alibi. But *The Fortunate Mistress* achieves a much more subtle effect than this, for the novel superimposes the diachronically separate time schemes onto each other, allowing them to coexist synchronically as value systems, co-occurring in different characters. The reader is meant not to forget this discrepancy, but to theorize it. It is during Roxana’s reign as Restoration courtesan that the reader is *most* represented within the text: the reader’s relationship to the fictional narrative is modeled during this period, and it is neither sympathetic nor moral. Midway through the novel, Roxana returns to London, eager to cut a figure in court. She hosts a masquerade ball and dresses up as the famous Roxolana after whom she is christened by the mob, who at the sight of her in her get-up, “were under the greatest surprise imaginable; the very music stopped awhile to gaze, for the dress was indeed exceedingly surprising, perfectly new, very agreeable, and wonderful rich.”²⁷ The captivation of her onlookers is palpable: they are surprised and arrested. Though she surely means that the musicians stopped playing, she says “the very music stopped awhile to gaze”. In other words, the silence itself, the very absence of music, the aural atmosphere is made up of the gaze.

Roxana is given her name in this incident—her real name is Susan, we learn only later on—and she refers to herself hereafter as Roxana. Roxana explains:

I was now in my element. I was as much talked of as anybody could desire, and I did not doubt but something or other would come of it; but the report of my being so rich rather was a balk to my view than anything else; for the gentlemen that

²⁵ Rodney Baine, “Roxana’s Georgic Setting,” *SEL* 15.3 (1975): 459-71; David Blewett, “The Double Time-Scheme of *Roxana*,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 13(1984): 19-28; Max Novak, “Crime and Punishment in Defoe’s *Roxana*,” *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 65.3 (1966):445-65; Paul Alkon, *Defoe and Fictional Time* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 58-9

²⁶ *Defoe and Fictional Time*, p. 59.

²⁷ *Roxana*, 175.

would perhaps have been troublesome enough otherwise, seemed to be kept off, for Roxana was too high for them.²⁸

The crowds are awe-struck by her *celebrity* status, and keep their distance, though they continue to talk and to gaze. But her readers, too, gaze, captivated by the imaginary spectacle of her costume and dance. At this moment, when the text explicitly models what it means to be captivated by spectacle, the reader and Roxana's viewers are alike in their submission to the power of the fantasy she invites her viewers to project onto her. The *ekphrasis* deployed in the description of her dress effectively identifies her star-gazing admirers with the readers of her story.

The connection between celebrity and fiction is concretized with the invocation of Charles II. Roxana initially returned to England with the desire to join a royal coterie of mistresses. The king arrives (many hints are dropped that this is Charles II) as Roxana is transforming herself into a celebrity, and it is no accident that her celebrity status brings on the mention of the Merry Monarch. Renaissance scholars have alerted us to the power of the sovereign gaze and the dazzling effects of being a cynosure that “converts economic enticement into the fiercer magic of a specular seduction,” as Christopher Pye puts it.²⁹ Renaissance scholarship focuses mainly on the spectacle made by Elizabeth and James, and no wonder—the spectacle made by Charles II was quite different. Charles II was something of a failure when it came to projecting sovereign power; according to Joseph Roach, “the contempt with which he was often regarded and sometimes openly treated still shocks readers today.”³⁰ This leads Roach to the conclusion that Charles II was more of a celebrity than a sovereign, embodying the contradictory vulnerability and power, glamour and abjection, that are the hallmarks of the “public intimacy” of the “It-effect.”³¹ It is for this reason that Charles II appears in *The Fortunate Mistress*: Charles II's power came not from the power of sovereignty, but from the power of fantasy, just like fiction's. By the time of the Restoration, the sovereign cynosure had become a fiction, but one still imbued with a lot of potency. Its potency, however, resided more in

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

²⁹ *The Gendering of Men*, vol. 1 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004). See also Leonard Tennenhouse, “Stimulating History: A Cock Fight for our Times,” *TDR* 34.4 (1990), 144; Christopher Pye, *The Regal Phantasm: Shakespeare and the Politics of Spectacle* (Routledge, 1990), 63; Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997). “The court aristocracy's command of the visual field enabled displays of their legitimacy as rulers,” Thomas A. King tells us, and “the Tudors and Stuarts made specularly and patronage... overlapping exercises of power.”

³⁰ *It*, (University of Michigan Press, 2007), 97.

³¹ *Ibid.*

the pleasures it invoked than in the fear it elicited. Roach quotes Walter Bagehot's description of the power of spectacle:

In fact, the mass of the English people yield a deference rather to something else than to their rulers. They defer to what we may call the THEATRICAL SHOW of society. A certain state passes before them; a certain pomp of great men; a certain spectacle of beautiful women; a wonderful scene of wealth and enjoyment is displayed, and they are *coerced* by it. Their imagination is bowed down; they feel they are not equal to the life which is revealed to them. Courts and aristocracies have the great quality which rules the multitude, though philosophers can see nothing in it—visibility.³²

At the heart of post-Restoration English sovereign power is the coercion of spectacle, which subdues the imagination, rather than the political will. Patriarchal kingship doesn't disappear in the modern era, but morphs into the perhaps more powerful and subordinating force of fantasy.

The "theatrical show" once easily associated with the spectacle of royalty cloaks Roxana not only within the novel by her spectators, but outside the novel, by her readers. The mention of Charles II both on the title page and at Roxana's dance parties further exposes the form of the novel at work in this text. The coercion at the heart of the spectacle is *both* the "pleasure of subjection and proximity to favor" that the figure of the sovereign activates *and* the pleasure of reading fiction.³³ For what are characters if not fictional celebrities, and what is celebrity if not a fiction? Thus the novel mentions Charles II to invoke the kind of engrossed submission readers recognize from their own star-gazing in order to reveal to them the nature of the pleasure of reading. Rather than setting the reader up to sympathize and judge by turns, as Starr and Alkon suggest, *The Fortunate Mistress* delivers Roxana as centrally located in a sovereign cynosure not only to the eyes of the other characters, but to the reader's eyes as well. The reader is engulfed in the spectacle, and Roxana's body operates like "the king's double body...like a miraculous contagion, capable of transforming directly all who reflected on it."³⁴

The Fortunate Mistress fills the text with characters who are subjected to the potency of celebrity. Roxana herself is not immune to it, consumed by the desire to marry a prince despite having enough money between herself and her Dutch Merchant to live like "like a Princess"—"But tho' this was true, yet the Name of *Princess* and the

³² *It*, 77, my italics.

³³ *The Gendering of Men*, 50.

³⁴ *The Regal Phantasm*, 4.

flutter of it, *in a word*, the Pride weighed ‘em down.”³⁵ The word itself is not fungible—unlike capital; it possesses an affective power for Roxana, a “flutter” that cannot be replaced by any sum of money, and neither can it be defined. The dark side of this flutter reveals itself when Roxana’s Dutch Merchant buys her a title (a gift for which she finally marries him).

Roxana’s analysis of the bought title reveals the relationship between celebrity and fiction:

I was now my Lady –, and I must own I was exceedingly pleased with it; 'twas so big and so great to hear myself called Her Ladyship, and Your Ladyship, and the like, that I was like the Indian king at Virginia, who, having a house built for him by the English and a lock put upon the door, would sit whole days together with the key in his hand, locking and unlocking and double-locking the door, with an unaccountable pleasure at the novelty; so I could have sat a whole day together to hear Amy talk to me and call me Your Ladyship at every word, but after a while the novelty wore off and the pride of it abated, till at last truly I wanted the other title as much as I did that of Ladyship before.³⁶

Roxana’s *enjoyment* of the title is compared to the Indian King’s, whose sovereignty is now a fiction, symbolized by a key to a house he doesn’t own because it now resides on land that has been colonized. But Roxana is wise to the ways of celebrity, that fantasy logic that has supplanted true titles and real sovereignty. The episode in which she purchases a title is also the episode in which, with this one potent image, she reveals the dangerous potential of fiction—its potential, if successful, to colonize, leaving its reader with a sign of her autonomy: closing the book. In this image, Roxana, who has colonized the imagination of the reader, gives us the key to locking and unlocking and double-locking *The Fortunate Mistress*.

The Coercive Nature of Reading

Roxana’s narrative is haunted by her two groupies: her ubiquitous, enabling maid Amy, and her fatally persistent daughter Susan. The struggle for Roxana’s recognition—both are obsessed with declarations of loyalty from her— issues in death for one, and rape and temporary banishment for the other. It is curious that Defoe felt the need to shadow Roxana’s story with not one but two foils. It is equally curious that almost without exception, critics of *The Fortunate Mistress* interpret either one or the other of Roxana’s minions but not both of them. Those who focus on Amy see her as an externalized part of Roxana’s psychological needs or desires; she is often referred to as

³⁵ *Roxana*, 235.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 246.

Roxana's "alter-ego," due to her role as director in the schemes that fulfill Roxana's salacious and often disavowed desires.³⁷ In contrast, Susan has inspired structural rather than psychoanalytic interpretations, many of which focus on the role of modernity or commodity structures in the text.³⁸ I suggest that Susan and Amy embody two models of reading through which *The Fortunate Mistress* explores the potentials for coercive pleasure buried in the form of the novel. The doubling of sidekicks mirrors the doubling of time schemes; Defoe uses Roxana's negotiations of these alternatives to articulate the novel's difference from romance but also from discourses which would eschew fictional absorption altogether. As we will see, Defoe uses Susan's attempts to coerce Roxana into acknowledging her as a daughter in order to stage a quixotic attachment to fact at the expense of fiction. But he uses Amy and her attempts to squash Susan to illustrate Romance's distance from the novel, a quixotic fantasy from which the novel departs.

