

The Government of the Senses

Aesthetic Subjectivity and the Rule of Taste in Britain, 1660-1760

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Abstract

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The Government of the Senses is a study of how the changes in aesthetic culture that occurred in the wake of empiricism operated as regulating social processes. Tracking the rise of a new concern with tastefulness as well as various approaches to aesthetic detachment, I describe how these critical discourses translated into different styles of subjectification.

Each chapter identifies figural representations in literature and visual culture that reflect what it felt like to participate in the new aesthetic culture. Chapter One describes the new interest in ideas of taste and “gust” in John Milton’s work and models of aesthetic detachment in John Dryden, showing how Lord Shaftesbury and Joseph Addison developed these models of aesthetic behavior into a comprehensive social program. Chapter Two argues for a continuity between the cultivation of pleasure in the Restoration libertine discourse of Lord Rochester and George Etherege and the eighteenth-century cultivation of aesthetic pleasures. I show the importance of the fop character type in the transition to socially acceptable enjoyments: at the center of ambivalence about cultural consumption, the fop is the first figure that condenses the experience of modern aesthetic subjectivity.

Chapter Three follows the inner sense tradition, arguing that Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* narrates an aesthetic self-fashioning by testing the limits of detachment from social life. This wildly popular novel shows how culturally relevant the new aesthetic culture had become beyond the stratified elites. Chapter Four studies the emergence of a socially intelligible figure of the person of taste between Jonathan Richardson’s theory of connoisseurship and the major statements on the standard of taste in the 1750s. It shows that the methods, tensions, and models of authority associated with the new aesthetics were most fully exemplified in the literary career of Alexander Pope.

Methodologically, this project studies the regulating effects of aesthetics using Michel Foucault’s late theory of “governmentality” and it describe aesthetics as a self-sustaining social process using the theory of Niklas Luhmann. The chapters also include discussions of the Cartesian theory of pleasure, Hobbesian psychology, the theory of the *je ne sais quoi* of Dominique

Bouhours, the models of conduct in Baltasar Gracián and the Chevalier de Méré, John Locke on secondary qualities and self-education, inner sense theory in Ralph Cudworth and Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith on self-regulation, William Hogarth on utility, and the theories of taste in Edmund Burke, Alexander Gerard, and David Hume. I show that the first phase of modern British aesthetics fashioned a coherent model for the conduct of conduct using the intensities of the sensitive body.

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Abbreviations

- AS* Niklas Luhmann, *Art as a Social System*, trans. Eva Knodt (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000).
- C* Joseph Addison, *Cato: A Tragedy, and Selected Essays*, eds. Christine Dunn Henderson and Mark E. Yellin (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004 [1713]).
- CU* John Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, ed. Thomas Fowler (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901 [First published in *Posthumous Works*, 1706]).
- D* John Dryden, *The Poems of John Dryden*, eds. Paul Hammond and David Hopkins (London: Longman, 2005), 5 vols.
- EMP* David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985).
- G* Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Governmentality: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2004).
- HU* John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975 [1690]).
- M* George Etherege, *Sir Fopling Flutter; Or, The Man of Mode in Four Restoration Libertine Plays*, ed. Deborah Payne Fisk (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005 [1676]).
- O* Baltasar Gracián, *The Pocket Oracle and Art of Prudence*, trans. Jeremy Robbins (London: Penguin, 2011 [1647]).
- OED* *Oxford English Dictionary*, OED Online. Oxford University Press, Accessed: 1 May 2015 <dictionary.oed.com>
- P* *The Poems of Alexander Pope: A One-Volume Edition of the Twickenham Text*, ed. John Butt (New Haven: Yale UP, 1963).
- PE* Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990 [1757]).
- PL* John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, eds. Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004 [1667]).
- PR* John Milton, *Paradise Regained*, in *Complete Shorter Poems*, 2d. ed., ed. John Carey, (London: Longman, 1968 [1671]), 417-512.

R *The Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, ed. Harold Love (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999).

RC Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* [*The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*], ed. John Richetti (New York: Penguin, 2001).

S Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, ed. Douglas Den Uyl (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001 [1711, 2nd ed. 1714]), 3 vols.

SA John Milton, *Samson Agonistes* (1671), in *Complete Shorter Poems*, 349-413.

SP *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965 [1711-14]), 5 vols.

TE John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, eds. John W. and Jean S. Yolton, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989 [1693]).

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Introduction Aesthetics as a Governing System



Frontispiece. William Hogarth, *The reward of cruelty*. Plate 4 of *The Four Stages of Cruelty*. 1751. Engraving. British Museum.

We begin with a scene from which the viewer is meant to recoil with distaste. Much of William Hogarth's work exhibits a moralizing intention, but in *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1751), which addresses male violence among the urban working classes through the aptly named character of Tom Nero, the reforming appeal of the image is unusually pronounced.¹ In this Introduction, I show how Hogarth's image makes its reforming appeal in terms of tastefulness; the caption of the first plate of the series (Fig. 1) summarizes: "How Cruelty disgusts the view, / While Pity charms the sight." Furthermore, I argue that Hogarth defines the propensity for violence within Tom as a taste that must be rooted out by a better taste that "charms the sight." Tom thus represents an extreme version of what it was like to be a subject governed through his tastes in the 1750s. Hogarth presupposes that a mode of aesthetic engagement – buying this print and interacting with it as a spectator – will, whether through prevention or reform, discourage similar violence. The logic of this regulatory effort has two components: it addresses the viewer viscerally, acting as directly as possible upon the senses and the emotions, and it simultaneously imposes a distance from mimetic engagement with the figures it presents. This joint process, which I refer to as "the government of the senses," was the chief social accomplishment of the new aesthetic culture of the early eighteenth century. This dissertation describes the genesis of the regulatory function of aesthetics from its beginnings in the literary culture of the Restoration to its widespread social diffusion by the mid-eighteenth century.²

The most shocking image in *The Four Stages of Cruelty* is probably the first plate, which introduces a ragged Tom in the act of sodomizing a dog with a poker, unmistakably signifying the unnatural turn of his inclinations. The series reaches into Tom's past, only to find his propensity for cruelty already fully formed in childhood. This kernel of cruelty grows into the act of beating a horse on the job in Plate 2, and finally to theft and murder in Plate 3, showing a clear progression from the abuse of animals to violence against women to crimes against society. Initially, at least, Tom's crimes seem to have no (human) victim, and Hogarth insinuates their deleterious effect on social life as a whole by opposing the young Tom to a smooth and elegant "Youth of gentler Heart," allegedly modeled on the young George III, who offers his delicate tart in exchange for the welfare of the dog, to no avail. Underlining the political resonance of the confrontation, the caption adds that "tortur'd Victims bleeding shew / The Tyrant in the Boy."³ Presenting in Tom the anti-type to the sovereign sentimental subject, Hogarth's message had a political import that went beyond the topical relevance of animal cruelty: here was the threat of tyrant subject from below, and it was to be expected that Tom goes on to disrupt the flow of traffic around the courts, defy property, defile marriage, and ultimately suffer the consequence of being cut apart before the eyes of the world. The seeds of Tom's violence in infancy are unknown; his adult character is beyond the touch of reforming intervention; he is left to die alone. Instead of his personal suffering we see the impersonal revenge exerted by a whole crowd of medical, legal, social, and artistic practitioners – society acting on a "Tyrant" it could not refine but only violently subdue.

Hogarth's final plate (Frontispiece) makes the paradoxical choice of showing Tom's final punishment as an excruciating suffering inflicted upon his body after death. The caption begins: "Behold the Villain's dire disgrace! / Not Death itself can end . . . / His Heart expos'd to prying Eyes, / To Pity has no claim." Instead of depicting Tom's execution – perhaps Hogarth worried that doing so would encourage the appetite for such spectacles – or the moment of his sentencing before the law, Hogarth uses dissection to yield a maximum of both shameful visibility and physical invasiveness. The fact of Tom being dead shields the punitive authority from appearing to be the same order of torturer that Tom had been, creating a humane distance that renders the

suffering on display entirely phantasmagorical. Already resembling a skull, Tom's face is contorted into an exaggerated grimace that implies suffering even though his consciousness is beyond reach.



Fig. 1. William Hogarth, *Children Torturing Animals*. Plate 1 of *The Four Stages of Cruelty*. 1751. Engraving. Yale Center for British Art.

Inviting a classic materialist mode of aesthetic engagement, Hogarth's image allows the viewer to watch with a kind of titillation the wreck of Tom's life from a comfortable distance.⁴ Behind Hogarth's gruesome prompts to step back from violence, Tom's punishment looks like a version of his enjoyment pushed to the limit of overstimulation. The caption defines his cruelty in terms of desire: "Those Eyeballs from their Sockets wrung, / That glow'd with lawless Lust!" Tom began his career with the cruelty of the penetrator and ends up violently penetrated. As the dissector reaches through Tom's chest with his left hand, in his right he holds a blade just over the erection that could have followed from the cause of death. Tom will be made to enjoy his cruelty to the very end – and beyond. At the center of the image the thread of Tom's intestines coils in a serpentine line into a bucket, a bodily correlate for the expression of ecstatic agony on his face.⁵

Hogarth's image evokes a number of social systems, but it places Tom, as the subject targeted by their pressures, beyond them at a certain distance. The legal system is alluded to in Plate 2 when Tom knocks over a coach of fat lawyers, but the image avoids threatening the

viewer with a distinctively legal event. Plate 3 displays religious overtones – Tom’s murdered fiancée points to the inscription “God’s Revenge against Murder” – but the image carefully avoids any suggestion of otherworldly intervention. The revenge is exacted within a scientific scene, presided over by a medical expert, who is presumably oblivious to the point about moral consequences that the image is using his gesture to make. Yet the image is not a critique of science; the surgeons are not hyper-refined torturers but indifferent as to the provenance of this body, which has been plugged in to their context from somewhere else. Hogarth adds to this plausible dissection scene a bubbling cauldron in the left foreground, a macabre gothic touch designed to trigger associations with the old idea of hell that the image has renounced invoking directly. In the right foreground, a man gathers a bucket of organs, implying that a further stage of even less human processing awaits what remains of Tom’s flesh as it exits a scientific setting. Via these associations, the final plate presents the legal system that judges him, the scientific system that uses his body, the economic system charged with picking up the leftovers, and the art system that presents the observation to the viewer as distinct yet interpenetrating systems.⁶ The threat is of a frighteningly impersonal corporeal transfer, and it is presented as a purely aesthetic event, which exists only in the art system.

In Plate 4, Hogarth places Tom beyond fear and pain in order to threaten with imaginary social pain, the instrument of which is a dense social network of finger-pointing. The demonstrator’s wand, collapsing Tom’s trial and punishment into a single factual event, dominates both the blade (an emblem of sovereignty) and the flesh of the body without quite touching it. It has a host of analogues dispersed throughout the image, creating a network of deictics that figures the string of consequences being pointed out to the viewer. In the foreground, an academic points at the dissection in progress, while a background figure on the right haphazardly points upward. Two fleshless skeletons of previous victims, stripped of organs, point abstractly at each other as if they were the same figure in mirror image. To the left, an appalled surrogate for Hogarth points, in turn, at these pointing emblems. Even Tom himself takes leave of his *rigor mortis* to direct his index finger toward the cauldron steaming the bones of those not fortunate enough to be enshrined on the wall as moral specimens.

These moralizing yet contentless deictics are a synchrony of convulsive gestures organized around the place where a body meets a void at its edge. They create a communal bond comprising the sleeping, the distracted, the differently engaged, the critically engaged, even the allegorically engaged (the skeletons), as well as the very figure that must be abjected for the system to function (Tom). The object of this network of finger-pointing is Tom’s depravity, which is introduced as an object of “disgust.” Its method of redress is the immanent ruling of tastes by means of reflexive recognitions. For Hogarth, a more humane and tender sensibility is the desirable outcome of viewing the shocking stimulus of *The Four Stages of Cruelty*. Above the presiding demonstrator, an emblem encapsulates the image’s regulative deployment of irony: one hand feel’s another’s pulse. Instead of the hand of God, the actors become like the two hands in the emblem, twin organs of a singular system, where neither the left nor the right hand knows what the other does.

Plate 4 is very clear about where and how the viewer is addressed: something is being forcefully jammed into Tom’s eyeball, while at the same time a machine threads directly into his brain, holding his skull up to see and be seen. An instrument enters Tom’s eye (engraved as a seamless surface, it could be mistaken for a beam of light being shined inward, through the socket, into his brain), while a figure cuts into his feet in the shadows (as if a court reporter were taking notes directly onto the body of its subject). Joseph Addison makes vision the “great inlet”

of ideas into the brain and simultaneously privileges the linguistic arts for their superior capacity to trigger mental imagery through absence. Tom is the horrifying apotheosis of this model. His eye becomes the literal inlet of the idea of cruelty, and his absence of feeling – one knows that his contorted mouth motions its screams in silence – is what makes for such a powerful conduit of feeling to the viewer. Tom is laid out on the spherical operating table, a blank surface not unlike the tabula rasa that was taken as the starting point for the empirical subject. Yet the image does not begin with the pure white surface of an innocent childhood uncorrupted by the inscription of cruelty. Instead, it engineers that surface, utilizing something like an ironic karmic retribution for Tom's eroticized cruelty so as to scrape the cruelty out of him through his eye – and hopefully out of the viewer, too. In the final plate, we watch the violent making-innocent of the eye. In W. J. T. Mitchell's version of the art historical truism, "the 'innocent eye' is a metaphor for a highly experienced and cultivated sort of vision."⁷ Hogarth's image shows (and performs) this innocence in the making.

Acting in consort with the mechanical device that cranes Tom's neck toward us, Hogarth distorts the perspective to skew the viewer toward Tom's face. This distortion is particularly apparent in the gridded lines of the window (those on the left are more sharply angled than those on the right), and the throne, artificially magnified by the perspective, is shifted to the right in relation to the windows. All the skies in the previous plates featured some shading, but the exterior behind the two eyelike windows is perfectly blank, lending to the entire circular scene the feeling of oneiric (or systemic) self-enclosure, encompassing the victim, the heavy-lidded demonstrator, the spectacled assistant, the variously attentive spectators, and the artist himself. It is as if turning Tom's vacant face toward us exerted a torque on the perspectival arrangement of the form conveying it to us. The demonstration wand is the emblem of the authority achieved by the controlling pressure exerted by this image.

At the threshold of power and the ecstatic limits of the body is a gap, an absence that the assistant ambiguously reaches in to pull out or put inside in its stead. What is implanted in this Tom-subject is a newly accessible animality, a new kind of heart. The dog that he is (and abuses) gnaws at his heart, and the image works by gnawing at its viewer. The only mechanism of this dogged knowledge – which knows nothing beyond the insistent bite of its anaesthetics – is an apparatus that moves him, moves the fleshless matter of his head, to make its point to us. The power effects that constitute the affective drama of this image are those that, had they worked properly, would have kept Tom out of *The Four Stages of Cruelty*. Stimulating the recoil of a distance, the moral rhetoric of this image strategically ignores everything that could be said to come from inside the subject: a life that could be interpellated as such, any speech about itself that might situate that life in normative terms in relations to others, even the self-speculation that would grant it a basic identity for itself.

My objective in this dissertation is to describe how the aesthetic culture between the Restoration and the mid-eighteenth century, when Hogarth's image was produced, fashioned its own distinctive logic of social control.⁸ This logic comprised heightened reflexivity and an appeal to sensitive immediacy. Writing in 1711, Lord Shaftesbury was the first to propose that the attraction of tasteful behavior and the repulsion of distasteful behavior (such as Tom's) could work as an ordering force on a large social scale.⁹ Envisioning a gentlemen's club – which his heir Francis Hutcheson extends into a broader social theory – in which the merest sneer could powerfully regulate behavior and good-humored raillery could keep all sorts of liberties within reasonable bounds, he declares that "Tis not merely what we call *Principle*, but a *TASTE*, which

governs Men” (S III.108). The tastes that are the object of reform in Shaftesbury’s theory and Hogarth’s engraving are intimately connected to the body. At its beginning, Tom’s violence did not address human subjects but rather animal flesh, and the “poetic” revenge is that at the end of his uncoiling guts it is an animal, a dog, that is gnawing at his disembodied heart. The image makes the case very convincingly that people such as Tom are dogs, and get what they have coming to them.

The methodological commitment that distinguishes this project from the several fine intellectual historical studies of the new aesthetics between Shaftesbury and Kant –for example, Paul Guyer’s magisterial *History of Aesthetics*¹⁰ – is the search for figures in literature and visual culture that tell us what it felt like to participate in the new aesthetic culture of the eighteenth century. The obstacle to this type of study is this culture’s stress on the self-effacing posture of detachment, borrowed from the experimentalist culture of the seventeenth century, which tended to avoid crystallizing the detached observer into coherent figures.¹¹ Running through all of my examples of aesthetic subjectivity in the period is some negative quantity in perception: a subjective vacuity, an attempt at distance from the object, an impersonal shattering of the self, which relays aesthetic experience through a personal anaesthetics.¹² Following the influential vocabulary of Kantian philosophy, philosophers frequently call this quantity “disinterestedness.”¹³ Less transcendental alternatives, such as “psychic distance”¹⁴ and “detachment,”¹⁵ describe roughly the same cognitive aptitude in more psychological terms, as do the broader “aesthetic attitude”¹⁶ and “aesthetic experience.”¹⁷ In his sociology of art, Niklas Luhmann proposes replacing disinterestedness with the constructivist and post-humanist alternative concept of “second-order observation.”¹⁸ He claims that second-order observation has been the central social function of the arts since the Enlightenment.

The new aesthetics grew out of a specific ideological milieu, the new liberalism of “cosmic Whiggery” that sought to project a universally expansive sphere of neutrality.¹⁹ However, the study of aesthetics as both the outward semantics of taste and the self-effacing or distancing mode of subjectification requires a supplementary level of social analysis beyond the Habermasian public sphere model that has been so fruitful for eighteenth-century studies.²⁰ Hogarth’s scene is obsessed with circles and circular movement, and it conveys the impression of an insistently present public by not receding in perspective the second shaded row of onlookers. Yet the central object of public scrutiny, similar to the fop who will be discussed in Chapter Two and the castaway in Chapter Three, is a vacant parasitical entity at the limit of the public domain. Because of its parasitical quality, this figure threatens to deconstruct the boundary between public and private. As opposed to making a normatively principled address, the image deals with this figure’s destabilizing potential by ritualistically invoking his violence in order to disperse its effects, a process that Jacques Derrida calls “autoimmunity.”²¹ To capture the tacit and embodied regulative power of the system of pointers in Hogarth’s engraving – which reach out aggressively toward the viewer, amounting to what I call “the rule of taste” – I draw on Luhmann’s alternative to the public sphere model, which describes society as a recursively self-supporting network of communication that evolves without a normative framework or a humanistic representational sovereign.²²

The major resource that scholars have used to understand the regulative function of aesthetics upon the subject has been the Marxist theory of ideology, notably in the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Terry Eagleton, which stresses the ordering power of aesthetic idealism imposed upon the material body.²³ In the wake of this influential work, some scholars have backed away from such “strong” regulative accounts by bringing out the democratic aspects of the new

aesthetics and the covert materialism running through the tradition of taste.²⁴ More recent aesthetic theorists working within the Marxist framework have tended to emphasize the constructive rather than the mystifying power of the aesthetic or to hybridize ideological analysis with a psychoanalytic theory of desire.²⁵ Other theorists have renewed the case for the liberalizing and regulatory function of aesthetic culture without posing the question of immanent controlling processes.²⁶ My account returns to a “strong” reading of the regulative function of the aesthetic, drawing on Michel Foucault’s theory of discipline rather than the theory of ideology. Marxist aesthetics has tended to view aesthetic detachment with suspicion as an affectation or an idealist illusion. By contrast, Foucault’s approach allows us to enquire into this curious affectation as a specific bodily disposition tied to specific techniques of power.²⁷

Foucault’s late work distinguishes three different regulatory strategies pertinent to our period: the seventeenth-century *raison d’état* model of state sovereignty; the “biopolitical” model of surveillance, enclosure, and hermeneutics addressing the life of populations (which gathers steam from the 1750s onward); and the techniques of liberal “governmentality” that came to the fore in British empiricism during the intermediate period, in the first half of the eighteenth century.²⁸ Adapting Foucault’s political theory to the regulatory function of aesthetics, I argue that the regulative framework behind the new culture of taste is “governmentality,” a term that combines the ideas of liberal governance and “mentality,” or common sense. Hogarth’s moral address here is poised between this model and the emergent biopolitical one, intervening in the life of specific populations somatically and subliminally. Even though his body is spectacularly attacked, Tom is not treated with the mimetic engagement of the old model of sovereignty, nor is he under surveillance or hermeneutic analysis.²⁹ He is treated as a punctual being laid out on a blank white table rather than confined or enclosed in a darkened cell.³⁰ Tom’s personal identity is not in question: he is anyone whomsoever, and his narrative is boiled down to a few snapshots of before and after. The image still displays a complete indifference to why the young Tom had such debauched tastes; he does not have “a case history or a childhood.”³¹ The pressure it applies to the viewer uses Tom’s body extensively as a medium to sway an impulse to cruelty that inhabits him impersonal. This impulse, which potentially survives him in the viewer, is not policed but made to see its consequences.

The image is a prompt to self-regulation, and it addresses the viewer beyond the ego, at a liminal point where living shades into deadening. Michel Serres explains a materialist theory of the soul as a “localized point proclaimed by the whole body” that becomes “almost identifiable” at moments of extreme experience.³² The image addresses Tom’s “soul” in this sense, the part of him that is presumed to live on after death and that responds to the social stimulus of the gaze and the pointed finger more acutely than to physical pain. The appeal is made to a materialistically mediated “soul” because it addresses the subject through moments of personal vacancy and anesthesia. Simulating visually Serres’s type of extreme experience – his example is of a near-death shipwreck, an abiding figure in materialist aesthetics as well as Romance – the image applies pressure on the “soul” of the viewer, meaning the viewer’s experience of distance from her own body. Hogarth inscribes a faint “T + N” on Tom’s arm, echoing the intersection of the blade and the wand, substituting for the sovereign’s power to kill and the doctor’s knowledge of life. Laid out on the table the mark reads as an X. Preserving a sign of Tom’s singularity in the truncated form of initials, this triangular mark makes Tom, the subject, an empty spot at the site of a cross, a bare place at the intersection of social systems, an elusive singularity hinted at between the lines of the first and last names that confer social identity. As S-lines squirm out of this X-subject’s central cavity, they weave into a latticework that finally takes shape as a grid

over an empty background in the two large windows. The grid does not contain Tom as the bars of a prison but rather signifies the matrix that maps him into visibility as a social phenomenon or a statistic. Beginning with the X on his arm, Tom himself becomes the grid that brings the social phenomenon of cruelty into visibility, and the discipline he is subject to is immanent to his life and death. In this dissertation, I present the genealogy of this mode of moral address and the strategy of regulation, with its distinctive mode of subjectivity, just up to the point where the subject of the aesthetic governance of the living is fully outlined.

To describe the regulation of life by aesthetic means developed in Hogarth's image, an ensemble of techniques gradually consolidated during the first half of the eighteenth century, I approach the critical discourse of the period as theories of communication and the mediation of sensation. Reading aesthetics as a medium theory, David Wellbery provides a useful criterion for the period boundaries of the aesthetic discourse studied in this dissertation.³³ The period begins when critical aesthetics operates independently of the rhetorical tradition (which addressed a rational subject rather than a sensitive, somatically excitable, and materially affected one) and ends with the rise of modern hermeneutics (which succeeded in bringing "man" into focus as an object of scientific inquiry³⁴). What I call the "new aesthetics," or Enlightenment aesthetics, begins when the methods of empiricist analysis were adapted to a new set of objects: the human considered as an observer, the social communication of observation, and the "mass" mediation of ways of perceiving.

It is worth remembering that Hogarth's image is potentially quite distasteful, and it introduces another major line of argumentation in what follows, namely that the aesthetic culture developed in the eighteenth century was not exclusively an affair of stratified elites, refinement, and privilege.³⁵ An antecedent for the aesthetic as a countercultural impulse – one that subsequently becomes the foundation of cultural authority – is the passage in Milton's *Paradise Regained* that is sometimes credited with introducing the metaphorical sense of "taste" into English. Milton's Jesus declares that "true tastes" will shun the allurements of worldly culture for a spiritual truth beyond the world as it is (*PR IV.346*). The opposition to one's immediate cultural context and what passes for normatively tasteful within it becomes a standard gesture, and is perhaps the distinguishing mark between the old cultures of tastefulness and the new cultural semantics of taste.

During the period, critical discourse was dominated by two related preoccupations: specifying the nature of taste and the possibility of cognitive detachment, or what is now sometimes referred to (often skeptically) as "the aesthetic attitude." The outward sign of the new aesthetics was an extensive cultural semantics of tastefulness, the most thorough and sophisticated study of which is James Noggle's *The Temporality of Taste*.³⁶ Noggle shows that the new interest in taste followed a heightened self-consciousness about the historicity of culture, the temporal succession of tastes and styles, and the simultaneous cultivation of immediate and discontinuous judgments. The other side of the historicized discourse of taste is the notion or practice of aesthetic detachment. Here, the decisive innovation is the concept of "secondary" imaginary pleasures in Joseph Addison's series of papers on the "Pleasures of the Imagination," which argued that the representation of an absent object could trigger even more powerful imaginary engagement than its presence.³⁷ This move resolutely placed aesthetic experience within the observer, rather than within the object. Alexander Baumgarten's somewhat later argument, which coined the modern word "aesthetics," added the criterion of cognitive obscurity.³⁸ The observer could refer to the audience or to the artist considered as observer of the world, an equivalence that encouraged the idea that the artist communicated a way of seeing the

world to the audience. The basis of this view was the old Platonic communication of forms, and the theoretical implementation invoked the most up-to-date empiricist vocabulary.

The hybridization of neo-Platonist theoretical constructs with materialist methods and procedures is virtually a constant in the aesthetics of the period. On the Platonic side, several largely neglected trends fed into the new aesthetic preoccupation of the Enlightenment: versions of the Platonic theory of attraction to beauty, the tradition of manipulation through images, and the self-manipulation of unconscious processes through memory arts.³⁹ The new aesthetics' engagement with what I earlier called negativities in perception pushes the embodied subject to the limits of its individuated experience, bonds it to others in a somatic zone beyond ordinary rhetorical exchange, creates effects of self-effacement or distancing in the eyes of other observers, and takes outward shape in the historically specific tacit order of tastefulness. The first sign of this hybridization was the "inner sense theory" of the Cambridge Platonists, developed by Shaftesbury and especially by Francis Hutcheson, discussed in Chapter Three.⁴⁰ Despite its new worldliness and pragmatic edge, the Platonic current within aesthetics still entertained links to the mystical tradition – the negative conception of God was the ultimate example of a negativity in the imagination – which only came to the fore again in the work of Coleridge and his nineteenth-century heirs.⁴¹

From the perspective of the Platonic tradition of the imagination, the decisive mutation was the encounter with mechanist philosophy, empiricism, and experimentalist practice, to which was added the absence or distance of the observer. In the seventeenth century, two related critical figures emerged from this conjunction of intellectual currents. First, the *je ne sais quoi* appeared within rationalist discourse to signal a peculiar attraction that eludes causal specification.⁴² Second, the rediscovery of the Longinian sublime (in Boileau, then Dryden and John Dennis) signaled a moment of reflexive grandeur or a heightened pitch of performativity within an empirically determinate rhetorical situation. With these figures, the regulating power of something invisible (traditionally, some version of the Platonic ideal) could be traced indirectly in the medium of matter. Both offered powerfully circular self-confirmations and suggested new modes of authority in feeling. With the exposure to empirical methods, the regulating idea evolved from something transcendent to something manifest secretly in other people, an inner light they were held to access immanently. Taste, an old idea that conjoined the material physiological body, the sensitive body of conscious pleasure and pain, and the complex processes of custom, was the perfect vehicle for this new regulating principle.

Chapter One begins by drawing out figures of cognitive detachment as a particular type of behavior, showing how the first generation of eighteenth-century aesthetic writers extended these behaviors into a cultural program. Milton had made the related ideas of "taste" and "gust" central to his work, representing the logic of governing oneself and others through tastes. Focusing on instances of aesthetic spectatorship in Milton's work, I show that Addison and Shaftesbury developed these techniques, which included elements borrowed from a Cartesian theory of affects and the *je ne sais quoi* as a regulatory allurements, into a full-blown social program. The chapter also argues that Addison and Shaftesbury focused on the aesthetic aspects of the philosophies of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, expanded on them in order to deepen the emphasis on reflexivity. I show that Dryden's late reflections on art's power to sway those in power describe similar strategies of influence with a greater focus on the question of detachment than the problem of taste.

Because the new aesthetics was connected to widespread efforts toward the reformation of manners – substituting refined pleasures for coarser ones – the centrality of pleasure within

aesthetic experience is drastically minimized if one reads only aesthetic theory, but ubiquitous whenever aesthetic deportment takes on figural shape. Chapter Two makes the case for the continuity between the libertine cultivation of pleasure, studied primarily in Lord Rochester and George Etherege, and what Addison called “the pleasures of the imagination.” The new aesthetics was a sanitized libertinism within reach of the middle classes, as well as a method of reform that used pleasure to regulate pleasure. Tom’s self-enclosed *jouissance* appears in a less jarring form in the character type of the fop, a simulacrum of the libertine who aspires to regulate his life through taste and is, I argue, the earliest figural condensation of the new aesthetics as an abiding mode of comportment. In a detailed reading of Etherege’s play *The Man of Mode*, I show that he joined the neo-Machiavellian conduct theory of Baltasar Gracián, long held as the main source of our modern notion of taste, with the *précieux* theory of cultivated deportment of the Chevalier de Méré into a single notion of the aesthetic. Furthermore, a major sociological approach to Enlightenment practices of taste as regulative of conduct has been the study of civility and politeness as emulative models.⁴³ I show in Chapter Two that, in addition to functioning as a public-prescriptive model, politeness presupposed and tacitly encouraged the very runaway emulative and embodied engagement that it sought to restrict.

Chapter Three explores the countercultural side of the new aesthetics, which was already quite visible in Milton, at its most extreme remove from normative Western culture. Here, I argue that Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* is a model of the new aesthetic subject rendered in a diachronic process of development rather than as a static type. Driven by his impulses to detach from society, Crusoe regulates himself according to a social program in the absence of other people, remaking his social world as a self-supporting aesthetic construct. Although the novel pays relatively little attention to the problem of delicacy, I argue that it is centrally concerned with the cultivation of the inner sense. I contextualize it within inner sense theory from Ralph Cudworth to Hutcheson, the theory of self-education in Locke, and the account of self-regulation in Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Adding the aesthetic to several social systems (economic, religious, and political) for which this text has been read as an allegory, I argue that it furnishes a fully realized paradigm for an aesthetic self-education through the practice of detachment. Recent studies of luxury and consumer culture in the eighteenth century have accustomed us to thinking of consumption patterns as yielding aesthetic norms.⁴⁴ In Chapter Three I show how the new aesthetics set up “the natural” as an aesthetic criterion that could never be verified itself, but could trump any formalized aesthetic norm.⁴⁵ The aesthetic conduct of conduct made use of both seductive pleasure in images and the unconscious compulsion to repeat in the absence of imagistic presence.

Chapter Four turns from the solitary self-making of the aesthetic subject to the socialized construction of the authority of the person of taste. I show that the first positive, evolving, and fully socialized figure that enshrines the methods of subjectification and the regulatory techniques of the new aesthetics appears in Jonathan Richardson’s theory of connoisseurship in the first decades of the eighteenth century. During the first half of the eighteenth century, the figure who most thoroughly integrated the premises and tensions of the culture of taste into his literary program – in other words, the figure who most lived what I call the experimental authority of the person of taste – was Alexander Pope. Integrally connected to the figure of the tastemaker was the project of critically specifying a standard of taste, not on the old model of externally normative laws but on the new model of subjective laws sensitive to the fluctuations of human response. Efforts in this direction yielded the three most influential accounts of a “standard of taste” during the 1750s in the works of Edmund Burke, Alexander Gerard, and

David Hume. I show that all three versions of the standard had precedents at various points in Pope's oeuvre.

Returning to Hogarth's print, we find this figure of the moral connoisseur mingled with that of the head surgeon, whose wand masters Tom's taste for cruelty through a pointing that conducts the viewer to better tastes than his. Recalling Pope's figure of the dominance of the ruling passion, a hidden principle of order within the subject, the surgeon's wand hovers over Tom's body like Moses's staff, about to be thrown down into the dust to become a snake that devours the lesser snakes.

Notes to the Introduction

¹ In his comments on the series, Hogarth acknowledges the coarse style of engraving, declaring its “strong bold stroke” to fit the intended audience of “men of the lowest rank,” adding that “as they were addressed to hard hearts, [I] have rather preferred leaving [the line-work] hard, and giving the effect, by a quick touch, to rendering them languid and feeble by fine strokes and soft engraving.” He continues: “The prints were engraved with the hope of, in some degree, correcting that barbarous treatment of animals, the very sight of which renders the streets of our metropolis so distressing to every feeling mind. If they have had this effect, and checked the progress of cruelty, I am more proud of having been the author, than I should be of having painted Raphael’s Cartoons.” *Anecdotes of William Hogarth, Written by Himself*, ed. J. B. Nichol (London, 1833), 64–5.

² Throughout this dissertation, I use the term “aesthetics” in the general sense of critical reflection about art and beauty (specifically with reference to the conduct of conduct) regardless of the period in question, even long before Alexander Baumgarten introduced the word as a technical term in 1734 (see note 38 below). I describe as the “new aesthetics” the tradition of criticism that is the primary object of this project, the British critical tradition inspired by empiricism that began with Shaftesbury and Addison. Occasionally, I use the term “Enlightenment aesthetics” to describe this tradition in a wider sense, encompassing continental works and works beyond my historical period, up to that of Kant. Even more rarely, I speak of “the aesthetic,” a more contested category sometimes used to describe the wider cultural impact of this tradition up to the present.

³ The catalog, appended to *Anecdotes*, 245, identifies the good sentimental youth in Plate 1 as George III as a boy and the head surgeon in Plate 4 as Mr. Freke, the president of the Royal College of Surgeons.

⁴ The *locus classicus* is the famous example from Book Two of Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* of the spectator’s secret pleasure at watching a shipwreck. For a sophisticated discussion of this example in Enlightenment texts, see “Aesthetics and Ethics of the Spectator” in Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator*, trans. Steven Rendall (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 23–46.

⁵ In Hogarth’s main theoretical text, he contrasts the inherent beauty of the straight-lined pyramid as a model of proportion with the serpentine line, where the motion in the scene depicted meets the motion of the spectator’s eye. This “line” linking the spectator’s eye, the artistic representation, and the motion of its signified is compared with the line the imagination follows when reading a literary text. See *The Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Ronald Paulson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 33ff.

⁶ In Niklas Luhmann’s social model, which I draw from frequently in what follows, as various social subsystems begin to function with their own binary codes and operating program, they show *greater* signs of mutual dependence. For example, the art system shows greater functional independence exactly during the period in the early eighteenth century when it is most intensely exposed to the economy (e.g. the rise of the modern art market). Borrowing a concept from Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela’s theory of cell development, Luhmann refers to the continuous self-reproduction of systems as “autopoiesis” rather than autonomy in order to avoid suggesting enclosure and monadic isolation. At various stages in his work he refers to the heightened dependencies between systems as “interpenetration” and “structural coupling”; see respectively *Social Systems*, trans. John Bednarz, Jr. with Dirk Baecker (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1995), 210-254 and *Theory of Society*, vol. 1, trans. Rhodes Barrett (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2012), 49-67.

⁷ W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 118.

⁸ The idea that an epochal break in the first decade of the eighteenth century inaugurates aesthetic modernity is a truism of intellectual history. Władysław Tatarkiewicz perhaps makes the case with the most performative verve; arriving at his watershed date of 1700 at the end of the third volume of his *History of Aesthetics*, ed. Cyril Barrett, trans. Daruta Petsch (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), he discontinues the projected future volumes and writes a thematically organized *History of Six Ideas* (1980; Melbourne: Springer, 2013) instead. The standard account of the

emergence of the modern conception of “the fine arts” around 1710–1720 is Otto Kristeller, “The Modern System of the Arts,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 4 (1952), 496–527.

⁹ This was the argument of “Sensus Communis; an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour” in S I.37-94. Jerome Stolnitz rediscovered the origins of “the aesthetic attitude” in Shaftesbury; see “On the Significance of Lord Shaftesbury in Modern Aesthetic Theory,” *The Philosophical Quarterly* 11, no. 43 (April 1961), 97–113. For another statement of the standard view, which stresses the teleology toward Kant rather than Shaftesbury’s empiricism, see Dabney Townsend, “From Shaftesbury to Kant: The Development of the Concept of Aesthetic Experience,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 48, no. 2 (Spring 1987), 287–305, where Kant develops disinterestedness beyond Shaftesbury’s simpler intuitionism, purging it of neo-Platonic holdovers.

¹⁰ The most comprehensive and sophisticated recent survey of aesthetic theory from an intellectual historical perspective is that of Paul Guyer, *A History of Modern Aesthetics*, 3 vols., (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), which begins by dissociating three distinct lines: Shaftesbury’s inner sense theory, which yields the problem of taste; the German rationalist theory of pleasure in Christian Wolff and Baumgarten (which I do not consider here); and the theory of “free play” in Jean-Baptiste Dubos, with which Guyer aligns Addison (much too hastily in my view). All these roads, for Guyer, lead directly to Kant. In a similar survey proceeding with a much lighter touch, Timothy Costelloe likewise makes this tradition originate with “the age of taste” and begins with the notion of inner sense; see *The British Aesthetic Tradition: From Shaftesbury to Wittgenstein* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 18–19.

¹¹ See Joanna Picciotto, *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), esp. 509-592.

¹² On the abiding link between aesthetics and the deadening of sensation (or an “anaesthetics”), particularly prominent in the Frankfurt School, see Susan Buck-Morss, “Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin’s Artwork Essay Reconsidered,” *October*, no. 62 (1992), 3–41. Kevis Goodman describes these effects in early eighteenth-century poetry in terms of noise and damaged perception in *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹³ For a sympathetic account of Kant’s theory of disinterestedness, see Henry E. Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Taste* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2001), 85–97. In a series of articles, Stolnitz traced the roots of this theory from Shaftesbury and Addison; see “On the Origins of ‘Aesthetic Disinterestedness,’” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 20, no. 2 (Winter 1961), 131–43 and “‘The Aesthetic Attitude’ in the Rise of Modern Aesthetics,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36, no. 4 (Summer 1976), 409–22. For an account of various contemporary versions of this phenomenon, not all of which are directly Kantian, see Norman Kreitman, “The Varieties of Aesthetic Disinterestedness,” *Contemporary Aesthetics* 4 (February 2006) [<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.7523862.0004.018>]. Also see Nick Zangwill, “Unkantian Notions of Disinterest,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 32, no. 2 (1992), 149–52.

¹⁴ In “‘Psychical Distance’ as a Factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle,” *British Journal of Psychology* 5, no. 2 (June 1912), Edward Bullough gave an influential account of “distance” as an empiricist alternative to Kantian disinterestedness that posited a continuum between “under-distancing” and “over-distancing.” His much-discussed central example of looking at the fog at sea recalls the spectator’s pleasure at watching a shipwreck from *De rerum natura*, which is foundational for materialist aesthetics. Bullough’s empiricist approach did not seek disenchantment but, on the contrary, a re-enchantment. “The most sensual appeal,” he emphasizes, “becomes the translucent veil of an underlying spirituality, once the grossly personal and practical elements have been removed from it” (107). This “spiritual” factor in aesthetics has of course long been the target of materialist criticism, even though its genealogy is part of the materialist line.

¹⁵ “Detachment” is largely synonymous with “distance” (the empiricist as opposed to the transcendental Kantian view), though it suggests the position of the subject rather than physical distance from the object. In what follows, I usually default to this term, in large part because it is less common and thus somewhat less freighted with positions.

¹⁶ The term “aesthetic attitude” invariably includes some version of distancing, detachment, or disinterestedness; for a succinct summary see Alan Goldman, “The Aesthetic,” in *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, 2nd ed., (London: Routledge, 2005), 263–6. Beginning with a series of articles responding to Stolnitz in the 1960s, George Dickie has attacked the existence of special “aesthetic attitude” within the discourse of analytical philosophy; his most cited statement is in “The Myth of the Aesthetic Attitude,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (January 1964), 56–65. Despite skeptical attacks, the notion of an “aesthetic attitude” remains common in analytic philosophy, more so than literary theory or visual culture, where it is unpopular on account of its *souçon* of idealism.