Susan first appears at a point in the novel when Roxana suddenly recalls that ten years ago, she began to search for her children. Susan's entrance onto the scene disrupts the narrative's chronology: "I must go back here, after telling openly the wicked things I did, to mention something, which however, had the Face of doing good."³⁹ Amy finds Susan and gives her some money, and Roxana wryly muses that Susan was "at first a little too much elevated" by her new status. There is no hint that things will go awry, and the narrative returns to Roxana's life in London ten years later, to her decision to clean up her act, and the honest Quaker who helps her do so. Roxana reunites with the Dutch Merchant, an event which ends the novel *chronologically*. The story then backtracks again—"I must now go back to another Scene, and join it to this End of my Story"—and Roxana spends the final third of the novel describing the horrifying events that lead to the possible murder of her child.⁴⁰ In other words, the novel at a crucial moment *splits* and runs two concurrent stories simultaneously. This split is classically Defoean: Susan is reportedly nineteen or twenty *both* when Roxana finds her eleven years previously, *and* fifteen years later, when she should be thirty five, according to the novel's chronology. Here again we see Defoe superimposing diachronic structures onto

³⁷ Terry Castle, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Peter New, "Why Roxana Can Never Find Herself," David Marshall, *The Figure of Theater* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

³⁸ Anne Louise Kibbie, "Monstrous Generation: The Birth of Capital in Defoe's Moll Flanders and Roxana." *PMLA* 110.5 (Oct., 1995), 1023-1034; Jesse Molesworth, "'A Dreadful Course of Calamities': Roxana's Ending Reconsidered," *ELH* 74.2 (2007) 493-508; Janet Sorensen, "'I talk to everybody in their own way': Defoe's economies of identity," *The New Economic Criticism: studies at the intersection of literature and economics*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Mark Osteen (Routledge, 1999).

³⁹ *Roxana*, 188.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 265.

synchronic values, the messiness of this operation rendering it visible to the reader. The Susan episode is introduced *after* the uninterrupted narration of Roxana's Court life with Amy, her Restoration romance. The bifurcation encourages a comparative analysis of Roxana's two foils.

Susan's appearance in the narrative effectively ends Roxana's ability to enjoy herself and the spectacle she makes, for she becomes instead the object par excellence for Susan's unceasing demand for recognition, a reification that turns her into a cause for others' enjoyment, and also a metonym for the novel. Janet Sorensen has illuminated Roxana's role as a commodity that must hide its history in order to enter circulation by submitting to the law of equivalence. But the novel stages the failure of this law, in Sorensen's inspired account: "As Roxana's experience reveals, however, identity predicated on the ability to master and efface difference through exchange will always be haunted by the threat of the return of that difference."⁴¹ Narrative itself is able to tell a story in which the particularity of the object is insisted upon, revealing the commodity's dangerous difference and disrupting the smoothness of circulation. This reading alerts us to a central aspect of the text; however, Roxana's reification is significant not only for its role in establishing narrative's resistance to commodification, but also and more importantly for its role in divulging the coercive nature of fictional narratives. The novel's form doesn't so much insist on Roxana's particular history as it suggests the fantasy-logic buried in historical understanding, as I will now argue by turning to the tension between Amy and Susan.

Susan's untimely demise begins when she decides that it's not money she is after but a mother. To Amy's horror, Susan deduces that she, *Amy*, is her mother, and begs Amy to acknowledge their biological relation. Amy panics. "I think the Girl's mad!" she cries, insisting "if I was thy Mother I would not disown thee; don't you see I am as kind to you *as if* I was your Mother?"⁴² However, this "as if" does not satisfy Susan, for it is not merely Amy's kindness that has suggested to Susan that they are related. Rather, Susan tells Amy, "That she knew well enough how it was; I know, *says she*, when you left—, *naming the Village*, where I liv'd when my Father went away from us all, that you went over to *France*, I know that too, and who you went with, *says the Girl*; did not my Lady *Roxana* come back again with you? I know it all well enough, tho' I was but a Child."⁴³ Susan starts to piece together the parts of a story she is hoping includes herself as the biological product of its protagonist. This account of Roxana's life is largely accurate. Short of the referent—Susan has supplanted Amy for Roxana—Susan has the story almost exactly as Roxana has told it. As Roxana puts it, "*In short*, it was plain the Girl had but a broken Account of things, but yet, that she had receiv'd some Accounts

⁴¹ Janet Sorensen, "'I talk to everybody in their own way': Defoe's economies of identity," *The New Economic Criticism: studies at the intersection of literature and economics*, ed. Martha Woodmansee and Mark Osteen (Routledge, 1999), 77.

⁴² *Roxana*, p. 267.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 268.

that had a reality in the Bottom of them.”⁴⁴ Susan “was quite wrong in some things, she was yet so right in some other.”⁴⁵ Susan infers: she “put all these things together” to make the most probable narrative of her genealogy.

The “broken Fragments,” the “reality in the Bottom,” being both wrong and “yet so right” are suggestive of Watt’s definition of formal realism with its “air of authenticity.”⁴⁶ Replete with the details of a circumstantial life, yet denuded of the truth of actual life, the technique of formal realism is what Susan is de facto deploying: she has the details right, yet the referent is wrong—a fiction. Susan’s formal realism is portrayed here as devastating to Roxana’s capacity for self-enjoyment. Susan is a very careful reader, a fact unnerving to Roxana and Amy in the extreme. They fear exposure; it must be avoided at all, including murderous, costs! But the question remains—why? Do they really not believe that Susan would keep their secret? This seems unlikely in a character whose maddening insistence is outweighed only by her extreme vulnerability. Indeed, if Amy and Roxana fear Roxana’s exposure at all costs, why doesn’t Amy simply own Susan as her progeny? Should Amy have owned Susan, all the troubles would have been avoided, and the “broken Fragments of Stories” would have remained just that. Instead, Amy vehemently refuses to own the girl, resulting in Susan arriving at the even truer conclusion that “if [Amy] was not her Mother, Madam *Roxana* was her Mother then, for one of them, *she was sure*, was her Mother.” We are again forced to ask—would it have been so bad to let her in on the secret? The only convincing reason Roxana gives for not wanting to do just that, is that had she done so, “[she] must forever after have been this girl’s Vassal.”⁴⁷ The biological nature of this coercion cancels the potential for pleasure, for pleasure is precisely created by the exchange of consent. Without this exchange, there is pure coercion, biological fact, no illusion of choice to lubricate the exchange of freedom, and thus no pleasure. It is this aspect of the way Susan *reads* that “filled me with Horror.”⁴⁸

Susan insists on a regime of facts, declaring “that she wou’d go find [Roxana] out; *adding*, that she made no doubt but she cou’d do it, for she knew where to enquire the Name of her new Husband.” Susan wants the “True History”; she is the empiricist par excellence, who in Jesse Molesworth’s eloquent phrasing, espouses a “modern view, granting more weight to circumstantial evidence” than to direct testimony.⁴⁹ By insisting on reference at all costs, Susan is effectively trying to escape from fiction itself, effacing

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *The Rise of the Novel*, p. 32.

⁴⁷ *Roxana*, p. 280.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Molesworth, 499.

the “nobody-ness” that Catherine Gallagher has insisted upon as fiction’s hallmark.⁵⁰ Defoe seems to be launching a *critique* against this kind of skepticism from the perspective of Susan’s “*Knight-Errantry*” in pursuit of the “Evidence... of the Fact itself.” Susan’s obsession with the truth ironically pushes Roxana further into hiding, as the Quaker puts it, for “’twas certain she could never be brought to own a Name and Character [that Susan] had so justly expos’d.”⁵¹ Furthermore, her response to the suggestion that Roxana was an actress is equally telling: “No indeed, Madam, *says she, I assure you, my Lady was no Actress; my Lady danc’d a Turkish Dance, all the Lords and Gentry said it was so; and one of them swore, he had seen it danc’d in Turkey himself; so that it cou’d not come from the Theatre at Paris; and then the Name Roxana, says she, was a Turkish Name.*” Susan’s account of the dance parties that the reader, too, attended, makes it sound like the veracity of her tale hangs on whether or not Roxana’s dance was *actually* Turkish, confirmed by the fact that “Roxana,” her mother’s *fictional* nomenclature, is a Turkish name. Refusing to recognize fiction, Susan cannot distinguish it from fact: she thinks the *fiction* of Roxana’s fantasy-fulfilling persona is her mother’s *factual* truth. Molesworth calls Susan “a detective searching for clues,” but she is also like the paparazzi stalking their celebrity prey, and in this role, she draws precisely the wrong conclusion—Roxana’s dance is a *French* dance that mimics a Turkish dance, her name a fiction to dress up a woman for hire.⁵² Susan’s desire for facts makes her blind to the fact that Roxana’s real name is also Susan; she cannot see the role she herself plays in shaping the narrative. Susan can’t distinguish between Roxana and a “meer Roxana.”

Susan’s insistence on facts, physical evidence, identification, and truth claims gets between her and the reunion with Roxana for which she yearns, and positions empiricism itself as a method of investigation in fatal tension with the readerly pleasures associated with fiction. Robert Clark suggests that

taking care to get the dates right is quite typical of Defoe’s style of writing which in good measure convinces readers of its plausibility because it cares to be precise and ‘scientific’ about number and quality. The fetish of the factual sign is typically mercantilist, forcefully expressed in any balance sheet, and usually signifies a suspicion between writer and reader which is to be overcome by flaunting the text’s truthful facticity.⁵³

⁵⁰ *Nobody’s Story*.

⁵¹ *Roxana*, 307.

⁵² Molesworth, 498.

⁵³ Clark, xlii.

In this vein, Susan's factual monomania is the epistemological equivalent of the Dutch Merchant's "honest" exchange value. However, the association of mercantilism with the Dutch Merchant's boobyish credulity and of facticity with Susan's obliteration of narrative pleasure seem to me to complicate a reading that finds these to be values that the novel endorses. Susan posits empiricism from within the novel as fiction's death drive—that which robs the novel of its pleasure and thus its existence—and with Susan's death comes not only the end of the novel, but the end of Defoe's career as novelist.⁵⁴ Susan is crucially *enslaved* to the search for her mother. There is no pleasure as there is for Amy; her story is all coercion, and no pleasure.

Susan's empiricism also threatens another character. Her opposition to fantasy threatens to destroy everything Amy has made it her mission to provide for Roxana. Amy plays foil to Roxana's lovers and liar to Roxana's foes, fulfilling every one of Roxana's desires, even catastrophically. Amy also plays a central role in stage-managing Roxana's career, through a crafty combination of lies and clever schemes which further Roxana's often conflicting desires. Roxana characterizes their relationship as follows: "I must remember it here, to the Praise of this poor Girl, my Maid, that tho' I was not able to give her any Wages, and had told her so, nay I was not able to pay her the Wages that I was in Arrears to her, yet she would not leave me."⁵⁵ This passage begins to spell out what will become clear very soon—Amy and Roxana do not have a modern economic relationship. The fiction of a contractual working agreement between mistress and maid is here revealed to be just that—a fiction. Amy's relationship to Roxana is not determined by money at all, but by a web of affective intensities that Roxana sees as debt and Amy sees as voluntary and sympathetic. Indeed, Roxana, "*The Fortunate Mistress*," is Amy's mistress too. Is she perhaps fortunate in having secured the "violent Affection" of Amy?⁵⁶ The slippage of affection which results from the ambiguity of the term "Mistress"—lover of men, employer of Amy—solidifies the eroticism between the two women as an effect announced by the novel's title. The erotic valence of Roxana's career is carried over through this ambiguity to her status as Amy's employer, and this eroticism turns ugly for Amy as Roxana herself displays a truly "violent Affection" towards Amy by instigating the rape of her virgin maid.

Amy's relationship to Roxana is familial but not biological; it reflects an affective reality rather than an economic one. We have seen that the novel associates

⁵⁴ David Marshall and Maxmillian E. Novak both use this biographical fact as the interpretive key to the novel. This reading is in opposition to Mary Poovey's reading in *Genres of the Credit Economy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), where she argues that *The Fortunate Mistress* instructs readers in evaluating credit and credibility for purposes of making them better consumers of finance capital. Defoe seems to me to be precisely critiquing these operations with Susan, exposing the ways in which a strictly consumer culture is anathema to the pleasures of fantasy.

⁵⁵ *Roxana*, 16.

⁵⁶ *Roxana*, 32.

honesty with economic modernity, and Amy is an incorrigible liar: she lies to Roxana's ex-husband the Brewer, to the Quaker, to Susan, to the Dutch Merchant, and finally, to Roxana herself, telling her that the Brewer is dead long before this is confirmed, in order to enable Roxana to remarry, and what's more, *Roxana is not bothered by these lies*. Amy forces the world to conform to her values by telling stories "with all the Art that she was Mistress of," and in this way chiefly is Amy aligned with Defoe the novelist and story-teller. Were it not for the presence of Susan in the story, we could certainly see in Amy the novelist's avatar. She sets Roxana up, dresses her as the "Writer" claims to do on the title page, tells her story and her stories, and advances her interest. Roxana in an aside explains the success of Amy's manipulations by telling us that "Amy, an ambitious Jade...knew my weakest Part, *namely*, that I lov'd great things, and that I lov'd to be flatter'd and courted."⁵⁷ Let us not forget Amy's role in tickling Roxana's ego-ideal after the Dutch Merchant purchases a title for Roxana: "I cou'd have sat a whole Day together, to hear *Amy* talk to me, and call me *Your Ladyship* at every word."⁵⁸ Amy is the self-appointed catalyst of Roxana's romance plot.

But the pleasures of romance are dangerous. Amy's absorption in Roxana's plot eventually drives her mad, like that sorrowful knight to whom Susan is compared. Quixotism is Defoe's way of signaling the limitations of committing to the wrong genre. In Susan's case, that genre is empiricism; in Amy's, it is Romance.

Amy's assimilation into the romance of *The Fortunate Mistress* is portrayed as compromising her ability to consent to the events of the story, dramatized by her rape at Roxana's behest. Early in the novel, when the two women discuss the Landlord (who it seems will soon attempt to achieve a more intimate relationship with Roxana), Amy insists that she will offer herself "if he would but give you enough to live easie upon."⁵⁹ Roxana correctly surmises "there's more Friendship than Honesty" in Amy's offer, for when the time comes, Amy strenuously resists:

She pulled back a little, would not let me pull off her clothes at first, but it was hot weather and she had not many clothes on, and particularly no stays on; and at last, when she saw I was in earnest, she let me do what I would; so I fairly stripped her, and then I threw open the bed and thrust her in.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 246.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

I need say no more; this is enough to convince anybody that I did not think him my husband, and that I had cast off all principle and all modesty and had effectually stifled conscience.⁶⁰

Amy's resistance is overcome not only by force, but by Roxana's editorializing: Amy's rape is nothing more to her than a piece of evidence regarding her own moral state and her own relationship with the Landlord: "for though she had indeed lain with her master, it was with her mistress's knowledge and consent, and, which was worse, was her mistress's own doing."⁶¹ Roxana shifts the question of Amy's sexual encounter from being a question of Amy's consent to being a question of *her own* consent. This is a salient staging of the stakes of reading fiction, for the same deferral of consent occurs as the fictional character's actions displace those of the reader, and the question of consent strays from the reader to the protagonist. The action within the plot mirrors the negotiations between text and reader: just as Amy's consent is suspended in service of the story, so is the reader's. Amy is not the author's avatar, but the reader's.

"It would look too much like a Romance here, to repeat all the kind things he said to me, on that occasion," Roxana tells us on one night with a princely amour, forgetting perhaps that she has not omitted to repeat the kind things anyone else has said to her.⁶² Does this mean she has been writing "Romance" all this time? Indeed— she nonetheless follows this disclaimer directly by saying she "cannot omit one Passage" despite its similarity to romance. When Roxana calls this episode "Romance," she seems to be making a category error. What precisely about the life of a prostitute is *romantic*? Indeed, though some of the conventions of romance persist in this text—the portrayal of sexual pursuit as attack, shipwreck, absent mothers and foundlings—it seems a bizarre genre for this story to invoke. Dieter Schulz has noted that such anti-romance polemics "were aimed more immediately at books like *Love in Excess* than at the romances of the seventeenth century, and that, even when they explicitly mentioned the heroic romance as their target, their notion of 'romance' was profoundly influenced by the productions of such writers as Behn, Manley and Haywood."⁶³ By associating romance with the Restoration, *The Fortunate Mistress* draws our attention to the historical nature of fantasy with its Restoration props and sets, as well as to the fantastical nature of history by challenging the Whiggish narrative of progression. While *The Fortunate Mistress* contains characters attached to two very different regimes of value and two very different kinds of narrative, these are superimposed onto each other in a setting that conflates the Restoration with Georgian England, *as though* one could choose, *as though*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 72.

⁶³ Dieter Schulz, "'Novel,' 'Romance,' and Popular Fiction in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Philology*, 70.1 (July, 1973).

these historical periods exist synchronically. In this way the novel suggests that the contract-based nature of modernity remains charged with a psychic burden of romance fantasy.

Amy is the quixote of fantasy, Susan of facts; what makes *The Fortunate Mistress* a novel is its presentation of this tension, and its belief in our enjoyment at the expense of these two women who *can't* enjoy their coerced positions. While Amy tries to keep the novel a romance with her attachment to the Restoration, the German Prince, and the fulfillment of Roxana's fantasies, Susan reminds both Amy and the reader that *The Fortunate Mistress* is not a romance, driving the novel desperately towards some other form, an accounts-ledger, or a report to the Royal Society. The novel narrates two incomplete and incompatible reading experiences, Amy's fantasies and Susan's facts, and the reader becomes unable either to sustain Roxana's fantasies, or to see through them skeptically. The novel is neither romance nor "True History." Rather, it offers the reader the pleasures of submitting to the potency of Roxana's celebrity, experienced through absorption in her plot. But because this is a novel and not a romance, the reader is not raped, like Amy, nor is she killed, like Susan. She escapes unscathed, and by closing the novel, is restored to the fiction of her sovereignty.

The Fortunate Mistress begins with its heroine engaging in coercive procedures, which secrete a surplus pleasure, revealed to be the lubricant of modern life. But as the plot progresses, Roxana is herself reified into a coercive cause, and unleashes horrific acts upon her groupies. The fictional narrative produces coercive pleasure for its reader, safe as she is from the action of the story, and our pleasure is revealed to us to be on a par with celebrity worship. The novel reveals that modern life is constituted by a series of coercive circumstances, not least of which is submission to the law of fantasy. Worst of all, we cannot help enjoying this captivation. Perhaps the novel is, after all, "too much like a Romance."