¹⁷ Across many fields, “aesthetic experience” seems to be the least ideologically fraught lexical choice, although it clearly evokes a family of variously post-empiricist (as opposed to neo-Kantian) approaches in the lineage of John Dewey’s *Art as Experience* (1932; New York: Perigee Books, 2005). For different contemporary versions of empiricist, neo-pragmatist, and materialist (via neuroscience) theorizations of aesthetic experience, see, respectively, Roger Scruton, *Art and Imagination: A Study in the Philosophy of Mind* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine Press, 2015); Richard Shusterman, *Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012); and G. Gabrielle Starr, *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015).

¹⁸ Luhmann’s rationale for replacing “disinterestedness” with second-order observation is the by-now-standard problem facing post-Kantian theories of disinterestedness: “is there perhaps a special interest in being disinterested”? (*AS* 69). Luhmann defines observation as any operation that includes both a said and an unsaid in the same form – this “reentry” of the form into the form yields a “two-sided form” – and he stresses that observation, understood in this radically constructivist sense, can take place at the sub-human neurological level of cognitive systems as well as at the supra-human level of social systems. I return to what makes for “second-order” observation in his terms in Chapter 1.

¹⁹ Ernest Lee Tuveson, *The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 101. More prosaically, J. G. A. Pocock categorizes them into the “polite Whigs” subtype, who developed “secular,” “urbane and suburban” culture, which both projected an ideal of a singular society reconciling divergent interests (“by observing his friends [Mr. Spectator] heightens their awareness of self and other” far more than he could “as a politically engaged activist”) and gives coherence to the specific interests around “irenical, established, and oligarchical ideals, capable of being employed against Puritan, Tory, and republican alike and of making them look curiously similar.” See “Varieties of Whiggism from Exclusion to Reform” in *Virtue, Commerce, and History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 215–310, here 236–7.

²⁰ Jürgen Habermas’s influential work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), traces the emergence of the principle of “publicity” as a “principle of control” that “intended to change domination as such” (28) to an order in which participants “knew of no authority beside that of the better argument and because they felt themselves at one with all who were willing to let themselves be convinced by arguments” (41). In the “moral weeklies” of Addison and Richard Steele, “the public held a mirror up to itself” without coming “to a self-understanding through the detour of a reflection on works of philosophy and literature ... but through entering into ‘literature’ as an object” (42–3). Since Nussbaum and Brown pointed out the resistance of the eighteenth century to the new theoretical approaches developed in neighboring fields in *The New Eighteenth Century*, eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York: Routledge, 1987), the vast majority of the work on this period informed by social theory has used, more or less critically, Habermas’s theory of the public sphere as a point of departure. Working at the limits of the Habermasian model, I have found Michael Warner’s *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005) particularly helpful.

²¹ “An autoimmunitary process is that strange behavior where a living being, in quasi-suicidal fashion, ‘itself’ works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself *against* its ‘own’ immunity.” See Jacques Derrida, “Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides—A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida” in *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*, ed. Giovanna Borradori (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 85–

136, here 94. Grasping this process requires “an ‘empiricist’ style, though aiming beyond empiricism” (88), which is to say, in the terms of this project, an aesthetic mode of analysis.

²² The notorious central postulate of Luhmann’s social theory is that human beings are not a part of society and they cannot access society; they are rather in the environment of a social system that operates autopoietically. As he puts it, “our point of departure is that no society can reach itself through its own operations. Society has no address,” *Theory of Society*, vol. 2, trans. Rhodes Barrett (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2013), 167.

²³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); see also “The Historical Genesis of a Pure Aesthetic,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 46 (1987), 201–10, where Bourdieu situates the “invention of the aesthetic attitude” in terms of the “pure gaze” in nineteenth-century literature. The standard critique of Bourdieu is that he has virtually nothing to say about aesthetics before Kant. Although my analysis follows a Foucaultian understanding of practices and a Luhmannian account of society, it shares with Bourdieu the cardinal imperative to understand this aesthetic subject as above all a social artifact. See Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (New York: Blackwell, 1990), esp. Ch. 1, “The Law of the Heart,” discussed further in Chapter One.

²⁴ Respectively, Luc Ferry, *Homo Aestheticus: The Invention of Taste in the Democratic Age*, trans. Robert de Loiza (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), and Denise Gigante, *Taste: A Literary History* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005).

²⁵ See respectively, among their many works, Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004), and Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989).

²⁶ For a polemic on the reforming power of aesthetic experience, see Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). A more detailed account of her phenomenology of visualization can be found in *Dreaming by the Book* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999). For a nuanced contemporary attempt to rehabilitate a qualified version of aesthetic idealism, see Alexander Nehamas, *Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

²⁷ As Marcel Mauss puts it, “At the bottom of all our mystical states are techniques of the body which we have not studied” in “Techniques of the Body,” *Economy of Society* 2, no. 1 (1973), trans. Ben Brewster, 70–88, here 87.

²⁸ See *The Birth of Governmentality: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2004), discussed in detail in Chapter One, section 2. The pioneering work to consider the history of aesthetics in terms of its disciplinary function is Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgment* (Cambridge, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1989). I add to Caygill’s account an inquiry into the figural realization of aesthetic disciplines in literature and visual art.

²⁹ In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), Michel Foucault describes the public execution of an attempted regicide, which included a postmortem dissection as an instance of a spectacular display of sovereign power (see 32–59, esp. 51). The powerful vertical display of the transcendent power of the sovereign is shifted in Hogarth’s image to a horizontal and immanent display of power, in which the figure of the prince physically struggles with Tom, and rather feebly at that.

³⁰ My project thus investigates a different phenomenon than the pioneering studies of disciplinary regimes inspired by the work of Foucault in John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) and D. A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

³¹ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 43.

³² “There is an almost identifiable point, which, in the spatial experience of passing from inside to out, is proclaimed by the whole body. The I as a whole leaps towards this localized point and moves decisively from one half of the

body to the other when the point slides, in contact with the separating wall, from its internal to its external surface. Since my shipwreck I have become accustomed to calling this point the soul. The soul resides at the point where the I is decided. We are all endowed with a soul, from that first moment of passage when we risked and saved our existence.” Michel Serres, *The Five Senses: A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies, I*, trans. Margaret Sankey and Peter Cowley (New York: Continuum, 2008), 20, 21.

³³ The argument for Enlightenment aesthetics as medium theory to which I am contributing is made with brief, aphoristic brilliance by David E. Wellbery in “Aesthetic Media: The Structure of Aesthetic Theory Before Kant” in *Regimes of Description in the Archive of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. John Bender and Michael Marrinan (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 198–211, and at somewhat greater length by Michael McKeon in “Mediation as Primal Word: The Arts, the Sciences, and the Origins of the Aesthetic” in *This Is Enlightenment*, ed. Clifford Siskin and William Warner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 384–412. See also John Guillory, “Genesis of the Media Concept,” *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2010), 321–62, which argues (implicitly against Friedrich Kittler) for the lineaments of a media theory going back to the later seventeenth century. Like Wellbery, Guillory argues that the crucial transformation is the late-seventeenth-century decay of traditional rhetoric and the exploration of mediated forms of spontaneous or direct influence on the senses (see 327). Of course, one could look for still earlier explorations of such techniques of mediated sensory triggers, for example, in the arts of memory or in pornography.

³⁴ Georg Gadamer places the discourse of taste at the beginning of modern hermeneutics in *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1989), 3–41. On the contemporary changes within rhetorical discourse, see Samuel Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), especially Chapter 6, “The New Rhetoric, 1646–1800.”

³⁵ A rather squeamish proto-Victorian critic writes: “The Four Stages of Cruelty was his next work – and I wish it had never been painted [sic]. There is indeed great skill in the grouping, and profound knowledge of character; but the whole effect is gross, brutal, and revolting. A savage boy grows into a savage man, and concludes a career of cruelty and outrage by an atrocious murder, for which he is hanged and dissection.” Allan Cunningham, *The Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters and Sculptors* (1831), cited in *Anecdotes*, 245.

³⁶ *The Temporality of Taste in Eighteenth-Century British Writing* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³⁷ For a detailed discussion of Addison’s theory, see Chapter One, section 3. Many of Burke’s observations about the sublime, discussed in Chapter Four, section 4, followed from this idea.

³⁸ Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry*, trans. and ed. Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954), defines poetry as dealing with “clear and confused [meaning obscure] ideas” (3). He later calls the outcome of this conjunction a “partial image” (13).

³⁹ Especially good on Bruno, see Ioan Couliano *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987); see also Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge, 1966), and Ernst Gombrich, “*Icones Symbolicae*: The Visual Image in Neoplatonic Thought,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948), 163–92.

⁴⁰ In *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), David Summers argues that the theoretical discourse of the judgment of sense, intuitive knowledge variously linked to sensation, continuously informed artistic production (see especially 103–7, 311–36).

⁴¹ For a tantalizingly brief sketch of references suggesting that “God still lurks in the background” of Enlightenment aesthetics, see Rémy G. Saisselin, “A Second Note on Eighteenth-Century ‘Disinterestedness,’” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 21, no. 2 (Winter 1962), 209–10. In a parallel line, M. H. Abrams gives an intellectual history of Enlightenment aesthetics in which “both the contemplative and the heterocosmic models for art [i.e., the thesis that an artwork is its own world] ... first exploited in the eighteenth century ... [were] imported into criticism of the arts from theology,” thus describing the relation to religion we would now call post-secular. See “From

Addison to Kant: Modern Aesthetics and the Exemplary Art” in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century British Art and Aesthetics*, ed. Ralph Cohen (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 16–48, here 21. Most useful of all for my project is the thesis of Niklaus Largier’s “Mysticism, Modernity, and the Invention of Aesthetic Experience,” *Representations* 105, no. 1 (Winter 2009), 37–60. Largier posits that the mystics were preoccupied with the “rhetorical stimulation of the senses” (52) through new “practices of enchantment” (58n17) geared not only to apprehending the divine but to seeing the world differently (53).

⁴² See Richard Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005). For a brief survey of the *je ne sais quoi* in England during Addison’s period, see Samuel Holt Monk, “A Grace Beyond the Reach of Art,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 5, no. 2 (April 1944), 131–50.

⁴³ Lawrence Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), and “Politeness for Plebes: Consumption and Social Identity in early Eighteenth-Century England,” in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 362–82. The classic general work on civility is Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1994).

⁴⁴ See Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), and Frank Trentmann, “Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 3 (July 2004), 373–401, and 1–46. See also the overview in John Brewer, “‘The most polite age and the most vicious’: Attitudes towards Culture as a Commodity, 1660–1800” in *The Consumption of Culture*, 242–61.

⁴⁵ Outlined long ago in Arthur O. Lovejoy’s seminal essay, “‘Nature’ as Aesthetic Norm,” *Modern Language Notes* 42, no. 7 (November, 1927), 440–50.

Chapter One

The Rule of Taste

Milton, Dryden, and the New Aesthetics

Men may and should correct their palates, and give a relish to what either has, or they suppose has none. The relish of the mind is as various as that of the Body, and like that too may be alter'd... The eating of a well-season'd dish, suited to a Man's palate, may move the Mind by the delight it self, that accompanies the eating, without reference to any other end: To which the consideration of the pleasure there is in health and strength (to which the meat is subservient) may add a new Gusto, able to make us swallow an ill relish'd potion... Habits have powerful charms and put so strong attractions of easiness and pleasure into what we accustom ourselves to... It is a part, in the conduct of Men towards their Happiness, neglected to a degree, that it will be possibly entertain'd as a Paradox, if it be said, that Men can make things or actions more or less pleasing to themselves; and thereby remedy that, to which one may justly impute a great deal of their wandering.

(Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*)

Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with ought of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's Songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men.

(Milton, *Paradise Regained*)

'Tis not merely what we call *Principle*, but a TASTE, which governs Men.

(Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*)

The foundational statements of eighteenth-century aesthetics, Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* (1711) and Joseph Addison's "Pleasure of the Imagination" sequence in the *Spectator* (1714), lent cultural intelligibility to a self-consciously new way of styling oneself as an observer, variously described as "disinterestedness," "detachment," or "distant" observation. The cultural definition of this cognitive disposition, linked to the idea of modern aesthetics, took shape around the rapidly intensified discussion of taste in the first decades of the eighteenth century.

In order to take detachment seriously and evaluate what it might have looked like as an embodied mode of cognition as well as a transpersonal regulatory medium, I look to the major literary achievements of the generation preceding Shaftesbury and Addison for depictions of the new aesthetic subjectivity. In particular, I consider figures that reflect on the power of representations to exert influence through appeals to the material body. Section 1 outlines the

empirical procedures that went into Shaftesbury's new aesthetics, arguing that Milton's innovative usages of "gust" and "taste" in *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained* model the social mediation of perception he has in mind. Section 2 argues that Shaftesbury's theory of taste as method of social discipline provides a crucial supplement to Foucault's theory of liberal "governmentality," of which Dryden's late ode on the power of art to govern provides a lapidary formulation. Section 3 shows that Addison's popular theory of aesthetic detachment, which he calls "secondary imaginary pleasures," incorporates a mechanistic theory of pleasure adapted from Descartes into his model of the reforming and regulative potency of aesthetic spectatorship, arguing further that it addresses a fallen spectator of the kind we find in Milton's Satan when he gazes at Eve. Section 4 further develops Addison's continental sources, arguing that Bouhours's theory of the *je ne sais quoi* provided a model for a materialist regulatory lure, showing that Milton depicts this in Satan's dream tempting Eve. Remarkably, the same mechanism of second-order observation that defines the new aesthetics of Addison and Shaftesbury tempts Satan to goodness and Eve to falling. The new aesthetics picked up on emerging techniques of governing by aesthetic means that had been explored selectively in literature and generalized them into a wide cultural program, a broadening suggested and anticipated in a brief yet vivid manner in Abraham Cowley's ode "Of Liberty."

One major aim of this chapter is to show how the aesthetic liberalism of the new aesthetics called on a public domain distinct from the public sphere of normative reason. Their aesthetics did not address reasonable and responsible citizens: it appealed to the somatic pleasures of the sensitive material body that responded automatically and was not always conscious of itself.¹ The new aesthetics suggested that given the right incentives, the domain of wayward impulses could be worked upon to regulate itself and they claimed that a secondary secret order of sociality driven by bonds of pleasure existed in addition to the diurnal sphere of public life. The oneiric public domain of common sense gradually took shape as the domain of civil society. The new aesthetics suggested that the production and consumption of art was practically sufficient to generate a well-governed lifeworld, provided this process – whose province was reflected in the cultural semantics of taste – was steered by competent critics.

1. "Gust" and the social mediation of taste in Milton and Shaftesbury

Can we bear looking a-new into these Mysterys? Can we endure a new *Schooling*, after having once learnt our Lesson from *the World*? For by the Lesson of the latter *School*, ... should'd I at any time ask my-self, *What govern'd me?* I should answer readily, *My interest*, ... Opinion, and Fancy. ... Is every thing therefore my Interest which I fancy such? Or may my Fancy possibly be wrong?"

(Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*)

The way to know were not to see but taste.

(Milton, *Samson Agonistes*)

The new aesthetics promoted by Shaftesbury was an uneasy hybrid of empirical procedure and idealist rhetoric. The standard view of Shaftesbury's role as a philosophical idealist,² hero of Whig aesthetic ideology,³ and framer of detachment as the cardinal aptitude of aesthetic

subjectivity downplays the empirical procedures and materialist premises of the new aesthetic model he inaugurated. He conceived the practice of taste to act as a directly social mechanism for governing interpersonal relations sensitively – meaning through instances of sensation, through the indirect action of tactful sensitivity, and through the stimulus of sensual pleasure – as an explicit alternative to transcendent sovereignty, normative value statements, and state-like institutions. This section stresses the socially mediated self-effacing practices of the self he recommends around the category of taste. In order to understand his version of aesthetic detachment as a lived experience, I turn to two key passages in Milton: the moment in *Paradise Regained* which is often thought to introduce the new aesthetic sense of “taste” into English and the dramatic appeal to the power of taste in its archaic, non-aesthetic sense in *Samson Agonistes*. I explain the two parallel semantic fields existing in the late seventeenth century around “taste” and “gust/gusto/goût.” While “taste” carried the emergent aesthetic sense, I argue that it needed to absorb and remediate the visceral sense of “gust,” traces of which we find in the usage from *Samson Agonistes*. Shaftesbury’s new rule of taste, which governed through perception and the mediation of primitive gusts of experience developed a model of relationality in Milton into a social program that was counter-public and post-secular in nature.

When Shaftesbury urges a “new Schooling” that comes after the materialist analysis of motivation as structured by interest and opinion (and pleasure), he offers a manifesto for his new program of aesthetic, or tasteful, philosophy. The question that launches this program is one the subject must pose to itself: “Is every thing therefore my Interest which I fancy such? Or may my Fancy possibly be wrong?” (S I.190). Without leaving the material frame of observing interest and “fancy,” he demands that the subject separate off a supplementary observer to doubt and recognize its true interest and to decide what to enjoy. This observer shapes its invisible character and is ruled by its own taste: the subject of this “new Schooling” is Shaftesbury’s new aesthetic subject. In *Paradise Regained* (1671), Milton powerfully condensed the emerging aesthetic usage of taste, which he is sometimes credited as officially introducing into English: rejecting Satan’s alluring rehearsal of the prestige of Hellenic culture, Christ declares all this “will far be found unworthy to compare / With Sion’s songs, to all true tastes excelling” (*PR* IV.345–6).⁴ The innovation in this passage lies in mobilizing a rationale for dismissing Satan and discovering divine truth through the sensitive perception of taste.⁵ The following line, “Where God is prais’d aright, and godlike men” (347) underlines the audacity of this move by making the “godlike men” (such as himself, and all other poets and intellectuals it is possible to have a “true taste” for), who are or were perceptible human beings, the grammatical objects of the same “praise” as that bestowed to the divine. Milton updates the old “natural light” (or “synderesis”) tradition by locating this intuition not in a higher spiritual illumination emanating from within but a tasteful certainty precipitated from without.⁶ Moreover, designating taste as a medium of knowledge upset the traditional hierarchy of the senses, which placed sight at the top and taste and smell at the bottom, suggesting instead that truth could manifest from the dark gustatory cavity and in the resonance of songs.⁷ The verse alliteratively bonds divine truth with an organ’s capacity to sift through matter, calling in the passive voice on the future consumer(s?) that like him will simply find no comparison here. Although Shaftesbury had little interest in “Sion’s songs” and idealized Greco-Roman culture, the “new schooling” of fancy he recommends makes the same proposition as Milton’s Christ that the confused domain of tastes is a fit medium for truth.

The older usage of taste appears in a pivotal episode of *Samson Agonistes*, when the giant Harapha visits the blind and chained Samson seething with verbal superiority and the aura of

martial finery, and Samson fearlessly taunts him: “the way to know were not to see but taste” (SA 1091). Milton compresses his defiant retort into this heavy-handed line of pentameter designed to cudgel Harapha with the monosyllabic demand to taste. Samson expresses in terms of the “taste” the demand for a primal encounter with the giant that would decide between them and reflect on their respectively supporting gods: Harapha should not just look (illusory sizing up) and talk (toothless rhetoric) but actually taste Samson’s strength. The word “taste” comes from the late vulgar latin *tastare*, a combination of *gustus* (taste, which included both the literal sense of physiological taste and the metaphorical senses of preference, inclination, sample, foretaste, including the aesthetic sense of cultivated discrimination or *iudicium*) and *tangere* (touch).⁸ *Tastare* came from the earlier composite form *taxitare* (from *taxare*, to feel, handle, evaluate, but also to censure or find fault with), from which we also get taxation, an association preserved when we speak of a tasteless person or writing taxing our patience.⁹ *Tastare* also yielded the modern French *tâter* (to feel for, probe, know by touching), which does not carry any of the aesthetic sense of *goût*, which came directly from *gustus* without the idea of touching, testing, or taxing. Milton’s use of “taste” here evidently exploits the archaic connotation of physical trial or test by touch that was already becoming obsolete.¹⁰ The fully present ur-taste Samson demands, a theologically charged moment of decisive violence, never happens, at least not on stage. Although primordial knowledge by tasting is deferred, Milton gives this moment a definite epistemological purchase: Samson offers to taste blind while the able-bodied Harapha declines with squeamish distaste, holding his nose: “To combat with a blind man I disdain / And thou hast need much washing to be touch’d” (SA 1106–7). Milton relishes the self-inhibiting effect of Harapha’s pride: a Philistine indeed.

In both of the poems Milton published in 1671– the path-breaking robust epistemological usage of taste in *Paradise Regained*, which asserted that truth could actually be tasted, making bodily functions a site of spiritual knowledge, as well as the archaic, epistemologically deferred usage in *Samson Agonistes* – take in a new direction Milton’s already extensive deployment of the category of taste in *Paradise Lost*.¹¹ Milton charges the act of tasting the fruit with significance as aesthetic, as well as physiological and magical, consumption. He describes Eve’s state of mind just before the fall in terms of epicurean focus, “intent now wholly on her taste” (PL IX.786). When Adam follows suit, Milton casts him as a phony follower of what is called tasteful by others: “Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste, / And elegant, of sapience no small part, / Since to each meaning savour we apply, / And palate call judicious” (1017–20), ironically transforming the removal of a small part evoked by *taxare* (as in taxation) with the removal of sapience, the true knowledge Plato compared with physical hunger.¹² Heavenly disapproval takes shape in the invocation to Book IX as “distance and distaste” for man after the Fall (9). By contrast, Book V offers the counter-model of good taste in Raphael’s unfinicky gastronomic gusto: “to taste / Think not I shall be nice,” he tells Adam and Eve (432–3). Likewise, Eve’s hospitality represents consummate tastefulness: “She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent / What choice to choose for delicacy best, / What order, so contrived as not to mix / Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring / Taste after taste upheld with kindest change” (331–6). Milton unambiguously makes her an aesthetic observer, who does not merely choose well but observes with consideration what choice she shall choose.¹³ Her prelapsarian delicacy consists of avoiding inelegance, of contriving to let each taste speak for itself in sequence, suggesting an ideal of total continence of tastes, an infinitely coursed meal in which every distinct flavor appears with

perfect integrity. Her role is to process the flavors into homogeneity (gathering, heaping, crushing, creaming) without any chemical transformation (no fermenting or fuming) to alter their singularity. They appear like “our primitive great sire,” in themselves “all their state” (350, 353).

The contradistinction between good taste and bad taste Milton upholds in *Paradise Lost* becomes much more difficult in the later texts. The innovative “true taste” passage in *Paradise Regained* ends with a qualification that powerfully undermines the idea that taste’s epistemology works with the binaries it did in *Paradise Lost*: “Such are from God inspired [the objects of true taste], not such from thee; / Unless where moral virtue is expressed / By light of nature not in all quite lost” (PR IV.350–2). He excludes Satan from objects which taste of truth, adding that objects not directly tasting of divine origin (the classics) can still taste of the more diffused natural light of truth.¹⁴ The passage makes taste the perception of graduated illuminations of divine truth rather than of evil in a positive sense.¹⁵ In *Samson Agonistes*, Milton explores how the primitive moment of truth-by-tasting can nonetheless happen in a mediated fashion. By the end of his verbal exchange with Samson, things have not gone well for “his Giantship,” who leaves “somewhat crest-fall’n” (SA 1244). Milton places the entitlements of worldly giantship on one side and the naked confidence of the chosen one on the other, yet the encounter Samson wishes for – burning through rhetoric to flesh and spirit, definitively discriminating that the Satanic side is “weighed, and shown how light, how weak” (PL IV.1012) – never happens. The exchange is initiated in Harapha’s terms, proceeds according to his sense of decorum, and without breaching that rhetorical arena still manifests Samson’s superior gusto.¹⁶

Milton pushes the archaic meaning of taste away from the idea of corporeal test of someone else and towards the idea of a self-reflective test within a socially conditioned verbal exchange. Samson’s experience of himself and of his rival are simultaneous and interdependent. The experience of this mediated taste grants him a renewed measure of his powers, leading him offstage to deliver his mortal gust to the edifice of the philistines. Samson’s usage of taste urges beyond looking and talking, but not towards a knowable spiritual core but rather surface manifestations: “gorgeous arms,” unwashed hirsute flesh, and material destruction. His power is essentially non-verbal – “I know no spells, use no forbidden arts; / My trust is in the living God who gave me / At my nativity this strength, diffused” – but its expression is contingent on non-living, socially conditioned signifiers like words and hair: “while I preserved these locks unshorn, / The pledge of my unviolated vows” (SA 1139–44). Milton suggests that even his earlier exploits, which were certainly not rhetorical, were nevertheless mediated by a rhetorically charged factor clinging to his flesh. In the late contest with Harapha this supplement is all that remains of his power, the deferred “taste” mediated by words: yet his true character still prevails. Unlike the unfallen characters in *Paradise Lost*, Samson’s grandeur shows through the medium of a Harapha’s gigantism.¹⁷

Of course, Milton meant “his giantness” to stand for the lordly presumption of Shaftesbury’s class. When Shaftesbury endorses the criterion Milton formulates in terms of true taste as a general rule for subjectification and social life, he was appropriating Samson’s native greatness for those who would hold themselves high in the world. He asserts that the procedures of Harapha’s decorum defining the interaction with Samson need not defeat the one coated in “gorgeous arms” provided that one has (as Harapha did not) a true taste beyond outward fashionable or boastful refinement. According to Shaftesbury, the knowledge of true taste, a touch beyond words, can happen performatively within polite verbal mediation. In a noteworthy

passage, he recasts Harapha's olfactory dissatisfaction as the rule of true taste: "Shou'd one, who had the Countenance of a Gentleman, ask me 'Why I wou'd avoid being *nasty*, when nobody was present?' in the first place I shou'd be fully satisfy'd that he himself was a very nasty Gentleman who cou'd ask this Question" and the only reply he could offer is "'Twas because I had a Nose." Nose-snubbing among gentlemen, he thinks, has always been a more effective alternative to tomes of principled moral thought. Shaftesbury has made Samson's superficial nastiness – that is, the sense of "stink" that still adhered to this word¹⁸ – into Harapha's nastiness as a bad gentleman. At the end of Book V, *Paradise Lost* offered a similar scene of distaste in action when the Satanic hordes place acute social pressure on Abdiel to conform with the fashion of the moment: "his zeal / None seconded, as out of season judged, / Or singular and rash" (849–51), as if he were tastelessly failing to do what is now tacitly done and God were so very last season. Abdiel returns social ostracism in kind: "and with retorted scorn his back he turned" (906). Shaftesbury recommends this performative posture of "retorted scorn" as a powerful pose of social judgment among civil persons.

As we have seen, Shaftesbury's "new schooling" through the distribution of scorn was premised on a materialist analysis of normative ideals in terms of interest, pleasure, and bodily habituation. "Tis the height of Wisdom, no doubt," he quips, "to be rightly *selfish*" (S I.76). All of these self-centered material factors were connoted by the recently imported continental forms based directly on the Latin *gustare*: *gusto*, *gust*, and even the directly translated *gout*.¹⁹ Instinctual likes and dislikes, sociable approbation and shame, displays of enthusiasm, all of which were tied to a reflex in the body, were to be driving factors in practical philosophy. His premise is that "Every-one is a *Virtuoso*, of a higher or lower degree: Every-one pursues a GRACE, and courts a VENUS of one kind or another" (87). The various ruling passions take shape as different tastes: "One admires *Musick* and *Paintings*, *Cabinet-Curiositys*, and indoor *Ornaments*: Another admires *Gardens*, *Architecture*, and the Pomp of *Buildings*. Another, who has no *gusto* of either sort, believes all those they call VIRTUOSI to be half-distracted" (III.240). Shaftesbury's usage of "gusto" for tasteful inclination reflected a lexical trend the *OED* gives many examples of: "Men afterwards find a *gusto* in [tobacco] and are unable to leave [it] off" (1647, Boyle); "we are not all of your *gusto*" (1662, Wycherley); "A sound *gusto*" in building (1663); "the *Gust* of that Age" (1699). It was particularly applied to the arts, as in "a Posture must be therefore be chosen according to their *gusto*" (1695, Dryden); "a good *Gust* in *Designing*" (1706) and drapery "of a little *gout*" (1717, Berkeley). It also connoted elite appreciation or vulgarity: "their *gusto* so depraved" (1662, Evelyn); "the *Gust* of the Vulgar" (1664); "the *gran gusto*" of the sublime (1706); "the Natural *Gout*" (1706); and the "Foppish *Gusto*" (1727, Pope). Introduced into English in the early seventeenth century, the *gust* forms were widespread in the second half of the seventeenth century, and then decline in the eighteenth century as "taste" gradually takes over as the leading aesthetic concept.

Usages of *gusto* often connoted a particularly energetic relish or appreciation with a more direct appeal to sexuality than taste, as in the very early usage in Shakespeare: "Mine eye well knows what with his *gust* is greeing / And to his palate doth prepare the cup," which frankly merges aesthetic and erotic appreciation.²⁰ Dryden rhymes it with lust in the opening sequence of *Absalom and Architophel*, which merges the sexual meaning with the nautical sense of wind when the narrative speculates as to Absalom's parentage, "Whether inspired by some diviner lust / His father got him with a greater *gust*."²¹ Milton too registers the libertine semantic potential of "gust" when he uses it alongside taste to describe the devils' misdirected exuberance: "more delusive, not the touch, but taste / Deceived; they fondly thinking to allay / Their appetite with

gust, instead of fruit / Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste / With splattering noise rejected” (PL X.563–567). Here, he makes gust the inner devilish simulacrum and taste the inward touchstone even devils retain still.²² These gust-based forms, more directly physical than taste (both in the direction of erotic and scientific knowledge) but without the connotation of touch, test, trial, and tax – and therefore not the idea of mediated touch Milton explored in *Samson Agonistes* – were making a bid to carry the newly prominent aesthetic meaning. Had the popularity they enjoyed in the late seventeenth century held fast we would today speak of our personal gusts for this or that and public-gusto surveys. The specialized usage of “gusto” as a particular enthusiasm survives, but the new aesthetics fixated on the idea of mediated sensation offered by “taste.” It is important that Milton does not tax Satan with an untrue or faulty gusto but with tastes out of order, something on the surface, not in the depth of his being.²³ Satan does not have, in Foucault’s famous formulation, “a past, a case history, and a childhood” yet he does have “a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology,” as we discover when he returns to hell after the fall only to experience “a greater power / Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned” transforming the devils’ bodies into strange morphologies charged with symbolic luster with a “horrid sympathy ... caught by contagion, like in punishment, / As in their crime” (PL X.515–45).²⁴ The new critical deployment of taste only happens when the immediacy conveyed by the idea of gust is integrated into the mediated arena of taste, which is why the usage in *Samson Agonistes* is so important.

Shaftesbury rejects the claims of materialist gusto alone but reformulates an ideal of taste wholly dependent on material factors, which are virtually its only positive contents. His version of taste requires gust just as Samson depends on his hair. There is no enjoyment, he claims, “without the Pre-establishment or Supposition of *a certain TASTE*” (S III.101). Individual gusto-impulses presuppose a sensibility or character that mediates them: the “characteristics” of his title. His “a certain” registers its inaccessibility except through the gusts of pleasure and interest that speak to it. When he describes “the great Work of *reforming his TASTE*” according to the “Standard of Nature” the only way the subject can ascertain whether he has achieved “Justness of *Taste*” is whether he detects an inward resistance to custom and fashion: “But if no such Conflict can be call’d to mind; ’tis a certain token that the Party has his *Taste* very little different from the Vulgar” (S I.218–19). Like Milton in *Samson Agonistes*, he makes the important thing living strength and true taste, but he conditions this on a gustatory thrust that he sees as necessarily contingent.²⁵ The taste or character he appeals to is the observer of material conditions like pleasure and interest, especially the subject’s own. Supposing a materialist structure of motivation, he argues, requires an inward observer to discriminate between pleasures and to decide what the subject’s interest is. The body’s disparate impulses do not speak for themselves; they require a guiding faculty. This capacity for detached (self-)observation, which makes split-second decisions below the threshold of conscious reasoning by principle, needs not remain mysterious or beyond discussion. The competency to act and judge in good taste represents another type of schooling, which can mitigate both the perceived hedonism of materialist analysis and the need for ruling social life with artificially imposed norms. Instead, he proposes a rule based on practices of self-observation: the rule of taste. “The great business in ... the whole of life,” he concludes, “is ‘to correct our taste,’” adding scare quotes to stress this happens through the shock of (in)correctness and not through normative correction.²⁶ This was anti-philosophical in that it attacked the rhetorical basis of philosophical discourse: most problems of moral and political philosophy, he thought, could be dissolved if a self-regulating

social process exerted pressures that made alignment, forced or consensual, with stated norms unnecessary.²⁷

This was adamantly not, however, a return to the old mystification. Shaftesbury's sublunary version of righteous indignation programmatically refuses to assume the providential mystery of the inward light of conscience to be a given. His distaste for the gentleman he recognizes to be nasty is a para-rhetorical supplement to their rational discussion. But he does not assume it to be innate: "a legitimate and just TASTE can neither be begotten, made, conceiv'd, or produc'd, without the antecedent *Labour* and *Pains* of CRITICISM" (III.101). Preverbal intuitions can and must be discussed and shaped, and this happens by means of the gusts of the body. Letting the nasty gentleman talk back, he is willing to take seriously the physicality implied by his metaphor: "What if I had a Cold? Or what if naturally I had no such nice Smell? ... Why even then, tho I had neither Nose, nor Eyes, my *Sense* of the matter wou'd still be the same; my Nature wou'd rise at the Thought of what was sordid [and if not I would] *hate my-self* for a Beast [rather than see myself] as a *human creature*" (I.78). He refuses to justify the potent idea of the sordid he invokes any other way than as an epidermally diffuse sensation that like Samson's strength originates at the dark limits of the body. He infers that, even stripped of bodily sense, the observation of his own nature would still yield this response: the feeling of uncouth beastliness that he thinks would survive all remission of sensible communication outside himself – all blindness – is the only sure pledge of his humanity.

Because he assumes no direct access to truth, Shaftesbury's righteousness is necessarily a self-righteousness worked up from within; in the same way, the spontaneous reflex responses he prizes are self-consciously labored effects. A central feature of the new discourse of taste was the dual demand for innate aptitude – a kernel of genius – and the absolute requirement that it be cultivated, developed, and improved. The strictures of French classicism avoided this conjunction.²⁸ Shaftesbury's aim is for self-regulation to replace the vulgar need of the masses for "such a rectifying Object as *the Gallows* before their Eyes" (S I.79). He rails against "indolent supine ... *Spectators*" who simply like what they like (III.103), preferring a "certain *Inspector* or *Auditor* establish'd within us" (I.115) that accommodates the subject to the standard of nature with an unremitting, ruthlessly invasive demand, recasting elite privilege as the precarious outcome of critical cultivation. Shaftesbury's new schooling puts unrelenting pressure on fancy, which may "possibly be wrong": "'Tis not the ... I like and you like. But why do I like? And if not with reason and truth I will refuse to like, dislike my fancy, condemn the form, search it, discover its deformity, and reject it."²⁹ If squeamish giantism felt less secure and more sensible of what it ultimately bottoms upon, he reasons, it could be its own Samson, correcting itself without the punishing encounter with an ideal. The new fragility of 'true' privilege leads directly to a new disciplining according to the as-yet inchoate categories of nature, natural truth, or common sense.³⁰

Shaftesbury constantly has recourse to norm-like value categories like reason, truth, right, and nature, but it is essential to his program that their positive elaboration is always beyond reach. His *Soliloquy; Or, Advice to an Author* (1710) develops this into a method based on interrupting one's continuous sense of self: "RECOGNIZE YOUR SELF: which was as much as to say, *Divide your-self*, or *Be TWO*" (I.107). Splitting oneself into observer and observed should invoke an uncanny "Daemon-Companion" through "duplicity of Soul" (106), not reassure the subject it is what it seems to be. Hamlet's ghostly *revenant* becomes the obligatory melancholy of gentlemanly good taste. If morality happens not just in principles, politics and religion, not just in confessions and rhetorical professions but in looks and deportments and bodily impulses

as available for observation, one has a duty to attend to these, to take them seriously, to make constant adjustments through a procedure of observational self-dissection. The nasty gentleman sequence was offered as an example of permanently restless self-doubt about unconscious factors in judgments. All tasteful judgments of others' nastiness rest upon an extrojected identification based on the subject's own. Only by including the nasty gentleman as his own possibility – observing how he observes – is he repudiated.

This method requires two parts: a visualization that imaginatively reconstructs the observed character and a posture of detachment or “disinterestedness” stabilizing the observer (S I.62). The heightened insecurity about the condition of the physical body was followed by a quiescence restoring trust in self and world. Shaftesbury explains the observation of character by reference to Homer, who “describes no Qualitys or Virtues; censures no Manners: makes no Encomiums, nor gives Characters himself; but brings his Actors still in view” (123). Fancies and opinions, just by force of being brought to view, are “forc'd to declare themselves, and take party” (117). He continues:

The scene presents it-self, as by chance, and undesign'd. You are left not only to judg coolly, and with indifference, of the Sense delivr'd; but of the Character, Genius, Elocution, and Manner of the Persons who deliver it ... it must be seen *from what Bottom* they speak; from what *Principle*, what *Stock* or *Fund* of Knowledg they draw; and what Kind or Species of Understanding here must have its Mark, its characteristick Note, by which it may be distinguish'd. It must be *such and such an Understanding*; as when we say, for instance, *such or such a Face*. (125)

His subject is not able to formulate what exact knowledge of taste it is looking for: it looks for what all sense bottoms upon, without permitting itself to find that bottom outside of the field of sense, seizing instead on the “characteristick note,” the particular that seems synecdochally telling. He is clear about the empiricist premise: “Tis the Habit alone of Reasoning, which can make a *Reasoner*” (45). He asks what *images* of this reason – meaning the character traits which are unconsciously motivated – come into focus as something publically visible. He endorses the ancient supposition that one's moral character and status as a political subject are reflected in one's physiognomy, countenance, and deportment – heretofore a subject for literary and artistic reflection – but these traits are dynamic and virtually nameless bundles of qualities apprehended as “such and such” by comparison rather than self-present ideals. These new aesthetic qualities or “characteristics” made these signs not available directly *and* visible in mediation.³¹

There was thus a double motivation for the observer's posture of detachment: to see clearly and to avoid being seen. Shaftesbury describes the predicament of disinterestedness: “what we esteem a Happiness in *one* Situation of Mind, is otherwise thought of in *another*. Which Situation therefore is the justest, must be consider'd: ‘How to gain that *Point of Sight*, whence probably we may best discern; and How to place our-selves in that unbiass'd State, in which we are fittest to pronounce” (S II.130). The labor of critically assessing how probable it is one is unbiased inherently nudges one into a point of sight adjacent to the desired one, feeling both the desired detachment and distance from it. Initially, his version of subjectivity does not claim unity through the coherence of an ideal; rather, it feels a different order of coherence: “FANCY and I are not *all one*. The Disagreement makes me *my own*” (I.200). His ambiguously synonymous reformulation registers that detachment requires the subject to look inside and outside at the same time. In the same way that he subjects pleasure and interest to self-doubt, the

possibility of a biased, derivative, or simply bad taste is the central fact following from submitting all practical judgment to the rule of taste. The passage conveys the disorientation following from an unreflective and pre-linguistic dimension of the subject for it to reach into, unsure whether it looks up or down.

2. Sensitive Government in Shaftesbury and Dryden

The theory of the subject in English empiricism probably represents one of the most important mutations, one of the most important theoretical transformations in Western thought since the Middle Ages, ... a subject who is not so much defined by his freedom, or by the opposition of soul and body, or by the presence of a source or core of concupiscence marked to a greater or lesser degree by the Fall or sin, but who appears in the form of a subject of individual choices which are both irreducible and non-transferable... This is the idea of a subject of interest ... [and] the appearance of interest for the first time as a form of both immediately and absolutely subjective will.

(Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*)

Shaftesbury's subject-shattering project of elevating taste into a criterion encompassing all practical life answered directly to a method for social and political ordering. This section situates Shaftesbury's intervention within the context of British economic liberalism in the Lockean tradition. In his late lectures at the Collège de France, Foucault develops the concept of "governmentality" as way to understand liberal non-interventionism, a broadly realized ethos of *laissez faire*, as a distinctive administrative and controlling strategy rather than simple non-action or leaving to nature. The natural freedom of the liberal subject, he argues, must be constantly assisted, stimulated, fashioned, reconfirmed: one must become "free to be free" (G 69). In what follows, I show that Shaftesbury was, on the one hand, rebelling against the *homo oeconomicus* Foucault derived from British empiricism, this subject "defined by interest" that Foucault thinks is so immensely significant in the history of the West (G 297), and which Shaftesbury called into doubt and situated within another rule defined by taste. I go on to show that, on the other hand, the new rule of taste and the *homo aestheticus* it produced, in no way stepped out of the schooling of interest, but instead leaned even more heavily on what Foucault calls "a form of both immediately and absolutely subjective will" in the decisions of taste, which were a supplementary and invisible interest with highly visible effects. "Tis not merely what we call *Principle*," Shaftesbury declares, "but a TASTE, which governs Men" (S III.108). The concept of "governmentality" – at term that conjoins the idea of disciplinary effects with *mentalités* or ways of thinking – was implicitly an alternative to the Marxist theory of ideology, stressing the act of governing interpellation and the horizontal nature of the exchange rather than the vertical imposition of a superstructure and the subject's passive confinement. I show that Dryden demonstrates of the techniques of aesthetic governmentality in his late lyrical masterpiece, *Alexander's Feast*, which depicts the controlled firing of enthusiasm within a densely mediated social context.

In her study of eighteenth-century political economy, Mary Poovey showed that the discourse of taste reflected Foucaultian governmentality, an analysis I develop here in terms of the aesthetic writers themselves.³² Shaftesbury's model detaches the subject from all direct coercion, declaring it free to think and like what it pleases without formal censure provided that it assents to the frame of tastefulness. The Hobbesian strategy of "overpowering ... Mens natural Fears ... by other Fears" is counterproductive, suggesting instead a pragmatic alternative; instead of "the Sword, or *Fasces*,"

the Magistrate, if he be any Artist, shou'd have a gentler hand and, instead of Causticks, Incisions and Amputations, shou'd be using softest Balms; and with a kind Sympathy entering into the Concern of the People, and taking, as it were, their Passion upon him ... [and] endeavor, by cheerful ways, to divert and heal it (S I.11).

There is an art to sympathizing strategically so as to control wayward enthusiastic gusts without marking this directly as discipline. The stern rule by norms or ideals is not wrong, it is just less effective at controlling outcomes than leaving subjects free to have whatever violent passions they want within an environment with strong incentive structures promising positive and negative feedback. The objective now goes beyond obedience: "the *saving* of Souls is now the heroic Passion of exalted Spirits; and is become in a manner the chief Care of the Magistrate, and the very End of Government it-self" (I.13). He suggests replacing a vertical norm limiting freedom to a horizontal normalizing – all heroic spirits are invited to participate in both the end of government and the true function of magistracy – designed to save souls, or free them to be free, while constraining the uses to which such freedom can be put.

One glimpses in this passage the intensive disciplinary concern with the living that Foucault famously called "biopower" or "biopolitics." In his seminar on *The Birth of Biopolitics*, however, Foucault claimed that these in-depth techniques needed appeared within the "framework" of another set of techniques he called "governmentality."³³ Governmental liberalism developed in British socio-economic thought from Locke through the mid-century period of Hume, Smith, and Ferguson – coinciding precisely with the first stage of aesthetic reflection in Britain covered by this dissertation.³⁴ Unlike the full-blown biopower Foucault identifies in statements from the 1750s onwards, and which I shall argue had a counterpart in the aesthetics of the same decade, the "governmental" techniques thriving in Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century were more equivocal: they suggested to Foucault both techniques for governing others and the "techniques of the self" that offered salutary resistance to disciplines, and which he then turned to study in antiquity.³⁵ This "governmentality" was formed, he argues, as a self-regulating alternative to the seventeenth-century "police state" and its increasingly artificially constructed sovereignty (*G* 37).³⁶ It pointed to a domain of facts – the prime example was economic facts – that traditional sovereignty was necessarily blind to: "the blindness of the economic agent is absolutely necessary" (*G* 279). Unlike direct intervention, governmentality is anxiously concerned with "how not to govern too much" (*G* 13), seeking a "natural" practice of governing that respected the factual autonomy of interests-based economic rationality (*G* 15). Foucault summarizes its logic: governmentality is

the image, idea, or theme program of a society in which there is an optimization of systems of difference, in which the field is left open to fluctuating processes, in which

rules of the game rather than on the players, and finally where there is an environmental type of intervention instead of the subjugation of individuals. (*G* 259–60)

It is thus the very opposite of discipline based on surveillance and interpretation of subjects.³⁷ The techniques developed by classical liberalism gradually identified the domain they acted upon as “civil society” (*G* 295–310) which encompassed all constructed social relations not directly mediated by state administration. Governmentality calls upon a domain of factual, freely self-governing reality that frames contingency as a given that can be counted on and planned for. Only once the domain governmentality produces performatively acquires imaginary stability and figural coherence can it be read hermeneutically and acted upon by disciplinary biopolitical operations.³⁸ Freedom becomes a demand, even a requirement: one must “produce what [one] need[s] to be free ... [so one is] free to be free” (*G* 63, 69). The demand that freedom be produced and supported yielded, by Adam Ferguson’s influential *Essay on the Origin of Civil Society* (1767), an account of society that was constructed all the way down, famously asserting that that “if the palace be unnatural, the cottage is so no less.”³⁹

As Howard Caygill comments in an analysis of aesthetics parallel to Foucault’s effort, that “the theory of civil society was haunted by the problem of taste, while the theory of the police-state formed the matrix for the emergence of aesthetics.”⁴⁰ Shaftesbury recommends precisely the reorientation Foucault describes as an “art of government” (*G* 186), however his recommendation that governors should proceed by considering ways of perception proposes something beyond the subject Foucault describes as *homo oeconomicus*.⁴¹ Shaftesbury offers two main examples of government by aesthetic factors alone, a negative example of self-regulation through censure in a demotic public fair and a positive example of intimate inclusion in a gentleman’s club, both of which operate as formal, performative demands triggered by virtual rather than actual social spaces. Cheerfulness is his prime example of the passionate homeopathy he recommends. Laughter is a trans-verbal factor intrinsically connected to embodied sociability that can powerfully influence behavior without invoking principles. Any non-rational feeling, practice, enthusiasm, taste, as long as it occurs in public, will be regulated by the common sense of those around it, who will laugh problematically excessive behavior away – even if the “marketplace” does so in this case by means of the parasitical factor of laughter.

Shaftesbury’s prime example of curative public ridicule is an outbreak of “trembling” religious frenzy in France, which he learned about either in conversation or from pamphlets.⁴² He dubs this the “Bartholomew Fair method” because he “is told, for certain, that [Huguenot enthusiasts] are at this very time the subject of a choice droll or puppet-show at Bartholomew Fair” (*S* 15–16). Bartholomew Fair was also a marketplace, and on the face of it his method is just what it sounds like: confidence that the marketplace of ideas, without any intervention from outside, will filter out the bad ones. However, the distance from the scene of ridicule – he was “told, for certain” but does not investigate this for himself – is just as important as the fact that he stages this scene. He does not even adopt the socially safer method of reading the enthusiastic literature and mocking it in print, as Milton might have done. He is above all of this, and his technique consists of affirming the potency of the scene of public mirth while strategically deferring the moment of bite. His rule of taste entails a heightened awareness of the real possibility of being laughed at and acting so as to permanently forestall its occurrence: tastefulness acknowledges the gusts of Bartholomew Fair, needs them to be there, and succeeds

culture of cruel satire, whose core principle he nevertheless appropriated, and upheld from an ironic distance. When he says that he takes laughter seriously he is not laughing but telling us that he is sincere about it, proposing a the mode of strategic sincerity. Yet this sincerity is no robust picaresque or Romantic gusto; it is laced with a self-muffling irony that frustrated his more earnest contemporaries – preserving an attenuated echo of the scathing urban(e) savagery of the fair scene with the same gesture designed to immunize itself from its pique.⁴³ His ontology may have taken after Platonism, but his social theory, to which he subordinates ontology, is Lockean.⁴⁴

In his positive example of aesthetic governing, the club, Shaftesbury shows where his notion of “government” departs from the traditionally empiricist one Foucault describes. On the one hand, he conceives of social relations, the domain the new arts of governing act upon, as more radically separate from political and juridical rationality than Locke does, more like the mid-century theorists.⁴⁵ Unlike them, however, Shaftesbury does not have an overall concept of civil society; he does not infer a social space like the public sphere or the market to frame the regulatory effects of tastefulness. Instead, he conceives of civility (notoriously) as taking place in the more liminal space of the club: “you are to remember (my Friend!) that I am writing to you in defense only of the Liberty of *the Club*, and of that sort of Freedom which is taken amongst *Gentlemen* and *Friends*, who know one another perfectly well” (S I.48), a “Liberty in decent Language to question every thing” (I.45). Like the fair, the club is an idealized model rather than a specific social space; his depiction of country gentlemen discoursing while strolling in semi-solitude through the natural grounds of an estate depicted in *The Moralists* is its most accurate social correlate, not dense spaces of urban public discussion.⁴⁶ The club’s elitism is based on moveability, a tasteful, decent atmosphere – in which nevertheless “every thing” may happen, at least virtually – and unmarked intimacy rhizomatically diffused rather than credentials or overt exclusion. This move endorses an archaic segmentary model of elite-formation, much as the fair invoked an ancient site of public life. The novelty of his move was to make the endorsement of a mode of sociality hostile to general publicity as a public announcement: to recommend, in public, bonds regulated tastefully, thus *not* by public reason.⁴⁷ His “you are to remember (my Friend!)” demonstrates the elemental gesture of counter-public clubbiness; the club exists wherever this performative gesture, displayed in the impersonal, public medium of print, can find its mark, acting as a “liberogenic device” (G 63) making the freely tasting subject more free still. His club/fair model suggested processes of civility without present society, or in the interstices of society. It could be called anti-social in that it rejects an overall mediating social form to stimulate social bonds by negating or sidestepping an overall social form.⁴⁸ In similar vein, Michael Warner defines counter-publics as “publics defined by their tension with a larger public” because “their participants are marked off from persons or citizens in general” and it “enables a horizon of opinion and exchange ... distinct from authority and [that] can have a critical relation to power.”⁴⁹ In Shaftesbury’s hands, the aesthetic counter-public is infinitely extendable, subtending invisibly all social life, present wherever people behave with taste and discretion.

Foucault deduces a style of subjectification from “governmental” reason, which parallels Shaftesbury’s tasteful subject formally even as it displays what he sought to resist as a form of life. *Homo oeconomicus*, for Foucault, admitted of no interiority, no direct discipline, no interpretive surveillance; this subject-figure was perfectly flat, a “grid,” a “surface of contact,” or an “interface” between “the individual and the power exercised on him” (G 252–3). That subject’s interiority is left to itself; it is “the person who must be left alone ... who accepts reality,

or responds systematically to modifications in the environment ... [who] appears precisely as someone manageable" (G 270).⁵⁰ The requirement of accepting "reality" means only the bare rationality of positive or negative feedback, not any kind of discursive reasonableness, and can thus include patently "non-rational conduct" (G 269), provided it "accepts reality." The framework of *homo oeconomicus* is by definition not the only framework the subject uses to understand its identity, yet within it the subject is "the entrepreneur of himself" whose human capital is not dissociable from his or her life (G 226). Governmentality does not interpellate a unified subject; instead it addresses quantifiable instances of conduct; in Gilles Deleuze's version, its whole procedure is quantitative, statistical, and posthumanist, using an impersonal "code" which apprehends "'dividuals', and masses, samples, data, markets, and 'banks'."⁵¹

Shaftesbury's model was obviously a reaction against the nascent *homo oeconomicus* and its governmentally weaponized empiricism; strategically, however, he endorses its method of subjectification.⁵² Under the rule of taste, one accepts that enthusiastic preferential gusts simply occur beyond anyone's direct control (whatever else they may be, they are real); one accepts oneself as a "dividual" being (whose behaviors count as *both* distinctive to a discrete subject *and* comparable with others'). One's tastes are simultaneously subject to the conduct of others and effective modes of conduct, as in the nasty gentleman episode. Foucault argues that the fully developed subject of governmentality is defined by a radical "anthropological erasure" of identity categories (such as the criminal), dealing instead with a "supply of crime" (G 258, 253), or in our case of nasty bad taste. The criminal subject, then, "is nothing other than absolutely anyone whomsoever ... the penal system itself will not have to deal with criminals, but with *those people* who produce that type of action" (G 253, *my emphasis*). Shaftesbury's rejection of the nasty gentleman defined nastiness in the same performative conduct-based terms and sought to limit nastiness via the same incomplete invisibilization that responds to bad taste by treating one as "those people": who will never be asked for a case history, who cannot become visible as an identity category without turning into something else, who are visible only as "dead" in advance – "those people" are visible as a statistic or not at all.⁵³ Being one of those people, as his colorfully visceral word "nastiness" suggests, quite literally stinks. The rule of taste keeps the tasteless in check by refusing certain conduct the interpellative recognition of the better sort.

Shaftesbury's move consisted of proposing a secondary mode of government based on observation, in the constructivist sense proposed by Luhmann. He defines observation as a special kind of operation that both says something (in his terminology, the operation makes a distinction) and implies something which is not said (it makes an "indication"). Observation is a form of behavior that simultaneously carries information about *how* that behavior is being carried out, "according to the general pattern of 'this-and-not-something-else'" (AS 59). All observation in this sense projects what Whitney Davis call "stylisticality," a "seeming similarity to other things" based on aspects, suggesting a causal-historical relationship whether or not one actually exists.⁵⁴ Observation in this sense inscribes its own distinctive way of observing in the act of observing; according to Luhmann, it "realizes the unity of the distinction between distinction and indication" (AS 59). In other words, the observer cuts out a blind spot in the observed world by means of which the fact of its own utterance "reenters" the information put forward, at which point the observer successfully indicates the world as such (at least for another observer that gets it). The radical constructivist view of observation, which insists on "absolute continence" between observation and other kinds of operations, casts a "veil of perception" in which "the material conditions that make observation possible" are firmly excluded from the act of observation itself (59). Observation cannot become visible as a singular event because the

unsaid of its utterance calls upon a whole world-horizon, which can be reconstructed by another observer in communication but never apprehended directly as a true kernel of intention. Luhmann's postulate of "absolute continence" entails a practical idealism – more precisely, it would be idealism if it were a philosophical discourse about being instead of a description of communication – which buys us a description of any "ideal" as the contingent unsaid of a particular observer situated within a system that recursively upholds it. Importantly, there are two different ways of understanding the "material conditions" that Luhmann claims the operation of reentry excludes: either "matter" understood as the environment of a system or matter as a figure used by a system of communication. The old historical materialism referred to what Luhmann calls the environment, where he places humans and the "unsaid" of their utterances. However, when "matter" is designated in communication as available for perception, on his analysis this is the construct (strategic idealization) of an observer. Luhmann aims to build a ruthlessly demystified "idealism," which we might call an essentialism on the move, between the steps of which an observer stands to catch telling reverberations, not unlike the sounds from beyond Kubla Khan's "stately pleasure-dome" of "ancestral voices prophesying war."⁵⁵

Shaftesbury conceives of "characteristics" as ideals that cannot be made present except through the blind spots of style revealing personal character, and like Luhmann these instances of "observation" serve the double purpose of upholding a system without transcendental support (based on the performative acts of a distinction reentering a distinction, or in Bateson's much-cited formula, "a difference that makes a difference") and indirectly putting communication in touch with the environment, its 'beyond.' We see this double purpose when he subjects all practical reason to the refinement of nose, ear, taste (S I.148) – endorsing in other words the posthumanist "conduct of conduct" according to which noses are what count (G 186) – and then vehemently scorns the idea that any kind of truth or common sense can be established by polling, or "counting Noses" (S I.92). *Homo aestheticus* treats the nose – which both sniffs and snubs, sometimes at the same time – as a reality-grid on the same level as the noses *homo oeconomicus* makes polls of, but these are radically incommensurate for him. The assumption of a perfect continence separating the subject's "nose" (its tastes, its "knows," and the "truth" of that taste) from the socially mediated representation of that taste-knowledge available for analysis is the distinctive feature of the first phase of the discussion of taste in British aesthetics, distinguishing its "governmental" orientation from the "biopolitical" objective in the age Hume and Burke, for whom counting noses, we will see, was the name of the game. Only in this period are aesthetic "characteristics" submerged within the breadth of the idea of nature and unavailable to formalizing recuperation.

Shaftesbury thus envisions *another* reality-grid, another empiricism, another government, another freedom: an inward, invisible, spiritual, or secret empiricism, which concerns aesthetic and moral values. Yet his aesthetic nose is not an idealized alternative to the material nose detected by interest, as Markley suggests, but its mediation.⁵⁶ This is the case, firstly, because he claims there could be no materialist analysis of pleasure or interest without the mediation of sensation: Shaftesbury's speaker responds to the gentleman's nastiness in a robust, Swiftian sense – but still gives him a full hearing. Secondly, the "aesthetic" use of sensory organs, including the secondary use of the perceptual body for purposes of a social signalization designed to guide, inspire, and stimulate the perceptual bodies of others, is nevertheless a physically conditioned act of perception. Shaftesbury rigidly distinguishes between the economic reality of the nose (a perceiver unperceived) and its aesthetic reality (the perception of perception). The *object* of perception is "ideal" because it is defined negatively as a blind spot in

the world, but the *subject* observes (traces of the ineffable) as a good empiricist. *Homo oeconomicus* and *homo aestheticus* are two differently systematic codifications of a material environment in relation to which they are equally heteronomous. Economic governmentality defined itself as critical resistance to sovereign or normative government, deploying freedom strategically instead; aesthetic governmentality makes the same move in relation to economic governmentality, critically resisting *homo oeconomicus* in the name of good taste.

While the crucial distinction in Luhmann's account is between basic operations of distinction and reflexive observations, it is important this move can be replicated on observation itself to yield "second-order observation." This occurs when an observer switches from observing "with a gaze [that] remains fixed on the object" to observing "*how* others observe," meaning the "improbability of first-order observation. A movement of the hand, a sentence spoken..." (AS 61-2). Shaftesbury aims at bringing "the air, feature, attitude, action, motion" into visibility as "the plastic truth."⁵⁷ In this mode, an observer wholly brackets *what* another observer is indicating to focus instead on "the world's unobservability as an unmarked space carried along in all observations" (61). In other words, second-order observations give body to an observer's unsaid, which unfolds a whole counterfactual world. Only when one switches from communicating *about* art to communication *through* art (17) does the process of observation yield a felt "*impression* of ... immediacy" (8, my emphasis), which in turn yields "a type of sociability ... that cannot be negated" (17, 20). For Luhmann, art as a social system functions to stabilize social life on the level of this secondary un-negatable sociability ordered by the stylization of perception alone. This is not the sociality of dumb spectators absorbed in a sensory spectacle but the sociality of second-order observers communicating by means of acts of detached absorption that suspend "the cherished *critical* attitude that has been with us since the eighteenth century" (99). Indirect communication by artfully letting oneself go, embracing an work with pleasure, is the aptitude that Shaftesbury obsessed over when he anxiously worries about "how to gain that *Point of Sight*, whence probably we may best discern; and How to place our-selves in that unbiass'd State in which we are fittest to pronounce" (S I.130).

The "governing" of the governor is especially well shown in a work of art about the effect of art, a meta-aesthetic performance. In his late lyrical masterpiece, *Alexander's Feast*, Dryden depicts what the conduct of conduct using through aesthetic factors alone – meaning that it makes all ordering follow from transcendently powerful experience while all transcendence is understood as an effect following from a perceptual state – might look and feel like. The poem describes the aporia of a public poet acting on the world from within as if he were acting from without, describing a sequence of aesthetic appreciations in which the appeal to a perfectly detached, sovereign figure outside the frame of art is completely impossible. As for Shaftesbury, he shows government working horizontally from the senses to the senses and detachment is a performative possibility within a corporeal frame, pivoting from the presence of material factors defying sovereignty to the observation of observation. Like Milton, he makes taste happen at a lack, division, or blind spot in the aesthetic field, which makes primitive experience present through mediation. What he adds to the analysis is an account of the technical remediations enabling this artful government to work on a mass scale, which only succeeds, he suggests, by addressing and conducting the material immediacy of organs.

The poem embraces the public nature of its occasion; it was set to music and performed by a large choir in a major celebration of "the power of music" for St Cecilia, attributed with inventing the pipe organ.⁵⁸ Its narrative recapitulates the situation of festivity it was intended for, depicting the bard Timotheus adeptly modulating the passions of the sovereign Alexander as the

crowd watches on. Massively popular throughout the eighteenth century, readers were continually impressed with how swiftly he transitions, prosodically in the irregular Pindaric verse as well as thematically, without losing the feeling of continuity.⁵⁹ He first turns the king into a Jovian dragon, ecstatically ravishing Olympia with a thrill of charismatic royal presence: “A present deity, they shout around” (l.35), exactly the “diviner lust” and “greater gust” that Dryden had celebrated in Charles II. Then he channels Bacchus, mixing pleasure with the memory of pain: “Drinking is the soldier’s pleasure . . . Sweet is pleasure after pain” (l. 57, l. 60). Next, he recalls Darius’s tragic fate, evoking fate as a completed cycle of pleasure and pain. Quickly revolving back to his love present beside him, Alexander now gazes at his consort Thais with a new distance: “The prince, unable to conceal his pain, / Gazed on the fair / Who caused his care, / And sighed and looked, sighed and looked, / Sighed and looked, and sighed again” (lines 109–113). He lands in the depressive posture of the sigh, but the penultimate line ending in “looked” has no corresponding rhyme (a fact Samuel Johnson noted critically⁶⁰), leaving the ideal presence of the look hovering detached over the scene, which ends in utter exhaustion: “the vanquished victor sunk upon her breast” (l. 115). Yet the feeling of the rhyme survives within the line through repetition, literally pivoting the harmony of the look inside. The three and a half revolutions between gaze and depression Timotheus takes Alexander through turn the gaze from the object-cause to take in the repetitive cycle of “care” itself.

Timotheus’ influence transforms from direct intervention to indirect environmental control once it includes a fully-formed depiction of power as an illusion or otherwise as a construct, torn out of nature. Giving us a glimpse into the puppet-master’s self-satisfaction when “The mighty master smiled, to see / That love was in the next degree,” adding that “‘Twas but a kindred-sound to move, / For pity melts the mind to love” (lines 93–6), stressing the easy acoustic mechanism employed rather than the magic of his personal capacity or his specific message intention. Likewise, from the perspective of Alexander’s Dionysian apoplexy, Dryden underlines the constructedness of the state: “With ravished ears / The monarch hears; / Assumes the god, / Affects to nod, / And *seems* to shake the spheres” (lines 37–41, emphasis added). Dryden qualifies the whole interpersonal sphere-shaking enterprise encompassing Timotheus, Alexander, and everyone else, as the *affectation* of a nod, which recreates under the dome an enchanted second nature. Dryden detaches a third level of perspective that observes not just the maker or his surrogate but for us, who see their reciprocal determination.⁶¹

The final stage rouses Alexander once again, catapulting him back into action – the existentially charged but senseless action of setting Persepolis on fire – with a freedom qualified by all the ghosts within the domain of sighs Timotheus drew his looks into. Threatened with judgment by the glittering ghosts of dead rivals clamoring for revenge, “the king seized a flambeau, with zeal to destroy; / Thais led the way, / To light him to his prey, / And, like another Helen, fired another Troy” (lines 147–51). Timotheus’ move becomes a “liberogenic device” by joining up the imaginary chase of undead rivals with the present and embodied chase of Thais: the negativity of repression does not act as a transcendent factor outside the situation but merges with the bodily stimulus of Thais, his material incentive to launch a fatal secondary gust towards a ghost. The poem’s analysis of propelling agency sees no transcendent factors beyond a world defined by so many fires (Johnson again: the ending is “completely vicious”⁶²). But Dryden makes his “flambeau” – lexically gripping a *beau* it delivers unconsumed – also count as the symbolic medium that makes observation possible, here observing the common root of love and

war. His depiction of enlightenment – at once our enlightened perception of Alexander’s creative and destructive urges as conjunct, Timotheus masterfully lighting up Alexander by banishing the ghosts of the past, and Alexander’s fatal “firing” himself into the historical record – is dialectically qualified with an inescapable rigor. Dryden’s is an all-consuming but secondary, observing fire, and within its frame history only happens as an absurdist, ambiguously tragicomic traumatic repetition: “another Helen, another Troy” – but not another Alexander. The free sovereign ego, recognizing nothing beyond its singular fire, sublimates itself away.⁶³

The gradual erasure of self-present sovereign transcendence in this poem, and its transmutation into the immanently diffused sovereignty of observing fire, distinguishes this late ode from Dryden’s earlier, pre-1688 ode to Cecilia.⁶⁴ There, “bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher; / When to her organ vocal breath was given / An angel heard, and straight appeared / Mistaking earth for heaven” (lines 51–4). In the myth of Cecilia, her ardent singing over an organ during an undesired wedding ceremony manifests a physically present angel warning her husband not to consummate the marriage.⁶⁵ Dryden ‘mechanically’ reproduces this miracle by giving these words to singers performing over a pipe organ, self-consciously forcing a transcendent presence: “But O, what art can teach, / What human voice can reach / The sacred organ’s praise? / Notes inspiring holy love, / Notes that wing their heavenly ways / To mend the choirs above” (lines 43–8). This was undoubtedly a bold claim for art to inspire, wing itself upward, and mend the “angelic” powers that be. The “organ’s” in line 46, which the *California Dryden* gives with the original spelling “ORGANS” – of course, in the original context of a performed song “organs” and “organ’s” sound identical – condenses in a nice ambiguity the overlap between the power of the machine (and printed text) to deliver beyond “what human voice can reach” and the sense delivered by the performing vocal organs’ actual reach.⁶⁶ Dryden’s self-consciousness about his calculated production of transcendently charismatic sublime presence leads him to end on a dissonant note within an eschatologically charged atmosphere: “The dead shall live, the living die, / And music shall untune the sky” (lines 62–3). In the later ode, all this theologico-political trumpeting – and Dryden was then undoubtedly playing on the fact that the 1687 Cecilia ode was the first to use trumpets⁶⁷ – promising the final resurrection of the dead given the right political “organs” is replaced by the burning of Persepolis, a more ontically limited event than the final judgment but more chilling in its catastrophic absurdity. In the 1697 ode, Dryden’s all-conducting fiery principle coincides with a detachment achieved where ardor comes against a self-exhausting limit.⁶⁸ The dissonance of the “double, double, double beat / Of the thundering drum” tripled into presence (“Ode,” lines 30–1), becomes the all-too-mellifluous “Happy, happy, happy pair” (*Alexander’s Feast*, l. 15).⁶⁹ Alexander is powerfully engaged imaginatively (his ghosts), in his senses (pursuing Thais), and in action (the wayward flambeau) because Timotheus’ art has taken him through exhaustion, to raise the image of what Alexander needs most to repress, whereupon he springs up into action. All willful, rhetorically mediated action disappears into an atmosphere of pressurized quiescence – including the exalted solipsism of libertine self-consciousness, which Alexander replicates machinically – replaced by automatized triggers dependent on contingent but ineluctable insecurities.

The final stanza makes a reflexive twist, reframing the allegory in relation to Cecilia, not Timotheus, making a claim for the ubiquity of the technique of artfully leading through triggers to action rather than persuasion:⁷⁰

At last divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame:
 The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before. (lines 171–176)

As he contrasts the male flute-wielding bard who must carefully work up passions with his breath to the massive, mechanically “heaving bellows” (l. 156) of Cecilia’s pipe organ, Dryden does not regard the prestige of the bard or the charisma he confers on temporal power as under threat, far less as something to be mourned sentimentally. He acknowledges the organ’s capacity to synthesize and mediate the multiple voices of several instruments into a massive public instrument, wielding an angel-scaled blast of sound. Her “arts unknown before” of mediating sound into a materially present public domain are “nature’s mother-wit,” touching on a deeper matriarchal stratum, the somatic matrix of masculine wit and language: at once obscure to consciousness and alive with flames. Because the angelic presence of her organ’s array of rigid, priapically “enlarged” pipes feels so powerfully immediate, from its perspective one feels as though in the old bardic days “organs yet were mute” (l. 157). This usage of “organs” confirms Dryden’s play on bodily organs: from the contemporary perspective of Cecilia’s day, where she makes no secret of working with organs, is it apparent that Timotheus was doing organ-work all along. Dryden acknowledges the artificial cyborg quality of her innovation, yet her medial extensions in effect yield more natural warmth than nature could provide unassisted. The pipes of her organ provide a rigid “vocal frame” forcibly propelling an “enlarged” sound with “added length” upwards.⁷¹ This was a form of correcting through the framing of pleasure rather than discipline; as one eighteenth-century reader put it, “[Dryden’s] Fire not less, he more correctly writ, / With ripen’d Judgment and digested Wit,” describing his correctness in almost unmetaphorically physical language.⁷² These medial extensions deliver more nature of “her sacred store” than one thought possible are a post-secular manifestation.

There was a wryly muted perversity in Dryden’s making Cecilia, an icon of medieval Christianity, stand for the cosmopolitan diffusion of Alexander’s fire into the public domain that the poem’s performance was situated in (which was that of a music society and not the state). Dryden’s finale restates the contrast between his old bardic impassivity and her updated, proto-Shaftesburian “Sweet enthusiasm,” but the thrust of the passage powerfully erodes the apparent claim for the modernity of the public relations allegorized with Cecilia’s organ:

Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown;
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 She drew an angel down. (lines 177–180)

From the moment Alexander is introduced “aloft in awful state,” everything Timotheus does draws the sovereign further down (l. 3). His bardic model, Dryden suggests, immortalized an Alexander only to the extent the sovereign lets himself be drawn down, revealing idealizing elevation as merely the index of somatic excitation. “Drawing” is apt diction for his operation,

which magnetically draws Alexander through its power to draw (in the sense of represent) figures that affect him – exactly the conjunction we will see Addison deploy shortly between “secondary imaginary pleasures” in absence and the present of triggering aesthetic representations. The bard was already undoing the idealizations of power; all a pipe organ does is to raise these mortal sounds skywards. The witty final quatrain projects the appearance of a difference between idealizing power and producing the soma-aesthetic processes that construct it, which the performance of the poem had thoroughly undone.

The only mortal Dryden raises to the sky is the figure of Timotheus himself, the poet who puts himself in the place of the woman as the object-cause under the crown.⁷³ But while Dryden could be said to idealize Timotheus (himself a bard), he replays this cypher for his own aesthetic power through Cecilia’s dividual organs of pleasure and perception, not any sovereign ego. In this exceptional case of a poem designed to come as close as possible to realizing a personal exchange between producer and acclamatory audience – sidestepping completely the ideal royal consumer, who survives only as any one of the sovereign audience – he deflates the spherical image of robustly humane social substance into the redounding echoes of conduct conducting conduct, this way or that, perhaps heading towards disaster. It is thus in the third to last line the argument of the poem blossoms: “Or both divide the crown.” If the only difference between archaic aesthetics and its modern counterpart is heightened self-consciousness about its own medium (“nature”), the fact of that self-consciousness divides out or “dividualizes” the crown. Dryden demonstrates the crown to be as ghostly as the dead Grecians trampled upon to uphold it: the poem booms that the governor is the one with the most art, which only means the one best adapted to conduct by drawing perceptions to what is not there. Its radical thought is that the crown can be meaningfully divided into as many subjects as there are organs to see what another observer cannot see. What makes this thought paradigmatic for the aesthetic modernity it proclaims is that the self-conscious break “divine” Cecilia introduces with her manifold of dividual organ-pipes is the sacred store of the modern subject. These pipes are not ideological incursions deep into the flesh but rather the co-independent voices of mortal life, the conductive bodily agencies. His figure of Cecilia, the fuzzy feminine hyperlucid observer, hints distantly at the birth of another aesthetic mode of sovereignty.

Like Milton, Dryden presents the modern taster in term of mediated primitive experience, and both authors make its subject-shattering or “dividual” aspect lead the subject to a disaster. Both disasters imagine a collapsing public sphere, and both conceive of taste as calling forth a secondary counter-public operating on a different frequency. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the analysis of dividual subjective factors could take place without reflexive panic. Burke’s methodological statement at the beginning of *A Philosophical Enquiry* programmatically endorses the same “diligent examination of our passions in our own breasts” Shaftesbury recommended, yet his procedure has changed to “a careful survey of the properties of things which we find by experience to influence those passions.”⁷⁴ The idea that we can know ourselves indirectly by studying the properties of things that affect us is Shaftesbury’s legacy, but the positive study of the motivating tastes takes a step beyond him. The unselfconscious third person plural lurking in “our breasts” assumes the subcutaneous reality of a civil society that was beyond Shaftesbury’s subject, who only attends to how it differs from itself. This “our” secretes a whole typology of truths about tastes and a whole hermeneutics. In Shaftesbury’s moment, however, no positive phenomenology is possible because the subject knows itself only as alterable in the direction of more likely tasting correctly; his art of self-government is an art of forgetting oneself. Like “right reason” in the following passage from *Paradise Lost*, the rule of

taste promises the mediated presence of “true liberty” lost in dividual life: “Since thy original lapse, true liberty / Is lost, which always with right reason dwells / Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being” (*PL XII.83–5*).

3. “Secondary” imaginary pleasure and the Satanic spectator

This is the great deception of sense, which also is by sense corrected. For as sense telleth me, when I see directly, that the colour seemeth to be in the object; so also sense telleth me, when I see by reflection, that colour is not in the object.

(Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law*)

We have already seen the Influence that one Man has over the Fancy of another, and with what Ease he conveys into it a Variety of Imagery; how great a Power then may we suppose lodged in him, who knows all the ways of affecting the Imagination, who can infuse what Ideas he pleases, and fill those with Terror and Delight to what Degree he thinks fit? ... He can so exquisitely ravish or torture the Soul through this single Faculty, as might suffice to make up the whole Heaven or Hell of any finite Being. (*TS III.579–80*)

(*Spectator* No. 421)

Where Shaftesbury described his new aesthetics as a social process that started with one’s relation to oneself, Addison focuses on how aesthetics took place as a complex cognitive process. Only with Addison do we get a detailed theory of aesthetics as a special mode of cognition. This section shows how it was grounded in the empiricist psychology of secondary qualities and also went beyond this analysis by appealing to another kind of secondariness, the “secret” domain of pleasures imported from a continental and mechanistic model. Critics have tended to focus on how Addison appeals to the imagination, which takes detached pleasure and also takes a supplementary pleasure in its own detachment, further developing empiricist theory to aesthetic experience. This accorded with his own overt intentions when he made the terminology of primary and secondary borrowed from Locke the central conceptual feature of his analysis in an effort to lend his aesthetic speculations epistemological legitimacy as well as to reassure the public that the key insights of this sometimes-suspect new science were wholly compatible with the common sense of politer society. Milton, I will show, had carefully thought through the process of moralizing by means of mediated or “secondary” spectatorial effects in *Paradise Lost* when Satan is tempted to goodness by gazing at Eve. Addison’s project, I argue, at least as far as its aesthetic component went, had completely abandoned the search for Paradisal innocence, developing in its stead a secondary imputed innocence suited to the fallen world.

The philosophical distinction between primary and secondary qualities was already familiar enough for Hobbes to evoke it in a favorite text of Addison’s, the 1640 *Elements of Law*: “as sense telleth me, when I see directly, that the colour seemeth to be in the object; so also sense telleth me, when I see by reflection, that colour is not in the object.”⁷⁵ Locke elaborates that distinction most fully in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, a source openly

acknowledged in Addison's *Spectator* series. But Addison inherited one serious problem: how to apply these epistemological distinctions to aesthetics, to the "pleasures of imagination" and the "government of taste." Hobbes was definitely concerned with *correction* – he notes that the "great deception of sense" is also "by sense corrected" – but he concentrated on "sense" rather than "taste" and "deception" rather than "pleasure." Locke was more aware of aesthetic issues: in the passage chosen as the first epigraph to this chapter, he recognizes the "powerful charms" and "strong attractions of easiness and pleasure," and assumes the close relationship between "the relish of the mind" and that of the body, noting the "new *Gusto*" that explodes when physical taste combines with "the consideration of the pleasure." These charms are subject to governance, moreover: "men may and should correct their palates" (*LE* 280). But these remarks were incidental to Locke's treatise, which offers no systematic aesthetics as such, a project left to Shaftesbury and Addison.

As Anna Laetitia Barbauld commented in the introduction to her early nineteenth-century edition of the *Spectator*, "the reign of taste may be said to have commenced with Addison."⁷⁶ His major contribution was to turn aesthetics firmly towards the analysis of effects on spectators, who experience a detached "mental" pleasure (*SP III.527*).⁷⁷ He sought a principle for the non-arbitrariness of individual responses in the notion of taste, which he takes up in the paper of the series.⁷⁸ He illustrates this "Faculty of the Mind" by reference to bodily experience, noting that taste is a "Metaphor ... general in all tongues" (527). His first extended example in the "pleasures of the imagination" sequence is a virtuoso tea-taster, who tastes ten teas blind and can recognize them, individually as well as in combination. In an analogous fashion, he claims, the person of taste will recognize in an author "the several Ways of thinking and expressing himself, which diversify him from all other Authors, with the several Foreign Infusions of Thought and Language" (528). Taste's initial capacity is strictly forensic, the detection of individual styles and the capacity to discover where extraneous styles were imitated and absorbed 'dividually'. Like the tea itself, all of which is imported from somewhere else, even the singularity of an author is apprehended as a dividuated "Foreign Infusion" and not an essential property. However, another factor emerges a few lines later in his formal definition: taste is "that Faculty of the Soul, which discovers the Beauties of an Author with Pleasure, and the Imperfections with Dislike."

The experimental narrative about training in fine tasteful discriminations did not in and of itself require pleasure or disgust. If the taster preferred one of the ten teas, or favored one particular blend, he was keeping secret from the experiment such personal responses. That said, the experiment was not an inquiry into the properties of the teas but into the taster's body, and since tea is drunk for pleasure, the experiment tacitly assumes some measure of pleasure or dislike in the taster infused with his means of knowing. Forming into knowledge something that originates in pleasure entails that the pleasure be concealed, at least in its individual singularity. In order for that knowledge to be discussed and to be owned as the aesthetic of one particular subject, pleasure must make an emphatic reentry. The *Spectator's* eagerness to impose a new standard of cultivated propriety proudly features the virtuoso tea-taster as if such a person drank tea alone in his cave his entire life and then one day emerged into society for the benefit of the *Spectator's* readers.

We must look, in detail, what social process grows such authoritative subjects. In his famous paper on the great chain of being, Addison also calls on making fine discriminations on a grandly cosmic scale, starting with insensible matter, then considering creatures endowed with only "Feeling and Taste," then adding hearing, then sight (V.347). Just like the ten shades of tea,

in the realm of organic complexity “the little Transitions and Deviations from one Species to another, are almost insensible” (348). The limits of what an observer can perceive in nature are also places where nature looks back at us: “this intermediate Space is so well husbanded and managed, that there is scarce a degree of Perception which does not appear in some one part of the World of Life” (348). Citing a long passage from Locke on the *probability* that the scale should continue above us to God, he claims that the intermediate spaces *within* the scale of being as we see it, which seems full of life and perception, follows from the unbridgeable intermediate space between our perception and that of our creator. The gaps are absolute, but our knowledge of them is contingent, merely probable. The tea-taster has learned to “husband and manage” not positive knowledge of beings on a fixed scale, but the limits of his own perception, limits which follow from the gap between humans and the divine. The “whole Chasm in Nature” below us repeats the “infinite Gap or Distance” to God (348). This taster stands in the place of a God that can only be said probably to exist: the activity of husbanding and managing almost insensible intermediate spaces produces the scale it finds. It is clear how powerfully Addison projects a feeling of hierarchical order where all beings find their rightful place. Its basis is my feeling of the limits of my own perception. What justifies this order is my ability to see ungovernable complexity in the world – ten types of tea writ large – and manage it through linguistic description. Addison claims that his reader should link her feeling of absolute distance from God to her feeling of contingent distance from the micro-complexities of the organic world – including the domestically relevant mysteries of tea.⁷⁹ Addison’s authority is not the vertical authority of eternal transcendental certainty but the contingently absolute certainty of someone who knows what she is talking about. This achievement is the metaphorization of taste: bodily sensitivities acquire an authority conferred by language, and pleasures are voluble, they can be read and mean something to other people.

The use of primary/secondary distinctions in aesthetics was the core novelty of Addison’s essay; his specific terminology did not catch on widely, but making a guiding distinction between presence and absence prepared the way for Burke’s binary distinction between the sublime and the beautiful. The primary pleasures of the imagination follow directly from objects before our eyes, while the secondary ones “flow from the Ideas of visible Objects, when the Objects are not actually before the Eye, but are called up into our Memories, or form’d into agreeable Visions of Things that are either Absent or Fictitious” (537). Like Shaftesbury, he is careful to qualify that neither kind springs up as natural light or visible causes within the subject; they are indirect reflections of objects in the medium of the subject’s memory or effects as they appear to an observer. An observer could look for absent or secret causes in visible effects, and an observer could herself be in the dark.