Chapter 4: Pamela: Towards a Phenomenology of Reading

Introduction

Pamela's readers have never been shy about divulging their readerly responses. Since its publication in 1740, the story of the sixteen-year-old maid who is repeatedly assaulted by her master, whose "virtue" we are told already in the subtitle is "rewarded" by marriage and ascendancy to her master's rank among the gentry, has charmed, disgusted, aroused, amused, and invigorated its readers. Immediately following its publication, *Pamela*'s readers famously formed two camps: "Pamelists," such as Denis Diderot and Samuel Johnson, who were touched by the heroine's suffering and felt elevated by the story; and "Anti-Pamelists," like Henry Fielding and Eliza Haywood, who read Richardson's novel as false, comically and pornographically so. This controversy is mired in a conflation of Pamela's virtue with her honesty, both synonymous in period usage with chastity—a conflation reiterated in criticism that focuses on on psychological accounts of character. In Frances Ferguson's reading, for example, "the form itself" of the Richardson's novels seeks to "oppose the very mental state it was designed to represent."¹ Ferguson posits the existence of an autonomous, interior truth or psychology distinct from the social forms that misrepresent it. In the same vein, unmediated access to Pamela's heart plays a central role in William Warner's argument about *Pamela*'s epistolary nature: "Pamela's journal letter to her parents produces... the 'truth effect' of knowing what is inside the envelope, inside Pamela's clothes, and inside all the disguises of the social: the letter of the heart."² Even Michael McKeon's argument, which focuses largely on the relationship between genre and social history, ultimately rests on the interior, truthful nature of Pamela's virtue; hence, B's externalized honor is superseded when "internalized in Pamela's virtue."³ Regarding such readings Sandra Macpherson has observed that "norms of interiority are masculinist norms," and as long as the question of Pamela's virtue is posited as a function of her interior truth, we are destined to continue prying into Pamela's interior in our efforts to gain the truth of her suffering, and by extension, the justice of her reward.⁴

¹ "Rape and the Rise of the Novel." *Representations*. 20 (Fall 1987): 88-112, p. 101.

² *Licensing Entertainment*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, p. 191.

³ *The Origins of the English Novel*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987, p. 366.

⁴ *Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010, p. 172. Macpherson argues that a logic that privileges interiority and the intention behind action, rather than the consequences and effects of actions in spite of the intentions behind them, is doomed to locate the justice of claims to rape in the character, and by extension, virtue, of the injured, rather than in the nature of the injury.

In this chapter, I will challenge the critical attention that has been paid to interiority, both Pamela's and her readers', and argue instead that the true stakes of the book are to be found not within the character and reader, but in encounter between character and reader, in the question of consent. Just as Robinson Crusoe was no true model for the enclosing capitalist, so too Richardson's chaste heroine is not the self-enclosed subject furiously protecting her borders, that readers pretend she is. It is rather Pamela's questionable ability to consent, and that of her reader, that structures the text, and gives meaning to its plot.

This chapter attempts to articulate certain formal properties in *Pamela* and the effects they generate; these formal properties are guided by a different principle than the construction and revelation of Pamela's psychological truth. From the earliest possible moment in the text, Pamela's father, Mr. Andrews, instructs his daughter not only in how to behave, but in what sorts of letters he expects to read. Mr. Andrews' demands are twofold: Pamela should narrate letters in which Mr. B attempts to compromise her virtue, *and* she must also represent herself as resisting these attempts. Mr. Andrews courts Pamela's refusal to consent to Mr. B, generating the story of *Pamela* by making the demands that set up and structure the plot. Mr. Andrews dictates the form of the novel as well, for the troubling of consent produces a formal challenge for Pamela. The concept of consent, troubled throughout this text, is dramatized as impossible for Pamela: how can she consent if she must say no? But this state of suspended conditions of consent becomes the breeding ground for Pamela's love, which she tells us, "is not a Volunteer thing." Furthermore, these attempts to coerce Pamela's consent are the source of the reader's own pleasure, for they are the enabling condition of a plot enjoyable enough to absorb and delight its reader. The reader is ultimately revealed to be as incapable of consenting to the events of *Pamela*, or to the conditions of her encounter with the text, as Pamela is to Mr. B's desires. The reader is a passive consumer, with no capacity to assent to or cause any change in the events she consumes. *Pamela's* form, rather than representing its heroine's interiority, reveals to its reader that breaches of consent—both of the character and of the reader—can produce pleasure.

If Haywood's novels expose women's incapacity to consent, Richardson capitalizes on it showing readers that rather than replacing a pre-modern, traditional society with free consent, the modern state gives pleasure in exchange for consent freely given, supplying in its place the "true" coerced consent.

Mr. Andrews Generates Form

Readers of *Pamela* have always interpreted *Pamela's* epistolary style as providing a special avenue to the eponymous heroine's innermost world. In his eulogy on the occasion of Richardson's death, Diderot says of *Pamela's* author, "He it is who lights the depths of the cavern with his torch. He it is who spirits away the mighty phantom which guards the entrance to the cavern."⁵ Truth is equated with interiority, figured as a dark, mysterious cavern, guarded by the phantom of social mores which disguise it. As I mentioned above, William Warner recapitulates Diderot's language of "secret thought[s]"

⁵ "In Praise of Richardson," *Diderot: Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, Penguin Classics, 1995, p. 84.

in the depths of someone's heart" in his chapter "The *Pamela* Media Event" when he suggests that "Pamela's journal letter to her parents produces... the 'truth effect' of knowing what is inside the envelope, inside Pamela's clothes, and inside all the disguises of the social: the letter of the heart."⁶ Warner in so doing discloses the best reason to doubt the equation of the epistolary with an unmediated representation of truth, for how can Pamela's letter provide an unmediated entrance to her heart, when they are letters "to her parents"? Anyone who has composed a letter to a parent knows that few documents are more mediated. By mentioning that Pamela's letters are "to her parents" Warner is thus bringing to light the *disguises* of the social, rather than proof of Pamela's unmediated representation of truth; in Diderot's language, the parental destination of her letters fall on the side of the "phantom which guards the entrance to the cavern" of the heart—the disguises of the social—rather than proof of the cavern's penetrability, dispelling the very access to interiority that Warner seeks to expose.⁷

Pamela's parents are not passive readers. Pamela's first letter to her parents describes a benevolent, paternalistic Mr. B of no determinate age and no determinate marital status. Nothing in his behavior narrated in the first letter is suggestive of mischief. Pamela writes of B's stipulation that if she "was a good Girl, and faithful and diligent, he would be a Friend to me, for his Mother's sake."⁸ He gives her four Guineas—completely within the realm of normal wages for the year spent in her mistress's employ, for which Pamela has yet to be paid, and he instructs her also to be kind and "faithful and diligent" to her parents. B uses the same words to describe how he wishes Pamela to treat him—faithfully and diligently—as he uses to describe how he wishes her to treat her parents, implying that she should treat him as she would her father, not her lover, and unsurprisingly—in the traditional patriarchal order, the landlord is as a father to social inferiors.⁹

However, Mr. Andrews' reply to this letter (we know it is her father, not her mother, for she responds to them separately) construes Mr. B's kindness as something to be feared. Mr. Andrews begins his letter by telling Pamela that "Every body talks how you have come on, and what a genteel Girl you are, and some say you are very pretty; and indeed, six months since, when I saw you last, I should have thought so too, if you was not our child."¹⁰ Pamela's father uses the subjunctive as an alibi to alienate himself from

⁶ *Licensing Entertainment*, University of California Press: 1998, p. 191.

⁷ This error is curious, as Warner himself criticizes Ian Watt's formal realism as an undeconstructed failure by arguing that no language is any closer to reality than any other.

⁸ Samuel Richardson, *Pamela*, Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press: 2001, p. 12.

⁹ oldbailyonline.org reports standard wages for a housemaid to range from two to eight pounds per annum. <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Coinage.jsp#wages>

¹⁰ *Pamela.*, p. 13.

the role of father and into the role of admiring stranger, invoking Richardson's use of the conditional in the Preface to alienate the novel from his imagination. Recall the extended conditional conceit:

If to Divert and Entertain, and at the same time to Instruct and Improve...

If to inculcate Religion and Morality...

If to set forth in the most exemplary Lights...

If to paint Vice... and to set Virtue...

If to draw Character justly...

If to give Practical Examples...

If these... be laudable or worthy Recommendations of any Work, the Editor of the following Letters, which have their Foundation in Truth and Nature, ventures to assert, that all these desirable Ends are obtained in these Sheets...¹¹

Richardson uses the extended conditional to distance the relationship between author and text, supplanting instead the relationship between means and ends: if these be worthy ends, these pages will get you there. In other words, focus not on who wrote them, but their effects on the reader. While Richardson's conditional uses the causal nature of the argument—"If you love virtue, read this book"—to remove himself as the source of the text, Mr. Andrews similarly uses the conditional to remove himself from view as the source of his daughter. The subjunctive does the work of producing a fantasy: if I weren't your father, I would have found you extremely attractive. He then uses the subjunctive to set up an erotic imaginary scenario in which Mr. Andrews identifies with Pamela's admirer. His fantasy of admiring Pamela has more erotic charge than anything B has yet to say to her, for B has yet to praise anything but her handwriting and her character. These are things a "Friend" might certainly say without ulterior motives, and are perhaps more appropriate findings for a father than noticing how pretty she has become. But Mr. Andrews erases the possibility that B intends to help Pamela, in his exegesis of Pamela's letter. After admitting how beautiful he finds her, Mr. Andrews writes, "But what avails all this, if you are to be ruined and undone!" thereby introducing Pamela's "undoing" for the first time. This is not to say that B was not already planning Pamela's seduction, but rather, that the text presents B's seduction *initially* as a fantasy of Pamela's father:

Indeed, my dear child, we begin to be in great Fear for you, for what signifies all the Riches in the world with a bad conscience, and to be dishonest? ...we would sooner live upon the Water and Clay of the Ditches I am forced to dig, than to live better at the Price of our dear Child's Ruin.¹²

The melodramatic nature of this letter proleptically justifies B's taunts: "Why, Goodman Andrews, I think thou hast read romances as well as thy daughter, and thy head's turned with them."¹³ This barb is not unjustified; Pamela's father's creative exegesis *introduces*

¹¹ Ibid., p. 3-4.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ *Pamela*, p. 190.

B's attempts at seduction, both to Pamela and to the reader. Mr. Andrews instructs Pamela to view herself under the threat of attempts at her virtue, and furthermore supplies both the idea that virtue can be purchased, and the rate of exchange: should Pamela *not* sell her virtue, her father will be threatened with eating clay; that is, the price of virtue is anything better than clay. Because no one could *actually* survive on clay, this is meant only as a threat, and a very melodramatic and romantically inflected one at that. But it paradoxically sets the price of Pamela's virginity very low. The temptation to submit is thus *increased* when her father intimates that he will be eating clay if she does not. Mr. Andrews' desires transform the narrative.

If we examine Mr. Andrews' source material for these fantasies, we see that they are produced via creative exegesis performed upon Pamela's letters. "I hope the good 'Squire has no Design," Mr. Andrews laments,

But when he has given you so much Money, and speaks so kindly to you, and praises your coming on; and Oh! That fatal Word, that he would be kind to you, if you would do *as you should do*, almost kills us with Fear.¹⁴

We must remember that what Mr. Andrews calls "so much Money" was actually Pamela's wages for a year's work; she had *already* earned it, and thus the fear that it was a down-payment on future sexual favors is unfounded, and must be understood as generated by Mr. Andrews himself. Furthermore, one has to wonder, which of these words which *don't* appear in Pamela's letter is the "fatal" one? Is it B's promise of "kindness"—ambiguously supplanted by Mr. Andrews for B's platonic offer of friendship? Or is the fatal word the subjunctive "should" with its implication of what B wants Pamela to *think* is her duty? If so, then Mr. Andrews has substituted a past conditional originally applied by B to himself—that he "would" be a friend to Pamela, if she is virtuous—for one applied to Pamela, implying sex. This is creative exegesis indeed, designed by the narrative to implant suspicion. Where Pamela saw friendship—"one joined to another in mutual benevolence and intimacy" in Samuel Johnson's words, Mr. Andrews insists she see a desire to harm her.¹⁵ Mr. Andrews' response comes as the second letter of the novel, and thus plays a structural role, insofar as his instructions to Pamela regarding the content of her future letters generates the form of her future communiqués and by extension of the novel.

The narrative thus creates a gap between what Pamela has written and what Mr. Andrews reads. For Warner, this gap seems to suggest that Mr. Andrews knows his daughter all too well, which includes knowing where to read her desires into her "fears": Pamela's parents' "hermeneutics of suspicion... invite readers to suspect that Pamela harbors an unconscious love for B."¹⁶ But Mr. Andrews' remarks seem to introduce this unconscious love, rather than to expose it. As we shall see presently, Mr. Andrews is

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1756.

¹⁶ *Licensing Entertainment*, p. 187.

teaching Pamela how to narrate a novel. Thus, Mr. Andrews' instructions to Pamela are not to be mistaken for instructions to the *reader* to emulate Mr. Andrews' readerly sensibilities of suspicion. Rather, his letter exposes to the reader the form in which Pamela must generate her story from the perspective of what the reader desires. Mr. Andrews is there to show readers what they desire—a tale of attempted rape, not one of consensual sex. This explains how readers have failed to see Mr. Andrews' pernicious behavior for so long: who wants to identify with the position of the person desiring rape? And yet this is precisely the point of *Pamela*—it's fiction, which is itself designed for such breaches in consent. To thematize these formal elements as the plot itself is to the novel into that which theorizes fiction—its structural properties and the demands, and rewards, it makes and bestows upon readers.

Mr. Andrews introduces the element of B's desire—or his own desire, displaced onto B—as a structuring element of the story. However, more even than Pamela's violation, her father fears that “she should be *too* grateful—and reward him with that jewel, your virtue, which no Riches, nor favor, nor anything in this Life, can make up to you.”¹⁷ Mr. Andrews is most worried that Pamela will *willingly* give up her virtue; in other words, more than rape, he fears freely given consent. Pamela's father inaugurates the drama of Pamela's virtue, setting the stage for Pamela's inherited suspicions to wreak havoc upon the B household, and supplying the stakes of Pamela's refusal: whether she should consent, or desire to pay B back at the rate of exchange her father explicitly determines, Mr. Andrews insists he will promptly die. The imperative is clear: Pamela cannot consent. She must say no, and the novel proceeds to question what meaning consent can have when one must say no at all costs.

If we closely track Pamela's use of the word “consent” throughout her letters, we notice that it fails to gain any real purchase. The first time Pamela uses the word, she applies it to Mr. B, who “would not consent” to the transfer of Pamela from the B household to the Davers household.¹⁸ Consent here is operating as a synonym for “allow,” and refers to B's ability to control Pamela's fate, rather than to a kind of self-determination. This is the consent of unequal power relationships, not the myth of consenting equals. With the use of “consent” in this context, substituting for the ambiguously transitive “allow,” Pamela has alienated the rights of consent by making it a question of B's consent. When it comes to Pamela's body and the places it may go, it is B's consent that is in question, not Pamela's. Pamela, we can surmise, certainly would have “consented” to live with Mrs. Davers, had her consent been sought, in order to escape B's attempts at her virtue. The decision regarding Pamela's whereabouts leaves a gaping hole where Pamela's consent should be, but it is also the condition of the events of the novel.

Pamela also refers to B's paradoxical methods for procuring her “consent” for various activities. Once she is captive in the Lincolnshire Estate, B promises Pamela “to come near you not without your own Consent” —an example of Pamela's conviction that “He

¹⁷ *Pamela*, p.14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

hopes to ruin me by my own Consent.”¹⁹ But by and large, it is B who is asked to “consent” to things—to put off the wedding day, for example; alternatively, Pamela is taken places “without [her] consent” and also “cannot consent to” live with Mrs. Davers. Pamela “consents” to Mrs. Jewkes, and refuses to consent to marry Williams, but she does not apply the word to her interactions with Mr. B.

The one time consent—or its refusal—is most nearly approximated as a description of what Pamela withholds from B, the word itself is not used at all. B has just given Pamela a set of proposals which, should she accept them, would result in her being B’s kept woman, and for B, this contract shows “what Value I set upon the Free Will of a Person already in my Power.”¹⁹ This paradoxical claim—how can a person who is already in his power exercise free will—lies at the heart of the meaning of consent in this novel. Contracts falsely assume the freedom of those entering into them, and yet B here reveals the true nature of contractual agreements—that they are born of a coercive, unequal situation. Pamela refuses the terms upon which B offers to keep her—terms which even Nancy Armstrong has called most generous, and in the next scene, B disguises himself and waits in her bedroom (he must ironically shed his male garb in order to sue for her consent). When Pamela is naked, he pounces on her and, bizarrely, begs her to accept the terms of the contract:

I must say one Word to you, *Pamela*; it is this: You see, now you are in my Power!—You cannot get from me, nor help yourself: Yet have I not offer’d any thing amiss to you. But if you resolve not to comply with my Proposals, I will not lose this Opportunity: If you do, I will yet leave you.

O Sir, said I, leave me, leave me but, and I will do any thing I ought to do.—Swear then to me, said he, that you will accept my Proposals!²⁰

B’s argument—that Pamela consent to my terms or consent to be raped—delivers the novel’s very message about consent. The novel sets up this scenario, withholding the signifier of consent in order to say just this—that consent in such a situation is not possible. Pamela *cannot consent*, for she is not free to do so. Rather than a description of the process whereby volition is represented and ascertained, Pamela records B’s attempts to procure her consent only to dismiss them as part and parcel of the fictitious structures that allow people to mistake contracts for agreements freely entered by equals. And yet, it is precisely within this fictional construct that the drama of *Pamela* plays out.

Consent is the fiction that enables Mr. Andrews’ two narrative imperatives to cohere into the plot of *Pamela*: on the one hand, he demands that she see in B a sexual predator; on the other hand, he seeks to convince her that he will surely die if she consents to the

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 203. Many critics have pointed out that at this point, it is simply not Pamela’s body that B desires anymore. See Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, and Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel* and William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*.

sexual encounter. These twin poles—of suspicion and fantasy—are two sides of the same coin; Mr. Andrews insists on the presence of sex, and then insists that it be violent rather than consensual. This is Mr. Andrews' fantasy structure *before* it is Pamela's, and we are to understand that *this* is the man to whom Pamela must write, the man of whose narrative demands Pamela structures herself as an effect. Pamela's father thus inaugurates narrative itself as a kind of formal and necessary violence by insisting she supply all of B's "Stratagems to decoy you" in her future letters.²¹ This reading of Pamela's necessary performance of victimization at the hands of potential harm also obviates claims of getting to the "truth of Pamela's narrative" and other epistemological claims of this nature. Pamela's "truth" is inaccessible both to the reader and to herself because her narrative is a function of someone else's narrative demands, making its truth value inconsequential to its meaning. In Austinian terms, it is the perlocutionary force of Pamela's utterances that must be considered, that is, their performative nature, rather than their locutionary force or correspondence with reality (in this case, fictional reality). Perhaps all we can say *for certain* about her desires is that she wishes to convince her father that she is honest.

Indeed, the greatest tragedy of the novel is that Mr. Andrews' formal imperatives force Pamela into a position in which she cannot be honest with herself. The word "honesty" itself is a protean signifier in *Pamela*, the destiny of which reflects the competing narrative imperatives—B must try to have sex with her, she must stymie him by refusing consent—as they come at the expense of an inner psychological truth. McKeon has suggested that "to inquire into the morality and social justice of Pamela's upward mobility is to necessarily inquire into the truth of her story."²² However, when we look for the truth of her story it is difficult to locate, not because Pamela, i.e. Richardson, is purposely misleading the reader (Fielding would have it), but rather because the novel uses the signifier "honesty" and its corresponding meaning to suggest a myriad of things. Johnson defines "honest" three ways in his *Dictionary of the English Language*. It means 1) "upright; true; sincere" 2) "chaste" or 3) "just; righteous" and *Pamela* makes use of all three meanings. Pamela's father asks her at the beginning of the novel, "What signifies all the Riches in the World with a bad Conscience, and to be dishonest?"²³ "Honesty" here refers to chastity, the opposite of being "ruined and undone." However, in answer to this letter, Pamela shifts the meaning of the word, telling her father "that which gives me most trouble is, that you seem to mistrust the Honesty of your child."²⁴ Pamela clearly

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27. This explains why the story takes a nose-dive when B agrees to marry Pamela; if narrative is itself constituted around two imperatives—to claim harm and to refuse consent—there is nothing left to tell when these are both extinguished. Also explained is why Mr. Andrews never arrives to save his daughter until long after he is needed: his absence is necessary to perpetuate the narrative of harm.