The primary/secondary distinction rests on a more basal distinction Addison made between vision and touch. The sense of touch gives us acquaintance with extension, shape – everything except color and other secondary qualities – but it is limited as to number and distance (536). Sight “seems designed to supply all these Defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch,” allowing us ultimately to “touch” the stars. Following Descartes, he makes sight secondary with respect to touch: on the one hand, he treats touch as the benchmark means of perceptual acquaintance, and on the other he elevates sight as a secondary medial technique for touching at a distance. This borrowing from earlier Cartesian mechanics was a sign that Addison went beyond the empiricist epistemology – albeit with a light touch, so to speak – into a new aesthetics. The idea that vision “touched” its object came close to the Aristotelian idea of manifest causes in perception – the visible species or signatures – which

the scientific revolution had widely rejected. He avoids regressing to starry-eyed mysticism by acknowledging that because colors cannot be touched, when sight is acting as the mediated form of touch it is necessarily missing something, and colors in perception are not identical to whatever qualities make an object touching. Vision thus operates on two levels: it sees colors in perception, but as delicate and diffuse touch it touches on something it cannot quite see with its eyes. This ungraspable something bears a relation to its knowledge that colors in perception are only its own constructs.

Because he defines imaginary pleasures as following from sight, and what is distinctive about sight is that it perceives colors, which are secondary qualities not present in the thing itself, even the primary imaginary pleasures we take in the presence of an object are in a sense already secondary. All imaginary, “mental,” or detached pleasures follow from something about *the subject* which it knows only from the look of things – something that “touches” like one’s own hand touching a mirror. Even the sublime primary pleasures in the presence of great buildings presuppose the observer’s capacity to reconstruct that sublime edifice for itself mentally, even when it drives itself beyond its own capacity to do so. For Addison, the imagination’s work of beautification encountered in the secondary imaginary qualities which go beyond intense presence – the beautiful (including the novel) as opposed to the sublime – is the more fundamental, strange, and interesting category.

The properly secondary imaginary pleasures occur when the imagination keeps working beyond the support of perceptual cues; this happens both when I create mental imagery with my eyes closed and when I read a text and reconstruct what it describes as mental imagery. Paradoxically, privileging sight leads Addison to favor textuality as the best medium for effecting visual effects, in the same way that privileging touch epistemologically leads him towards visuality as the ideal medium for intimately touching effects. By isolating secondary imaginary pleasures terminologically, Addison gives shape to the observer’s posture of detachment itself. This move illuminates the detachment (or secondariness) already operating, albeit less consciously, when we admire great or affecting objects which are present; only at this further stage of the absence of the object does the observer *know* that what it enjoyed came from itself all along. Only at this stage does the man of taste enjoy a prospect more than many landowners would because taste “gives him ... a kind of Property in every thing he sees” (538). The less conscious primary imaginary pleasures are simply thrown into the landscape without thought of possession – *it* could be said to possess *them*, at least to an observer using that distinction – whereas the aesthetic secondary observer has accepted his radical expropriation from the presence of that scene and then reappropriates it imaginatively, at which point the landscape seems to talk back, telling the observer something almost legible about itself.

But how do the secondary pleasures work, when the sensory “idea” is absent? Addison illustrates this vividly: using these secondary imaginary pleasures, “a Man in a Dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with Scenes and Landskips more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole Compass of Nature” (537). He is invoking, but also supplementing, the *camera obscura* model implied by the empiricist view of the mind. “External and internal Sensation ... alone,” writes Locke, “are the Windows by which light is let into this *dark Room*. For, methinks, the *Understanding* is not much unlike a Closet wholly shut from light, with only some little openings left, to let in external visible Resemblances, or *Ideas* of things without; would the Pictures coming into such a dark Room but stay there, and lie so orderly as to be found upon occasion, it would very much resemble the Understanding of a Man” (*LE* 162–3). In a

particularly excited passage Addison locates the fusion of primary and secondary pleasures in an actual camera obscura, located in Greenwich park by the Thames:

If the Products of Nature rise in Value, according as they more or less resemble those of Art, we may be sure that artificial Works receive a greater Advantage from their Resemblance of such as are natural; because here the Similitude is not only pleasant, but the Pattern more perfect. The prettiest Landskip I ever saw, was one drawn on the Walls of a dark Room, which stood opposite on one side to a navigable River, and on the other to a Park. The Experiment is very common in Opticks. Here you might discover the Waves and Fluctuations of the Water in strong and proper Colours, with the Picture of a Ship entering at one end, and sailing by Degrees through the whole Piece. On another there appeared the Green Shadows of Trees, waving to and fro with the Wind, and Herds of Deer among them in Miniature, leaping about upon the Wall. I must confess, the Novelty of such a Sight may be one occasion of its Pleasantness to the Imagination, but certainly the chief Reason is its near Resemblance to Nature, as it does not only, like other Pictures, give the Colour and Figure, but the Motion of the Things it represents. (550-1)

Addison accepts the analogy or resemblance Locke proposes between the mind and a camera obscura, while transforming Locke's clear and distinctly understood world-picture, which does not mention color (though of course the image in a camera obscura is in color), into a spectacle involving particularly "strong" colors as well as motion. Both versions picture a subject in contact with external reality by means of sense experience mediated by cameral organs, but while Locke's subject aspires to a settled mental alignment, Addison's version introduces undulating waves, a moving ship, leaping deer, and "green shadows of Trees" that seem an almost psychedelic (or simply painterly) augmentation. Yet all this colorful movement is limited to the park and the river by the bounds of the device, and within those bounds he takes a particular pleasure in this landscape ("the prettiest ... I ever saw") because its mobile and evanescent effects contribute to a sense of natural correctness. The fact that the colors are particularly "strong" only makes them feel more "proper": they are themselves and they are under perfect control. In fact, all the objects he singles out bear some relation to the wind: the sailboat is driven by it, the trees wave "to and fro in the Wind," and even the miniature deer are seen not on the ground but leaping through the air. What is so seductive about the camera obscura to Addison is that its image suggests indirectly an aspect of the world (the wind) that is otherwise invisible, extending mediated vision one step closer to the touching the stars he has originally gushed over, removed to the most distant outer space. Locke's subject simply *is* the chamber of himself, or at least he aspires to be, while Addison's aesthetic subject feels simultaneously *inside* the "dark room" or dungeon of his psyche and imaginatively thrust *outside* ecstatically into the "green shadows" of a reality that somehow offers the subject more than what it appears to be.

The invisible object in the landscape, on the one hand, discloses visual pleasure to the subject like a prism transforms sober white light into a rainbow, while on the other hand, the invisible object in the landscape serves as the transparent medium or frame (an effect reiterated by the material frame of the device) for a visceral feeling of rightness, or "proper" color. The additional factor that makes the secondary imaginary pleasures in general so interesting is that the subject's pleasure is split into enjoying the apparition for himself and enjoying his own

capacity to create visual imagery within his own internal medium. Only at the secondary level is it doubly touched with pleasure in the object and itself. Addison explains that working at this level requires “a new Principle of Pleasure ... which *compares* the Ideas that arise from Words, with the Ideas that arise from the Objects themselves” in the observer’s memory (566–7). In other words, he infers a pseudo-tertiary observational faculty competent to manage the relation between the mental spectacle of fictions and the sense spectacle registered in memory.⁸⁰ This is the competency at governing through perceptual comparison the *Spectator* aspires to perfect. I return to it with reference to Hobbes’s theory of comparison Addison borrows in part 4 below. This “principle” is new and somewhat strange to Addison because, unlike the imaginary pleasures it negotiates, it never claims to touch or order reality directly.⁸¹ This new pleasure-principle works only through “Resemblance, or at least some remote Analogy” in memory or imagination and it only ever make probable, not definite connections (558).

We will see in a moment how Addison found this appeal to a pseudo-tertiary quality – a strange power that manifests in deliberate ordering extended via an unconscious mechanism – already in Locke. We must notice first that at every level of his scale of imagination, from perceptual presence to absence to controlled (“principled”) absence, the fact of pleasure in perception has featured a different kind of secondariness, a factor that has felt beyond the entire construct of the scale from the beginning. “It is impossible,” he repeats several times, “to give the necessary Reason, why this operation of the Mind is attended with so much Pleasure” (560). The *necessary* nonknowledge sets him apart from those who sought the full conjunction of knowledge and pleasure, including Descartes, Milton, and the libertines. The tea-taster has an empirically conditioned capacity to make fine discriminations, but in and of itself this competency implies nothing about his pleasure; yet he both feels a secret pleasure in the presence of each of the teas he tastes, which are the primary imaginary pleasures. At this level, he compares his ideas of the teas’ characters to what he tastes; he would also be able to comment on how sure he is based on how close what he tastes fits to his ideas of them. It is also possible for him to feel a secondary imaginary pleasure in remembering the tastes without their presence – or, crucially, with the prosthetic aid of a representation, typically a text.⁸² This work coincides with the pleasure in his own ability to make the distinctions, which operated in the background the whole time.

Pleasure is thus a secret factor at every level of imaginary activity. With the secondary pleasures, the secret starts to bubble out: a “Secret Ferment in the Mind of the Reader, ... [works] with Violence, upon his Passions. ... We are at once warmed and enlightened, so that the Pleasure becomes more Universal” (567). The secret of pleasure follows all imaginary activity like a shadow, but only at the level of secondary imaginary pleasures are we clearly in a position to actually *feel* the split between my pleasure in the imaginary object and in my own act of imagining it, which is also the split between my pleasure in the various teas I taste and my pleasure at my ability to identify them correctly. “The shadow of a man,” Locke argues, “is a positive thing ... and thus one may truly be said to see Darkness. For supposing a hole perfectly dark, from whence no light is reflected, ’tis certain one may see the Figure of it, or it may be Painted; or whether the Ink, I write with, makes any other *Idea*, is a Question” (*LE* 133–4). A negative quantity in the world of primary qualities is converted in the camera obscura of cognition into a positive idea: when consciousness encounters privation, the subject looks at the world as if *it too is a camera obscura* seen from outside as a perfectly dark pin-hole looking back at it. At this point the world seems like a blind spot – or the eyeball, a dark hole framed by white

background, the aperture of another observer. Locke's speculation, offered in passing, as to whether writing works this way too, is wondering to what extent text too has this power of imprinting itself with instantaneous mechanical force upon a less conscious portion of the mind: in other words, whether his philosophical writing might not also exert the pull of a charming aesthetic effect.

To the extent that the imaginary synthesis of sensation is informed by the secret of pleasure, at any and every level, it lends to the imagination the peculiar quality of quasi-instantaneous knowledge. The effect is strong at the level of sublime primary pleasures: "it is but opening the Eye, and the Scene enters" (538), where the rush of pleasure is almost completely confounded with the mechanical act of perception. They gradually start to come apart, however, at the level of secondary imaginary pleasures: when one visualizes from reading descriptions in a book, "the Colours paint themselves on the Fancy, with very little Attention of Thought or Application of Mind in the Beholder" – *very little*, perhaps, but some imaginative operation has nevertheless quietly done its work. By the time we reach the radically secondary or pseudo-tertiary level of the man in a dungeon who must produce imagination without the support of even a book, he must be able to produce that instantaneity itself entirely for himself. And if it is possible to *produce* spontaneous freedom under *such* conditions, then it must also be possible to generate or reproduce such spontaneous freedoms for readers with the "very little" attention span to take in a *Spectator*.

Locke explains primary qualities by using the example of a kernel of wheat: all the qualities that would survive its reiterated division up to and beyond the threshold of sensibility are primary. The qualities which are only "Powers to produce various Sensations in us," such as color, sound, taste, are secondary (*LE* 135). Then he adds "a third sort": the power in fire to produce a new color or the power in the sun to melt wax.⁸³ Like the secondary qualities that we perceive immediately, these are powers to produce an effect; unlike these, they are "barely Powers" because we perceive them "mediately" and they involve no "resemblance" to ourselves. We recognize that the sun's powers to melt wax or change color "are not Qualities in the Sun, but Effects produced by Powers in it" (*LE* 141). At this level we *seem to see causality itself* – which for Locke never actually happens – when we see an effect as the manifestation of a power.⁸⁴ We look at the wax melting in the sun and we "see" the power of the sun "reflected" in the privation suffered by the wax. "If rightly considered," Locke continues, "these Qualities of Light and Warmth, which are Perceptions in me when I am warmed, or enlightned by the Sun, are no otherwise in the Sun, than the changes made in the Wax, when it is blanced or melted, are in the Sun" (*LE* 141).

When describing the "Secret Ferment" in the mind of the reader at secondary imaginary pleasures, Addison uses the same two descriptors – *warm* and *enlighten* – that Locke used to describe those secondary qualities that can be perceived directly and also perceived in their effect on matter. Locke makes no particular distinction between light as bearer of secondary qualities (color) and light as bearer of feelings (warmth and heat), but the examples he chooses could, in a more poetic and less philosophical reader such as Addison, suggest an analogy to aesthetic experience and an aesthetic mode of perception. Qualities like warmth and heat are powers to alter shape (the plasticity of the wax), to change coloration (a power to change secondary qualities), the power to make grow or wither or to govern without intrusion, touch without contact. What if Locke's "mediate perception" of an object undergoing alteration were applied instead to a subject, another sentient person with a high level of "resemblance" to the observer and presumably herself endowed with observation? As Addison transforms Locke's

epistemology into aesthetics, the power of the sun on the wax becomes “the Influence that one Man has over the Fancy of another.” Literature shows “with what Ease he conveys into it a Variety of Imagery; how great a Power then may we suppose lodged in him, who knows all the ways of affecting the Imagination, who can infuse what Ideas he pleases, and fill those with Terror and Delight to what Degree he thinks fit?” (*TS* III.579–80).

Locke was not indifferent to pleasure, “Gusto” and “the relish of the mind,” as we have seen, but he was less interested in developing an aesthetic theory. Addison, in contrast, repeatedly evokes the “Secret delight” in observing affects (543), the “Secret pleasure” in novelty (545) or the “secret Refreshment in [the mediation of] a Description” (538). Addison was adding to the empiricist theory of the imagination a continental theory of pleasure. In *Les passions de l’âme*, Descartes makes a distinction between the passions, which are produced mechanically and the “inner feelings, which are excited only by the soul itself.”⁸⁵ His first example is a husband who cries at the funeral of a wife he did not love – mechanically “squeezed by the sadness that the machinery of the funeral ceremony” into passion – while he feels “a secret joy inside more deeply still” that she is gone.⁸⁶ He compares this secret pleasure to what we feel when reading a book or attending the theater: in addition to the mimetic pleasure we take in “the objects that offer themselves to our imagination,” we feel the supplementary “pleasure of feeling them roused within us, and this pleasure is an intellectual joy.”⁸⁷ He regards these inward feelings as the controls on happiness or the means to an ethics of passions (Part II, Art.148). As he put it earlier: our passions cannot be directly engaged or suspended by the will, “but they can be indirectly by the representation of things that are habitually joined with the passions we want to have.”⁸⁸ This project of governing (oneself) indirectly using representations which trigger “intellectual joy” is exactly what Addison has in mind.

When he comes to discussing how imaginary pleasures may be trained, in *Spectator* No. 417, Addison could simply have applied Locke’s association of ideas or his account of how habits “put so strong attractions of easiness and pleasure into what we accustom ourselves to, that we cannot forbear to do [what] habitual practice has suited, and thereby recommends to us” (first chapter epigraph). Instead, he coyly evokes how “a Cartesian would account” for it (*TS* III.562). The Cartesian version of association uses two levels, the “Sett of Ideas, which we received from such a Prospect or Garden” (or artwork) and the “Sett of Traces belonging to them in the Brain” (563). Consciously perceived ideas trigger pleasures in the brain-traces of which we are not directly conscious, which trigger other ideas annexed to them, which trigger other pleasure-traces until “the whole Sett of them is blown up, and the whole Prospect or Garden flourishes in the Imagination” as “our imagination takes the Hint” and “raises up a whole Scene of Imagery” from memory (563, 562). This quasi-instantaneous process, he adds, has an automatically selective function: the tendency to overlook unpleasant ideas and emphasize ideas with “a wider Passage worn in the Pleasure Traces” (563). Addison hints that this account may be quaintly mechanistic but it is heuristically useful for the “noble Writer” wishing to shape his “Power of Imagining Things.” The noble writer should focus neither on cultivating the “nicer Texture” of his brain nor on “the greater Perfection in the Soul” but on the mediating faculty that receives and retains lively ideas in the body, “rang[ing] them together, upon occasion, in such Figures and Representations as are most likely to hit the Fancy of the Reader.”

Addison does not discard the level of mimetic pleasure that works along Aristotelian lines, but he adds another level, at which representations address not conscious ideas but the gaping wide passage in the pleasure-traces that works quasi-automatically. Like Descartes, he sees representations as bodily stimulants that may be useful to govern the self and provide a

secondary secret joy at this capacity to govern himself – as well as others. For Descartes, the stage of intellectual joy is the conjunction of reason (or ethics) and desire; it could appear unmastered as the self-preserving emotional ruse of the widower or in the philosopher who harnesses the oneiric power of representations to master himself. Addison puts forward the domain of intellectual joys as a new scene of work and insecurity: “a Poet should take as much Pains in forming his Imagination, as a Philosopher in cultivating his Understanding. He must gain a due Relish. . .” (*SP III.563*). Descartes saw no need to dissociate a poet specializing in imagination and a philosopher specializing in understanding, nor to extrapolate a third kind of observer to comment on their interdependence, a critical observer anxious to “gain due relish” of the “nature” ambiguously subtending both the world and himself. That self-observing perspective necessarily disappears, as much for the widower who cannot integrate his secret joy with the tears he sheds as for the philosopher who acts on himself with representations effectively on condition he forgets his own governing intention. In Addison, the distinction between primary/secondary recurs at the level of sociological roles: poet, philosopher, and the invisible critic-philosopher who is both and neither.

We saw that Addison the critic gives a sidelong sneer at his philosophical example, and in No. 417 he does the same thing to his example of the perfect modern poet. He praises Milton for succeeding best at the self-made work of cultivation he recommends and then backhandedly slights his linguistic medium: “so Divine a Poem in *English* [as *Paradise Lost*], is like a stately Palace built of Brick”; the “Materials are of a coarser Nature” (566). The observation makes the impossible demand that the perfect modern poet transcend the limitations of modern language. His critical reserve has to do with neither the form nor the content of the poem: “no other Subject could have furnished a Poet with Scenes so proper to strike the imagination, as no other Poet could have painted those Scenes in more strong and lively Colours” (566). His main example of primary imaginary pleasures was architecture (based on strong presence), and his half-voiced critique is that even though Milton works on secondary imaginary pleasures (literature does not give presence in the same way a building does) the satisfactions he offers feel too primary: Milton is too present, too material – one notices the bricks (the language) too much.

The analogy to building also influences Addison’s catalog of the beauties within the poem, which had served as the pretext for a famous series of *Spectator* papers a few months earlier. Like Milton he begins with hell and ends with Eve: “What is more beautiful than *Pandaemonium*, Paradise, Heaven, Angels, *Adam* and *Eve*?” (*TS III.566*). He likens the poem’s self-made beauty to the resplendence of *Pandaemonium* – a subtle version of a “Satanic” reading of Milton from an unexpected source. All the poem’s figures, he implies, down to the angels and its human protagonists, feel like (contemporary brick) constructs in a way that ancient works in marble do not. Apparently nostalgic for the ancients, Addison holds out the possibility of a poem that would have been even more satisfying than the apparent perfection of *Paradise Lost*, a necessary possibility if there is room for optimism about poetry in the future. There is no objection to Milton’s imaginative poetic aptitude nor to his philosophic understanding; the subject and the object of the poem are both perfect. It is a triumph of good taste in the traditional sense; in it Milton the poet and Milton the philosopher are like Adam and Eve “one flesh” (*PL IX.959*), and any supplement necessarily takes on a Satanic coloration. For the Addisonian observer – the eighteenth-century spectator – it nevertheless tasted of bricks, like the (linguistic) stuff of everyday life, elevated though it was. This is perhaps an instance of the secret sneer behind the surface of urbane geniality that Pope attributed to Addison’s character in his poetical portrait of him, itself full of aggressive adulation: his Cartesian “pleasure traces” and his brick-

built Milton “Damn with faint praise, assent with civil Leer; / And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.”⁸⁹

This “secondary” faculty of taste exercised upon absent things, like the “Beauty” surprisingly attributed to Pandaemonium, has something potentially Satanic about it. Addison’s prime example, as we have seen, is “a Man in a Dungeon,” and his eulogy of the poet’s influence makes him sound demonic: “He can so exquisitely ravish or torture the Soul through this single Faculty, as might suffice to make up the whole Heaven or Hell of any finite Being.” (Even his power to “convey into [the Fancy] a Variety of Imagery” echoes Satan’s injection of the dream into Eve in book IV of *Paradise Lost*.) For Addison, the litmus test of aesthetic subjectivity is whether secondary pleasures in absence can survive the eclipse of primary ones, as in Satan’s condition at the beginning of *Paradise Lost*: literally in a dark dungeon, the fallen angel asserts that “the mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heav’n of Hell” (I.254–5) – though his imaginary pleasures revolve around revenge rather than celestial bliss, and his mind actually carries hell within it even in Paradise. The core aptitude of the aesthetic subject is, given the absence of objects of pleasure, the capacity to reconstitute Paradise inwardly from memory, to undertake Satan’s voyage without leaving home. Addison offers an armchair radical fall, an aestheticized and sanitized version of Satan’s “mind”: “a man should endeavor . . . to make the Sphere of his innocent Pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with Safety, and find in them such a Satisfaction as a wise Man would not blush to take” (*TS* III.539). The subject of pleasure is not innocent in the way Adam and Eve were before the fall because its pleasures presuppose a “dark room” or require a “dungeon” to be fully appreciated. Addison’s model of aesthetic spectatorship urges Satanic self-consciousness taken to the threshold of temptation and no further, as if he remained perched on the tree of life, a cormorant-like spectator nursing a sphere of invisibility around him indefinitely.

Milton gives a sophisticated description of the secondary mode of innocence communicated by aesthetic spectatorship when Satan gazes on Eve just before he tempts her. Enthralled by the “rural sight[s]” of the garden like one who “from each thing met conceives delight” (*PL* IX.451, 449), Milton explains how much pleasure such a spectator *would* feel “If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass, / What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more / She most, and in her look sums all delight” (453–4). Framed within the simile, Milton compares Eve to famous mythological beauties, each a beautiful simulacrum symbolizing the general beauty of their gardens: the garden of Adonis in Spenser, the garden of Alcinous in Homer, and the Biblical garden “where the sapient king [Solomon] / Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse” (440–3). Milton’s simile rehearses an inclination to hallucinate nymphs that he regards as only natural for anyone soaking in the pleasures of the countryside. As the risqué allusion to Solomon’s unorthodox commerce with the fleshpots of Egypt suggests, Milton uses the narrative space of this simile to push Satan’s spectatorship as close to prurient pleasure as possible without giving him fantasies which are other than *completely normal*. Within this simile about fantasy, which itself feels like a fantastical pause within the narration, the difference between fallen and unfallen perception itself momentarily disappears, replaced by an idea of fantasy-perception that is only natural.

When the post-simile sentence begins in the following line and it comes time to explain how we are to compare the fantasy-simile to Satan’s experience, the narration recesses and delays Eve’s presence, as if the visual pleasure she provides were unveiling itself slowly before his eyes:

Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone; her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft, and feminine
 Her graceful innocence, her every air... (455–9)

The “such pleasure took the serpent” (he had just been called “the fiend” [412]; now the narration stiffens him into his symbolic shape) leads us to expect something will be revealed after the suspense of the line break after “behold.” Instead, his gaze – the gaze of anyone in this position? – lands on “This flowry plat, the sweet recess of Eve,” a line that offers two quite distinct levels of visualization. Either he takes in the complete picture of the beautiful garden’s “flowery plat” within which Eve is so recessed as to be almost indistinct from it or even disappearing into it (the *OED* cites this passage to illustrate the sense of “plat” as a small area of land in which something grows), or else the line reads as Milton replaying Spenser’s crypto-pornographic “stately Mound” girdled in Myrtle at the exact center of the garden of Adonis (Shakespeare had used “plat” in 1609 to mean a single narrow line of twined hairs). When he finally manages to take all of her in, what he sees is her “heavenly” (not Paradisal) form “angelic” (not human), as if it momentarily returned him to a place and a state otherwise impossible for him.

Both ways of reading that key line (456), however, withhold the figurally complete fleshy self-presence of the “nymph-like fair virgin” passing in the simile: both the lewd vision which Milton does not actually ascribe to Satan but rather inscribes as-if anamorphically into the text’s unconscious for the reader inclined to look at it from exactly that angle and the ultra-innocent vision worthy of an Addison pausing over the “green shadows” cast by this undulating landscape of flowers, one of which is she. Milton wants Eve to please more than a generic nymph fantasy would because of her actively engaged and experienced look. At the same time, he wants to grant her all the allurements of inexperience (which was not the case in Spenser) – at least before the vicarious eye of an intruder – exactly when her substantive innocence is about to fail. He makes the nymph-hallucinating eye, wherever it comes from, encounter Eve not as an image that refers to a symbolically charged presence but as an image that functions as an obstacle to the reader – in the language of psychoanalysis, a bit of the real – which serves as a mirror of the subject’s own peculiar orientation. Under Satan’s particular gaze, all of her terrestrial and unfallen qualities virtually disappear and she becomes a kind of ideal “form,” a standing abstraction of everything he longs for most. Satan’s pleasure is almost entirely within the register of secondary imaginary pleasure, in which the object is (or might as well be) absent, and the viewer is (or might as well be) in his own portable chamber of darkness. What he sees is conditioned by the medium he brings to see with, and only the tremor of her “more soft” quality. Is this a tactile quality, his mind rushing out to touch her flesh like Addison’s aesthetic vision ran to touch the stars? Is it a visual quality, like the misty impression of eyes watering at what they see? Or is it the ontological softness of her form approximating the angelic in a secondary feminine register? In any case, it acts as a *je ne sais quoi* (“graceful... her every air”) that keeps his feet, amidst this rush of intellectual pleasure, still planted upon the for now still-Paradise ground.

In the lines that follow, Milton makes Satan’s spectatorial pleasure before Eve, fully aesthetic in Addison’s sense, the means of a temporary but nevertheless effective instance of reform:

Of gesture or least action overawed
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
 That space the evil one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remained
 Stupidly good. (460–65)

Satan's aesthetic experience – or even nakedly idealist experience: the serpent stands abstracted – works *because of* the allure of her absence. The object of his experience takes shape as either lewd subtext, as an artful posture of innocence, or even as the normal-and-natural response in which neither innocence nor guilt has a part modeled in the simile. The effect of her absence is not to merely *awe* him with her virtuous beauty as the presence of a virginal nymph might have. She “overawes” him with a momentarily reforming secondary imaginary pleasure triggered by her perfect lack of evil. Milton stresses that Eve's presence does not communicate any special virtues; instead its strange virtue is like a higher void momentarily absorbing his dark matter. She wreaks on him the strangely “abstracted” effect of a benign disintoxication expropriating him from his evil, which Milton describes as “rapine sweet,” suggesting the paradoxes of pleasant plunder or consensual rape. With this negative enthusiasm, Satanic askesis before Eve illustrates a strange moment of aesthetic detachment as a visceral rush towards stasis – *as well as* a contrary and precarious fantastical state to be interrupted shortly by the interest of his mission. Satan is surprised by his lack of sin (which is completely different from the lack *of* his sin). Addison takes this experience of secondary, imputed innocence communicated by spectatorship, and builds it into a sphere of innocent pleasures within which any devil who can read a piece of white paper covered in dark marks may become “stupidly good.” With his qualification of “stupidly” Milton voices the now-standard worry about the passive, soporific effects of mediated spectatorship. Milton's fictional context, in which there is little “society” to speak of and certainly no technologically mediated culture, allows him to depict the mediation of vision of aesthetic spectatorship as a largely autological process that requires only a bare minimum of other people, even though we clearly understand that Satan brings his hellish medium along with him.⁹⁰

We glimpse the relation between the pleasures of the imagination and more sensual ones in the number Steele contributed between Addison's introductory paper on taste (No. 409) and the main sequence on the pleasures of the imagination (Nos. 411–412). Perhaps intending to supplement Addison's serious reflections on taste with a more practical moral example, Steele tells an anecdote about the aging rake Will Honeycomb leading the naive Tory squire Sir Roger de Coverly to be taken in by a courtesan dressed as a respectable widow. The paper notes she is “most exactly dressed from Head to Foot” but then goes on to provide exact sartorial clues that Sir Roger might have used to read through her character: low-grade black silk, no ribbons, striped Muslin, “at once consulting Cheapness and the Pretention to Modesty” (*SP III.532*). Her situation (she is unattended) and behavior (allowing herself to be lavishly entertained by men who have just picked her up) only confirm our picture of what she is. Correctly guessing her inclinations but mistaking her social station, Sir Roger writes her a letter inviting her into the country with him. His friends' great raillery at him is then put to rest by a solemn didactic poem warning against the seductress, who lays about her boudoir every pleasure imagination can

conceive of, terminating in herself: “Whatever to the Sense can grateful be / I have collected there ... I want but Thee” (534).

Addison was vexed by this number, which interrupts the moral project of cultivating “mental taste” by regressing to a social ambience where tasteful signifiers have a primarily erotic valence and where ridicule overtakes a subject naively taken in by signifiers that are not what quite they seem.⁹¹ However, when Addison takes us out of the world of seduction, rakes, and ridicule, and back into the world of cultivated appreciation in the following number, he does not suppress the image of a bed of sensory delights the previous number ended with. Rather he focuses these more precisely into a sublimated visual sensory channel when he declares “Our sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our Senses” (535). In the context of the preceding number, one knows exactly what Sir Roger, were he confined to a dungeon, would be directing his aesthetic organ of “more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch” towards (536–7). Instead of denying the ultimately pornographic unconscious of the aesthetic experience he proposes, Addison suggests that refining into more “diffuse” secondary pleasures is a way to avoid Sir Roger’s embarrassing failure to read through the object of his imagination’s provenance.⁹² The longing to possess and enjoy what one sees, whether in the feminine landscape or the topographical one – or, like Satan, in the exquisite combination of Eve and her environment – does not lead to direct violation. Satan does not possess Eve by attempting to rape her; he wishes to possess her plus her entire environment: “earth felt the wound” that, stupefied, she does not feel right away (*PL IX.782*).

A second piece of intertext by Steele advertising his plan for a lottery at the end of No. 413, even more awkward because it caused him legal trouble, makes a link between imaginary pleasures and pecuniary gain.⁹³ The paper explains the “great Modern Discovery” that secondary qualities exist only in the imagination and speculates that these ubiquitous, spectacular “Supernumerary ornaments” are implanted by providence, spreading epidermally diffused pleasures over the entire world as a special dispensation for those with eyes to see. “In short,” he concludes, “our Souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing Delusion, and we walk about like the Enchanted Hero of a Romance ... but upon the finishing of some secret Spell, the fantastick Scene breaks up, and the disconsolate Knight finds himself on a barren Heath, or in a solitary Desert” (546–7). This powerful description of disenchantment is offered as a speculation about whether after death the soul is thrown into a colorless world of primary qualities. But rhetorically he gives a charged depiction of consensus reality as a simulacrum, so that once he transitions the perspective into the desert of the real the reader still feels like a “Knight” – an aura of reenchantment in an impossibly real scientific world – albeit a disconsolate one.

Addison’s reflections on the reenchantment caused by aesthetic spectatorship abruptly give way to Steele’s almost crass plug for a state lottery. Attempting a plausible transition, Steele picks up on the chaotic aspect of the spectacle of life in color: “the Pleasures of the Imagination are what *bewilder* Life [the same word Addison had just used], when Reason and Judgment do not interpose” (547, *emphasis added*). Just as Addison offers spiritual guidance in the context of the strange aleatory work of providence, Steele’s lottery will offer a material medium for providence to re-enchante the right people’s lives – touching on material factors while Addison touched on spiritual ones – all while benefiting the state: “for no Man can be a Gainer here, but at the same time he himself, or some other, must succeed in their Dealings with Government” (547–8). Steele was proposing a way to align subjects with state interests through imagination

rather than reason: the pleasure in a lottery is another imaginary pleasure promising enchanted results and almost always leaving the subject a disconsolate dupe of the odds, which always favor the house. One might reasonably ask to what extent the rest of the imaginary pleasures, which all follow from isolating some pleasures from causality and reason, are liable to arrangements that play into a third party's vision of general interests. Just as in the aftermath of Coverly's furtively libertine (but ultimately imaginary) pleasures, Addison absorbs rather than repudiates this moment: a few lines into his reprise in the following number, he uses the vocabulary of gambling to describe the pleasure in looking at nature: "the Sight wanders up and down without Confinement, and is fed with an infinite variety of Images, *without Stint or Number*" (549, emphasis added). To what extent does declaring some pleasures imaginary, mere entertainment, part of the chaos of the world directed by providence, put some individuals in position to steer others? Were the aesthetics of imaginary pleasures harnessing the irreducible diversity of tastes in the manner of a lottery, and if so who stood to benefit?

4. The mechanics of the *je ne sais quoi*; or, the secret communication of pleasure in Addison and Milton

One sees the machine, and this with pleasure, but one does not see the hidden spring that turns it on.... If by chance one were to glimpse this surprising *je ne sais quoi* which transports the heart upon first view ... it would stop being what it is.... If this is true, said Eugène, one should never condemn the taste of another, howsoever bizarre this taste may be.

[On voit la machine, & on la voit avec plaisir; mais on ne voit pas le ressort qui la fait jouer ... Si par hasard on venait à apercevoir ce je ne sais quoi qui surprend, & qui emporte le coeur à une première vue ... il cesserait d'être ce qu'il est. ... Si cela est ainsi, dit Eugène, on a tort de condamner le goût, & l'inclination d'autrui, quelque bizarre que soit ce goût.]

(Bouhours)

What makes it possible for secondary imaginary pleasures, which every subject responds to freely, dividualy, even chaotically, to become subjects of control is the mechanics of pleasure, a "secret" according to the continental theory of the *je ne sais quoi*. This section shows that in addition to the Cartesian theory of pleasure Addison more or less covertly incorporates into his aesthetics, throughout the "Pleasures of the Imagination," he also repeatedly alludes to this popular thought-figure for the limits of rationalist thinking, the "hidden spring" in the machine according to Dominique Bouhours, or simply the ineffable.⁹⁴ Even very late, for example in Hugh Blair's 1783 lectures on rhetoric, one reads that taste ultimately relies on "a certain string, to which, when properly struck, the human heart is so made as to answer," with scarce any further details possible.⁹⁵ Addison's other major source, this time within the English tradition, was the great theorist of government through pleasure, interest, and comparison, Thomas Hobbes. Before Addison, the major literary model for the government or manipulation of others specifically by means of a *je ne sais quoi*, which is to say a bond of pleasure, was Milton's depiction of Satan tempting Eve through a dream. I argue that the *Spectator* set out to address its

reading public using the same medial techniques with which Satan addresses Eve, albeit with intentions its authors felt were virtuous. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief reading of an ode by Abraham Cowley, which anticipates the diffuse popular communication of the secret of pleasure.

At two moments in the “Pleasures of the Imagination,” Addison uses the widely popular continental figure of the *je ne sais quoi*. In No. 409, he appeals to a certain something beyond rules, which he associates at first with the sublime: “There is still something more essential, to the Art, something that elevates and astonishes the Fancy, and gives a Greatness of Mind to the Reader, which few of the Criticks besides *Longinus* have consider’d” (*SP* III.530).⁹⁶ His second appeal to this category allies it rather with strangeness: the Chinese “have a Word, it seems, in their Language, by which they express the particular Beauty of a Plantation that thus strikes the Imagination at first Sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an Effect” (552).⁹⁷ Shaftesbury had rejected invoking this category as an anything-goes mystification to justify any taste whatsoever, but this is not how Addison appeals to it here.⁹⁸ This ineffable something is not directly accessible to consciousness, perhaps because it works with great speed, but it may be approached indirectly, whether through *Longinus* or strange, forgotten Chinese words. It is also not the reaction and property of an individual subject but an instance of communication, a greatness the rubs off on the reader or a beauty that violently strikes the mind. These effects exceed the limits of transmissible propositional content but they do not circumvent language itself: “Colours speak all languages” (559).

The phrase, *je ne sais quoi*, had been used since antiquity, and Bouhours begins by registering that as a gesture of mystification it is already a cliché, especially in Spain and Italy (*Entretiens*, 287–8). Bouhours frames his contribution as the attempt at a more conscious discussion by defining it not just as a mystery but as a mystery that would disappear once understood: “If by chance one were to glimpse this surprising *je ne sais quoi* which transports the heart upon first view ... it would stop being what it is.”⁹⁹ In other words, the *je ne sais quoi* is a mystery that appears in an object, but which one can recognize has to do with the observer’s own “first view.” His discussion thus distances itself from the astrological occult causes frequently attached to the *nescio quid* and likewise places the concept beyond the object’s beauty: it is “an ornament [*agrément*] that animates beauty and other natural perfections ... which enters into a walk, a laugh, the tone of the voice”¹⁰⁰ There is a mechanistic quality to it, but its mechanism is secret: “One sees the machine, and this with pleasure, but one does not see the hidden spring that turns it on.”¹⁰¹ As in Addison, the spring is a remediated form of touch: “if the soul does not grasp the trait that touches it in in this encounter” it is because “everything that proceeds with an extreme rapidity cannot be seen: thus arrows, musket shots, canon balls, and lightning bolts fly before our eyes without our being able to see them: these things are visible in and of themselves but movement carries them on and hides them from our view.”¹⁰² The concept upgrades Cupid’s traditional arsenal with the most up-to-date ballistics: the *je ne sais quoi* treats mystery of love as a natural phenomenon that happens to work too fast to be directly observed, as if the old allegories were literal truths that were misunderstood. In any case, as for Addison, one achieves knowledge of it only indirectly: “one knows it only by the effects.”¹⁰³

Moreover, Bouhours’s attempt at a conscious theory of the *je ne sais quoi* – meaning which goes beyond the gesture of mystification by appealing to a secret or swift mechanics of pleasure – is quite overtly occasioned by restrained homoerotic longing. Bouhours’ text is a dialogue between two men, and he introduces the topic in the fifth dialogue as the explanation for their desire for one another: “because, virtuous though it is, it has the effect between us that

love does on others ... [the fact of] these secret inclinations makes us feel for one person I know not what [*je ne sais quoi*], which we do not feel for another”¹⁰⁴ The first literary figure exemplifying it is an anonymous poem about “a charming young man,” which one of his contemporaries attacked because “it depicts as beautiful boy with the same air as a shepherdess talking of her shepherd.”¹⁰⁵ Bouhours’ conclusion about taste is tellingly broad-minded. If this is true, said Eugène (one of the two speakers in the dialogue), one should never condemn the taste of another, howsoever bizarre this taste may be.”¹⁰⁶ He quickly adds that one can control actions, but with first impulses: “you have to blame nature itself ... one loves ... without even the heart itself knowing.”¹⁰⁷ In general, the *je ne sais quoi* aims to separate the object of the drive – in psychoanalytic terminology the object-cause of desire – from the beautiful object of libidinal interest. While the term usually referred to other-sex attractions, it could also provide a cover for less common tastes within the broad scope of nature, whatever virtue might instruct one to do with them. Bouhours was willing to describe potentially deviant impulses as part of the innermost nature of the subject, not as external behavior or sin, but he then ascribes to virtually all desire these unstable object-causes: “the *je ne sais quoi* is almost everywhere.”¹⁰⁸ In our critical vocabulary, this was to call all inclination queer.

When he speaks of the “particular Beauty ... that thus strikes the Imagination at first Sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an Effect,” Addison is quite close to this tradition, retailing an only nominally more subdued version of the *je ne sais quoi*.¹⁰⁹ His aesthetics, he had explained, looks for “a new Principle of Pleasure, which is nothing else but the Action of the Mind, which *compares* the Ideas that arise from Words, with the Ideas that arise from the Objects themselves” (*SP* III.566–7). The original, he adds, is always absent to some degree; the pleasure principle ultimately resides in “the Aptness of the Description to excite the Image” in the observer’s memory (567). He then illustrates this “secret Ferment of the Mind” with the inexplicable and softening touch of melancholy: it is pleasant to look at a good portrait of someone, more pleasant if the person is also beautiful, and most pleasant “if the Beauty be softened with an Air of Melancholy or Sorrow” (567). The first pleasure in basic resemblance is not aesthetic for Addison; it is like the earlier example of someone whose greatest pleasure reading Virgil is calculating Aeneas’s voyage on a map (529). The pleasure in the beauty of a resemblance is the secondary, supplementary delight in an object’s capacity to trigger a reaction in the subject. It is with the third level that a “secret Ferment” appears, in which the absence-triggering pleasure has taken shape as a distinctly nameable aspect: the superadded “Air of Melancholy,” which one cannot place what lies behind (the *air*, or pose, may prove to be as important as the affect itself). The object reflects the observer’s “disconsolate” realization that the observer’s own colorful “supernumerary Ornaments” of pleasure, however universally appealing she might wish them to be, are her own secret properties, her own true colors and tastes and smells. Addison’s enquiry is into how pleasure, without ceasing to be pleasure, may nevertheless appear to follow a mechanism-like principle occasioned by self-reflection in the face of its object. Pleasures take shape as an ordered field – or an “innocent sphere” – when they are seen to follow from a mental comparison, the surreptitious glance back from the object of enjoyment to how this enjoyment fits with previous memories of enjoyment. Thanks to reiterated comparison, as in the initial tea-taster example, the act of enjoyment yields knowledge, but a merely ‘subjective’ knowledge about how one body (say, this tea) relates to another (the taster). Comparison also creates, with the automatic swiftness of pandaemonial self-making, an imaginary map, building, or memory-palace about how various pleasures relate to one another, which future degustations automatically build upon.