²² *The Origins of the English Novel*, p. 378.

²³ *Pamela*, p. 13.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

doesn't think they mistrust her virginity, but rather, her ability to narrate her own story accurately. "Honesty" in this case is expressed by accurate verbal representation. But in the next letter, the word is used quite differently when Pamela tells her parents that John the footman is happy to carry her letters to them, who he so esteems for "you are both good and so honest... It is a thousand pities," Pamela continues, quoting John, "that such honest Hearts should not have better luck in the world."²⁵ John does not mean that Pamela's parents are virgins, nor does he mean that they are accurate. Rather, here and elsewhere when applied to Pamela's parents, honesty suggests righteousness, or perhaps humility. Pamela plays with these different meanings as it suits her purpose, for example, when she negates these concepts after B's first attempt at her virtue, she insists "I am honest, though poor; and if you was a Prince, I would not be otherwise."²⁶ The first "honest" means just or righteous, Johnson's third definition, though the second one, implied as that which Pamela "would not be otherwise" is certainly a virgin, the second meaning. In other words, threatening an "honest" or accurate narrative of the events chez B is Pamela's need to retain two other, competing kinds of honesty, the performance of which come at the expense of verbal accuracy, for it is simply not possible to be both righteous and honest when being honest involves admitting things that would conflict with righteousness, such as Pamela's struggles to represent knowledge of her beauty. Nor would an account that prizes accuracy necessarily be able to supply Mr. Andrews with the narrative he demands. The counterpoint to Mr. Andrews' competing narrative injunctions—to be harmed, but to resist; to be violated, but to prevail—are the three honesties: Pamela must be just, she must be chaste, and she must not lie, but these three are not compatible. If she is chaste and truthful, she cannot be just. If she is just and truthful, she cannot be chaste. If she is just and chaste, she cannot be truthful. It is the drama of this conflict that I am offering as a crucial aspect of the form of the novel.

Pamela's "truth" is not only obfuscated from the reader—it is hidden as well from B and even from Pamela herself. This is because the signifier of truth—"honesty"—is itself compromised by conflicting definitions. By the same token, at Pamela's innermost core there is no unassailably private self but rather a series of formal imperatives to which she is subjected and to which she consequently, relentlessly subjects others. In other words, personal drives are construed by the text as restricted by a grammatical structure posed by someone who demands to be obeyed. Indeed, B seems to be offering Pamela a grammar she refuses, as opposed to her father's grammatical demands, which she accepts.

Mr. B is Harmed

Mr. B complains bitterly of Pamela's unreliability as a narrator. He calls her a hypocrite on numerous occasions, and also objects to Pamela's analogies by telling Mrs. Jewkes "Oh! You don't know how well this innocent is read in Reflection. She has Wit at Will, when she has a mind to display her own Romantick Innocence, at the price of other

²⁵ Ibid., p. 16.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

People's Characters."²⁷ B seems genuinely disturbed at the way Pamela's narrative sacrifices standards of reliability to the other two imperatives of her narrative—summed up rather aptly as “her own Romantick Innocence,” provided by her equally romantic father.²⁸ B's fear of being misrepresented is also an anxiety about being represented at all, and it bears mentioning that we are never given the story from B's point of view. If Pamela is a narrative effect of her father's formal demands, B is an effect of Pamela's execution of those demands, and just as Mr. Andrews wants to read that Pamela is assailed, Pamela insists that B suffer his fair share of this harm.

McKeon has brilliantly argued that the drama of *Pamela* is a class struggle over the meaning of virtue: “In the broadest ideological movement of the narrative, Pamela and Mr. B converge and collide from the opposite corners of industrious ‘virtue’ and corrupt, aristocratic ‘honor.’”²⁹ Indeed, “B's lust expresses his will to repossess what his behavior announces he has lost to her, both his honor and his externalized conception of honor, which is now internalized in Pamela's virtue.”³⁰ For McKeon, the novel is a struggle over virtues of competing natures and their final convergence, but another struggle lies at the heart of the novel: the struggle to lay claim to different kinds of harm.

Pamela's first mention of the harm she endures comes to us as she tries to control B's attempts upon her virtue by claiming that harm to her would mean even more harm to him. She accomplishes this ingenious rhetorical move through an implicit comparison of her body with B's reputation. Pamela instructs her parents not to worry, “For I am sure my Master would not demean himself so, as to think upon such a poor girl as I, for my Harm.”³¹ In McKeon's terms, B's class honor is negated by attempts upon Pamela's personal honor, revealing that B has none:

For the attempt, like the kidnapping that enables it, is a theft that symbolically acknowledges not only Pamela's possession of what B values, but also his lack of it. The doubleness of her virtue, its reference both to moral goodness and to chastity, really represents a double threat to his status. Pamela's virtue is both the alien ‘true nobility’ of the progressive individual and the vestigial remnant of aristocratic honor, his own alienated honor that is now lodged unaccountably within her.³²

However, it seems to me that for Pamela, virtue is fungible; she is turning homonyms into synonyms, telling B that assaults upon her honor imply the same for him. Pamela

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

²⁸ Here Fielding's critique makes sense, though for reasons other than those he imagined.

²⁹ *The Origins of the English Novel*, p. 366.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 367.

³¹ *Pamela*, p. 17.

³² *Origins of the English Novel*, p. 367.

views this “demeaning” of himself to be on a par with harm to her body. This is Pamela’s story and she sticks to it, the upshot being that every time Pamela escapes harm, B does not. Her master is demeaned by merely “*thinking* upon such a poor girl as I for my harm.” In other words, though Pamela has escaped bodily harm, B has not escaped “thinking” it and has thus *already* demeaned, already harmed, himself. Pamela sets things up such that *attempts* to harm her result in *actual* harm to her master. From the potential to the actual, from the body to a signifier, his and hers versions of harm are fungible. Of course, this only makes sense in the context of fiction, where no real body is at stake, for Pamela’s body is, at a literal level, made up of words, just like Mr. B’s reputation. This is not an ethics, but an ontology of fiction and simultaneous exposure of notions of consent that pervade modern life. The beauty of fiction is that no actual body is at stake. Pamela’s body stands in for all bodies, but more importantly, all subjectivities. The pleasure that pervades her position—to be attempted, to prevail—is the pleasure of post-1688 modern life.

Every subsequent attempt of B’s is thus a kind of self-rape or relinquishing of agency and consent, if we are to accept Pamela’s logic that attempts upon her person are harm to B’s reputation. The first time he kisses her in the summerhouse, B promises that he will “do [her] no Harm,” but when Pamela is incensed and insists she won’t stay, he quickly angers. “Do you know who you speak to!” B demands, to which Pamela answers “Yes, I do, Sir, too well! Well may I forget I am your Servant, when you forget what belongs to a Master.”³³ This struggle over how to define what is happening between them is symbolic more than it is sexual. Pamela wants B to acknowledge that by harming her, he harms himself by sacrificing the rank-barrier between them, and when B asks, “have I done you any Harm?” Pamela readily responds:

–Yes, Sir, said I, the greatest Harm in the World: you have taught me to forget myself, and what belongs to me, and have lessened the Distance that Fortune has made between us, by demeaning yourself, to be so free to a poor Servant... He was angry, and said... I own I have demeaned myself, but it was only to try you. (24)

B thus *accepts* Pamela’s analysis, that attempted harm to her person is harm to his status, and that these should be considered equivalent kinds of calamity. B bids her be silent on the matter and seems to leave her alone, until he finds out she has failed to obey his injunction and has rather written an account of the events of the summer home, thereby failing to uphold her end of the bargain to not harm his reputation. Unfortunately for B, Pamela does not stipulate the reverse of her logic—that if she is harmed, he is harmed—or that by maligning him, she has also raped herself. The logic only goes one way, and B desperately tries, and fails, to get a handle on the situation. He calls her a “subtle artful Gypsey” both for writing *and* for being treated like a gentlewoman by the other servants, blurring the lines between writing and pretense at social status. By attacking Pamela’s writing, the source of her ability to harm him in reputation and status, B is attempting to take back control of the language game that operates between them. He uses the same terms for her writing that Pamela uses for sexual advances: while Pamela accuses B of

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

“demeaning yourself, to be so *free* to a poor servant,” B accuses Pamela of vanity, when she “even dar’d to make *free* with Names that she ought never to mention but with Reverence and Gratitude.”³⁴ That is, B feels the harm of Pamela’s pen as she does his threats of seduction. Imposing a formal grammar on one’s interlocutor is conceived of as a kind of violence, passed from Pamela’s father to Pamela and now on to B.

Pamela implicitly accepts the accusation of forming narrative as violence when she hears B approaching and consequently “thrust the letter into my Bosom—as if I had been doing some great Harm.”³⁵ B accuses Pamela of making “a common Talk of the matter, not considering either my reputation or your own.” However, we must remember, Pamela is always considering her reputation as well—her name is as important to her as B’s is to him. B represents this harm in sexual terms when he demands, “And so I am to be exposed, am I, said he, *in my House and out of my House, to the whole World?*”³⁶ He considers the harm to his reputation in the eroticized language of public exposure, continuing the reiteration of Pamela’s harm as his own. B then reiterates that he is “very much displeas’d with the Freedoms you have taken with my Name,” once again calling our attention to the equivalence between erotic, bodily violence (“freedoms”), and what I have called formal or grammatical violations of a person’s name and position. Pamela thus paints B into a narrative in which he, too, is subjected to narrative violence, portrayed as a form of rape victim. Pamela and B are constituted by, are narrative effects of, violation: Pamela of her father’s violent demands, and B of Pamela’s. B and Pamela are equally subjected, equally harmed socially. For within the logic of the novel, the “real” or physical harm is also made up of words. Indeed, their narrative comes to a natural rest when B confesses in his letter to Pamela, his only successful attempt at self-representation, “well I found the Tables intirely turned upon me, and that I was in far more Danger from *you* than you was from me.” This has been his argument all along, and is the gambit that the novel asks its reader to judge, whether “Tis true, my dear Pamela, we have sufficiently tortured one another.”