In this use of comparison as a regulatory mechanism, Addison follows Hobbes. Like Descartes, Hobbes distinguishes sensual pleasures from “the delight of the mind . . . which we call joy,” and he explains affects like glory, courage, trust, and pity as simply more detached or mental delights.¹¹⁰ Laughter is especially revealing for him because it shows the operation of comparing in memory that subtends all mental pleasures: “laughter is nothing else but a sudden glory arising from sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmities of others” which comes “suddenly to remembrance” (54–5). He explains love, infatuation, and the urge to sociability as following from comparison with themselves as well. Helping other people is “an argument to a man of his own power,” and Socrates’ continence in the *Symposium* shows that “continent men have that passion they contain, as much or more than they that satiate the appetite” (56–7).¹¹¹ Curiosity, which is “a delight” (58), is the best of these second-order mental passions because it is the most directly conducive to self-improvement, which has “no other goal, nor no other garland, but being foremost” (59). Even Socratic pleasures are too sensual for him compared to curiosity, which offers the refined pleasure of “comparison, [in which] a man delighteth himself” with a “virtue of the mind . . . by which men attain to exact and perfect knowledge” (61).

Addison’s version of mental pleasures clearly follows Hobbes’s account of refinement by means of comparison, but he does so in order to reverse the latter’s priorities. In No. 420, he considers the imaginary effects of the new science, which pleurably enlarges the mind, which uses imaginary means to “touch” large, small, distant, and complex parts of nature through a medium, though only to a point: “our Reason can pursue a Particle of Matter through an infinite variety of Divisions, but the Fancy soon loses sight of it, and feels in it self a kind of Chasm, that wants to be filled with Matter of a more sensible Bulk” (576). The following and final number turns to the use of imaginary pleasures in “the Polite Master of Morality,” the chief instrument of which is allegory: “when well chosen, [allegories and metaphors] are like so many Tracks of Light in a Discourse . . . [one of which] casts a kind of Glory round it, and darts a Lustre through a whole Sentence” (578). Exerting moral influence by spectacular aesthetic means thus requires the preceding (“Satanic”) imaginary encounter with the “chasm” of primary qualities. Earlier, he figured this moment as a solitary desert; here, once he turns to consider what “pains of the imagination” might look like, it appears as madness. “There is not a Sight in Nature so mortifying,” he says, “as that of a Distracted Person, when his Imagination is troubled, and his whole Soul disordered and confused. *Babylon* in Ruins is not so melancholy a Spectacle” (579). Addison does not think of madness primarily in terms of a breakdown of reason, but rather as a “troubled” imagination, which by extension swallows up “his whole Soul,” including reason and will. Moral allegories, by contrast, are the means to mental health. When “two of its Faculties [are] gratified at the same time” the Mind “discover[s] a Scheme of Thoughts traced out upon Matter” and “transcrib[es] Ideas out of the Intellectual World into the Material” (477). The brilliant aura cast by allegory covers the imagination’s incapacity to process the full extent of the real while also acting secretly on matter below the threshold of consciousness in the manner of a doctor. Pleasure instantaneously schools the subject through the basal act of comparison, combining the old Horatian formula, to please and to instruct, into a single act, making no further instruction necessary. As Hobbes earlier put it, the “great deception” (or madness) of sense is “by sense” corrected.

Following Hobbes, who sees the philosophical growth of the imagination as an endless race to be first, best, and most refined, Addison claims that “memory is the World (though not

really, yet so as in a looking glasse)” in which Judgment assembles knowledge, whereupon “Fancy ... findes her materials at hand and prepared for use ... [and] she seemeth to fly from one *Indies* to the other, and from Heaven to Earth, and to penetrate into the hardest matter, and obscurest places, into the future, and into her selfe, and all this in a point of time, the voyage is not very great, her self being all she seekes.”¹¹² Hobbes wishes poetry to work like an artificial, more playful duplicate of scientific knowledge, unraveling an unbounded mental journey from the kernel of its own store. He sees the poet as the moral counterpart of “the Philosopher,” whose task it is “to furnish and square his matter, that is, to make both body and soule, colour and shaddow of his Poem out of his own store” such that its artificially worked-up images may be “so deeply imprinted, as to stay for ever there” in the recipient “and governe all the rest of [his] thoughts” (50, 55). Hobbes stresses that poetry governs by means of an artificially produced, internal reflection alone. Addison follows this model, supplementing it with an auratic charge, as when allegory “casts a kind of Glory round it, and darts a Lustre.” This supplemental glow, like the secondary reenchantment of his “knight” in the Romance passage, follows from a pleasure not just in what he sees but in what he learns from what he cannot see. Addison’s mental traveller necessarily hits a wall beyond which he cannot go: a chasm, a desert, a void, a beyond. For Hobbes, pleasure *is* the mechanism, while for Addison there are “secret” effects beyond the Hobbesian pleasure principle. He proposes a new principle of governing through something beyond pleasure, which is the substance of all pleasure but which only takes on its own proper shape as a strange unnecessary supplement to pleasure.

The previous section claimed that Addison’s newly principled usage of imaginary pleasures was allied with the mode of consciousness that Milton ascribed to Satan in *Paradise Lost*. In that passage, Eve stimulates Satan into momentarily being “stupidly good”; of course, Milton was even more interested in how secondary imaginary pleasures could tempt to evil. In Eve’s dream, narrated at the beginning of Book V, Milton emphasizes the physiological mode of suasion Satan is attempting, invoking the same “animal spirits” that Addison later does in his (pseudo)Cartesian theory of pleasure: Satan approaches

Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve;
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 The animal spirits that from pure blood arise
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distempered, discontented thoughts
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires
 Blown up with high conceits engendering pride. (*PL* IV.800–809)

Milton conceives of Eve’s unconscious in terms of flux: she has a multiplex of plural “organs,” a stream of “pure blood,” and the subtler “gentle breaths” of “animal spirits” emanating therefrom. The metaphorical shape of the toad, an amphibious and sometimes venomous animal, is particularly felicitous for this aquatic circulatory milieu. His “devilish art” entails reaching into her stream of organs and shaping them from within, staining them with a polluted “taint,” and finally molding the airy “gentle breaths” into “distempered ... thoughts.” At no point does he insert an external thought-image into this flux, let alone interrupt it; his work of “forging” acts

entirely within the medium of her mind, and his “high conceits” are shaped from her own unconscious material. Satan’s acoustic nanotechnology alters her somatic environment, throws her off-balance, and works up fragments of imagistic content. He operates directly on her the organs that mediate her sense experience in order to “raise” thoughts within the free-flowing stream of her mind without interrupting her freedom. Because of this indirect, mediated approach, he attempts to govern her with secondary imaginary pleasures.

Of course, the pernicious *je ne sais quoi* Satan subliminally advertises to Eve is the interdicted object of taste. By the moment of the fall Eve is all action: all tasteful reflection is swallowed in the enormity of her act as “Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she ate” (*PL* IX.781). Leading up to the act, her inclination waxes synesthetically: “the smell / So savory of that fruit, which with desire / Inclinal now grown to touch or taste, / Solicited her longing eye” (740–3). Her waking imagination, which now translates an inviting odor (“smell... so savory”), through a desire “to touch or taste,” finally into a scopic longing (“solicited her longing eye”), is already disordered: she is seeing things, looking for something beyond the manifold pleasures God has placed in the garden. However, in the earlier proleptic dream inspired by Satan’s intermediation, “the pleasant savoury smell / So quickened appetite, that I, methought, / Could not but taste” (*PL* V.85–6). Milton adds that after her trip into the sky “my guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down” (91). Her compulsion to repeat this self-conscious “methought” as she attempts to get a grip on her own experience is the symptomatic footprint of Satan’s preemptive oneiric strike. Milton emphasizes that Satan’s intervention is not a positive imaginary presence but the feeling of an absence in the face of which she dream-eats with only the momentum of her own psychic automatism, which could not but eat. The double negative *je ne sais comment* Milton places in Eve’s mouth is perhaps the only exception to Freud’s claim that dreams admit of no negation. Just as when the voice leads her away from her own image and towards Adam, “what could I do, / But follow straight, invisibly thus led?” (*PL* IV.475–6).

Once Eve tastes the fruit in the dream, ambiguously to be sure – “that I, methought / Could not but taste” (*PL* V.85–6) – what Satan offers her in the vision is a powerful effect of detachment rather than any new visionary content. He promises that she will be “not to earth confined, / But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes / Ascend to heaven” (78–80), but the vision itself offered only flying “up to the clouds” to see “the earth stretched out immense, a prospect wide” (88). What he tempts her with, then, is not alluring foreign celestial beauties, but a new perspective on her own world, a view from the airy chasm of the world as it really is, at least to those such as him. This promise of the real, cloudy to be sure, reenters her world as the uncanny fruit, which like the grain or kernel Locke used to explain primary qualities, is divisible and shareable in the right hands. One could say, then, that within the dream he tempts her with waking up, with negating the dream of the world as she knows it. He offers her a new stellar perspective in which secondary qualities recede – inverting on a vast special scale the “sweet recess” of Eve that Satan had contemplated earlier – and all she can take in is something “immense,” a “prospect wide” of primary qualities, which turns out to be an inhospitable and chaotic oceanic domain.

Having incorporated the kernel of this fruit, Satan adds that she will ascend to heaven “by merit thine” (*PL* V.80). Milton is setting up the alternative positive version of space-flight through taste that Raphael will shortly explain: “And from these corporal nutriments perhaps / Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit, / Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend /

Ethereal, as we” (496–99). Raphael promises the same “ethereal” lucidity and via the same means of material taste; his phrase “turn all to spirit” (as when Eve’s pure blood earlier transformed into gentle wafts of animal spirits) suggests that their bodies will eventually consume even their own material base into spirit, as if reflexively devouring itself through tasteful self-enjoyments. However, tempted by Satan’s debased psychotropic lucidity, she misses the opportunity to taste her own world (and perhaps other worlds) consciously as an ethereal spirit, and instead she unconsciously “methinks.” Satan’s operation, abstracting Eve from her native goodness through secondary imaginary pleasures, renders her no more than “stupidly” evil, just as her angelic grace later abstracts Satan through spectatorship from his acquired malice. His stimulating her to touch the sublime chasm of inhuman space follows the same mechanism as her stimulating him to remember (his) angelic beauty lost.¹¹³

Passing from Book IV’s description of Satan’s machinations as object-cause behind Eve’s experience to Adam’s reassuring account of her experience after the fact in Book five takes the reader from a Cartesian model of the mind to an empiricist one. Adam answers Eve’s tears with an ordinary display of mansplaining: “Evil into the mind of god or man / May come and go, so unapproved, and leave / No spot or blame behind” (*PL* V.117–9). Milton qualifies this opinion by placing it in the mouth of a character that does not undergo this specific experience speaking to the character who does, who is not literally “man,” as he is, and who does not ultimately succeed in avoiding “spot or blame.” Adam projects a firmly virginal mind on a subject whose faculties, Milton implies, may turn out to be more plastic and impressionable than his. The psychology he mobilizes to explain this “uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear” ends up explaining little (98). He distinguishes the healthy, diurnal work of fancy, which “forms imaginations, airy shapes, / Which reason joining of disjoining, frames / All what we affirm or deny” (105–7), from the unsupervised unconscious work of “mimic fancy,” which chaotically mixes “words and deeds long past or late” (110–13).

Mimic fancy may be confusing, but it is not evil, a soupçon of which Adam clearly detects in her dream as some “addition strange” (116). Before she even woke up, he notices her “tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek, / As through unquiet rest,” in spite of which her “Beauty . . . whether waking or asleep, / Shot forth peculiar graces” (10–15). Milton’s usage of “peculiar” hovers between the older sense of the word, which meant the *je ne sais quoi* of her individual distinctive charm (a word also strongly suggesting the idea of property), and the emerging newer sense of strange, unusual, odd, or off.¹¹⁴ What Adam actually observes are the effects of Satan’s intimate somatic mode of influence mingled with the emanations of her still-pristine beauteous individuality. He breaks off by urging her to turn to “the flowers / That open now their choicest blossomed smell, / Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store” (126–8), a cornucopia of mysterious peculiar odors waiting to secrete themselves openly for her. Like Addison, Adam has given an empiricist typology of the imagination, explaining its primary function of synthesizing effects of presence as well as its secondary or “mimic” continuation beyond presence. Furthermore, Adam too recognizes that an “addition strange” has been communicated, which he cannot observe directly, and which originates beyond Eve’s individuated experience. Gazing at the stars before going to sleep, Eve had asked Adam for whom they shine when no one observes them. Her dream changes her from an aesthetic observer to aesthetic object: “heaven wakes with all his eyes, / Whom to behold but thee, nature’s desire, /

In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment / Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze” V.44–47). The “addition strange” is the strangely multiplex gaze (“all his eyes”) under which Eve herself becomes a *je ne sais quoi* charged with “ravishment.” While Adam dislikes the “addition strange,” Addison suggests working upon such supplementary additions entwined with pleasure, specifically on the secondary imaginary level. The chaotic unconscious realm of mimic fancy is the neutral field and cover for instances of governing by spectatorship, which can be either dumbly Satanic or dumbly angelic: of course, the *Spectator* understands itself to be imputing innocence.

Their key requirement for working at this level is the impression of instantaneity, which Locke formalized with his distinction between wit and judgment. Hobbes, like Descartes, aspires to a full congruence of creative and analytical judgment, which he gives under the master-term of wit: “for, to judge is nothing else, but to distinguish or discern, and both fancy and judgment are commonly comprehended under the name of WIT, which seemeth a tenuity and agility of spirits, contrary to the restiveness of the spirits supposed in those that are dull” (*Elements*, 62). However, by Locke’s time, the category of wit had become suspect – in no small part as a reaction-formation to Hobbesian wit¹⁵ – and Locke isolates wit from judgment. He defines wit as the fortuitous and often entertaining “Assemblage of *Ideas*” and Judgment as the careful work of separating them, “thereby to avoid being misled by Similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another” (*LE* 156). Judgment cleans up after the mess of wit and prevents the troubling intrusions of strange affinities. This view of wit imputes to it a *necessary* auto-constructive spontaneity: wit “strikes so lively on the Fancy, and therefore [is] so acceptable to all People; because its Beauty appears at first sight, and there is required no Labour of thought ... the mind without looking any farther, rests satisfied with the agreeableness of the Picture” (156–7). Locke is suspiciously quarantining from judgment the oddly self-conscious automatism (or passive activation) of Eve’s “I, methought / Could not but taste” under the rubric of wit. Eve’s vision is certainly a waywardly fanciful assemblage, but it seems more like fatally stupid inexperience than witticism; likewise, Satan’s episode of stupid goodness appears to be a moment of Hobbesian dullness, where the tenuity and agility of his spirits momentarily slow down.

By isolating wit and judgment into two distinct levels, Locke assigns a certain virtue to the stupidly automatic constructions of wit, which are driven by associations. “Habits have powerful charms,” we have seen him explain, “and put so strong attractions of easiness and pleasure into what we accustom ourselves to, that we cannot forbear to do ... [what] habitual practice has suited, and thereby recommends to us” (280). In *Samson Agonistes*, Milton had described seemingly irresistible instinctive responses: Samson’s father claims he succumbed to Delilah’s “over-potent charms” (*SA* 427); more abstractly, the Chorus notes that “beauty, though injurious, hath strange power” (1003) and that of tempting women in general “by her charms, / Draws him [their object] awry enslav’d” (1039–40). These same powerful charms, in *Paradise Lost*, appear in a more salutary mode, as when Eve embraces Adam with “eyes of conjugal attraction unreprieved” (*PL* IV.493) and radiates “submissive charms” (498). Even Death seems to respond the call of such charms when he declares to Satan that “Nor can I miss the way [to earth], so strongly drawn / By this new-felt attraction and instinct” (X.262–3). Locke transposes these depictions of urgent attraction into a new register when he claims that they can survive the disappearance of their alluring object. For Samson, once he can say to Delilah, “I know thy trains / And dearly to my cost,” he can add, “[thy] warbling charms / No more on me have power” (*SA*

934–5). By contrast, Locke notes that by habit alone the “warbling charms” frequently live on as powerful as ever, even when the subject just responds “stupidly.” Locke immediately takes the further step of noting that these charms themselves can become subject to governance: “Men may and should correct their palates, and give a relish to what either has, or they suppose has none,” adding that “the relish of the mind is as various as that of the Body . . . the eating of a well-season’d dish, suited to a Man’s palate, may move the Mind by the delight it self, that accompanies the eating, without reference to any other end: To which the consideration of the pleasure there is in health and strength . . . may add a new Gusto, able to make us swallow an ill relish’d potion” (280). The same kind of attraction that moved Eve to Adam, Samson to Delilah, and Death to humanity can be turned, Locke says, into a “new Gusto” (or for Addison, a “new Principle of Pleasure”) potent enough to make anyone take whatever “ill relish’d” medicine they are thought to be wanting.

In other words, Locke is not just encouraging that the subject hold her nose in the face of an unpleasant but morally or medically necessary course of action. He suggests one should be able to actually taste the health presumed to follow from the potion immediately even in the stupid recalcitrance of the body. “Men can make things or actions more or less pleasing to themselves,” even though it seems like a “paradox,” and “thereby remedy that, to which one may justly impute a great deal of their wandering” (280–1). Locke’s “new Gusto” appeals to the supplement of mental delight, which takes effect automachinically “without reference to any other end.” This is not natural taste; it is not even the trenchant and almost solipsistic finesse of Hobbesian cultivated discrimination; it is something one has talked oneself into or been talked into subliminally, with a moment of stupid or automatic wit, after the matrix of Eve. Addison transforms this new gusto into his new principle of pleasure by developing a vocabulary for appealing to stupefied but inwardly self-determining spectatorship through plastic representations, so long as they are touching. The “powerful charms” of habit, like sunlight and kings, can be modulated by purely aesthetic means into desirable channels without arrogating their sovereignty.

In a much more pedestrian mode than Milton, but for that very reason all the more revealing, I will now conclude this chapter with a short discussion of Abraham Cowley’s ode “Of Liberty,” which puts forward its conventional didacticism on the foundation of a presciently modern vision of freedom.¹¹⁶ The poem’s prefatory essay defines freedom neither in relation to confinement nor censorship but in relation to time: a private man’s liberty is “being Master of his own Time and Actions” (l. 108). This surreptitiously economic view, suggesting that freedom is just the freedom to produce actions, directly entails a scarcity of freedom: “we must get as much Liberty as we can, and must use our utmost endeavors, and when all is done, be contented with the Length of that Line is is allow’d us,” adding that this line of freedom is most extended for mid-sized country land-owners (l. 121).

The ode itself then targets all the “small uneasie things,” especially public responsibility, that hinder the enjoyment of life, “Nor will the Master ev’n to share admit; / The Master stands aloof, and dares not Tast of it” (lines 13, 14–5). As in Addison’s secondary imaginary pleasures, the object of the pleasures of taste is absent (it appears in neither the libertine nor the moral-mystical register), yet a kind of pleasure lives on. He recommends, and attempts to demonstrate through the poem itself, another form of pleasure in the simple relief from stress: “To thy bent Mind some relaxation give, / And steal one day out of thy Life to Live” (lines 28–9). He steals

back this time not so he can leave his world but so that he can reassign his own duties: “Thus to himself can say, / Now will I sleep, now eat, now sit, now walk” (lines 4–5). His fear is not the imposition of others but his own internal self-limitation: “Where Honour or where Conscience does not bind / No other Law shall shackle me, / Slave to my self I will not be / Nor shall my future Actions be confin’d / By my own present Mind” (lines 22–5). The remarkable last stanza is a programmatic declaration of the neo-Pindaric mode whose popularity he launched: “If Life should be a well-order’d Poem be ... The more Heroique strain let others take, / Mine the Pindarique way I’ll make. / The Matter shall be Grave, the Numbers loose and free ... A thousand Liberties it shall dispense, / And yet shall mannage all without offence” (lines 12–18). The appeal of the Pindaric mode he outlines is that it artificially separates a nominally loose or free form and a didacticism of content.

Within the imaginary palace of these poems, they provided the powerful feeling that life itself was well-ordered in the same way as the artfully disordered Pindaric. Dryden’s *Alexander Feast* was considered the best work in this mode because its meta-reflection on the artful production of spontaneity held together a maximum of chaotically passionate conflagration and a maximum of artificial control under the same dome. Cowley’s Ode ends with a rather shocking reprise of his earlier figure of the bird as emblem for freedom:

So the Imperial Eagle does not stay
Till the whole Carkass he devour
That’s fallen into its power.
As if his generous Hunger understood
That he can never want plenty of Food,
He only sucks the tastful Blood.
And to fresh Game flies cheerfully away;
To Kites and meaner Birds he leaves the mangled Prey (lines 3-11).

It is hard to resist immediately concluding that the only experience of pleasurable taste Cowley’s free subject allows himself is the cruel pleasure of an imperial elitist gazing from a distance – not unlike Pope’s indictment of Addison’s “civil leer” – on the remains of the tasteless victim he has taught other birds to pull apart for him. Between the lines of this story is the reformulation of Dryden’s sovereign “greater gust” into a “generous Hunger” that limits itself to the “tastful Blood” (perhaps as well as the “animal spirits” that arise from the blood like “gentle breaths” [PL IV.805–6]), because it knows can claim a possession in everything it sees. These bloody drops are not unlike the “gentle tears,” the “two other precious drops that ready stood” like the foretastes of sin “each in th[e] crystal sluice” of Eve’s eyeballs after her dream: the secret fermentation of a reflexively self-implanted contagion passing from her eye towards her soul (V.130–2). One might doubt whether these “gentle” antecedents of the final “natural tears they dropped” upon leaving the garden were any different in substance from the differently innocent oneiric foretaste (XII.645). Cowley depicts a similarly natural solution to the urge towards Satanic rapaciousness upon entering the garden, which eclipses scarcity at the cost of vampirically draining its object of bodily fluids. Addison made a general offer of the “sweet rapine” of aesthetic spectatorship to the eighteenth century.

Notes to Chapter One

¹ The most thorough study of the sprawling discourses of taste, James Noggle's *The Temporality of Taste in Eighteenth-Century British Writing* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), shows that the term served to hold together the immediate synchronic intuition of good (or bad) taste with a diachronic sequence of tastes – “the modern taste, the Gothic, classic, female British, and Chinese” (1): these were the desiderata of publicity in Habermas and Picciotto's sense, which made up a new and temporalized type of social order in Noggle's analysis.

² On Shaftesbury's idealism and his break from Locke, who personally supervised his education, see Robert Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury, 1671–1713* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1984), 118–21.

³ The influential reading of Shaftesbury as a founder of aesthetic ideology is Terry Eagleton, for whom he is a “passed-over Platonist” who is “horrified by a nation of Hobbesian shopkeepers [and] speaks up for the ‘aesthetic’ as an alternative,” *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (New York: Blackwell, 1990), 30. The best monograph on Shaftesbury, which attempts a more balanced view, is Lawrence Klein, *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004). A more vigorous rejection of the aesthetic ideology model occurs in Karen Volihora, *Austen's Oughts: Judgment after Locke and Shaftesbury* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2010), a critique she makes in the name of the primacy of affect and the “pleasure ... of a formally articulated disinterestedness” (51); see esp. 103–5.

⁴ See *OED*, s. v. “taste,” n.1, 8.a. *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*, ed. Robert K. Barnhart (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1988), also cites this passage under “taste” as the earliest usage in the aesthetic sense.

⁵ Scholars have shown this was part of a much broader epistemological outlook; see for example *Labors of Innocence*, 400–507.

⁶ The “spark” of inner light, motive to natural religion, has a long theological history. Robert E. Greene argues that this concept was emphasized in both Locke and Whichcote, both key inspirations for Shaftesbury, though quite differently situated ideologically. “Synderesis, the Spark of Conscious, in the English Renaissance,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 52, no. 2 (Summer 1991), 195–219.

⁷ For an overview of the traditional hierarchies of the senses, see Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1999), 11–37 and Robert Jütte, *A History of the Senses From Antiquity to Cyberspace*, trans. James Lynn (New York: Polity, 2005), 54–71.

⁸ According to Walter W. Skeat, “the original sense of taste was to keep on touching, to feel carefully” in *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), “Taste.”

⁹ This argument for the derivation of taste through *tastare* via *taxare* was first made by Bloomfield's *Indogermanische Forschungen* (cited in *The Barnhart Dictionary*, “Taste”). This suggests the evaluative and epistemological sense of taste originated as a modulation of (or shared a common ancestor with) the idea of taxation, the removal of a small portion, including for purposes of knowledge.

¹⁰ The *OED* gives the last examples of taste that prominently feature the idea of touch or test between 1500–1660s.

¹¹ The most extensive reading on taste in Milton is in Denise Gigante, *Taste: A Literary History* (Yale: Yale UP, 2005), 22–47. She does not attempt to distinguish between the metaphorical and literal deployments. She concludes that “Milton’s . . . investment in taste is also foundational to the eighteenth century of taste as a particular manifestation of th[e] public sphere” (24).

¹² See Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1961), 1207.

¹³ Kevis Goodman notes that unlike Samson, who is “all Thanatos and very little Eros,” Milton’s Eve gives us an opportunity to think through “the distinctive, peculiar ‘instrumentality’ possessed by the aesthetic *aside* from its capacity to be put in the service of ideologies” because with her Milton attempts to think through the conjunction of eros and productivity. “‘Wasted Labor’? Milton’s Eve, the Poet’s Work, and the Challenge of Sympathy,” *ELH* 64, no. 2 (1997), 415–46, here 446.

¹⁴ The passage can also be read (more heretically) that objects which taste of truth may have been inspired by Satan when acting according to the natural light left in him rather than from his Satanic self. Milton is referring to the doctrine of general revelation based on (most relevant to us) Rom. 2:14–16.

¹⁵ As we will see shortly, a core move of Shaftesbury’s method of taste is pushing evil (or “nastiness,” which is clearly an alternative to the notion of evil) offstage rather than address it directly and punitively. His semantics of taste separates tastes from the theological label of evil; yet they must still be constantly and vigilantly corrected and improved.

¹⁶ Luhmann notes, citing Ludovico Dolce’s *Dialogo della Pittura*’s reference to gusto as natural taste “senza lettere,” thus without reference to social rank, that “the semantic success of this concept will require a social revalorization” (AS 389n93).

¹⁷ The titanic clash between Samson and Harapha (as a true test of taste) never happens, but I do not mean to suggest that it *does* in *Paradise Lost*. Adam and Eve’s bad taste is a fatal lost opportunity to continue working their garden tastefully *not* a deep test of their characters like the one Samson demands of Harapha and himself. Even in hell, the potentially nuclear encounter between Satan and Death is deferred just like the encounter between Samson and Harapha, and their vacuity shows itself through *not* tasting each other’s power. The later works do not introduce a new deferral into the taste (or test) of truth; but they treat it like the general norm rather than the exception and they consider how taste-tests can happen through mediation.

¹⁸ The *OED* documents that the literal sense of stench, rather than the metaphorical (and often moralizing) extensions of this idea appearing frequently from the sixteenth century onward, was still the primary sense in the seventeenth century; see “Nasty, adj.,” 1, 3a–b.

¹⁹ The *OED* records the aesthetic sense for gust beginning in 1684 (See *Goût*, n.3, 3a.).

²⁰ Shakespeare’s Sonnet 114 is cited as the first usage in this sense in *OED*, “Gust, n.2.” The *OED* gives three examples of taste in a sexual connotation between Shakespeare and Young; the idea of gust, however, was associated with libertine culture far more than the idea of taste. See “Taste, v.,” I.3.b.

²¹ *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. Earl Miner (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1969), III.203, II.232, I. 19–20, hereafter as *California Dryden*. The usage of gust for wind appears late in *Titus Andronicus* (1594), apparently borrowing a nautical term, via the Old Norse words for gush or pour. In Dryden’s hands, this sense serves to

underline the pressing physicality of the *gustus*-based Romance forms further still. Skeat suggests an intriguing derivation of gust from *jush*, the Sanskrit word for pleasure (*An Etymological Dictionary*, “gust”).

²² Boyle offers another illuminating usage that parallels Milton’s in *Paradise Regained*: “if you have a true gust for the Book you read,” which suggests truth as soundness in the reader’s appreciation, a healthy capacity to ingest knowledge. This usage does not separate out truth into a specially aesthetic or theological light. Richard Boyle, *New Experiments Physico-Mechanicall, touching the spring of the air, and its effects* (Oxford, 1660), 11, cited in *OED* “Gust,” n. 2. The *OED* also gives a number of examples of the literal sense of physical taste, which was also current, as when an experiment requires “the Testimony of the Gust” (1670).

²³ Milton does not want to imply that Christ’s superiority follows from either his forceful impetuosity or his refined rhetorical competence: his good taste, like Abdiel’s scorn-retorting preference for divine truth, points beyond rhetoric.

²⁴ This is of course Foucault’s description of the nineteenth-century homosexual in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 43. As we will see in the following chapter à propos the sexuality of the fop figure, historians of sexuality have since Foucault dated aspects of this transformation as early as the first decades of the eighteenth century.

²⁵ The concept of historically contingent necessity, highly applicable to the historical deployment of taste, occurs in Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (New York: Continuum, 2008).

²⁶ *Second Characters, or the Language of Forms by the Right Honorable Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge, 1914; repr. New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 114. His scare quotes also express the wish to deflect responsibility for using the formula “to correct our taste” onto another speaker.

²⁷ Shaftesbury is irritating to philosophers and has often been dismissed as a dilettantish gentleman philosopher, as when James Bonar sees “no coherent view” of moral philosophy in Shaftesbury at all in *The Moral Sense* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1947), 17. However, he has recently become interesting again to analytical philosophers interested in affect-based moral theories. See Stephen Darwall, *The British Moralists and the Internal ‘Ought’: 1640–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995); Daniel Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson: Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 98–149; and Joseph Duke Filonowicz, *Fellow-Feeling and the Moral Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), esp. 45–103. Anticipating the turn to affect, Marcia Cavell looked to taste for “a spontaneity that necessarily escapes formalization” in “Taste and the Moral Sense,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 34, no. 1 (Autumn 1975), 29–33, here 29.

²⁸ See Michael Moriarty, *Taste and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988), esp. 54–82, and “The New Liberalism” in E. B. O. Borgerhoff, *The Freedom of French Classicism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1950), 9–81. Luhmann comments that classical “French theories of taste ... contain a resonance of trust in one’s judgments which one finds nowhere else” (AS 240).

²⁹ *Second Characters*, 144.

³⁰ See Arthur O. Lovejoy’s seminal essay, “‘Nature’ as Aesthetic Norm,” *Modern Language Notes* 42, no. 7 (November, 1927): 440–50.

³¹ On aesthetics as media theory, see Introduction note 33.

³² Mary Poovey already noticed that “government by taste” closely accords with Foucault’s concept of governmentality. What follows takes up her hint in reading of the aesthetic texts of the period. See *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 157–174.

³³ Foucault explains that, as the title of his seminar suggests, he had intended to discuss biopolitics (see *G* 185–6) but ended up staying with “something much larger ... this new governmental reason ... [namely] liberalism as the general framework of biopolitics” (*G* 22). The first part of the seminar analyses classical liberalism (c. 1690–1750) as a form of “governmentality” and the second part leaps over the rise of 19th-century “discipline” to the rise of neo-liberalism in Germany and the United States from 1930s-1980s. The link he draws between classical liberal techniques for social ordering in the early enlightenment and their reinvention in the later twentieth century applies, I am claiming, to the role of aesthetics in these developments.

³⁴ Foucault uses the word governmentality in two distinct senses on the one hand as a term for any technique of governing in any historical period, and on the other to describe the more specific techniques he analyzes in classical liberalism and its neo-liberal reinvention. Unless stated otherwise, I use the word in its second, more specific sense. For more details on the terminology, see Thomas Lemke, “Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique” *Rethinking Marxism* 14:3 (2002), 49–64.

³⁵ In the following seminar, *On the Government of the Living*, Graham Burchell, trans. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), Foucault steps back historically from the problematic transition between governmentality and biopower in the eighteenth century to technologies of government in antiquity. The complex fascination with antiquity in English neo-classicism, which I consider around the issue of connoisseurship in chapter 3, had some of the same aims, as well as radically different ones.

³⁶ Foucault makes a claim for Locke as offering a theory of government and not of the state (see *G* 91), but his most detailed analyses take from the later authors, especially Hume and Ferguson. He sees Locke’s model of civil society as qualified by political and juridical factors, and thus not independently factual (see *G* 297).

³⁷ The themes, in other words, of *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*. The most first generation of literary history influenced by Foucault typically followed out the disciplinary model rather than the governmental one. See, e.g., John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) and D. A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

³⁸ The exact relation between techniques of government and the disciplinary the techniques of biopower remain very much up for debate. For a recent account of their relation, see Maurizio Lazzarato, “The Concept of Life and the Living in the Societies of Control” in *Deleuze and the Social*, eds. Martin Fuglsang and Brent Meier Sorensen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006), 171–190. He suggests understanding “governmental” disciplines using the term “noopolitics” for “the ensemble of the techniques of control ... exercised on the brain,” involving “above all attention, and ... aimed at the control of memory and its virtual power” (186). The social mediation of sensation in enlightenment aesthetics acted, on my argument, as a “noopolitics” in this sense.

³⁹ Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 14.

⁴⁰ Howard Caygill, *Art of Judgment* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 37, adding that “for both of them, beauty was the crisis-point of judgment since it exceeded judgment.” In this passage, Caygill is using “aesthetics” in the specific sense of the German tradition from Baumgarten through Kant and his successors. This usage describes a social configuration aligned with what I have just described as the full-blown “biopolitics” articulated in strong form from the 1750s onward as opposed to the “governmentality” of taste (which I call by the name “aesthetics” as well).

⁴¹ Foucault approach to liberalism using this concept has given rise to a sub-field of governmentality studies. The first important publication was Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, Peter Miller, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, 1991), and a recent survey can be found in Mitchell M. Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (New York: Sage, 2009). This analytical lens is typically viewed today as a strictly political mode of analysis, and the relation between aesthetics and the arts of government virtually never comes up.

⁴² For example, *A Cry from the Desert, or Testimonials of the Miraculous Things Lately Come to Pass in the Cevennes* (London, 1707).

⁴³ John Leland, while critiquing Shaftesbury's deism, gives some credit to his incitement to virtue, although annoyed by his irony. See *A View of the principal deistical writers that have appeared in England in the last and present century* (London, 1754), Letter V, 69–98.

⁴⁴ For a reading of Shaftesbury as participating in the project of experimentalism, focusing on his unpublished *Philosophical Regimen*, see *Labors of Innocence*, 267–73.

⁴⁵ In *Two Treatises of Government*, Peter Laslett, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970 [1690]), John Locke conceives of social relations as directly political; see especially “Of Political or Civil Society,” 318–30. Foucault points out that as late as Blackstone's legal theory, the factual domain of interests and the juridical realm defined by contract remain fused; this is what Hume attacks.

⁴⁶ Not, in other words, the more typically urban club setting. Timothy Mowl's acid quip calls it the “Fifth Gospel specially designed for the country landowner” of the eighteenth century in “Directions from the Grave: The Problem with Lord Shaftesbury,” *Garden History* 32:1 (Spring 2004), 35–48, here 37–8.

⁴⁷ The best analysis of the Shaftesbury's ambivalence towards publicity is David Marshall, who notes the many performative dehiscences from sociality that accompany Shaftesbury's focus on the public; for example his longing for “a private text to be public and still private” in *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia UP, 1986), 19.

⁴⁸ His strategy of “anti-sociality” as a ruse for a particular type of social bonds occurring at the site of a negation of overall social form could suggest both Lee Edelman's description of queer desire as “anti-social” in *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) but also neoliberal icon Margaret Thatcher's famous quip that “there is no such thing as society,” cited in David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 82.

⁴⁹ Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 56.

⁵⁰ Nancy Yousef has shown the solitary core to Shaftesbury's deployment of sociability in “Feeling For Certainty: Shaftesbury and the Limits of Sentimental Certainty,” *ELH* 78:3 (Fall 2011), 609–32.

⁵¹ See Gilles Deleuze's extremely influential “Postscript on the Societies of Control,” *October* 59 (Winter 1992), 3–7, here 2, which made the widely adopted suggestion to speak of “control” for governmental processes in contradistinction to “discipline,” which I follow here.

⁵² In a particularly vitriolic reaction to the values his work propagates, Robert Markley makes him “an aristocrat and ideologue” two thirds of whose work is “given to snobbish defenses of aristocratic privilege” and in “Sentimentality

as Performance: Shaftesbury, Sterne, and the Theatrics of Virtue” in *The New Eighteenth Century*, eds. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York: Routledge, 1987), 210–230, here 213.

⁵³ Achille Mbembe has explored the specific mode of abjection triggered by governmentality in “Necropolitics” *Public Culture* 15:1 (Winter 2003), 11–40. For a powerful recent attempt to think through this model in the eighteenth century, see Simon Gokandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012).

⁵⁴ Whitney Davis, *A General Theory of Visual Culture* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2011), 76. He adds: “Where there is observation of style, there can be replication of style. And where there is replication of style due to observation of it, there is stylisticality ... *because* of this loop ... we can derive not only the possibility of so-called stylistic development ... we can also warrant the forensic possibility that when we see style we can see what things looked like to people in the past” (82).

⁵⁵ “Kubla Khan” in *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: The Major Works*, H. J. Jackson, ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985), 102–4, lines 32, 30.

⁵⁶ In another piece, Markley denounces his “reification of moral values – virtue, truth, and even aesthetic beauty – as idealized, ahistorical absolutes” in “Style as Philosophical Structure: the Contexts of Shaftesbury’s *Characteristics*” in *The Philosopher as Writer: the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Robert Linsberg (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna UP, 1987), 143.

⁵⁷ *Second Characters*, 98.

⁵⁸ John Dryden, “Alexander’s Feast, or The Power of Music An Ode in Honour of St Cecilia’s Day” (1697) in John Dryden, *The Poems of John Dryden*, Paul Hammond and David Hopkins, eds. (London: Longman, 2005), 5 vols., V.3–18, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

⁵⁹ Lord Monboddo, who wrote a detailed analysis of the poem, praised it for the most “variety of measure” in “so small a compass” unrivaled anywhere. *Dryden: The Critical Heritage*, James Kinsley and Helen Kinsley, eds. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), 403. For its eighteenth-century readership, who also admired its “natural” manner, see Tom Mason and Adam Rounce, “*Alexander’s Feast; or The Power of Musique: the poem and its readers*” in *John Dryden: Tercentenary Essays*, eds. Paul Hammond and David Hopkins (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 140–173.

⁶⁰ *Dryden: The Critical Heritage*, 304.

⁶¹ In a passage that reads like a methodological self-reflection in Foucault, Luhmann explains that the second-order observer “is not particularly fond of wisdom and know-how, nor does he love knowledge. Rather, he wants to understand how knowledge is produced and by whom, and how long the illusion will last. To him, Being is an observational schema that produces ‘ontology’ and nature is nothing more than a concept that promises a comfortable end and blocks further questioning. ... [he] plants the seeds of suspicion within the life-world (in the Husserlian sense) without being able to leave that world” (AS 96).

⁶² *Dryden: The Critical Heritage*, 304.

⁶³ James Grantham Turner notes the “ironic distance and *sprezzatura* [Dryden] tried to establish between himself and them [his energetic, gustful heroes]” while maintaining that fire remains the poem’s cardinal principle and not the qualifications of idealizing detachment. “‘Thy Lovers were all untrue’: Sexual Overreaching in the Heroic Plays

and *Alexander's Feast*" in *Enchanted Ground: Reimagining John Dryden*, Jayne Lewis and Maximilian E. Novak, eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 215–336. My reading argues that the unequivocal privileging of the principle of fiery gusto is compatible with the gestures of ironic self-distancing provided we interpret the latter as somatic dispositions.