Threats of harm are not the only thing that gets passed between characters in Pamela’s letters. Take for example Mrs. Jarvis’ attempts to calm Pamela down after the initial episode in the garden. She tells Pamela that B regrets his behavior. “I know this,” Mrs. Jervis assures her pretty companion, “that he is vexed at what he has done; he was vex’d the *first* Time, more vex’d the *second* Time.”³⁷ Pamela promptly replies, “and so he will be vex’d I suppose the *third* and the *fourth* time too, till he has quite ruined your poor Maiden, and who will have cause to be vexed then?” Pamela imagines the affective vexation itself passing from B to her through the consummation of the sexual act, but lo and behold, B’s emotions themselves are enough for the passage of affective intensity to cross from his body to Pamela’s, for Pamela tells her father “my Master is horrid cross:

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 29, my italics.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

And I am vex'd, his Crossness affects me so."³⁸ B's anger itself provides the conduit for vexation to pass from him to Pamela. This is nothing short of an erotics of affect in which emotions are caught like infections, passed from character to character. Adela Pynch has already argued that affect in many eighteenth-century texts is construed as contagion, suggesting that one's feelings may not be one's own.³⁹ What *Pamela* shows us is that this contagion starts to break down emotional as well as physical barriers between characters, not through psychological means but through signifiers, through grammar: this is equivalent to that, this type of demand leads to that type of effect, and so forth.

Even as Pamela is affected by B, so too is B altered by Pamela. Mrs. Jervis complains that Pamela "has made our Master from the sweetest-temper'd Gentleman in the World, one of the most peevish. But you have it in your power to make him as sweet-temper'd as ever; tho I hope in God you'll never do it on his Terms!" she hastily adds. Ultimately, Pamela does restore to Mrs. Jervis her kindly master, as we are told later in the novel, when unable to bear the suspense of reading her letter, Pamela's parents are forced to skip ahead, "where we find your Virtue within View of its Reward... for he would have ruined you, if he could, but seeing your Virtue, God has touched his Heart; and he has, no doubt, been edified by your good Example." Virtue, too, is infectious. B lacks honor because his kind of honor cannot circulate—it is aristocratic, land-based. But Pamela makes his affects circulate by imitating them, taking them on as her own. B assures Pamela of her power over him, insisting that he finds in virtue with her "more sincere pleasure, than I have experienced in all the guilty Tumults that my desiring soul put me into" which causes Pamela to silence "ye stormy Tumults of my disturbed Mind." B's guilty tumults become Pamela's stormy ones, circulating from him to her. The affects of the one are time and again recapitulated in Pamela's narrative in the other.

B's personality is the product of a hypnosis performed upon him by Pamela, but this hypnosis is passed back again to Pamela when she begins to suspect she loves B. Both B and Pamela complain that love is involuntary. B accuses Pamela of having "the Power of Witchcraft, if ever there was a Witch; for she enchants all that come near her."⁴⁰ Pamela says something similar later in the novel when she has allowed herself to admit to being in love with B. She rationalizes her attachment to him—"But love is not a Volunteer thing... but creep, creep it has like a Thief upon me."⁴¹ Love, like the presence of a vexing other, does not wait for consent, but rather infects the subject.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁹ Adela Pynch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*, Stanford University Press, 1996.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

The argument for mutuality of harm suggests an equivalence between Pamela's body and B's name, or the representation of his status, effacing the unique status of the suffering body of the "little girl's etc" but also of aristocratic honor; furthermore, the passage of feeling between them suggests that what it means to be an individual is to possess a porous barrier which is transgressed by the words, demands, desires and pleasure of others.⁴² The erotics of affect in the novel suggest that B and Pamela's minds and bodies are open to each other, rather than closed, porous in a way that allows for the infection of certain feelings and states of injury. Pamela interprets feelings as operating like an opening in her rather than proof of her unassailability, much like property operated for Robinson Crusoe as a signifier of his unenclosed nature, rather than proof of his armored and impenetrable individuality. Furthermore, when we look to find the girl beneath the harm, we find nothing but a series of formal imperatives to represent this harm. Perhaps the novel's most "romantick" quality is that in *Pamela*, subjectivity is love: a bewitchment passed without consent between two characters at the behest of a sentimental and somewhat licentious father. No other text has so ruthlessly represented the creation of plot and character as the result of another character's readerly demands. In this sense, *Pamela* is utterly unique. However, its construal of porous subjectivity is the hallmark of early eighteenth-century fiction insofar as Pamela and B are not the only ones construed this way. The reader's own subjectivity is revealed to be equally porous, and equally instrumentalized by the text, as I will suggest in the next section.

Consent and Novel Form

Throughout this chapter I have been arguing that *Pamela* begins with Mr. Andrews instituting a series of formal demands or narrative constraints upon his daughter—the expectations he has as to the *kind* of narrative he will accept from his daughter—and how these demands deconstruct the barriers between Pamela and B through the notion of mutual harm. This structure is solidified as the form of the novel when the porousness implied by these demands and its effects extends beyond the diegetic limits of the novel to the reader's encounter with the text.

Kahn's revisionist study of contract theory sees mimesis as the tool whereby the passions we experience *while engaging with the text* are the same coercive forces that govern characters within the text. Our encounter with the fictional events of Romance recapitulates the paradox of consent. We have already seen that in *Pamela*, consent is merely a fictional category that underwrites Pamela's coerced relationship to her father's formal demands. Kahn's argument allows us to think about the phenomenology of reading *Pamela* as participating in this same critique of simplistic understandings of consent.

For it is not Pamela and B alone who are harmed by Pamela's letters to her father. James Grantham Turner has alerted us to the effects reported by readers both for and against Pamela:

⁴² Henry Fielding, *Shamela*

The underlying issue—whether a particular effect could be induced by a particular expressive form—led partisans to characterize the reader or spectator as an automaton, overwhelmed by passions beyond her control or programmed by subliminal messages from the concealed author. Inexorably, both sides equated this textual response with sexual arousal, valorized according to the polemic as genial warmth or onanistic frenzy, beguiling witchcraft or invasion of the body snatchers.⁴³

For Turner, as for Pamela, the affective *is* erotic: the reader, like B, like Pamela herself, is bewitched, subjected, controlled, invaded: to be moved is to be aroused, invaded, and ultimately exposed. If we look to Diderot's eulogy for Richardson, we see that he too uses language to describe reading *Pamela* that Pamela herself uses. While loving B, Pamela is "driven by an irresistible impulse... and could not help it if I would" (270). While reading Richardson, Diderot breathes, "we feel ourselves driven towards what is good with an enthusiasm we did not know was in us."⁴⁴ Descriptions of losing oneself in the absorbed state of reading *Pamela* abound, recapitulating not just B's readerly response to "the Particulars of your Plot" but also Pamela's own responses to B. If the form of the novel performs violation upon its characters, the reader plays an equal role in being violated by the very enthusiasm Pamela engenders.⁴⁵

In his work on eighteenth-century absorption in the arts, Michael Fried points out that

for Diderot, the painter's task was above all to reach the beholder's soul by way of his eyes... A painting, it was claimed, has first to attract and then to enthrall the beholder, that is, a painting had to call to someone, bring him to a halt in front of itself, and hold him there as if spellbound and unable to move.⁴⁶

He quotes Diderot as saying, "One forgets oneself in front of this work, that is the strongest magic of art."⁴⁷ Fried points out the paradox of art—that the beholder is absorbed precisely when she is ignored by characters who are themselves absorbed in what they are doing. He defines absorption as a kind of thralldom of the viewer to the work of art. Indeed, it is precisely in its ability to efface its artfulness that Diderot locates its magic. Diderot describes how "oppressed with grief or carried away with joy, you will be powerless to strain the tears which are about to flow, and to say to yourself, *But this may not be true*. This thought has gradually been removed from your mind and it is so far away that it will not occur to you." Compared to Richardson, Diderot insists, "history is a

⁴³ "Novel Panic: Picture and Performance in the Reception of Richardson's *Pamela*," *Representations* No. 48, Autumn (1994), p. 73.

⁴⁴ "In Praise of Richardson," p. 83.

⁴⁵ Diderot imagines himself in turn Lovelace, Clarissa, and the "editor" of their letters, perpetuating the myth of "editor" even in his fantasies. Unlike Turner, he doesn't accept the gender barrier as a boundary to identification.

⁴⁶ *Absorption and Theatricality*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, p. 92.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

bad novel.”⁴⁸ The work of the novel is to dramatize for the reader the very infraction of her capacity for consent. In *Pamela*, characters and readers are construed as effects of narrative violence, which both create and undermine, affectively and erotically, a porous border. As we saw in chapter 1 in the case of *Robinson Crusoe*, Richardson ultimately sees the novel as dramatizing an enclosure laid open.

⁴⁸ “In Praise of Richardson,” p. 87 and 90.