⁶⁴ "A Song for St Cecilia's Day" (1687), in *California Dryden*, III.181–4, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text. For the association between Alexander and William III in the later poem, see V.3.

⁶⁵ For more details of the story, see *California Dryden*, III.182.

⁶⁶ *California Dryden*, III.203.

⁶⁷ See *California Dryden*, III.181. The original music to *Alexander's Feast* is lost, but it was reset several times in the eighteenth century, most famously by Handel in 1723.

⁶⁸ See James Grantham Turner, "The Libertine Sublime: Love and Death in Restoration England," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 19 (1989), 99–115.

⁶⁹ Monbodo singles out this lines as a performative success: "*Happy, happy, happy pair*, where the measure is very happily changed for the Trochaic and the Repetitions of *happy*, and *none but the brave*, are I think exceedingly fine, and very well suited to the Subject, being as it were the Acclamation of the People" (*Dryden: Critical Heritage*, 402). This is to register that its object of acclamation is the divided sovereignty of a couple.

⁷⁰ James Winn registers "a self-conscious questioning of the artistic power to manipulate his hearers that Dryden had spent a lifetime acquiring," but also notices "his reluctance to undervalue those rhetorical skills in his immediate retraction of the preference given to Cecilia." The passage is a qualified deployment of rhetorical sublimity, but also, I argue, the transformation of the qualifying gesture of detached observation into the sub-rhetorical government of perception. "*When Beauty Fires the Blood*": *Love and the Arts in the Age of Dryden* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 160.

⁷¹ In *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), Marshall McLuhan makes the class argument that media should be understood as prosthetic extensions of sense organs.

⁷² Jabez Hughes, cited in Mason and Rounce, 151.

⁷³ Equating Timotheus with Dryden was fairly obvious, enough for Pope to organize his witty gloss around it: "*Persians and Greeks like Turns of Nature found, / And the World's Victor stood subd'd by Sound! / The Pow'r of Musick all our Hearts allow; / And what Timotheus was, is Dryden now*" (*Essay on Criticism*, l. 380–3). The intertextuality between these two works creates a fascinating link between Dryden's prosodic and performative preoccupation with circular effects suggesting processes of self-regulation and Pope's polished and formalized (one might say coupletized) fascination with circular effects. For Dryden's own view of *Alexander's Feast* as a grandly valedictory farewell performance, see *Dryden: the Critical Heritage*, 226.

⁷⁴ PE 1.

⁷⁵ Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic*, J. C. A. Gaskin, ed. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994), 26.

⁷⁶ Cited in Lawrence E. Klein, “Addisonian Afterlives: Joseph Addison in Eighteenth-Century Culture” *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35:1 (2012), 105. Klein’s piece shows the special aura of Addison’s writings, their “quasi-scriptural” cultural centrality essentially linked with the category of taste, and their subsequent decline “to the respectable margin” by Barbauld’s day (104). For more details on Addison’s relation to Whig culture, see his “Joseph Addison’s Whiggism” in *Cultures of Whiggism: New Essays on English Literature and Culture in the Long Eighteenth Century*, David Womersley, ed. (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 108–26.

⁷⁷ His first example is greatness or the sublime: “any Object that takes up a great deal of room in the Fancy” (*SP* III.545). He gives this a theological meaning in terms of final causes, which can be known.

⁷⁸ Luhmann’s summary account of the term’s sociological value: “Looking at a painting, listening to a piece of music, or simply identifying a work of art (as opposed to another object) from a first-order perspective position does not yet imply a capacity for judging the work. The naked eye does not recognize artistic quality. But if this is true, how do we account for the possibility for qualitative judgment? The standard answer to the question invokes the role of experience, education, or socialization in dealing with art. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the problem was solved via the idea of (cultivated) taste. Taste, while not innate, can be acquired in the course of a class-specific socialization and then judges intuitively. The notion of good/bad taste was a first attempt to introduce the recipient or consumer into the theory of art and to problematize, on this basis, the criteria according to which the fine arts ought to be judged” (*AS*, 80–1).

⁷⁹ It is noteworthy that Addison chose tea and not coffee, inscribing taste within domestic space, not the public space of the coffee house, let alone the tavern: the pleasures of the imagination would not have (but could have!) been illustrated by a connoisseur able to discern the provenance and vintage among ten types of British ale.

⁸⁰ In *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), Kevis Goodman points out that the more mediated (“cooler” in McLuhan’s sense) secondary pleasures of the imagination “emerge as an attempt to center the subject in the face of potential information overload” (55).

⁸¹ Goodman suggests that Addison’s pleasure principle does not merely involve *eros* but also the drive towards repetition: “what does this insistence on the ‘principle of pleasure’ signal if not also an awareness that there lies something beyond it, too?” (*Georgic Modernity*, 36).

⁸² On the dominance of textuality, both verbal and the medium of writing, in Addison’s account of secondary pleasures, see *Georgic Modernity*, 34–5.

⁸³ Based on Locke’s phrase “third sort” in this passage, it has become standard to call these “tertiary qualities” in critical commentary (see, e.g., “Locke’s Philosophy of Science,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* n.13). For a view of “tertiary qualities” as aesthetic (as well as other kinds of meaning), see Nenad Miscevic, “The Ontology of Secondary and Tertiary Qualities” in *The Balkan Journal of Philosophy* 5:1 (2013), 45–58.

⁸⁴ He speaks again of these “powers” attending secondary qualities at 584–5. Unlike secondary qualities, tertiary qualities reflect, albeit indirectly, the capacity for transformation in *primary qualities* (viz. the transformation of the shape of the wax), however Locke denies the passage from tertiary qualities in appearance to stable knowledge of real essence and causality. Were it possible to know with absolute geometric certainty based on the appearance of gold that it is malleable (or, in another of his examples, that opium has an intoxicating effect), then “it would be no more necessary, that *Gold* should exist, and that we should make Experiments upon it” (585). When Locke rejects that we can learn about objects through their powers to affect ourselves and others weakly, and at a distance, I suggest he is rejecting aesthetic apprehension as a reliable form of knowledge.

⁸⁵ “Émotions intérieures qui ne sont excitées en l’âme que par l’âme meme,” René Descartes, *Oeuvres et lettres de Descartes*, ed. André Bridoux (Paris: Pléiade, 1935). II. art 147, 766). All translations from the French are my own.

⁸⁶ “Serré par la tristesse que l’appareil des funérailles” ... “une joie secrète dans le plus intérieur de son âme” (*Oeuvres*, 766).

⁸⁷ “Les objets qui s’offrent à notre imagination” ... “plaisir de les sentir exciter en nous, et ce plaisir est une joie intellectuelle” (*Oeuvres*, 766).

⁸⁸ “Mais elles peuvent l’être indirectment par la représentation des choses qui ont coutume d’être jointes avec les passions que nous voulons avoir” (*Oeuvres*, 717).

⁸⁹ “Atticus” in *The Poems of Alexander Pope: A One-Volume Edition of the Twickenham Text*, John Butt, ed. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1963), 294, lines 15–16.

⁹⁰ Milton shows here that this self-adhesive medium can also “demediate” or temporarily undo itself; according to Garrett Stewart, “Bookwork as Demediation” *Critical Inquiry* 36 (Spring 2010), 410–57, this occurs where the transition to a new medium presents the information as unavailable (obscured, erased, destroyed), which may be the same process that occurs in the much-studied “anaesthetic” aspect of spectatorship.

⁹¹ Bond tells us it was likely written by Steele with contributions by Tickell. He cites Budgell that Addison “was so heartily vexed when he read this Paper, that he immediately called a Coach, went to his friend Sir Richard, and never left him, till he had made him promise that he would meddle no more with Sir Roger’s character” (*SP* III.531n.2).

⁹² Focusing on the leitmotif of wit and his relation to the Kit-Cats, Elizabeth Kraft marshals evidence from throughout the *Spectator* that “Addison invokes what could be considered a libertine aesthetic” in “Wit and *The Spectator*’s Ethics of Desire,” *SEL* 45:3 (Summer 2005), 625–46, here 638.

⁹³ Bond explains Steele’s legal trouble with a long citation from Swift’s diary in 548n2.

⁹⁴ Dominique Bouhours, *Les Entretiens d’Ariste et d’Eugène*, ed. René Radouant (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003), 285, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text. All translations in the text are my own. For a brief survey of the *je ne sais quoi* in England during Addison’s period, see Samuel Holt Monk, “A Grace Beyond the Reach of Art,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 5:2 (April 1944), 131–50.

⁹⁵ Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, Linda Ferreira-Buckley and S. Michael Halloran, eds. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2005 [1783]), 19. John Hughes would even recommend this *je ne sais quoi* acquired “by reading in some harmonious Style, that so you may get your Ear well in Tune” as a strategy for scientific writing because it achieves effective communication in “Of Style,” *Critical Essays of the XVIII Century*, W. H. Dunham, ed. (New Haven: Yale UP, 1912), 83.

⁹⁶ The best study is Richard Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

⁹⁷ The forgotten or omitted word, borrowed from an essay by William Temple, is “Sharawadgi” (*B* 552n2).

⁹⁸ See section 1 above.

⁹⁹ “Si par hasard on venait à apercevoir ce je ne sais quoi qui surprend, & qui emporte le coeur à une première vue ... il cesserait d’être ce qu’il est” (*Entretiens*, 289).

¹⁰⁰ “Un agrément qui anime la beauté & les autres perfections naturelles ... qui entre dans le marcher, dans le rire, dans le ton de la voix” (*Entretiens*, 282–3).

¹⁰¹ “On voit la machine, & on la voit avec plaisir; mais on ne voit pas le ressort qui la fait jouer” (*Entretiens*, 285).

¹⁰² “Si l’âme ne voit pas le trait qui la touche en ces rencontres” ... “tout ce qui vas avec une extrême vitesse ne se voit point: ainsi les flèches, les balles de mousquet, les boulets de canon, les quarréaux de foudre passent devant nos yeux, sans que nous les apercevions: ces choses sont visibles d’elles-mêmes, mais le mouvement qui les emporte, les dérobe à notre vue” (*Entretiens*, 285).

¹⁰³ “On ne [les] connaît que par les effets” (*Entretiens*, 285).

¹⁰⁴ “Puisque toute vertueuse qu’elle est, elle fait dans nous ce que l’amour fait dans les autres ... ces inclinations secrètes qui nous font sentir pour une personne je ne sais quoi, que nous ne sentons point pour un autre” (*Entretiens*, 280).

¹⁰⁵ “Un jeune homme fort aimable,” ... “il dépeint un beau garçon du même air qu’une bergère ferait le portrait de son berger” (this was Barbier d’Aucour, cited in *Entretiens*, 283 n.12). Confusingly, the author of the poem was Voiture, describing his mistress dressed as a man.

¹⁰⁶ “Si cela est ainsi, dit Eugène, on a tort de condamner le goût, & l’inclination d’autrui, quelque bizarre que soit ce goût” (*Entretiens*, 290).

¹⁰⁷ “C’est à la nature à qui il faut s’en prendre ... on aime ... sans même que le coeur le sache” (*Entretiens*, 290).

¹⁰⁸ “Le je ne sais quoi est presque partout” (*Entretiens*, 290).

¹⁰⁹ As Peter Kivy remarks, for Addison “the pleasure of beauty is a ‘secret satisfaction’ – essentially a *je ne sais quoi*” in *The Seventh Sense: Francis Hutcheson and Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 2003), 31.

¹¹⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Human Nature*, part one of *The Elements of Law Natural and Politic*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994 [1640]), 45. Hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

¹¹¹ He adds, a propos the queer desire in question, that “there is something in [this] savoring of the use of the times ... an honorable pretence for the old to haunt the company of the young and beautiful” (57).

¹¹² Thomas Hobbes, “Answer to Davenant,” in William Davenant, *Gondibert*, ed. David F. Gladish (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 49.

¹¹³ This is not the only possible function of dreams. Adam’s earlier dream given later in Book VIII is the more typical case of healthy imagistic presence: “suddenly stood at my head a dream, / Whose inward apparition gently moved / My fancy to believe I yet had being, / And lived: one came, methought, of shape divine” (292–95). Adam’s “methought” here registers a kind of blinking before full divine presence, while Eve’s usages reflected an induced epistemological uncertainty about the soundness of her imagination.

¹¹⁴ The *OED* gives a usage in the sense of strange or odd as early as 1608 but this sense only becomes common in the 18th century (see A.5.). The word could definitely carry the connotation of irregularity: the noun form was 17th-century slang for mistress (see B.3.d.).

¹¹⁵ Responding to the picture of Hobbes as a pellucid analytical writer in a previous generation of philosophical commentary, recent work on Hobbes has recovered the caustically ironic wit and performative intention many of his contemporaries responded to. See Roger Lund, "The Bite of *Leviathan*: Hobbes and Philosophic Drollery," *ELH* 65:4 (1998), 825–55.

¹¹⁶ Abraham Cowley, *Poems*, A. R. Waller, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1905), 108–129, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

Chapter Two

An Aesthetic Pleasure

The Fop, the Libertine, and the Liberal

LUCIUS: I saw him stretched at ease, his fancy lost
 In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,
 He smiled, and cried, Caesar, thou canst not hurt me.

(Addison, *Cato*)

DORIMANT: I am not so foppishly in love here to forget ... I am
 flesh and blood yet.

(Etherege, *The Man of Mode*)

The man of consumption, insofar as he consumes, is a producer....
 He produces his own satisfaction.

(Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*)

An aesthetic subject, in the modern sense outlined in Chapter One of this dissertation, required a disappearing act.¹ Adopting the posture of detachment necessary to make truth appear within the material field of taste caused the subject of taste to efface itself figurally. In Milton, detached spectatorship can yield truth whether one is Satan or the mother of mankind. Likewise, it could be harnessed by a strong-willed public poet like Timotheus, by the playfully disembodied Mr. Spectator, or by the cool and almost impersonal passion of Milton's Christ. It could yield the milder semi-reclusive insecurity of the Shaftesburian aesthete or the eschatologically charged outbursts of Samson's righteous yearning to implode the entire Philistine social edifice. In Dryden's extreme vision, the sovereign aesthetic consumer semi-unconsciously flees the dome-sphere of social life to set the world, perhaps along with himself, ablaze.

All these examples of spectatorship drain the aesthetic subject of stable identity. This followed, I argued, from the reflexivity of second-order observation, or as Locke put it, as a power to produce an effect for another observer. Assuming this posture of detachment, every pleasure enclosed a secret piece of information, and this aestheticization of pleasure changed it from self-certain intensity to something immeasurably complex and uncertain. Initially, one looked for the pleasures of taste to yield information about the things themselves; one searched for external standards of taste 'out there' in nature like a single sun behind the multiplex transformations observable in different pieces of wax. Gradually, the pleasures of taste become historicized and counted as the reflection of one specific subject's historical situation. All the early examples we have already explored extract a supplementary charge of pleasure from the subject feeling like an exception, a socially centripetal or even antisocial impulse drawing the subject away from its order of things. The new aesthetics, I argued, attempted to govern these wayward impulses from a distance.

This chapter asks where the aesthetic subject's posture of detachment condenses into figural legibility as a social type. At what point does this disposition change from a stance one can momentarily assume to the typical behavior of a certain kind of person? What does the transfer from an investment in sensory or primary imaginary pleasures to secondary imaginary pleasures look like as an abiding existential possibility? Except perhaps for Cowley's lyrical speaker, none of our initial cohort of subjects who behave aesthetically – Satan, Eve, Sampson, Christ, Alexander, Timotheus, Mr. Spectator, the Shaftesburian aesthete – can be comfortably or plausibly fleshed out figurally as models for aesthetic subjectivity. The first example this chapter offers, discussed in section 1, is the Republican hero Addison fashions in his highly influential tragedy *Cato*, which makes detached spectatorship the centerpiece of his exemplary virtue.

The following three sections deconstruct this liberal ideal of sentimental spectatorial continence by discussing a Restoration comedy in which the problem of relating oneself to the governing power of taste is fully on display, George Etherege's *Sir Fopling Flutter; Or, The Man of Mode* (1676). The play develops a binary between the type of the Rochesterian libertine as the person of good taste and the new foppish consumer as the person of bad taste. In a detailed reading, I show that the play aestheticizes the pleasures of the libertine, in the specific Addisonian sense of rendering them "imaginary," by subordinating them to the necessity of social mediation figured by the fop. Both subjects illustrate Foucault's gloss on the subject of governmentality: "The man of consumption, insofar as he consumes, is a producer.... He produces his own satisfaction" (*G* 226). The comic type of the fop came into its own in this play, as the fop went beyond his role as a disposable comic counterpoint to the play's successful characters by modeling how one could use one's tastes to make a reasonably stable social space for oneself. Taking one's pleasures before the eyes of others is an inherently embarrassing proposition, but this is the practice the new aesthetics attempts to fashion a subject around.

The chapter's argument works in two steps. First, it shows that the template for the new aesthetic pleasures was the reflexive heightening of pleasure explored by the libertine culture of the Restoration, a filiation almost entirely disavowed. Second, I show that the figure of the fop provided a first step towards refashioning those pleasures from an exceptional, elite, and almost always self-shattering identity to a widely available and socially visible identity based on tastefulness. The new aesthetic subject begins a fop, aspires secretly to be the libertine, and perhaps positions himself socially as a *Cato*, a figure that integrates both ways of subjectifying oneself modally. The second section shows how Etherege aestheticizes the libertine subject we find in Rochester's libertine lyrics, proceeding along the lines of Gracián's ideal of tasteful self-fashioning. The third section shows how the fop is a liberalization of the libertine, noting that he represented hyperbolically the *précieuse* model of polite sociability theorized by the Chevalier de Méré. The final section shows how the play fashions each of these subjective possibilities into two different ways of inhabiting the same social identity of the figurally visible person of taste. In the Coda, I briefly sketch the evolution of the fop type away from his representative status as an aesthetic subject in the 1670s to his association with perverse marginal tastes in the 1750s.

1. The matter of detachment in Shaftesbury and *Cato*

They may think for certain "This is *right*, or that *wrong*": They may believe "This a *Crime*, or that a *Sin*; This punishable by *Man*,

or that by *God!*” Yet if the *Savor* of things lies cross to HONESTY; if the *Fancy* be florid, and the *Appetite* high towards the subaltern Beautys and lower Orders of worldly Symmetrys and Proportions; the Conduct will infallibly turn this latter way. ... Let the Appeal be to these, whose *Relish* is retrievable, and whose *Taste* may yet be form’d in *Morals*; as it seems to be, already, in *exterior Manners* and *Behavior*. That there is really A STANDARD of this latter kind, will immediately, and on the first view, be acknowledg’d. The Contest is only, “Which is *right*: – Which the *un-affected* Carriage, and *just* Demeanour: And Which the *affected* and *false*.”

(Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks*)

When it came to setting up positive models for the new aesthetics they proposed, both Shaftesbury and Addison insisted on going beyond what the world already construed as tasteful. Whether or not this looked like an outright transgression of aesthetic or cultural norms, their indispensable ingredient was a gesture of unmasking that went looking for the natural under culture: the secret pleasure, the primitive, the instinctive. Their intention was to marshal nature as a new support for social order, and often they rejoined a norm-like state of affairs so swiftly and effectively that the radical aspects of the intermediate steps are easy to miss. The rest of this chapter will be arguing that the libertine pursuit of reflexive pleasure and its transformation into the fop’s pursuit of imaginary reflexive pleasure are the two key intermediate steps to constructing a new aesthetics based on the norm of “nature” in a figural model.² This section lays the groundwork by showing how the problem of “affectation,” which the libertine-fop binary attempts to stabilize, follows from the turn to “true” or natural taste in Shaftesbury. Turning to *Cato*, Addison’s exemplary republican or, as I will prefer to call him, liberal³ – subject, I show that he solves this problem using the two devices of first, spectatorial detachment heightened almost to the point of Sadistic voyeurism, and second, the strategic deployment of unconsciousness and the slide into fantasy, which align with the observational strategies we find in the libertine and the fop.

Two characters coalesce in the chapter on taste in Shaftesbury’s *Miscellaneous Reflections* from which my epigraph to this section is drawn: the person whose pleasures are no longer retrievable – an example of which we encountered in the “nasty gentleman” of Chapter One – and the child whose pleasures are as yet unformed. If “the correcting of ... TASTE, or *Relish* in the *Concerns of Life*” is the objective, because “this at last is what will influence,” it follows that “*the Youth* alone are to be regarded” (S III.109). While Shaftesbury prizes the ideal of malleable youth, and returns to the figure of the child several times in his work, the practice of taste he recommends assumes that the utterly raw, unformed subject envisioned by empiricist education was virtually never available.⁴ Shaftesbury was uniquely placed, as the grandson of the first Earl of Shaftesbury whose education was personally curated by John Locke, to comment on the difficulties of presenting oneself as a *tabula rasa*.⁵ Instead of the model child, one encounters far more often in his work this image of “some *noble Youth* of a more sumptuous gay *Fancy*” taken by “the Love of Grandure and Magnificence,” who, “wrong turn’d, may have possess’d his Imagination over-strongly with such things as *Frontispieces, Parterres, Equipages, trim Valets in party-colour’d Clothes*; and others in *Gentleman’s Apparel*” (III.106). The passage

renders the common worry about profligate noble youth with a gentler modulation, focusing on over-attachment to imaginary signifiers rather than expense *per se*.⁶ The model subject of Shaftesbury's aesthetics is the literally post-Lockean "child," and the first part of this section shows that this figure appears touched by worldly corruption via his imagination but not his body.⁷ The discourse of taste did not address perfectly impressionable wax-like children but the prematurely precocious little adult who acts out mature social behavior without understanding it. This strange figure of fallen innocence, I argue, crystallized in the fop character type of Restoration comedy, the first clear type of the vacant upper-middle-class consumer.⁸ To be an aesthetic subject in Shaftesbury's sense was to be a reformed fop.

Shaftesbury's problem, in other words, is how to educate someone touched by affectation driven by runaway imitation, subject to dullness or inward vacuity, and disposed to abject devotion to fashionable patterns of consumption. For Locke, once such patterns have set in one could perhaps say that it is too late.⁹ In the passage in my epigraph, Shaftesbury's declared aim is the same "honesty" as in the traditional moral values, but he proposes a new method oriented around the standard of nature. Instead of searching for and restraining the negative qualities of crime and sin within the subject, he proposes another search for evidence of positive graces in external appearances. No less than Hobbes, he takes for granted that pleasure will be the sovereign determinant of behavior, but he assumes a continuity between superficial display of preferences and the concealed character of one's judgment. For him, the old moral model accepted a split in the subject between pleasure and action: one should "affect" virtue and honesty regardless of "the savor of things." Rejecting the disciplinary power of ideals and their punitive counterparts sin and crime, Shaftesbury claims that given an intrinsic consistency between outward display and inward character, the standardization of outward "carriage" – meaning the standardization of pleasures taken, especially in the little things of life – will make the heavy-handed normalizing intentions of concepts like sin and crime seem obtuse and superfluous.

Shaftesbury recognizes that a different and possibly equally arduous labor lies in store: identifying among all the appearances in the world which are real, natural, unaffected, and which only *seem* unaffected, only *appear* to dispense with appearances.¹⁰ This move casts a powerful shadow of doubt over the whole landscape of social life: one no longer knows at first glance whose behavior is unaffected. Pope explored the extreme reaches of this kind of skepticism when he unmasks whole swathes of respectable society as servants of the goddess Dullness in *The Dunciad*. Once we know what an unaffected, natural appearance consists of, Shaftesbury tells us, we can be certain "immediately, and at first view" that this appearance has a transpersonally legislative or standardizing authority, something very close to Kantian subjective universality. Moreover, we can never assume that taste follows social stratum: in no way can taste "be taken for *in-nate*. Use, Practice and Culture must precede the *Understanding* and *Wit* of such an advanc'd Size and Growth as this," a process he calls "the antecedent *Labour* and *Pains* of CRITICISM" (S III.101). The image of self-cultivation as an almost physical growth within or upon the subject is a striking illustration of his view that "nature" must be worked up rather than subdued.

Earlier in the same section, he draws an imaginary exchange between a man of taste and a version of the fop type in the theater. The latter rails against critics, exclaiming "as if one cou'dn't know what was agreeable or pretty, without their help." The signature of this species of foolishness is trust in his innate pleasures upon first impression. The man of "a real *good TASTE*"

responds only with laconic irony, but once the play starts and the critic-hater begins appreciating the wrong things, the man of taste “turns to the next Person who sits by him, and asks privately, ‘*What he thinks of his Companion’s Relish.*’” Shaftesbury is indignant: “Such is the Malice of the World! They who by Pains and Industry have acquir’d a *real* TASTE in Arts, rejoice in the Advantage over others, who have either none at all, or such as renders ’em ridiculous” (III.102). The demand, ubiquitous at auctions, that everyone “*bid* for what *he fancys*” – that each follow his pleasure – is the ruse by which the better-informed take advantage of the rest. He gives a positive conclusion: true taste demands something more from the man of taste than egotistical knowledgeability of things, a “RIGHT MIND, and GENEROUS AFFECTION” (viz. disinterestedness). The old man of taste could scorn the vulgar, but Shaftesbury’s new man of taste must treat such people as wayward junior members of his club. Presumably he refrains from the abusive sidelong glances his expertise entitles him to unless these are given to the former as irritations towards betterment.¹¹

Shaftesbury also makes another, more unsettling acknowledgement, that the potentially cruel procedure of sidelong glances accounted for how the man of taste acquired his expertise to begin with. The man of taste has neither followed timeless norms nor simply followed his humors; he has taken care that “his own [preferences] shou’d be so order’d *as the best Judgments wou’d advise*” (III.103). The man of taste only knows that his affections are truly generous and unaffected, that his relish is natural and healthy, because he has calibrated his judgments to those of the best people. Shaftesbury calls on the Renaissance ideal of *emulatio* but in a starkly impersonal manner, urging the neophyte to find models of taste in his own construal of what the best judgments *would* advise rather than in specific personal heroes. He subordinates true and natural behavior to the criterion of social imitation, drawing the type of subjectivity defined by imitation into the charmed circle of the best judgments. We see evidence for this inclusive attitude towards imitativeness when, in telling his imaginary anecdote, Shaftesbury shifts from the perspective of the man of taste listening with ironic detachment to the fool railing against critics to that of an outsider stung by the so-called good people talking about him under their breath. The raw material of self-cultivation is always the semi-monstrous imitator already engaged in sidelong glances.

When at the end of the chapter Shaftesbury reaches the moment to explain the passage from the imitation of beauty to real truth or nature, he breaks into a massive three-page footnote. He cites Cicero on the mystery of “the HONESTUM”; the only difference in his own view is that “he refuses to make the least difficulty or *Mystery* of this matter. He pretends [Shaftesbury himself, that is], on this head, to claim the Assent not only of *Orators, Poets*, and the higher *Virtuosi*, but even of the *Beaux* themselves, and such as go no farther than the Dancing-Master to seek for Grace and Beauty.” Shaftesbury does not reject the specialized knowledge of the rhetorician, the poet, or the virtuoso, but he challenges the exclusive mystique built up around it, claiming that beauty cannot be subordinated to rhetoric nor to any specialized knowledge or productive competency. The aesthetic – meaning the immediate apprehension of trans-egoic or disinterested or self-shattering pleasures exerting a regulative, self-ordering power – must appeal to anyone who has undertaken a minimum of cultivation: say, with a dancing master.¹² This person has learned to take pleasure not just in things but also in his or her “self-enjoyment” (S III.103). Of course, he thereby replaces the self-assurance of the specialist with the potentially smug self-confidence of those privileged enough to afford dancing masters. Nevertheless, his attack on the disciplinary production of knowledge aimed to widen the domain of those who

counted as knowing something about beauty: if true nature cannot be found among the beaux and at the theater, he suggests, there is little hope it should be found anywhere else.

The footnote goes on to develop a complex scale of beauty, several points of which may have influenced the “Pleasures of the Imagination” sequence. When it ends, “an airy Spark” appears in the speaker’s mind to question the point of the enterprise of formulating purely aesthetic categories, to which he responds “Only, Sir, to satisfy my-self, That I am not alone, or single in a certain Fancy I have of a thing call’d BEAUTY; That I have almost [almost!] the whole World for my Companions.” The airy spark, like the nasty gentleman discussed in Chapter One, is the exception to the sociability he would claim with the whole (fashionable) world, but only through a sociable exchange with this disturbing golem-like skeptic can he confirm that he is not alone. Surveying the manifold airy fopperies of the world he concludes ponderously “O EFFEMINACY! EFFEMINACY! Who wou’d imagine this cou’d be the *Vice* of such as appear no inconsiderable Men?” When it comes to finally explaining what the contrary to effeminate affectation might be, he gives the deliciously ambiguous “All *Embellishments* are affected, besides the true” (S III.112–3). His version of truth is not what precedes ornament but rather a special kind of ornament that is unaffected.¹³ By moving virtue and social discipline from deep categories like sin and crime to surface phenomena like manners and style, he installs the ultimately heavy demand that inward character actually accord with outer expression. For him, the subject should throw off the outdated ideal of “the sword, or *Fasces*, as a Cure” (I.11) and take on the meta-ideal that one accord with the appearances of oneself that one projects, like the wise governor who “with a kind Sympathy enter[s] into the Concern of the People.”¹⁴

Many critics have noticed that Shaftesbury’s work anticipates the problematic duty to sincerity central to the mid-eighteenth-century cult of sensibility.¹⁵ Julie Ellison has shown that the title character of Addison’s 1713 tragedy *Cato* was a central and exemplary figure for the emerging culture of sensibility, in large part because of the extreme form of self-exceptionalizing virtue that made him so difficult to imitate and therefore powerfully fascinating.¹⁶ Everyone understood that Cato’s virtue followed from his powerfully continent detachment. In what follows, I argue that Cato’s detachment should be understand as a specifically aesthetic detachment because, in Addison’s hands, his character is at least as concerned about the naked practice of virtue as about the display of virtue as spectacle before the eyes of others for the purposes of regulating their behavior through imaginary means. We should therefore understand Addison’s political hero as his model of an exemplary governing aesthetic subject, not in the thematic sense of elevating the tea-taster himself to world-historical significance but rather in illustrating the self-understanding of the *Spectator*’s own governing project in writing “The Pleasures of the Imagination.” By giving us this fleshed-out model, Addison displays dramatically how the criterion of natural sincerity we identified in Shaftesbury requires a passage beyond conscious affect into the material and somatic side of the subject. The play builds up to a dramatic test of Cato’s virtuous detachment in Act IV, Scene 2, when, in front of the Numidian prince Juba, Cato views his son’s dead body without tears and then bursts in tears over the fate of Rome:

Cato, meeting the corpse

Welcome, my son! Here lay him down, my friends,
Full in my sight, that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds...

Juba. Was ever man like this! [*Aside*]
Cato. Alas, my friends!
 Why mourn you thus? Let not a private loss
 Afflict your hearts 'Tis Rome requires our tears,
 The mistress of the world, the seat of empire...
 Oh liberty! Oh virtue! Oh my country! (*C IV.2.77–95*)

Addison's intentionally heightened disconnect between the personal and the public makes a point of allowing the father to feast his eye "at leisure" on the gory spectacle of the corpse, the necessary material correlate to the disembodied love he feels for the abstractions of virtue and empire. Addison had pointed out in *Spectator* No. 418 that scenes of outright torture press too close upon us to be aesthetically enjoyable, but the gory aftermath in this scene is pitched just right for Cato to take imaginary pleasures in the proofs of his son's civic virtue. Juba's reply, perhaps unintentionally laced with a suspicion of sadism, is meant to note, chorus-like, that Cato's behavior as a spectator in this scene proves his virtue. One might instead suspect Cato of masochism because we are meant to understand that he views his own corporeal welfare with the same indifference as his sons', yet the purely spectatorial or aesthetic nature of this proof lends the passage a margin of doubt between rhetorically expressed impulse and action. His speech ends with the ominous warning to his other son, "remember / Thy life is not thy own when Rome demands it" (86–7), where he speaks both as Rome's willing victim and the voice of Rome's true patriarchal authority itself. If he can speak these words, Rome has not brought this demand fully to his door yet, and the spectacular image of the dead son stands for this temporary delay.

When Cato at the beginning of the fifth act returns to stage reading Plato on the immortality of the soul – a bookish piece of heroism worthy of Addison – the text adopts the initially bizarre strategy of putting its hero to sleep, a not entirely implausible response to picking up *The Republic* under such circumstances. Cato soliloquizes:

The soul secured in her existence, smiles
 At the drawn dagger, and defies its point...
 Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
 The wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds.
 What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
 This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
 Nature, oppressed and harassed out with care,
 Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her. (*C V.1.25–35*).

Only within the framework of the new aesthetics does taking a nap appear as the ultimate proof of one's heroic character. Wholly committed to Cato's highflying idealist professions, Addison nevertheless quite intentionally draws attention to all the material factors subtending his capacity to work these feelings up, as an oceanic depressive lethargy laps against him with seemingly invincible somatic pressure. The parallel alliterations in the first two lines point to an insistence drawing both sides of his dualist self-conception, and the grammar-bending usage of "crush" combines the explosive loss of an external world with the feeling of a mental implosion. In short, Addison is intensely interested in the material conditions around the practice of idealized virtue, and by stressing that Cato gives in to sleep, just "this once," rather than elect this action from a

position of sovereign freedom for the benefit of others, he makes Cato assent to an order of physically manifested power – not unconnected to “this world” that was “made for Caesar” (19) – he is powerless to outdo. Stoic *apatheia* takes a surprising turn into apathy.

In scene four, we are given an explanation for this device when the remaining son remarks that

I saw him stretched at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams; as I drew near his couch,
He smiled, and cried, Caesar, thou canst not hurt me. (V.4.32–4)

Addison does not leave Cato’s triumph to post-mortem posterity but instead pushes his imperturbability one step further into outright sleep, wherein he achieves the crowning detachment that makes him imperviously triumphant. Sleep serves to create a protective imaginary space around him, and to some extent this unconsciousness, or as Julie Ellison puts it his “willed ‘insensibility,’” is deployed strategically as a practice.¹⁷ Addison is recommending switching to a subliminal battlefield, which is of a piece with the aesthetic because both are defined by the secondary pleasures of self-removal. The dream itself is directly related to his current predicament (it is not pastoral or obviously escapist) but neither is it an aggressive compensatory fantasy (he is not killing Caesar). His dream-words are difficult to construe as a part of the logic of a dream itself: if he is encountering Caesar within a dream-world, under what circumstances would he be able to declare *to* Caesar that he is beyond reach because of the fact that he is now in a dream? However, they make perfect sense as an oneiric address to the waking world, in this case to the son approaching his sleeping body whom he is ironically mistaking for Caesar. Addison encourages the audience to regard the dream-state itself – but a special dream – state in which one is suggestible enough to respond out loud to others, and which is thus very close to the state of absorption in secondary imaginary pleasures – as a deeper radicalization of Stoic imperturbability. From this state the subject exhibits a secondary fire, a secondary pleasure, and a secondary freedom that holds him at a remove from the world and simultaneously highly subject to irritation from it. Addison is not satisfied with posthumous victory following tragedy: Cato must show *here and now* before he has died that Caesar has not vanquished even his unconscious mind. Cato shifts the field of engagement from the diurnal public world to the darkened chamber of his own sleeping mind, from which he nevertheless engages with the world at large by speaking out before the audience of his son (even though his words cannot count merge with the waking world as a form of public speech). Clearly, all his sleeping thoughts are bent on the circumstance before him, but they are connected to it indirectly, emanating from an oneiric duplicate of his world. Moreover, the nap has a clear function as an exemplary spectacle for others, even though only the audience who has heard his soliloquy knows how little power he had to resist its onset. If Cato’s nap were dramatically inconsequential or unintelligible as a moral spectacle or treated by the play as a cowardly withdrawal it would not count as a specifically aesthetic instance of detachment. Because all of these are the case, and because the play suggests that Cato was engaged with his environment indirectly through the duplication of his world within his world provided by the dream, we are justified in regarding Cato as Addison’s hero of aesthetic subjectivity as well as his hero of moral and political subjectivity.

In *Cato*, Addison is relatively optimistic about aesthetic consciousness as a strategy of resistance, an extension or perhaps a manifestation of the divine, or “some power invisible [that]

supports [the] soul” (C V.4.29). Pope’s much more ardently didactic prologue, however, registers how much work assuming these secondary pleasures can be:

Britons, attend: be worth like this approved,
And show you have the virtue to be moved...
Dare to have sense yourselves; assert the stage,
Be justly warmed with your own native rage.¹⁸

He worries about a deficit of British attention, or a timorous reluctance to be moved by “your own native rage” a specimen of which is put forward in Roman garb. Pope formulates a principle of duty: to be warmed by pleasure “justly.” Addison is more skeptical of Pope’s virtuous fire when he draws a contrast between the two deceitful generals. Syphax, played by the great fop actor Colley Cibber, suggests the old methods of political dissimulation: “Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern / Our frauds, unless they’re covered thick with art.” The savvier Sempronius suggests the ruse of put-on sincerity: “I’ll conceal / My thoughts in passion (’tis the surest way) ... would’s’t thou be thought in earnest? / Clothe thy feigned zeal in rage, in fire, in fury!” (I.3.34–42). Shaftesbury raises the problem of sincerity when he makes singular surface displays the basis for moral and social ordering. A new labor of *Bildung* surfaces: to become who one is, two perverse versions of which are figured in the two deceitful generals above. Addison’s figure of Cato illustrates nicely Shaftesbury’s ideal of personal self-integrity traversing the subject’s conscious as well as unconscious states with an unprecedented, almost inhuman cool. Addison’s play registers with candor the material circumstances – such as the encounter with a corpse or with an attenuated foretaste of one’s own death through the heavy compulsion to sleep – required to make self-consistency on the level of appearances (not just an endorsement of truth irrespective of appearances) successful.

2. The paradox of the libertine consumer in Rochester and Etherege

I own right reason, which I would obey;
That Reason which distinguishes by Sense,
And gives us Rules of Good and Ill from thence:
That bounds Desires with a reforming Will,
To keep them in vigour, not to kill.
Your Reason hinders, mine helps to enjoy,
Renewing appetites yours would destroy...
Hunger calls out, my Reason bids me eat.
(Rochester, “A Satyre against Reason and Mankind”)

There is nothing paradoxical about libertine consumption. In the passage above, a kind of libertine existential manifesto, Rochester makes eating the exemplary virtue of his kind of reason, as well as a synecdoche for all other types of consumption his instincts may prompt him to. Rochester is riffing on Hobbesian empiricism with his “Reason which distinguishes by Sense,” cashing in on its transgressive prestige rather than taking seriously the alternative reason he tosses up, which this section will be claiming is directly related to the emerging sense-based

reason of the new aesthetics.¹⁹ Neither does he explore what a “reforming Will” based on sensualism alone might entail, as we saw in Shaftesbury, yet the passage registers in virtually every line that the immediacies of pleasurable consumption are mediated by some power, structure, or observer. Desires must be “kept” in vigor, enjoyments must be “helped,” appetites “renewed”: even in the simplest compulsion to eat the food before him the speaker senses some “right reason” that bids him eat.²⁰ No immediacy is so immediate as to not require being worked up; no impulse is exempt from what Hobbes called the “decay” of sense.²¹

One, if not *the*, central experience of the strand of libertinism I discuss here is the encounter with the exhaustion of desire – a complex, almost metaphysical “limit experience” vividly illustrated by physical impotence as well as erotic objectification – which the subject commits itself to overleap by imaginary means, pushing pleasure beyond the threshold of desire.²² Erotic and social abjection condenses in the figure of the fop, a character type that felt new or revived in the 1670s and who haunts the libertine imaginary: a character identified with the subordination of pleasure to wholly imaginary (and “secondary”) conditions.²³ Reading several libertine texts chiefly by Rochester, I show that the fop could not be ignored as a muggle-like irrelevancy but needed to be incorporated as an indispensable existential possibility within libertine subjectivity. When Rochester imagines the possibility of discovering “rules” for his pleasures, it is these alone that distinguish his pleasures from the fop’s. George Etherege’s fictionalization of Rochester in the character of Dorimant makes the case for the inevitability of this rapprochement even more aggressively, in an homage to Rochester’s charismatic aura that backhandedly attacks him as fundamentally vacuous. The world of *The Man of Mode* is unambiguously that of the social semantics of taste. With the strange, almost allegorical centrality of the fop, who gives body to a foundational lack within libertine subjectivity, we see the act of pleasurable consumption fully committed to social mediation – the imaginary metaphorization of taste – and routed through the paradoxical figure of the aesthetic consumer.

Rochester’s most expansive discussion of foppery occurs, appropriately, in the hangover poem, “Tunbridge Wells.”²⁴ After vomiting from his carriage on the way to the waters, the irritable speaker vents a more metaphysical nausea at the whole social world before him as so many fops. We are given a lumbering “Bawling Fopp” (15) straight from Etherege’s first play, then a ceremoniously proud “great . . . fop” (41), whereupon a whole world, “a New scene of Foppery” opens up, comprising ““a Tribe of Curatts, Priests, Canonick Elves / Fitt Company for none besides themselves” (52–4). Soon follow a theocratic bishop, the Irish, gossiping women, military men, and especially “the would-be wit” (99). The initial crowd of the usual suspects, “fooles, Buffoons, and Praters, / Cuckolds, whores, Citizens, their wives and daughters” (4–5) eventually swells into a socially expansive, near-universal empire of foppery: “Here Lords, Knights, Squires, ladyes and Countesses, / Channdlers, mum-bacon women, sempstresses / Were mixt together, nor did they agree / More in their humors than their Quality” (94–7). All the speaker’s rejections are made using the criterion of taste, a repulsion at the general “want of learning, honesty, and brain” (60), which is both highly stylized and powerfully physicalized. Rochester gives us a particularly cranky manifestation of the true subject of taste. I say “true” here, carrying over Milton’s concept of “true taste” discussed in Chapter One, because *this* tasteful subject defines himself by contradistinction not from the rude or uncultivated – this in spite of the apparently trivial but important racist jab at the “silly Macs” who “can’t be call’d so vile as they are born” (87) to which I will return – but from the world of the merely “tasteful” or fashionable. This man of taste rejects the aping of fashion of “the pretending part of the proud

world” (“Satyre,” 175) – whose principle or soul is “foppery” – but not in the name of a superior fashion, let alone timeless verities, in spite of his nostalgia for “learning, honesty, and brain,” which in the context of the priorities on display across Rochester’s *oeuvre* strike one as almost quaint, especially in that order. Read against the display of taste in this poem, one sees how Shaftesbury’s scenario of scorn at the “nasty gentleman” picked up Rochester’s own devices and turned them against his kind.

The poem’s last paragraph reads like a rough draft for the later “Satyre against Reason and Mankind”:

Bless me thought I what thing is man that thus
 In all his shapes, he is ridiculous:
 Our selves with noise of reason wee do please
 In vaine; Humanity’s our worst disease.
 Thrice happy beasts are, who because they be
 Of reason void, are so of Foppery. (178–183)

At this terminal point of the satire, his calling out of foppery *within* virtually every social station has subtly shaded into the intrinsic foppery of inhabiting unironically a social role or “shape” at all. The meter’s landing on *disease* pulls the word’s sense of social discomfort apart from the medical meaning, giving us a suggestive portrait of the spectacle of taste fully extended against the whole human world necessarily returning upon the distaster with all the inexorability of venereal disease. He cannot escape the contagious law of universal ridicule, and he is left alone and itchy in the face of the whole world.

The speaker cannot avoid the foppery of adopting *some* reason any more than in the later poem he can avoid beginning with “Were I (who to my cost already am / One of those strange, prodigious creatures, man) / A spirit free to choose . . . I’d be a Dog, a Monky, or a Bear” (“Satyre,” 1–5). Whereas that poem held out the tenuous (and rather Miltonic) possibility of the lone just man or “God-like men” (179, 216), here the only “wiser creature” (174–5) truly untouched by foppery is his horse. The ubiquitous libertine paradox of plumbing the depths of experience in order to be superior appears as the all-too socially mediated, precarious, and ultimately impossible “insolence” (173) of literally mounting one’s high horse and riding away from the scene of modern social life. The speaker’s point, perhaps, is that the alcohol-induced nausea he began with was preferable – or at least more studied, honest, and brain-dependent – than the proto-Sartrean metaphysical nausea that touches him with disgust more poignantly still.

When we look for fops in Rochester’s more habitual register of erotic nastiness, for example the splendidly vulgar “A Ramble in St. James’s Park,” he gives a more fine-grained psychological analysis.²⁵ In “Tunbridge Wells,” the speaker’s slur against the Irish located their bad taste or foppery not in their cultural conditioning but in their nature or breeding.²⁶ He does the same against the proud fops in almost Shaftesburian tones: “No spleen, or malice need on them be throwne: / Nature has done the business of Lampon, / And in their looks their Characters has shown” (22–4). This readily corruptible second nature of degenerate cultivation must be different from the honest nature of horse, dog, monkey, and bear that the libertine appeals to, but the line between them is uncomfortably thin. In “A Ramble,” the speaker attacks his mistress Corinna for her promiscuity in terms of the same degeneracy. He reproaches her for cavorting in the park with the numerous and station-mixing mass of “*Carr-men, Divines, great*

Lords and Taylors, / Prentices, Poets, Pimps, and Gaolers; / Foot-Men, fine Fops do here arrive, / And promiscuously they swive” (29–32), ending with special emphasis on the final term “fine Fops.” He then gives three portraits of idiotic fops she cavorts with, claiming that what bothers him is not the infidelity; if only she treated them like mere “Spermatick Sluce / [to fill] her *Cunt* with wholesome Juice” (93–4), he would conclude philosophically that “Such nat’rall freedoms are but just, / There’s something gen’rous in meer Lust” (97–8). By responding to their fopperies, she has become “a *Whore*, in understanding, / A Passive *Pot* for *Fools* to spend in” (102). Of course, her passivity has made *him* into such a fool: all her lovers are apparently fine fops, and he rages that she has made him one of the gang. Using the almost surrealist figure of autonomous genital agency – “at her *Mouth* her *Cunt* says yes” (78) – he reproaches her without invoking moral norms by charging her with a sensual immediacy that is bad only because it responds with instinctive automaticity to a stupid mannerism of behavior that has nothing to do with nature. Falling for the lure of foppery by responding to fops who are mere abortive imitators is a bad aesthetic response, and she is a whore in understanding only because of her bad taste.²⁷

It is unclear how much his refined accusation, which puts on a show of what we now call “compersion,”²⁸ ultimately differs from the standard male paranoia at female promiscuity.²⁹ We see that he makes the argument that he is not faulting her pleasures (“Nor ever thought [her whoring] an abuse / While you had pleasure for excuse,” 123–4) but rather Corinna’s desire for intimacy with fops: “with these Three confounded *Asses* / From *Park* to *Hackney-Coach* she passes” (80–1). She leaves the quasi-utopian sexual space of the park and passes beyond the reach of his voyeuristic participation. He goes on to physicalize her doting, “deprav’d Appetite” (135) for fops as a shift from genital to anal satisfaction, as when he curses her desire “to have him Bluster in [her] *Cunt*, / Turn up your longing Arse to th’ Air / And perish in a wild despair” (141), where the metrical compression of the last two syllables to “th’ Air” seems to demonstrate the self-sublimation into nothingness he wishes on her but feels all too acutely in himself.³⁰ In wishing she enjoyed them as wholly objectified beings (“stiff-pricked clown or well-hung parson,” where “parson” puns on any person whomsoever competent to “fill” his role) he commits to embrace precisely the objectification that makes him interchangeable with virtually anyone.³¹

Objectification is the core issue explored in Rochester’s great impotence poem, “The Imperfect Enjoyment.”³² There, the speaker curses his member for failing him at love but responding to objectification: “Worst part of me, and henceforth hated most, / Through all the Town a Common Fucking Post ... But if his *King* or *Coutrey* claime his Ayde, / The Rakehell villain shrinks and hides his head” (62–3, 56–7). Associating love with civic duty, the speaker fails to respond when the possibility of foppish role-playing appears: his problem is fop-phobia. This poem too ends with an aggressively equivocal wish: “And may Ten Thousand abler Pricks agree / To doe the wrong’d *Corinna* Right for Thee” (71–2), which combines a compassionate interest in the satisfaction of his partner with a menacing self-multiplication to “Ten Thousand” substitutes that threaten her with the pulverizing annihilation he has just finished complaining of feeling himself.

When the figure of the fop appears in the “Satyre against Reason and Mankind,” Rochester indicates quite clearly that the fop and not the woman is the ultimate antithetical other of the libertine subject:

Witts are treated just like common Whores,

First they're enjoy'd and then kickt out of doors...
 Women and men of Witt are dangerous tools,
 And ever fatal to admiring Fools.
 Pleasure allures, and when the fops escape,
 'Tis not that they're below'd, but fortunate;
 And therefore what they fear, at heart they hate. (37–45)

The fop here is the consumer of libertine wit, allured by a dangerous homosocial “pleasure” which is quite distinct from the frank appetitive engagement the libertine subject claims to aspire to. Yet the speaker needs this audience as the whore needs her patron, and he realizes furthermore, in the most self-indicting moment of the satire, that “Witt was his vain frivolous pretense / Of pleasing others at his own expence” (35–6). The “others” here are the idiotic fops that enjoy him, barely if at all escaping the butt of his wit; but wit itself, he claims, is a vain, frivolous pretense not unlike Corinna’s whoredom in understanding. An irony overtakes the canny recognition that his foppish audience hates him, just as he must hate his ten thousand abler Corinnas, because the person he has finally committed to pleasing and therefore must hate most of all is the fop – or more simply “man,” social man.

When George Etherege fictionalizes Rochester as his libertine hero Dorimant in *The Man of Mode*, he displays the rule of taste in social life operating just as it does in Rochester’s salacious libertine underworld.³³ Specifically, Etherege uses both plot structure and passing details to underscore the codependence between the libertine and fop which Rochester angrily acknowledges to follow from the social mediation of desire and which finally undoes pleasure. He transforms Rochester’s sublimely enraged angst into a breezy nonchalance at the libertine’s propinquity with the fop, at least up to the moment of crisis in Act III, as we will see. The following section will show how Etherege’s fop, still overshadowed by ridicule, begins to show signs of being a habitable social role, or more precisely a necessary ingredient of any social role. Insofar as its identification crosses the boundary separating libertine and fop the play steps out of the libertine world it is often taken to epitomize and into the social world of the new aesthetics. We find in Rochester the portrait of a libertine psyche, which submits to the radical heteronomy of desire’s objectification, and thus undergoes the anonymizing experience of being one of the masses. The libertine thereby submits all pleasures of sense to the secondary, socially conditioned criteria that Addison later called “a new principle of pleasure” based on the subject’s detachment or the object’s absence from the scene of pleasure, and thus gives us a raw prototype of the new aesthetic subject.

Etherege’s plot is structured around three romantic relationships that Dorimant, his Rochester character, navigates: the old mistress Loveit he gradually breaks up with, the serious new relationship with the beautiful and witty Harriet, who understands him and has the fortune he needs to keep afloat, plus an ephemeral fling with the sultry Bellinda he consummates in Act IV and tactfully disposes of in Act V. The important first scene establishes Dorimant’s character through a display of his cool, detached spectatorship of his own decayed desire. He reads the note he is about to send Loveit: “‘For Mrs Loveit.’ What a dull, insipid thing is a billet-doux written in cold blood after the heat of the business is over!’” (*M* I.1.3–5). The posture of a jaded lover moving on to fresher pastures is calculated to establish his vast sexual power, but we quickly learn that Dorimant enjoys toying with her during the period of “our [ie *his*] decay of

passion” (10). “Next to the coming to a good understanding with a new mistress,” he declares, “I love a quarrel with an old one” (189–90).

Dorimant introduces Sir Fopling Flutter into the plot as a substitute for himself with Loveit for whom he can feign jealousy. Fopling is a “fop to lay to her charge” (I.1.367), and she eventually retaliates by taking the fop seriously as a substitute, which leads to Dorimant’s moment of crisis in the play at the end of Act 3. Yet even these first lines in which he encounters his own piece of writing display his ability to observe her feelings. He knows she will read through his feigned gallantries and judge them “a dull, insipid thing.” The secondary verbal pleasure of a quarrel he goes on to draw her into, causing the fop to appear, adds a layer to the erotic heroism his character stands for.³⁴ He does not merely act in cold blood, as Shadwell’s callous and crassly uninspired villain Don John in *The Libertine* does, but observes even his own gilded lies with detachment.³⁵

Dorimant’s first act on stage of reading himself, situated in the Loveit plotline, is a detached aesthetic judgment. Etherege builds up his compelling new romance with Harriet from similar acts of detached observation in which all ardor is forced into indirect, mediated routes of expression. The play sets up the rightness of their match when each calls the other out, initially through mimicry, for feigning an authentic, natural demeanor. By contrast to the earnest Bellair, who ingenuously comments, in the grip of homosocial infatuation with Dorimant’s rakish charisma, “I never heard him accused of affectation before” (*M* III.3.27), Harriet sees through this: “he’s agreeable and pleasant, I must own, but he does so affect being so, he displeases me” (23–4). Of course, she is not displeased at all: he pretends to act only according to nature and she pretends to hold his pretending against him. Harriet reads through his easy good manners to their stiff core, at once coolly calculating and narcissistically frivolous: “affectedly grave or ridiculously wild and apish” (V.2.56). When he sweet-talks her mother under the alias of Mr Courtage – a generic seducer façade that Fopling, with inspired stupidity, keeps forgetting is any different from his usual persona – Harriet declares “he’s a fop ... a man made up of forms and commonplace, sucked out of the remaining lees of the last age” (IV.1.312–16).

Dorimant’s courtship takes an equally aggressive turn, as when Harriet claims to hate the “set face” that seems to say, as if to anyone whomsoever, “come love me” (*M* IV.1.117–18).³⁶ He points out: “I know y’are greedy of the praises of the whole Mall ... As I followed you, I observed how you were pleased when the fops cried, ‘She’s handsome, very handsome’ ... the thousand several forms you put your face into then, to make yourself more agreeable” (III.3.87–98). In his “To a Lady in a Letter” (also 1676), Rochester makes a similar remark to his lover: “There’s not a brisk, insipid spark / That flutters in the town, / But with your wanton eyes you mark / Him out to be your own” (17–20). He adds, which could have suggested the plot of *The Man of Mode* to Etherege, that “You rival bottle must allow, / I’ll suffer rival fop” (7–8). Importantly, Etherege excises the bottle as well as any hint of the fop’s crass priapic appeal to the heroine: “Nor do you think it worth your care / How empty and how dull / The heads of your admirers are, / So that their cods be full” (21–4). It was certainly possible to explore a leading woman’s interest in fops theatrically, as in Wycherley’s *The Plain Dealer*, which works up a cornucopia of foppish sub-types.³⁷ In spite of its reputation as a landmark from the notoriously libertine decade of the 1670s, Etherege’s play resolutely blocks this possibility dramatically – we simply cannot imagine the tasteful Harriet falling for such allurements – indicating clearly that the play is exploring the ruling of pleasures by means of taste.

As he develops a sentimentally compelling aspect of the rapport between Harriet and Dorimant, Etherege emphasizes how their passion for each other takes on rather than throws off mediation through social and aesthetic forms. In a key moment in Act V, we learn that Harriet has been listening all day to a love song Dorimant composed (not for her); immediately after it is performed, he walks in reciting yet another line of Cowley's, "Music so softens and disarms the mind-," which Harriet immediately finishes for him: "That not one arrow does resistance find," (2.89–90). Etherege transforms a Shakespearean matching of wit into the more guarded repartee based only on their making the same cultural selections. This meeting of tastes goes beyond the generative power of wit and involves spontaneous, quasi-automatic memory recall empowered by cultural literacy. The lines themselves update the familiar metaphor of seduction as conquest (Cupid's arrows) to a less familiar scenario where a musical enchantment saturates the scene (here, a taste for the same poetry) and disarms both lovers, who fall into each other's arms. The heightened role of mediating social forms in their relation – aggressive mimicry, impersonating generic social types, and routing sentiment through citing static cultural forms – are given as communicative alternatives to the standard rhetoric of love. Their preference is always for the types of engaged negation that Luhmann claims are the characteristic feature of the modern social mediation of intimacy.³⁸ Arguing that the modern ordering of intimacy derives from libertine excess, as well as the *précieuse* counter-discourse that section 3 of this chapter shows is being satirized in the fop, Luhmann describes the former with wry understatement as "a case of evolutionary good fortune."³⁹ When Dorimant exclaims "you have filled my heart with a secret," she replies "do not speak it if you would have me believe it" (V.2.116–7). Likewise, when Emilia asks Harriet "What think you of Mr Dorimant?" she responds "I do not think of him at all" (44–5). The sequence ends with Dorimant's contorted but accurate description of their coequal social artfulness: "The inimitable colour in [Harriet's] cheeks is not more free from art than are the sighs I offer" (124–5).

Beyond the specific romantic storyline with Harriet, Etherege's fascination with Dorimant as a character centers on his capacity to act as a detached observer and the opacity of character this generates. The only comic pedagogy Harriet demands is transferring his capacity to observe others onto himself. "When your love's grown strong enough," says Harriet, "to make you bear being laughed at, I'll give you leave to trouble me with it" (M IV.1.136–7). However, when Loveit publicly feigns replacing Dorimant with Fopling and he actually does risk becoming laughable, the play intimates that at no price will he accept this lesson. His very first words in the first scene recite an obscure couplet from Edmund Waller: "Now for some ages had the pride of Spain, / Made the Sun shine on half the world in vain" (I.1.1–2). The citation was meant to trigger for those in the know the association to Rochester, who was known to cite Waller frequently. Unpacking this rather recondite allusion, the opaque epigraphic utterance acts as a motto for a new regime of taste based on imaginary pleasures. Waller's poem discusses the shift of world power from the Spanish to English commercialism through an episode, a naval skirmish and pillage "disproportionate to [this] subject."⁴⁰ Whereas under the Spanish "of nature's bounty men forebore to taste" (160) so they could bring home the spoils, these were simply captured by the English, whose king now yields "a royal sceptre, made of Spanish gold" (164). Dorimant's lines declare with nostalgia that the old world of Spanish absolutism (along with its code of chivalry?) is gone, announcing a new world defined by commerce and plunder whose erotic implications the play seems bent on working out.⁴¹ His first words announce that renunciation-based primitive accumulation gives way to an order based on the circulation of

borrowed enjoyment, which the act of citation performs. When Rochester's speakers reach a moment of acute existential paradox – for example, turning into the fop or whore they despise – they tend to explode into venomous rage. Situating this kind of speaker in a definite social milieu and avoiding the grandly transgressive antics Shadwell represents gracelessly, Etherege describes the psychological faculty of holding in and managing, by means of a certain observational cool, such experiences of paradox.

While there was a certain vulnerability to Rochester's reckless desublimation of unconscious rage – there was a touch of the talking cure about writing these poems and voicing the raw emotions they express – Etherege's character never gives up his bottom-line strategizing. When Loveit shames him in front of Medley, we know from his aside how enraged he is: “He guesses the secret of my heart! I am concerned but dare not show it, lest Bellinda should mistrust all I have done to gain her” (III.3.289–91). Like Descartes' widower, Dorimant is *serré* by the situation into experiencing a feeling of jealousy for someone he no longer loves. However, unlike the widower, who wept profusely for a wife he did not love, Dorimant is able to keep his composure flawlessly and think strategically about how his reaction will affect the progress of his affair with Bellinda, who immediately observes that “I have watched his look and find no alteration there. Did he love her, some sign of jealousy would have appeared” (292–3). Etherege thus shrewdly toes the line by demystifying Dorimant's feelings and motives just enough to shift the audience's appreciation from a Rochesterian primal-scream to the slick honesty of a subject who has agreed to operate within the constraints of his social world, romantically-charged marriage plot and all. Unlike Bellair's disinterested marriage for love – a quaint gesture good enough for those who need that sort of thing – Dorimant sums himself up epigrammatically: “The wise will find a difference in our fate: / You wed a woman, I a good estate” (IV.2.181–2). As we have seen, anyone in the “wise” audience can see his regard for Harriet goes beyond mercenary interest in her estate. Yet the signifiers of sentimental love between them are laced with a chill by this cynical proclamation that we know is not put on.⁴² This is a paradoxical moment where the self-exceptionalizing libertine subject finds himself foppishly going through the motions with “a woman” because he requires what she has to offer, just like everyone else. Yet Etherege manages to make this uncomfortable supplement of conscious objectification not something that we (or Harriet) like Dorimant in spite of. The act of observing his interested motives in a detached manner furnishes the “secret” in his heart that bonds him romantically to Harriet. Like Milton's Eve preparing a delicate feast for an angel, the aesthetic detachment that steps back to consider “what choice to choose for delicacy best” (*PL* V.332) is actually what makes for his particular virtue. Taking a step beyond Bellair's romantic comedy, his cynicism delivers an updated version of the old Romance fantasy that one can marry both for love and into money, albeit not without a certain ominous *frisson*. Like Loveit, who sees “something of the angel undefaced in him” (*M* II.2.14–15), Etherege makes Dorimant's charisma appear only through a mediating disfiguration.⁴³

The chill that adheres to Dorimant's glamour, which is much less apparent in Rochester's fiery speakers, has to do with his self-anonymizing blend into the crowd.⁴⁴ Etherege registers this willingness to blend into the anyone-whomsoever from the title, *Sir Fopling Flutter; Or, The Man of Mode*, which gives the binary between the false foppish man of taste and the unnamed real man of taste, who hides his substance and manifests as all mode no less than his more fluttery counterpart. Etherege attempts to show the tacit compromises required to live out libertine subjectivity in the cagy urban sociality of his day, without going so far as asserting the

sinister, all-trumping force of competitive and commercial rationality beneath apparent libertine excess, as the play would have if the match with Harriet were less convincing or if Bellinda presented more enduring allurements. His point is that Dorimant is capable of compartmentalizing, of extracting three different kinds of pleasure out of three different relationships. All of them are driven by libidinal “instinct” – most spectacularly on display when, moments after a poignant exchange with Harriet, Dorimant immediately runs off to consummate his side affair with Bellinda, declaring himself to be “not so foppishly in love here to forget ... I am flesh and blood yet” (IV.1.321–2) – yet none of them, including the seamy assignation with Bellinda, as we will see in section 4, are exempt from social mediation. Etherege’s point is that all Dorimant’s tastes are aestheticized: he does not merely consume flesh and blood (like Shadwell’s vulgar libertine), nor is he consumed by his desire to consume, as in Rochester’s exquisitely paradoxical eros.⁴⁵ He operates as a consumer, silently traversing the paradox of his detachment from his own pleasure, just like everyone else.⁴⁶ In other words, Etherege’s plot works out Rochester’s strictly sensualist “reforming will” as the channeling of pleasure into aesthetics, meaning a pleasure taken under conditions of detachment. The play thus depicts aesthetic detachment as radically self-serving; by contrast to the sentimental disinterestedness of Bellair it trivializes, it presents detachment as a specific, materially conditioned strategy.⁴⁷

Far more than Hobbes, or even than the continental theory of *bienséance* we will encounter in section 3, Dorimant’s ethos realizes in a somewhat extreme key Balthazar Gracián’s ideal of *discreto*. Giving aphoristic, paradox-laden advice in manuals guiding the reader to self-perfection, Gracián merges the Machiavellian prince’s virtue of *prudencia* and the *sprezzatura* of Castiglione’s courtier. His *Oráculo* would become the major manual of court etiquette in the eighteenth century.⁴⁸ His account of good taste as the sign of the perfected individual is usually regarded as the first statement of the modern semantics of taste, a lineage Addison endorses in the first sentence of the *Spectator* number on taste, discussed above in Chapter One, section 3.⁴⁹ Gracián’s constant theme is the pursuit of *acutezza* or acuity of judgment through the careful management of appearances. Like Machiavelli, he stresses the flexible character who is skillful and intelligent enough, but also is highly attuned to how he is perceived, courts luck, is self-controlled and succeeds at a measure of control over others.⁵⁰ The prince’s great virtue, however, is his indomitable impetuosity: in a memorably horrifying passage, Machiavelli applauds his beating fortune like a woman, an affective configuration that we still find in Rochester’s libertine subject.⁵¹ Gracián suggests as a more effective strategy of control the courtier’s self-effacing *sprezzatura* without the motive of deference.⁵² The method is moderate detachment, heightened self-observation, and acute analysis of the feedback from people and events that ensue: “*use absence*, for either respect or regard” (O 106), cultivating “imperturbability” rather than impetuosity (5). Whereas Machiavelli’s prince needed to know when to defy public opinion, Gracián’s perfected individual knows when to ignore it and thereby seduce it without domination.⁵³ The habitual use of *ingenio* – behavior conditioned by inward detachment – precipitates into the *genio*, the personal character of one who has mastered the relation to oneself over time.⁵⁴ This secret part of the soul takes the shape of taste: “no one is born complete. Perfect yourself and your activities day by day until you become a truly consummate being ... this will be evident in the excellence of your taste.”⁵⁵ In this model, which Etherege realizes in Dorimant, the flowering of personal taste as the outcome of self-mastery coincides with the capacity to govern others.

From its first establishing scene, the play is haunted by the libertine's absence of character, which it has almost blithely decided to not make into a solipsistic crisis and instead to use as the basis for a bond with a likeminded partner. Before Dorimant even appears on stage in the first scene, the stage directions make him enter "*in his gown and slippers*" against the background of "*A dressing room, a table covered with a toilet, clothes laid ready*" (M I.1.1). His suit had preceded him, forming a ghostly outline for him to step into, and before he has said a word the scene has drawn a distinction between the costume he will eventually put on, consisting of the toilette, an arsenal of the potential signifiers of foppery, and the pre-costume body which is nevertheless covered head to toe. In spite his *déshabillé* there is no hint of exposure, but a second more primitive costume underlying the one he is about to put on. The scene's climactic moment of characterization equates the eerie metonymic disappearing act that transforms him into a suit with the constructed quality of his "natural" manners. Immediately, an Orange Woman enters, bringing fruit and the gossip about Harriet, setting the plot in motion. As his toilette nears completion, Dorimant programmatically shoos away the meddling servant, who replies: "[but] you love to have your clothes hang just, sir," to which he replies, "I love to be well dressed, sir, and think it no scandal to my understanding" (322–4). We are never given any details about Dorimant's outfits, other than the fact he is perfectly "well dressed," which apparently means a bare minimum of the fussing about "just hanging" that will preoccupy the fop.⁵⁶

Yet Etherege gives a more specific rejection, the orange-flower water the fop is notoriously drenched in as a bastardized version of the pheromonal aura Dorimant exudes of his own accord: "I will smell as I do today, no offense to the ladies' noses" (I.1.326–7), as if his scent "today" had in fact already been selected. Through this rejection of the surplus perfume, Etherege locates Dorimant's aura in the material subtlety of his "natural" smell, which cannot be given to the audience directly (unless perhaps one is sitting in the front rows) and so must be made credible by mediated means, though they can ultimately only give it as, like his purported love for Harriet, a kind of secret. The scene accomplishes this by the dramatic means of the orange, which he has bought from the orange woman and like a good fashionable gentleman delayed paying for as long as possible. He has been consuming the orange throughout the scene – connected metonymically with the fresh woman he sets out to pursue – and its juicy remains cover his hand, his mouth, and perhaps his face. The brilliant effect of this device is that it takes the singular smell of a person's body, emanating from the "flesh and blood" he so cherishes, and contaminates it with a material stand-in for the object of his desire, which moreover stands in an uncertain relation to payment for goods and services rendered. Dorimant does not smell like himself but like the orange he has just eaten, or his smell mingles indistinctly with the thing's. This strategic privileging of surface shows the inevitable consubstantiality of his orange and the fop's orange-flower water, and this is the reason for his success: because he, unlike the fop, has made his own essence of orange. In doing so he gives the essence of himself in the purely culinary sense of that part of the fruit which survives the disintegration of its visible form.

The motif of flower essences recurs when the Loveit confronts Bellinda immediately after her assignation with Dorimant. Bellinda protests that she woke up early to go buy fruit and flowers with her country cousins; Loveit is unconvinced and retorts: "there are essences and sweet waters" (V.1.33). Pressed further, Bellinda claims that unlike the cousins, "I never [wear] anything but orange flowers and tuberose. That which made me willing to go was a strange desire I had to eat some fresh nectarines" (40–2). The lewd humor draws a distinction between Bellinda's appetite for the real thing – the succulent fruit she declares was "the best I ever tasted"

(44) – and the silly, “filthy nosegays” that the foppish country cousins must perpetually “have their noses in” (30–2) to overpower the city smells. Etherege’s female libertine has a stronger stomach and she meets the harsh urban daylight after a long night armed with the very orange flower essence that Dorimant claims he leaves for the fop. Suppose Loveit’s interrogation of Bellinda were acted so aggressively as to corner Bellinda and smell her for traces of the “filthy nosegays” she worries about, the “orange flower and tuberose” Bellinda tells her to expect might just as easily come from her body as from Dorimant’s.

Etherege thus sneaks a delicate critical bite into his extravagant, over-ripe adulatory portrait of Rochester. Whereas convergence with the foppery of the world was a terminal and deeply vexing paradox, which brought crashing down his attempt at a sensualist natural reason into an exaggerated simulacrum of patriarchal fury, Etherege makes this crisis as unremarkable a fact of social existence as the need to get dressed and play the fop in order to marry or whore around, as the case may be. The libertine is tacitly in control of his excesses, and the knowledge of how to suspend and modulate them into socially given channels of gratification (the play’s three examples are mistress, wife, and *courtisane*) that are sustainable rather than self-consuming discretely subordinates his sensual libertinism to imaginary factors. Just moments after Loveit’s ploy with Fopling has rattled him, Dorimant has taken measures to keep Medley in check (“Twere unreasonable to desire you not to laugh at me, but pray do not expose me to the town this day or two” [III.3.311–2]) and developed a plan for revenge. Brilliantly, Etherege makes the content of Fopling’s sally with Loveit a scene of aesthetic judgment; he leads her by the arm, declaring “We’ll make a critique on the whole Mall, Madam . . . we’ll sacrifice none to our diversion” (300–4) – especially not, for Loveit’s purposes, the one person that the gesture is meant for. The play thus casts a scene of aspiration to tasteful critique as the fruit of a temporary amity between homosocially infatuated fop and jilted woman. The wounded but composed Dorimant manages to end the scene heroically with the couplet: “And you and Loveit to her cost shall find, / I fathom all the depths of Womankind” (340–1), beginning the first line with the supplementary “and you” that places his interlocutor in the front row for – if not as a feminized co-star in – his upcoming demonstration. Whereas in Rochester’s lampoon, the king’s manhood was of a length with the visual symbol of his power (and thus available to manipulation), Dorimant declares his virility to be of equal length with his invisible, observational power to probe the depths of the female mind, which apparently includes any fop who would dare to meddle.

Etherege thus carefully alters the source of his libertine’s prestige from a restless and powerfully sustained self-exceptionalizing to the successful ability to mediate aggressive, if not outright anti-social desire within a social form. The play is virtually obsessed with conjoining the extremes of behavior artfully cultured to the point of affectation and an embrace of unruly natural bodily impulses. Speaking for both of them, Harriet says, “My eyes are wild and wandering like my passions and cannot yet be tied to rules of charming” (IV.1.111–12). Even the libertine who places flesh and blood above all must, like Dorimant at his toilette, put this stance on like a costume with a definite symbolic aim. Etherege puts on display a subject who has one foot in the world of libertine excess and one foot in the world of comic moral resolution that reforms the rake, even though, as I noted in passing, the only thing Dorimant might be said to have learned (and this, rather doubtfully) is to laugh at himself. This not-quite-realized pedagogical impulse in the play is the subordination of sensual pleasure to secondary imaginary or aesthetic pleasure, of tasteful consumption (and even self-consumption) into the stable

category of the consumer. Seemingly the idiot foil to the main psychological interest of the play, the fop character seems half-unintentionally to take on a peculiar interest and autonomy. This character, to which I now turn, figures the reforming impulse of the new aesthetics, whose origins lie in the libertine pursuit of pleasure.

3. Man of mode: the fop as aesthetic subject

Thus Sir, you see what Humane Nature craves,
Most men are Cowards, all men should be Knaves.
The difference lies, as farr as I can see,
Not in the thing it self, but the degree:
And all the subject matter of debate,
Is only who's a Knave of the first rate.

(Rochester, "A Satyr against Reason and Mankind")

When Rochester, who was closely associated with the court of Charles II and who died in 1680, imagined himself rebelling against the foppiness of social life, he imagined society as a stratified order with the king on top, not as a liberal Parliamentary oligarchy. He concludes the lampoon that famously plays on the interchangeability between the king's scepter and his prick with the shocking couplet: "I hate all Monarchs and the Thrones that they sitt on, / From the Hector of France to th' Cully of greate Britain."⁵⁷ The whore, the fop, and the sovereign are perhaps the three others to libertine subjectivity, all of which it eventually discovers in itself.⁵⁸ Back in section 1, we saw that Addison, who was writing in defense of Whig republican ideals, demonstrates the capacity of detachment in the character of Cato by putting his conscious mind to sleep and testing his imaginary, unconscious integrity. For Rochester, enjoying detached pleasure was a virulent, broadly anti-social, and ultimately impossible passion. By 1711, Cato's detached pleasures of sleep and the aesthetic spectatorship of his dead son's corpse – he sets himself aside from the world solipsistically set and relishes the gory spectacle with an enhanced imaginary fervour – appear as a powerful motor of civic virtue, whereas for Rochester's speaker country, God, and love all inspired equally deflationary reactions. This section argues that the fop is the important transitional figure between the man of pleasure as a libertine and the man of pleasure as upstanding liberal citizen, and later the man of sentiment. Rochester's cynical levelling of the fundamental difference between a "knave of the first rate" and his less successful competitors is worked out dramatically in the play ("A Satyr," 168–73). Between Rochester and Addison, detachment or aestheticization grew from the undeveloped notion of a "reforming will" based in natural sense (with a vague glance at Hobbes) to a full-blown cultural program of tastefully self-moderating pleasures.

Knowing the several figures for aesthetic experience that have descended from him, such as the dandy, the collector, the snob, the aesthete, as well as the not directly aesthetic figure of the homosexual, it is difficult for us to look back at the fop and grasp just how little substantial interiority this figure entailed.⁵⁹ Dryden's epilogue to *The Man of Mode* suggests the reach of this type in 1676: whereas Dorimant and Medley referred to the specific real-life personalities of

Rochester and Sedley, “none Sir Fopling him, or him, can call; / He’s knight o’ th’ shire, and represents ye all.”⁶⁰ The witty elevation of the portrait of the fop into a quasi-sovereign representative at once assures the audience no individual character is meant by it – “no one fool is hunted from the herd” (34) – and steers us to see the moral intention of the play as prompting each to hunt the inner fool for herself, in the mirror of Fopling, with whom everyone and no one in particular should identify.⁶¹ The fop represents the principle of rote, abortive imitation without substantial character: he picks up signifiers wherever, and passes them on, “his bulky folly gathers as it goes, / And rolling o’er you, like a snowball grows” (19–20), a giant snowball of appropriative imitation, a formless empty-headed Behemoth. The worry is similar to the same instrumentalized incontinence that is threatening about the whore, as when we are told that “his various modes from various fathers follow” (21). However, even though the fop may be called a whore, and frequently treated like one, the worry – as with male promiscuity in general – is less about the significance of his acts than the inner state (or paucity thereof) they seem to imply. Unlike the fool character-types that preceded him, Dryden notes, the modern fop is “not of heaven’s making but [his] own”; “true fops ... help nature’s work and go to school / To file and finish God A’mighty’s fool” (2, 13–14).⁶² The ambiguity in the last line – is all the finishing useless against the magnitude of his natural foolishness or is his schooling itself to blame for his idiotic second nature? – captures the cultural ambivalence around the possibility of self-directed improvement. The difficulty with Dryden’s universalizing spin encouraging everyone to take away a heightened self-awareness about the possibility of being perceived as a fop is that obsessive self-regard is also what made one a fop in the first place.⁶³

The fop’s most memorable trait is his vanity, but his method is objectifying himself in all the right signifiers. He appeared at a play “with a pair of gloves up to his elbows,” taking a legitimate piece of menswear into hyperbole while hinting at his phobic repulsion from the rabble (*M* I.1.342–3). The major, signature signifier is “a periwig more exactly curled than a lady’s head newly dressed for a ball,” a masculine accessory lavished with the care a woman would lavish on the real thing: his efforts, though not the object per se, effeminize him. The third: “what a pretty lisp he has!,”⁶⁴ which “he affects in imitation of the people of quality in France” (342–7). Behind the showy clothes lies an even more irking feminine self-indulgence, and behind that lies a runaway propensity to imitate without discrimination.⁶⁵ Taking the French as incontrovertible sign of culture, he imitates a bad French accent in his native tongue, fooling no one. Dorimant sums him up: “He is a person indeed of great acquired follies” (352). His failings are not of birth, person, or upbringing – in the eyes of Loveit’s maid, “he’s as handsome a man as Mr Dorimant, and as great a gallant” (V.1.3)⁶⁶ – but of his own self-making.

Fops are frequently represented as pathetic pedants of love, like Rochester’s fumbling would-be wits who struggle by rote through the formulas of gallant discourse as if these were recipes for amorous success. The fop, then, satirizes a new type of consumer, focused on his power of choice among signifiers. Aphra Behn’s Timothy Tawdry in *The Town-Fopp* (also 1676), opts for a different set of signifiers pointing more specifically to court life: “Points, Lace, and Garniture” rather than periwig, cravat, and gloves.⁶⁷ A few years earlier, John Evelyn’s *Tyrannus* had attacked the ornamentally ribboned “fine silken thing ... dres’t like a May-pole,” recommending what was becoming the standard sartorial virtue: “choosing nothing that should be Capricious, nothing that were singular.”⁶⁸ Etherege’s great fop and his successors go beyond this model, emancipating themselves from mere slavery to an externally given fashion: they do not aspire to possess all the right modes but to *be* the *tyrannus*. It is at this point the fop begins

acquiring an autonomous interest; without casting off his absurdity, he takes a step towards being a dramatic rival to the libertine although in no way a thematic one. Whereas Dorimant strived to conceal his submission to fashionable exigencies by making his style as personal and natural to himself as possible, Fopling follows this same strategy of privileging personal style over normative fashion by working up exaggerated, idiosyncratically personal takes on all the right signifiers, and the comedy follows from him completely losing touch with fashionable propriety because of his ignorant vacuity. During his presentation scene, his apparel is discussed in detail and he rattles off the names of his suppliers like so many fetishistic magical signifiers: “The suit? Barroy. The garniture? Le Gras. The shoes? Piccar. The periwig? Chedreux. The gloves? Orangerie. You know the smell, ladies” (*M* III.2.205–216). This staccato presentation underlines that his selections are shorn of any narrative reconstruction about why he made them among other options. Each is presented as *the only* choice to be made, and it is intimated that Fopling has learned to absorb the correct signifiers without any understanding about why they are superior. Each is the right *je ne sais quoi*, and there can never be enough of them.⁶⁹ With the final item, the gloves made by the Orangerie, he motivates his selections with, “you know the smell, ladies,” the same appeal to an olfactory *je ne sais quoi* that Dorimant makes in the first scene, but its content is the leather second-skin of his gloves and the auratically charged *name* (“Orangerie”) this smell is meant to trigger.⁷⁰ Fopling’s idea of (Parisian) good taste thus has less to do with his desire for sophisticated French manners than for Dorimant’s successful assimilation of them.

The satire targets the passion for customizing and aggrandizing – as if more glove were always better – as revealing nothing but a protuberant desire for recognition. Fopling is altogether too much. He is also not enough, because all his selections are thoughtlessly redundant. His critics sneer that “he wears nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris” (III.2.202–3). No one objects to the originals – as if London high society were indifferent to the cultural capital conferred by the most famous hands in Paris – nor does the play suggest there is an alternative to making cultural selections through imitation. As we saw in the last section, the text constructs Dorimant’s superiority as the simultaneous refusal of surplus signifiers (the perfume) and submission to the need for them (the elaborate toilette). The fop is not, however, the pedant of fashion he is sometimes taken to be, who clings fetishistically to the magical power of his accessories. In a comic moment when he almost soils the ladies’ gowns and misinterprets their exclamations as concern for *his* outfit, he exclaims “No matter! My clothes are my creatures. I make ’em to make my court to the ladies” (IV.1.297–8). The humor lies not in his overvaluing clothes as ends in themselves but rather in his correctly identifying them as the expendable means to courtship and then failing to realize that preoccupied with the means he has completely missed the end. The text implies that *more* regard for clothes on their own terms would translate to a concern for the bodily boundaries he threatens to overstep by literally soiling them. The excessive focus on clothes as “his creatures” perversely turns him into a feminized object of courtship but it also creates a protective space around him as his signifiers precipitate into semi-independent objects with lives of their own. Etherege’s comic intention is to modulate the character from an independently ridiculous type to an excessive parody of the libertine’s own way of operating that delivers a muted satirical bite.