References

- Alkon, Paul. *Defoe and Fictional Time*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979. Print.
- Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. Print.
- *How Novels Think*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. Print.
- Baine, Rodney M. "Roxana's Georgic Setting," SEL 15.3 (1975)
- Ballaster, Ros. *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740*. Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Blewett, David. "The Double Time-Scheme of Roxana," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 13 (1984)
- Castle, Terry. *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Print.
- Clark, Robert. Introduction, *Roxana*, Everyman Edition. London: Dent and Charles E. Tuttle, 1998. Print.
- Defoe, Daniel. *Conjugal Lewdness*
- Roxana*, ed. John Mullan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Robinson Crusoe*
- Moll Flanders*
- Diederot, Denis. "In Praise of Richardson," *Diderot: Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, Penguin Classics, 1995. Print.
- Duncan, Ian. *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.
- Ferguson, Frances. "Rape and the Rise of the Novel." *Representations*. 20 (Fall 1987): 88-112.
- Fielding, Henry. *Shamela*
- Fried, Michael. *Absorption and Theatricality*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980. Print.
- Gallagher, Catherine. *Nobody's Story*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. Print.
- Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. Print.
- Jameson, Frederic. *The Political Unconscious*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981. Print.
- Johnson, Samuel. *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1756.
- Kahn, Victoria. *Wayward Contracts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Print.
- Kibbie, Anne Louise. "Monstrous Generation: The Birth of Capital in Defoe's Moll Flanders and Roxana." *PMLA* 110.5 (Oct., 1995), 1023-1034.
- King, Thomas Alan. *The Gendering of Men*, vol. 1. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. Print.
- Kvande, Marta. "The Outsider Narrator in Eliza Haywood's Political Novels", SEL 43:3 (Summer, 2003)
- Locke, John. *Drafts for the Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Other Philosophical Writings*. Ed. Peter H. Nidditch and G.A.J. Rogers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. Print.
- An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1997.

--*Two Treatises of Government*

Lubey, Kathleen. "Eliza Haywood's Amatory Aesthetic", *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39.3 (2006), 321.

Lynch, Deidre Shauna, "Novels in the World of Moving Goods," *A Concise Companion to Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cynthia Wall. New York: Blackwell, 2005.

Lynch, Deirdre. *The Economy of Character*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Print.

Macpherson, James. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962. Print.

Marshall, *The Figure of Theater*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. Print.

Marzec, Robert P. "Enclosures, Colonization, and the Robinson Crusoe Syndrome: A Genealogy of Land in a Global Context." *boundary* 2.29.2 (2002), 130.

McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. Print.

-- *The Secret History of Domesticity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Molesworth, Jesse M. "A Dreadful Course of Calamities: Roxana's Ending Reconsidered," *ELH* 74.2 (2007) 493-508.

New, Peter. "Why Roxana Can Never Find Herself," *Modern Language Review*, 91.2 (1996), 317-29.

Novak, Max. "Crime and Punishment in Defoe's Roxana," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 65.3 (1966):445-65

Olivecrona, Karl. "Locke's Theory of Appropriation," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 24:96 (July, 1974).

Picciotto, Joanna. *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2010. Print.

Poovey, Mary. *Genres of the Credit Economy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Print.

Pope, Alexander. *The Dunciad*

Pye, Christopher. *The Regal Phantasm: Shakespeare and the Politics of Spectacle*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.

Pynch, Adela. *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. Print.

Read, James. *An Account of the life and glorious actions of William the Third, late King of England, &c. Containing his princely birth, royal marriage, famous expedition into England, his being proclaim'd and Crown'd King; his great victory at the Boyne, and conquest of Ireland, &c. With the particulars of his sickness, and lamented death*. Edinburgh: London. printed, by James Read, and Edinburgh reprinted by George Jaffrey, 1702, p. 11.

Richardson, Samuel. *Pamela*. Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press: 2001. Print.

Roach, Joseph. *It*. University of Michigan Press, 2007. Print.

Schmidgen, Wolfram. *Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Print.

--*The Eighteenth Century* 48: 3 (Fall 2007) 205-223.

- Schulz, Dieter. "‘Novel,’ ‘Romance,’ and Popular Fiction in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Philology*, 70.1 (July, 1973).
- Sorensen, Janet. "‘I talk to everybody in their own way’: Defoe's economies of identity." *The New Economic Criticism: Studies at the intersection of literature and economics*. Ed. Martha Woodmansee and Mark Osteen, New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Starr, George. *Defoe and Casuistry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971. Print.
- Stewart, Alan. *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997. Print.
- Tennenhouse, Leonard. "Stimulating History: A Cock Fight for our Times," *TDR* 34.4 (1990).
- Thompson, Helen. "Plotting Materialism: W. Charleton's ‘The Ephesian Matron’, E. Haywood's ‘Fantomina’, and Feminine Consistency," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 35:2 (2002)
- Thompson, James. *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. Print.
- Turner, James Grantham. "Novel Panic: Picture and Performance in the Reception of Richardson's Pamela," *Representations* No. 48, Autumn (1994), p. 73.
- Warner, William. *Licensing Entertainment*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957. Print.

Bibliography

- Alkon, Paul. *Defoe and Fictional Time*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979. Print.
- Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987. Print.
- How Novels Think. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. Print.
- Baine, Rodney M. "Roxana's Georgic Setting," SEL 15.3 (1975)
- Ballaster, Ros. *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740*. Gloucestershire: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Blewett, David. "The Double Time-Scheme of Roxana," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture, 13 (1984)
- Castle, Terry. *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Print.
- Clark, Robert. Introduction, *Roxana*, Everyman Edition. London: Dent and Charles E. Tuttle, 1998. Print.
- Defoe, Daniel. *Conjugal Lewdness*
- Roxana*, ed. John Mullan. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Robinson Crusoe*
- Moll Flanders*
- Diederot, Denis. "In Praise of Richardson," Diderot: Selected Writings on Art and Literature, Penguin Classics, 1995. Print.
- Duncan, Ian. *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.
- Ferguson, Frances. "Rape and the Rise of the Novel." Representations. 20 (Fall 1987): 88-112.
- Fielding, Henry. *Shamela*
- Fried, Michael. *Absorption and Theatricality*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980. Print.
- Gallagher, Catherine. *Nobody's Story*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. Print.
- Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010. Print.
- Jameson, Frederic. *The Political Unconscious*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981. Print.
- Johnson, Samuel. *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1756.
- Kahn, Victoria. *Wayward Contracts*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Print.
- Kibbie, Anne Louise. "Monstrous Generation: The Birth of Capital in Defoe's Moll Flanders and Roxana." PMLA 110.5 (Oct., 1995), 1023-1034.
- King, Thomas Alan. *The Gendering of Men*, vol. 1. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004. Print.
- Kvande, Marta. "The Outsider Narrator in Eliza Haywood's Political Novels", SEL 43:3 (Summer, 2003)
- Locke, John. *Drafts for the Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Other Philosophical Writings*. Ed. Peter H. Nidditch and G.A.J. Rogers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. Print.
- An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. New York: Penguin Classics, 1997.

--*Two Treatises of Government*

Lubey, Kathleen. "Eliza Haywood's Amatory Aesthetic", *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39.3 (2006), 321.

Lynch, Deidre Shauna, "Novels in the World of Moving Goods," *A Concise Companion to Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cynthia Wall. New York: Blackwell, 2005.

Lynch, Deirdre. *The Economy of Character*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Print.

Macpherson, James. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962. Print.

Marshall, *The Figure of Theater*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. Print.

Marzec, Robert P. "Enclosures, Colonization, and the Robinson Crusoe Syndrome: A Genealogy of Land in a Global Context." *boundary* 2.29.2 (2002), 130.

McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987. Print.

-- *The Secret History of Domesticity*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Molesworth, Jesse M. "A Dreadful Course of Calamities: Roxana's Ending Reconsidered," *ELH* 74.2 (2007) 493-508.

New, Peter. "Why Roxana Can Never Find Herself," *Modern Language Review*, 91.2 (1996), 317-29.

Novak, Max. "Crime and Punishment in Defoe's Roxana," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 65.3 (1966):445-65

Olivecrona, Karl. "Locke's Theory of Appropriation," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 24:96 (July, 1974).

Picciotto, Joanna. *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2010. Print.

Poovey, Mary. *Genres of the Credit Economy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Print.

Pope, Alexander. *The Dunciad*

Pye, Christopher. *The Regal Phantasm: Shakespeare and the Politics of Spectacle*. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.

Pynch, Adela. *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. Print.

Read, James. *An Account of the life and glorious actions of William the Third, late King of England, &c. Containing his princely birth, royal marriage, famous expedition into England, his being proclaim'd and Crown'd King; his great victory at the Boyne, and conquest of Ireland, &c. With the particulars of his sickness, and lamented death*. Edinburgh: London. printed, by James Read, and Edinburgh reprinted by George Jaffrey, 1702, p. 11.

Richardson, Samuel. *Pamela*. Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press: 2001. Print.

Roach, Joseph. *It*. University of Michigan Press, 2007. Print.

Schmidgen, Wolfram. *Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Print.

--*The Eighteenth Century* 48: 3 (Fall 2007) 205-223.

- Schulz, Dieter. "‘Novel,’ ‘Romance,’ and Popular Fiction in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Philology*, 70.1 (July, 1973).
- Sorensen, Janet. "‘I talk to everybody in their own way’: Defoe's economies of identity." *The New Economic Criticism: Studies at the intersection of literature and economics*. Ed. Martha Woodmansee and Mark Osteen, New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.
- Starr, George. *Defoe and Casuistry*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971. Print.
- Stewart, Alan. *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997. Print.
- Tennenhouse, Leonard. "Stimulating History: A Cock Fight for our Times," *TDR* 34.4 (1990).
- Thompson, Helen. "Plotting Materialism: W. Charleton's ‘The Ephesian Matron’, E. Haywood's ‘Fantomina’, and Feminine Consistency," *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 35:2 (2002)
- Thompson, James. *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. Print.
- Turner, James Grantham. "Novel Panic: Picture and Performance in the Reception of Richardson's Pamela," *Representations* No. 48, Autumn (1994), p. 73.
- Warner, William. *Licensing Entertainment*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957. Print.