It follows from this satirical intention, and the gradual autonomous interest the fop accrues, that the *topos* of the fop’s Frenchification shifts from a defining to a subsidiary aspect.⁷¹ In *The Gentleman Dancing Master* (1673), Wycherley had built the satire on his fop Monsieur de

Paris around runaway Gallophilia. By the time of John Crowne's *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685), the most influential fop of the 1680s, the fop's interest in nicety has taken a turn towards compulsive and phobic concern with hygiene to the point that he professes to hate French wine because "the Clowns ... press all the Grapes with their filthy naked feet," opting instead for "several Drinks of my own composing ... *Mead, Cyder, Ale,*" all indigenous British concoctions.⁷² Whereas that text lowers its fop into a strictly material focus – he explains that a gentleman must have "*Bon mien, fine Hands, a Mouth well furnish'd*" not with fine language but "Fine Teeth"⁷³ – Etherege gives his fop slightly more elevated preoccupations than orthodontia and beer. Yet his fop succeeds in large part because he took a step away from satire on idealized fashionable imports and towards satire on the very indigenous country gentry apt to misappropriate them. Dorimant sums him up: "He went to Paris a plain bashful English blockhead, and is returned a fine undertaking French fop" (*M IV.1.328–9*). A bit earlier, when discussing his finely dressed French servants with Loveit, Fopling exclaims with unintended irony: but "there's one damned English blockhead among 'em, you may know him by his mien" (*III.3.299–300*). In a parallel fashion, the play makes Dorimant own to Loveit, "love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time, but soon the gold wears off and shows the native brass" (*II.2.186–8*). Etherege ultimately takes for granted the artificial cultural gilding, and whatever imports it might entail: with the fop no less than the libertine, his satire is after the native brass.⁷⁴

The differences between Dorimant and Fopling that the play stresses are not the old signifiers of social stratification but the new criteria for tastefulness, which Rochester usefully sums up as learning, honesty, and brains. The play's major explanation for Fopling's failure is his cultural (and almost literal) illiteracy. Fopling aspires to authority in sartorial matters in the arraying of servants and in the occasional arts, such as ballet and serenade, that gallantry may demand, but declines anything further: "writing, madam, 's a mechanic part of wit. A gentleman should never go beyond a song or a billet" (*M IV.1.222–3*). This is a warning to the audience that in this day and age such an attitude is tenable only for such as him. When Harriet quips back, "Bussy was a gentleman [and wrote]," he confuses Bussy, Compte D'Ambois with another Bussy, whose adventure stories Fopling might have seen adapted at the theater. The reference on Harriet's part is audacious: Roger de Bussy-Rabutin's *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* (1665) was a freshly published semi-autobiographical roman-à-clef of French high society, obsessed with sexually powerful women and the men they go through, including high-stakes sex work and a homoerotic love triangle.⁷⁵

The play avoids a critique of the bourgeois style of failure familiar from Molière's satire on bad taste in *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (1675) whose title character is unable to appreciate the culture his means can purchase. Turning to his hired philosophy master to help give a gallant turn to his expression of love, M. Jourdain is run through several modifications which all say the same thing, whereupon he is told the best was the original one: "I did it on the first try!"⁷⁶ he exclaims ecstatically. The fop's first thought, by contrast, is always a failure. Fopling does not represent the strictly policed adherence to the authority of fashion; he is completely distinct from satires on the affectedly pedantic social rule-follower searching for the right formula for success. Instead, he tries excessively hard to project the quality that Lord Chesterfield would still much later strive to instill in his son, the *je ne sais quoi* of "that air and first *abond* which suddenly lays hold of the heart."⁷⁷ As we saw in Chapter One, Addison appeals to this same principle, noting that beyond the rules of art "there is still something more essential ... something that elevates and astonishes the Fancy" for which it is very difficult to give rules.⁷⁸ The fop represents a

limit-case on the demand for the unexpected that Addison claimed was the essential ingredient of wit: in his character, the purely formal desire for novel personal difference is given without any of the qualities that lend it substance. His ruling passion is to make himself public as a unique being even though he is a parasite with nothing to say.⁷⁹

The theory of manners Fopling borrows from in an exaggerated fashion is the continental ideal of *bienséance* and the *honnête homme*, roughly agreeability and the truly polite man, codified by the great legislator of manners and preceptor to the *précieuses* during the period, the Chevalier de Méré (1607–1684).⁸⁰ Unlike Gracián’s works, which addressed anyone wishing to perfect himself in a worldly context and were thus useful to courtier and prince alike, Méré’s social model was pitched to the specific milieu of the upper-middle echelon of the absolutist court life, though his texts undoubtedly reached a wider audience of aspirants to gentility.⁸¹ His central move was shifting the basis of elites from stratified hierarchy to meritocracy of natural qualities, developing a notion of secondary or aesthetic and imaginary aristocracy.⁸² His theory required him to set up a principle of true taste beyond apparent fashionable rule-following, rejecting as inane the famous wit Voiture – the spirit that seems “so well adjusted” [“si ajusté”] but who “says nothing real or true” who does nothing but “speak into the air” with “fashionable words” – to whom he is nevertheless frequently compared.⁸³ Avoiding “everything that strives overmuch for brilliance and contrived effect [recherché],” his ideal is true *justesse*, which avoids abrasive extremes, persuades by means of the slightest hint, and “develops the naked truth.”⁸⁴ Fopling has taken these lessons all-too seriously, applying himself to the perfectly “ajusté” wig and appearing at the theater in an inappropriately underdressed “deshabillé.” Quite unlike Gracián, for whom appearances matter above all else, to be a gallant for Méré meant being willing to be detached from appearances: to be gallant “one must realize it more in fact than in appearance.”⁸⁵ Etherege’s satire imports this model in Fopling’s constant efforts to produce refined manners and failing because he cannot attend to the effect he makes. “True” *honnêteté*, for Méré, rejects the fashion of the moment, because “the graces of one century are those of all times” – this could be Fopling’s alibi for his anachronistic costume-choices – an indifference to what fashionable people really do that Etherege satirizes as artificially put on.⁸⁶ Like Dorimant’s Graciánic model, it is not a matter of following the rules: “it is not enough to know how to behave by rules and instructions, one must try to make them natural for oneself” – a labor that Fopling’s flops constantly make visible.⁸⁷ For Méré, “one must not exaggerate, or force, or express oneself archly, this will always end badly.”⁸⁸ From his *recherché* quotations, to Harriet’s observation that his manners seem either stiffly formal or affectedly wild, to his conniving and almost forced plots, Dorimant defies the fastidious prescriptions of the Chevalier and yet the play exhibits tremendous faith in his ability to maneuver himself through tenuous social situations and still come out on top.

As we will see in greater detail in the final section of this chapter, Fopling submits assiduously to the duty to regulate himself according to an externally given idea of what is natural, something that for the libertine is the height of foppish frivolity: “*bienséance* is an infinite study, and one must apply oneself to it incessantly, both in solitude and before others at court.”⁸⁹ For all the anxious self-adjustment this entails, it saves the subject from the biting insecurity vis-à-vis others as well as his material condition that the libertine is subject to. Méré tells a story that illustrates his theory particularly well. At a glamorous party the queen throws at the Louvre, in which everyone present is dressed at the height of the fashion of the moment, the Duc de Bokingant – the *English* Duke of Buckingham, who was in Paris for the marriage of

Henrietta Maria in 1625 – showed up in a strange costume “à la Persienne” (perhaps a cryptic sartorial pun satirically equating Parisian with Persia, a particularly felicitous fop-like confusion), with a strange feathered hat and “shoes so tucked in that they revealed his legs, which were beautifully shaped, and also much below the knees.”⁹⁰ This is not an arbitrary fashion intervention, but one tailored to what he knew would appeal most about his particular body, placed as if nakedly on display.⁹¹ Placing this anecdote at the very end of the “Discours sur la conversation,” Méré is attracted to how this model of *honnêteté* – in which style, which is contingent and individualized, trumps fashion, which has the form of a law one must follow – actually shuts down (malicious) conversation. Initially met with ridicule, he plays the scene so well that by the end of the night he wins over general opinion and “he effaced the most gallant members of the court.”⁹² This fantasy of idiosyncratic and slightly off bravura style effacing the uptight stylothes is plainly Fopling’s dream come true, and it accounts for no small part of the enjoyment his character offered the audience.⁹³

What many critics find compelling about the fop type from Etherege onward is his partial immunity or impression of exteriority from the play’s tense and competitive social climate granted by his vanity. In an influential article that launched renewed and sympathetic critical interest in the fop type, Susan Staves argued that he prefigured new liberal forms of masculinity, or “new sex roles for men.”⁹⁴ While he distinguishes Fopling from the uptight rule-follower, Etherege builds into his character an abiding and amusing anxiety.⁹⁵ Far from making a rigid or overly dignified grand entrance, Fopling loosely swishes into Lady Townley’s salon:

Enter Sir Fopling Flutter, with his Page after him

Sir Fopling: Page, wait without.

(To Lady Townley) Madam, I kiss your hands. (III.2.136–7).

Etherege makes Fopling, no doubt drawling his greeting (which is not a French *bisou*), enter half backwards in discussion with the servant, whose lowly station his self-elevating manners metonymically attach him to in spite of his acquired hauteur.⁹⁶ The delay fussing with his servant also has the effect of hinting that playing with this male thing is far more unconsciously pressing than actually entering the scene of courtship. The same device occurs in his final entrance in Act V, where Fopling’s fumble goes further still, as he exclaim again “Hey, page!” to verify that the wind has indeed knocked his periwig askew, wishing passionately for a little space alone “to adjust oneself in” (V.2.325–6), a space in which to labor at being perfectly *ajusté*. The great passion that Fopling actually displays is less for his beloved signifiers than for restless and constant self-adjustment by tinkering with them. Again, Etherege does not miss the opportunity to entwine Dorimant’s character with this behavior through mimicry. Aping Fopling’s derivative manners: “Now for a touch of Sir Fopling... Hey page!” (V.1.80–1). He later imitates Fopling again in front of Loveit as he is about to discard her, as if it were this bullying, and not his wit and cultural literacy, that made him superior.

While he proudly promenades his hyperbolic accessories at plays and other public occasions, his strut begins to trip in the presence of Dorimant, whom Etherege plainly insinuates is his true object of desire. As soon as he has greeted Lady Townley, he veritably lunges at Dorimant:

Without lying, I have not met with any of my acquaintance who retain so much of Paris as thou dost: the very air thou hadst when the marquise mistook thee i' th' Tuileries and cried, 'Hey Chevalier!' and then begged thy pardon. (III.2.139–42).

The interpellative misrecognition between Dorimant and the Marquise in Paris fascinates Fopling because it showed that Dorimant looked just like every other French Chevalier, blending into the crowd. In an apparently classic scenario of Girardian mediated desire, Fopling's ambitions at courtship are entirely focused on the successful rival Dorimant, whose old mistress Loveit he is about to pursue with the latter's blessing.⁹⁷ On the surface, *Etherege* is giving us an all-too-clear illustration of Sedwickian homosocial desire, in which men compete over women in order to attain recognition from other men.⁹⁸ Girard claims that this kind of mediated desire becomes one version of homosexual desire once a subject merges the object of desire (traditionally, a woman) with the rival. The fop's "homosexualized" position indefinitely delays the moment of crisis or "paroxysm" where rivals blame the object for the conflict and turn it into a scapegoat, which is first hated as the source of conflict and then deified for resolving it by taking the blame. Sedgwick's thesis that the male homosexual becomes the scapegoat for universal homosocial desire explains the surplus of cruelty Dorimant and Medley direct towards him. For his part, As George Haggerty puts it, "he only has eyes for the rakes that mock him."⁹⁹¹⁰⁰

Yet for all the play's innuendo, we cannot accept that the fop functions in this play entirely as a scapegoat or in the structural place that would come be known as homosexual.¹⁰¹ *Etherege* qualifies his theme of mediated desire on both sides. By illustrating Fopling's attraction to Dorimant with a moment based on misrecognition in which the latter appears anonymous, he builds the humor around Fopling's love for an abstraction, an ideal based ultimately on untouchable personal detachment, which Dorimant realizes contingently rather than essentially. This is why he turns inappropriately aggressive when he thinks Dorimant falls short of his own ideal, as in the all-important matter of the tie: "I never saw thee have a handsome cravat," he declares, making the absurd offer to send his French servant over to help dress Dorimant (*M* IV.2.91–2).¹⁰² The desire to be of service is the dominating, masculine form of eroticized overture rather than the fawning, infatuated, feminizing one. He makes this remark in the bedroom scene, discussed in detail in section 4, just minutes after Dorimant has slept with Bellinda, shuffled her off as the men arrived, and bantered with them about it: Fopling is reaching for the "cravat" Dorimant is indiscreetly concealing as literally as he knows how.¹⁰³ But this is also why Fopling is able to shrug the whole thing off so swiftly when Loveit conclusively dismisses him in Act V: oh well, he exclaims, "an intrigue now would be but a temptation to me to throw away that vigour on one, which I mean shall shortly make my court to the whole sex in a ballet" (V.2.349–51). Desperate subterfuge to cover for his dismal amorous failure, or sincerely blissed out acceptance, embracing this next piece of sublimation? Either way, he unapologetically takes up space in the limelight of the stage rather than shirking away like the disposable helping character Dorimant scripted him to be.¹⁰⁴ Whether one dwells on the ridiculous abstraction in proposing to court the entire feminine sex, or one wonders whether a rather campy displacement of sexuality into ballet suggests his vigor would better find its mark elsewhere, or furthermore one notices that his ballets are always for one, his foppish self-exemption from both the stringencies of actual courtship and the sting of merciless rejections that the game generates lends his character a parodic sovereign grandeur and absorbing fascination to

the contemporary audience. He presented his audience simultaneously with the fantasy of a narcissistic shield capable of deflecting any extreme of social ostracization and the implacable necessity of not being caught in the position of someone who must resort to it. In such a fishbowl of intrigue and competition, one would almost wish to be a Fopling, if one didn't have to be recognized as one.¹⁰⁵ The reflexive and aestheticized terminus of the mechanistic theory of pleasure happens here as parody when Fopling pivots from courtship to ballet. All the mediated desire Etherege builds into his character serves to motivate his insecure fumbling, as well as his pathetically misplaced aggression, but at the moment of crisis he fails to erupt into rage. Instead, he displays his own species of detachment, taking refuge in the aesthetic, and holds ground.

From Dorimant's side, Etherege stresses that his superiority requires him to conceal himself. When Fopling reaches out for friendship with him, exclaiming, full of overdetermination, "there is no living without making some good man the confidant of our pleasures," Dorimant declines on the pretext of his being someone who "could never keep a secret in my life; and, then, there is no charm so infallibly makes me fall in love with a woman as knowing my friend loves her" (*M* III.2.147–55). The statement is not true; we never see Dorimant's desire inspired by a rival and we do see him keep secret his affair with Bellinda. This is a subtler piece of mimicry on Dorimant's part: he is again playing the fop, and thereby demonstrates that he has correctly read not just the signifiers of foppery but its motivating structure of desire.¹⁰⁶ This move, of course, radically obscures Dorimant's motivations; as compelling as the matrimonial closure with Harriet is at the end, it remains touched with a *frisson* stemming from his not unvenal motivations, which keeps his character in the shadows. The play gives such a raw depiction of the splendors and miseries of the high class Restoration marriage market that even relatively secure characters like Bellair and Harriet are compelled to enact with mock glee a parodic ceremony of the institution that, one way or another, holds everyone hostage: "we will never marry!" (1.76).¹⁰⁷ Shortly after this, Harriet coaches Bellair through how to play the fop in order to deceive their parents: "Your head a little more on one side; ease yourself on your left leg, and play with your right hand" (134–5), to which he genially replies, "a little exercising will make me perfect" (139). The fop, on the other hand, is compelled by neither love nor money nor propriety to go through the motions of marriage. He displays a sublime and sublimated flight into aestheticization as a fascinating and almost viable cognitive alternative to the pressure of social compulsion, which allows him to shine, albeit in borrowed light, where Dorimant gets what he wants but must withdraw to the shadows.

Etherege wants to mock the fop as an inferior imitator as much as possible, but in order to carry the satire against the libertine, cutting him back to the size of the social world he inhabits and routinizing the upsetting possibility of his becoming indistinguishable from his ersatz substitute, he must let the fop steal some of the libertine's fire. It is thus Dorimant who experiences the sting of mimetic crisis when Loveit publicly pretends to receive Fopling's courtship, as if she has replaced him with a fop: shaken, he declares anxiously, "she cannot fall from loving me to *that?* [Fopling]" (III.3.282). Fopling cheerfully absorbs a world of abuse without ugly feelings, while Dorimant takes the threat of appearing like his idiotic pretender seriously enough to make Loveit solemnly promise in Act V to never put him through another such episode again. The play motivates the temporary amity between the fop and the jilted woman using aesthetic means, as they walk the Mall together acting as critics on the bad taste of the town.¹⁰⁸ Far from grinning and bearing his company for desperate strategic reasons, she turns gleeful and makes him a comrade in her critical animus, to "be malicious on all the ill-fashioned

things we meet ... we'll make a critique on the whole Mall, Madam ... we'll sacrifice all to our diversion" (297–303), creating an opportunity for a satirical jab at the critic's game of tastefulness as a camouflage for erotic frustration. We laugh at their impotent bluster, but the play has demonstrated that Dorimant's critical diversions are no more free of art than theirs: he has only succeeded in better covering his tracks.



Fig. 2. After J. Huymans, *John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester*. Circa mid-1670s. National Portrait Gallery, London.

Whereas the later culture of sentimentality envisaged the easy confluence of natural feelings and delicate cultivation, this play ruthlessly demystifies socially successful good taste as a playing-at-nature, and it allows the fop, who really is an almost simian English aboriginal, an ironic allegorical privilege, displaying him in much the same capacity that Rochester displays his monkey in the famous portrait (Fig. 2). In that image, the monkey stands over an elegantly

printed book, shredding its pages at random, while Rochester's manuscript pages, almost quivering with energy, emerge suggestively from under his beautifully ornamented coat. The flaunting of something like a textual secret, visually quite similar to the texture of his delicately *dentellé* cravat, is the precise inverse of the relation to print culture as an open secret that Shaftesbury models in the frontispiece he designed for *Characteristicks* (Fig. 3). In Shaftesbury's self-designed portrait, his book is swaddled like a child into his neo-Classical toga, as the composition shows him divided between a glimpse of an orderly country landscape and a sample from a luxuriously bound and heavily draped library. He sees himself as divided between this sharply receding and truncated natural vista and a not particularly well-ordered pile of books, his identity sumptuously shaded all the while. In the Rochester portrait, the tattered bits of printed matter the monkey holds up to him offer a kind of circular feedback to his parodic act of crowning, as he brings out a handful of manuscript pages from the darkness in the foreground. This prosthetic extension of his body is echoed in the monkey's torn pages, which seem to extend into the place of the voluptuously dangling necktie of the fop.



Fig 3. Simon Gribelin, *Engraving of Shaftesbury, prefixed to the second edition of Characteristicks* (1714). Engraving.

Within the fop's arsenal of signifiers, the cravat and the wig have privileged significance. The cravat represents the possibility of the interchangeability between Fopling and Dorimant, which the former welcomes and the latter blocks at all costs, while the wig, which became larger and larger in later fop plays and became the fop's dramatic calling card, stood for his singular, airy, and virtually substanceless capacity to take up space and make a spectacle of himself,

namely everything that distinguishes him from the libertine type. The portrait of Cibber as Lord Foppington (Fig. 4) represents his wig in the same vacuous, plush, and consciously ethereal manner it represents his powdered face. In that portrait, he makes the same reflexively circular mudra-like gesture pointing upwards that Rochester makes in his distinctly downward-facing crowning. When Fopling attacks Dorimant's cravat, he is reproaching Dorimant for not being on trend, and Etherege's point – he never writes into the play whether or not Dorimant even wears a tie – is that it does not matter, because the true man of taste is always beyond the norms of fashion. Yet when Dorimant responds to Fopling's offer with, "What? He who formerly belonged to the Duke of Candale?" (*M* IV.2.100–1), the play discreetly reminds us that for all of Dorimant's detachment from the rules, he keeps himself informed about the same worldly knowledge that Fopling does, only with greater intelligence.



Fig 4. Guiseppe Grisoni, *Colley Cibber as Lord Foppington*. Circa 1715–19. Oil on canvas. The Garrick Club.

The signifier of the cravat thus stands out as representative of Fopling's subordination to fashion and consequent objectification: it condenses metonymically Dorimant's entire critique of Fopling, who is nothing but "a tawdry French ribbon, and a formal cravat!" (II.2.225–6). More broadly, it represents the foppery of the age: its men are "only dull admirers of themselves, and make their court to nothing but their periwig and cravats" (IV.1.18–19), rants Dorimant, the play's great narcissist. If Fopling tied his own cravat, we would expect the same bungled results he displays elsewhere; he even says, echoing second-rate Parisian common sense, that "an

Englishman cannot tie a ribbon!” (2.94–5). The cravat stands for a borrowed phallic capacity – one that literally binds his neck with social exigency – and one that is linked to the visual expression of intelligible personality: “it would give another air to thy face” (92–3) – just the silly air Dorimant avoids by opting for the minimalism of a suit so perfect it goes unnoticed. Yet if Fopling had only a fussy tie to recommend him, there would be nothing remarkable about his character. It is the periwig, large enough that it threatens to tip him over, that pushes him into the parodic sublime and lends his pathetic qualities a quality of pathos. The author of *Mundus Foppensis: or, The Fop Display’d* (1691), a crude satire on the censor of women’s fashions, was very frank about the sexual reverberations of this signifier, comparing the curls of the beau’s wig to “Those *Dildo*es in the Nape of Neck; / That dangle down behind, to shew / Dimensions of the *Snake* below.”¹⁰⁹ Condensing the inflation that runs through all his signifiers, it projects the image of a forced radiance, a material reification of the auratic *je ne sais quoi* he longs for. It also acts as a humorously protuberant tumescence of his head that figures the sublimatory transfer from sexual to egoic inflation, frozen for our view into the plastic form of a risible aesthetic artifact.

Perhaps the major feature that pushes the fop beyond fall-guy foil and into playing *eiron* to Dorimant’s *alazon*, is that he carries the play’s obsession with phallic sexuality in a symbolized and aestheticized form. For example, upon Fopling’s first appearance Medley draws attention to his revealingly high crotch: “I have wished it lower a thousand times, but, a pox on’t, ’twill not be” (*M* III.2.198–9). On one level, the joke is that by hemming in his manhood for the sake of fashion (apparently against his better judgment) he has put his desires, as well as their anatomical correlates, nakedly on display. On another level, the play jokes that by submitting unreflectively to a half-baked and overdone idea of fashion he has failed at that too, as all of the other gentlemen have escaped these mysterious exigencies. Etherege insists that the various signifiers or modes of foppery fail not because they are instances of fashionable excess outrunning good sense, but because they are not actually fashionable, touched from their inception with obsolescence. To be well dressed, Dorimant tells us, is as much to be “valued in men as in baubles,” noting the coincidence between Fopling’s bubble-like insubstantiality and his being out of style, like a superannuated *bauble* (144–5). Yet Fopling makes a strangely comfortable home of his bubble, and the cruel tenderness that says “my clothes are my creatures,” declaring indifference just as they are about to be soiled, tells us that running in parallel to the restless anxiety he feels in Dorimant’s presence is a powerful capacity to take enjoyment from these prosthetic externalizations of his self regardless of whether or not they are validated as credible fashion.

On the first level, he takes a voluptuous pleasure in putting his pinched condition on display, enduring consensually, and even inviting his social castration. In his late work, Lacan developed the concept of *plus-de-jouir* to describe the subtle configuration of desire in which the subject rushes “relent[lessly] to castrate himself,” noting with a pun the conversion from *no-more-enjoyment* to a supplementary enjoyment, also referring to the concept as *surplus jouissance*.¹¹⁰ On the secondary or surplus-level of Etherege’s joke, Fopling is actually capable of taking pleasure in himself, where everyone else, including Dorimant, has a heightened sense of their own precarity, which forces them to take their pleasure while keeping themselves under wraps. Fopling surrenders symbolic as well as real phallic potency to everything Dorimant represents, but in exchange he gets the surplus enjoyment of parading on stage like a giant, stupidly erect *thing*, covered in similarly overswollen *things*, and topped with an indocile and

massively overinflated perukal thing in place of a head.¹¹¹ As a meta-phallic symbol – meaning a symbol of the *truth* of the phallus, which is to say absolute lack as opposed the illusion of plenitude – Fopling realizes as a concrete social possibility the aestheticization of pleasure that was the extremity of the libertine’s self–construction.¹¹² Jacques-Alain Miller claims that the phenomenon described by *surplus-jouissance* explains the phobic psychology of racism: this phobic response, much like Dorimant’s moment of panic in which he feels uncomfortably close to the thing-like Fopling, triggers a disturbing “extimity.”¹¹³ We have already seen evidence of this same affective structure when Rochester’s speaker expostulates hatefully against the foppery of the Irish in terms of their breeding (not behavior or formation) in “Tunbridge Wells,” and when several fop plays, notably *Sir Courtly Nice*, draw attention to his indigenous stupidity and almost aboriginal physicality. The fop has too much color.¹¹⁴

Even though its aggressive compliment to its libertine protagonist entailed the suggestion that foppery was in some sense the way of the world, the play’s intention is in no way to throw its hands up at wanton foppery, let alone to encourage it as a viable strategy for enjoying oneself in the face of overweening social pressures. According to John Dennis, who defended this play late in his career against Steele’s moralizing attacks in the *Spectator*, Sir Fopling’s character performs the traditional policing function of comedy, laughing the audience out of whatever similarities to Fopling they might observe.¹¹⁵ The play used satire for him to perform the self-regulation that Shaftesbury recommended transferring from didactic social policy to the new aesthetics of taste. Immediately after Addison’s theoretical sequence on true and false wit, discussed in section 4, Steele gives a heavy-handed but more penetrating critique. Attacking first the fashions around women’s mourning dress, he moves on to the recently revived *Man of Mode* to make an example of, declaring that “the Received Character of this Play [is] that it is the Pattern of Gentile [sic] Comedy” (*TS* I.278). Beginning with “the Character of Dorimant ... [who] is more of a Coxcomb than that of *Foplin*” (280), he argues at some length that the fopperies of Dorimant (meaning his libertinism) still remain perniciously attractive in his day. In the 1711 revival he refers to, Fopling was played by Colley Cibber at the height of his powers, who had over the previous decade spearheaded a series of fop roles self-consciously engaged in reforming comedy even as the fop’s trademark wig grew larger and larger.¹¹⁶ For Steele, the Cibberian fop was a harmless satire of a piece with the *Spectator*’s moral project.¹¹⁷ Dorimant, by contrast, was a tenacious remnant of the libertine world of the 1670s, and the surviving prestige of this ghost of Rochester reflected a major vein of the cultural tendencies the *Spectator* wished to clean up.¹¹⁸ Yet Dorimant’s breaches of civility scandalize Steele almost as much as Dorimant’s obvious immorality: his casual obscenity, his crude raillery with the lower-class characters, and his undignified mimicking of Fopling’s affected manners, something Addison had recently singled out as false wit.

Steele renews the attack a few numbers later, dismantling in detail the psychology of a woman nostalgically infatuated with Dorimant’s rakish charisma. This young lady tells Mr. Spectator full of grief that there is no man alive who can say “I fathom all the Depths of Womankind” (*TS* I.222–5), choosing, of all moments to swoon over, Dorimant’s blustering defiance that Loveit has temporarily one-upped him. Also reminiscent of Fopling’s plan at the end of the play to seduce the whole sex through a ballet, it suggests that Dorimant’s erotic heroism – at least how this belated audience member construed it – consisted of a similarly absurd amorous abstraction. It is doubly self-defeating, the number claims, to pine anachronistically for a character type that no longer exists in the flesh, and that would only dupe

you if he did (I.222–5). Depicting her as ridiculous and self-defeating rather than wrong, he effectively calls her out in politer language as a Rochesterian “whore in understanding” – to use imagination-fueled desire as a tool against its own excesses. Steele draws his counter-portrait of the *real* gentleman with the same *je ne sais quoi*, that “something so inexpressibly Graceful in his Words and Actions” that the young lady sought in Dorimant (B I.325). Steele’s politeness urges only a more tactful libertinism: fathoming the depths of all womankind in a more distant, spectatorial modality. Moreover, the critique ignores the obvious fact that a figure uniting erotic dominance, technical mastery of seduction, and emotional fulfillment with a rich, intelligent, and beautiful woman who sees through him and loves him anyway is a fantasy that primarily appeals to men. Dorimant appeared as the previous generation’s paragon of wit and good taste – a competing model for what an aesthetic subject could be – who needed to be cut down to the status of his abject other, the fop.

As we saw in Chapter One, Steele’s not always controlled urges to moralize could lead to accidentally untoward depictions of urges, as when he inserts a woman of pleasure in between the pleasures of the imagination. Here too his critique of “Dorimantic” temptation is most compelling when he mocks the “fopperies” of gross libertinism by adopting the fop-scourging stance Dorimant recommended, and putting himself forward as a superior man of pleasure, who knows better. By criticizing Dorimant in this manner, Steele was only developing a strain in Etherege’s own text, which seems to have only meant to discretely chasten the libertine’s ambition to pursue pleasure beyond the scope afforded by the people around him. It is Etherege who articulates the conversion from the paradoxical impossibility of wholly detached, aestheticized pleasure in which the subject disappears to the inevitable but manageable spectacle of consuming before the eyes of others. Etherege gives us a single version of the aesthetic subject: its visible and undesirable or ugly side is Fopling, and its invisible, desirable, and attractive side is Dorimant. In *The English Theophrastus: or, the Manners of the Age* (1702), Abel Boyer describes the two sides of taste that the play condenses into these two characters: on the one hand, as Dorimant tells us repeatedly, “the change of a Man’s *Taste*, or *Palate*, is as common, as that of his *Inclinations* is rare”; on the other, as Fopling demonstrates to his detriment, “we forsake our *Interests* sooner than our *Tastes*.”¹¹⁹ This binarization indicates, in Luhmann’s theoretical terms, that we are dealing with the “code” of a social system. For all its claustrophobia in the world of the play, his model is highly liveable: one accepts, as Shaftesbury would later suggest, that one could be accused of foppery because one is thrown into a social world founded on imitation, and then one improves oneself using Rochester’s virtues of “learning, honesty, and brain.” Etherege produces the idea that one could succeed in the world by purely aesthetic means, by being an informed, intelligent, and superior fop, who artfully conceals or disavows his pleasures or displaces their stigma onto someone else. One accepts taking pleasure as a consumer, namely as someone who responds to an address made by the object, while upholding the impression one takes enjoyment beyond the thoughtless automaticity of this trigger. Taking a step away from both these pleasures’ pungency and Etherege’s capacity for presenting them with rhetorical control, Steele reformats the strategy of self-aestheticization as the polite or liberal method of schooling.

4. The aesthetic subject and his double

BELLAIR: See Sir Fopling dancing.

(Etherege, *The Man of Mode*)

Etherege's major accomplishment in *The Man of Mode*, the last section argued, was to take the detached self-aestheticization he found so compelling in the Rochesterian libertine type and to develop a corresponding low comic type in the character of the fop that acts out the steps of libertine self-fashioning without any of the substance, but in a way that, according to Dryden, virtually everyone might identify with. In the fop, Etherege depicts a subject existentially committed to aesthetic artifacts and artificial social protocols that reflect him as his "creatures" – an arsenal of material signifiers surrounding him that prop his self-protective vanity – and to a principle of aesthetic consumption in which the libertine's taste of true pleasure, his "flesh and blood," is canonized and endlessly deferred. Returning briefly to Rochester, then discussing Addison's *Spectator* papers on wit, this section argues that the new aesthetics developed a concept of taste that integrated both possibilities, showing that making this link was already the central intention of the play.

In one of his most notorious stunts, Rochester allegedly placed his infamous "Scepter Lampon" in the pocket of Charles II, taking on with a pyrrhic heroism "the easiest King and best-bred man alive" (4) as the whore-in-chief. The satire restates the old complaint about a monarch's oversusceptibility to the influence of his courtiers with shockingly heightened intimacy: "Poor prince! Thy prick, like thy buffoons at Court, / Will govern thee because it makes thee sport" (14–15). Locating the influence of the "buffoons" within the corporeal zone of the royal "scepter," the speaker restates his frustration with excessive female erotic consumption in the person of the king: "Peace is his aim, his gentleness is such, / And love he loves, for he loves fucking much" (4, 8–9). Like Corinna in the "Ramble," Charles consumes brainlessly, and he turns the objects of his consumption into so many fops. The satire is thus hardly a moralization on the mollifying effects of "fucking," but is rather a phobic response to the duty to enter into the king's pleasures on such intimate terms. When he slipped this castrating performance into the king's pocket, just inches, James Turner points out, from the royal member itself, it was in place of another satire Charles had demanded. Contrasting the king's new French mistress to his previous favorite, noting "The pains it costs to poor, laborious Nelly, / Whilst she employs hands, fingers, mouth, and thighs, / Ere she can raise the member she enjoys" (29–31), the poem identifies her laborious pleasures with the same body parts employed in Rochester's role of court satirist, down to the pocket-covered thigh he was asked to penetrate with his satire. It was appropriate that an attack on the king's consumption of foppery should have hit home within the folds of the royal garment.

A similar act of royal portraiture is at issue in Addison's first sustained theoretical sequence in the *Spectator* in the series on wit. It develops Locke's account of wit as autonomous from judgment into a theory of secondary "true wit," discarding as false wit the "dangerous sense" the Rochester type illustrates so clearly, serving at the same time as a methodological reflection on Mr. Spectator's efforts.¹²⁰ True wit requires not just an ingenious combination of ideas but "one that gives *Delight* and *Surprize*" (SP I.264), whereas false wit, in Addison's model, seizes on the resemblances between letters, sounds, or gestures and leads to curious and contorted performances. This true wit is of course both the practice his moral project recommends and its chief instrument: "I shall endeavor [by taking up wit] as much as possible to establish among us a Taste of polite writing" (245). Once it comes time to give examples, he

proceeds with characteristic circumspection, opting for allegorical suggestiveness rather than finger-pointing. He illustrates false wit with a picture of Charles I in which all the hairs and lines of the face are text from the book of Psalms. This supremely odd example of this most common of occurrences is itself a witty choice because such things are not met with every day. It allows him to sneer at an overworked Baroque aesthetic and fetishistic royalist political sentiments without having to explain himself. Worse still, he adds, someone “has transcribed all the Old Testament in a full-bottom’d Perriwig” designed for King William (248). This was a ludicrous, next-level escalation of the poetical rendition of a monarch as Biblical character Dryden had pioneered, and one plainly allied with the signature gigantism of the fop’s wig. Offering an absurdly massive text-wig to King William was an even more strikingly indiscreet attempt to turn the king into a fop than Rochester’s placing a “terrible lampoon” in his pocket. Addison figured the bad Restoration wit he sought to distance himself from as an overwrought, psalmically ecstatic delineation of the sovereign’s secondary sex characteristics. He intimates its not very different successor is the super-sized and less thought-through fop. The fop walks on stage wearing a massive “Fair full-bottomed Perriwig” as if he were Addison’s Biblically proportioned text-wig come to life.¹²¹

Addison stays with this example long enough to suggest it had a special fascination for him. As we have seen, the pieces on wit were a privileged site of reflection on Mr. Spectator’s aims and methods, and his famously low profile could take no shape other than in the lines of the paper’s numbers.¹²² The text is evidently fascinated with an artifact that mediates personality indirectly through traces imbued with devotional pleasure. The “bad wit” of a walking and almost (or automatically) talking wig was not entirely unconnected to the *Spectator*’s project: if no other way, we recall that readers were instructed to place their letters to Mr. Spectator into a lion’s mouth, an aperture just inches from the simulacrum of a royal mane.¹²³ A more serious piece of baroque wit in royal representation was Hobbes’s famous frontispiece to *Leviathan* (Fig. 5). The image illustrates the relationship between the sovereign and his subjects in terms of an exchange of gazes: the king looks frontally out at the viewer, while the people, who cover the king’s body like a swarming mass of parasites and look inward, look away from the viewer. Instead of creating an exchange of gazes to illustrate a reciprocal fantasy of unity, the image illustrates a relationship of double contingency by placing the gazes of the sovereign and the subjects on different representational planes so that they are conjoined only where no mutual recognition is possible. Because the viewer only see the backs of the heads of the people, mostly covered with hats, these seem like a multitude of tiny hieroglyphic eyeballs bearing witness to the king-focused gazes we do not actually see. The image thus enlists the viewer into the ranks of the people staring at the sovereign symbol while preserving the impression of detachment from the masses.

The image thus illustrates nicely the relationship between Mr. Spectator and his audience. They look up to the royal symbol, a literal big-wig, their gazes powerfully drawn towards the apex of this great being of which they are themselves unconsciously a part. As for the king, like Mr. Spectator, he has no positively articulated body independent of the subjects that constitute him substitutively. In spite of the image’s pyramidal composition, it clearly defines the sovereign’s authority in terms of the governed people rather than a transcendent principle, and it illustrates that relationship in terms of spectatorship. Instead of having two bodies, the king’s body has two parts: the visible part above the neck (as well as the hand) and the invisible part, which shapes the mass of subjects using lines of cross-hatching, particularly visible in the

shoulder, underarm and neck areas. These shadow-cuts become particularly prominent around the neck, until they concentrate in the point where the king's head floats detached over the vast material matrix of his subjects, recapitulating visually the trauma of royal decapitation that the text responds to thematically. According to this image, the Hobbesian sovereign draws his subjects towards himself as consumers, simultaneously shaping them invisibly through their desiring gazes, while they constitute his flesh. This circular relationship of consumption and constitution bonds both parties negatively, unlike a circular relay of connected gazes that upholds the fantasy of communal presence. The *Spectator* acts out the urge, so pronounced in Rochester, to play the king while castrating him in effigy.

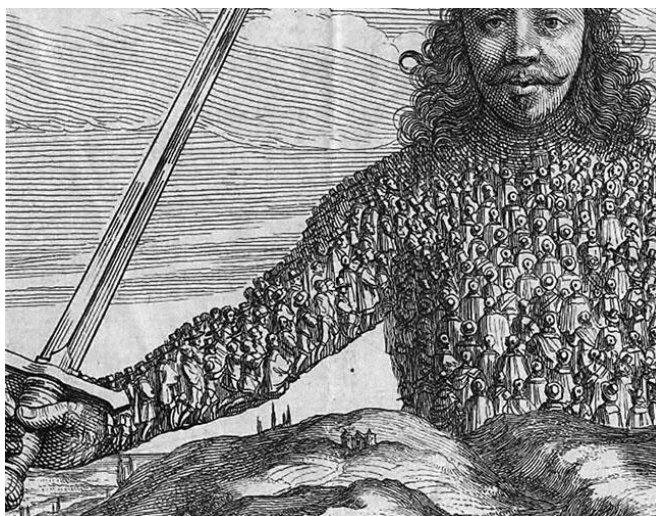


Fig. 5. Abraham Bosse, *Frontispiece* to Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (detail). 1651. Engraving.

It is perhaps not remarked enough that Addison loved Spenserian allegory and made frequent clever essays in this direction in the pages of the *Spectator*, including his final contribution to the series on wit. That number manages his own investment in claiming to practice true wit by pivoting to an allegorical dream in which the figure of Wit – suspiciously resembling Cupid – prepares to hand Mr Spectator his weapon: “As I was gazing on him to my unspeakable Joy, he took a Quiver of Arrows from his Shoulder, in order to make me a Present of it, but as I was reaching out my Hand to receive it of him, I knocked it against a Chair and by that means awaked” (I.274). The speaker is just about to receive wit’s arrows when a third ambiguous “it” transforms the quiver into his hand in the process of reaching rather absurdly for it knows not what in waking life. This moment of self-reflection on the *Spectator*’s methods for “encouraging” good taste succeeds as a piece of true wit in Addison’s terms not because it associates wit with a quiver of arrows (deploying a conventional image), nor because it plays on the repetition of “it” to conflate the arrows with the writer’s hand (a gesture dangerously close to the grammatology of false wit), but because in a (predictably?) surprising twist the speaker is left empty-handed – until, that is, he picks up his pen to write.

Etherege’s fictionalization of Rochester into Dorimant translates the Scepter Lamoon’s attack on the sovereign of its spectacular surplus of flesh from the court to “the town,” in which

Fopling plays the part of the sovereign consumer.¹²⁴ Whereas Rochester's speakers erupt in rage towards some other that dominates them – the whorish lover, the king, the subject's own uncooperative body – Etherege develops a character equally passionate, pleasure-driven, and capable, but his dramatic development is organized around the social forces that allow the libertine subject to prevail while keeping the paroxistic moment of acting out contained and effectively managed, yet without denying or even displacing the core combusive impulse. The unspoken source of Fopling's ability to take up space in the play is his evidently great wealth, in contrast with Dorimant, who must seek marriage “to repair the ruins of my estate that needs it” (V.2.271) – or so he tells Loveit.

Instead of attacking the misuse of wealth, the play critiques Fopling for his lack of social graces, the rule of taste which reigns supreme in this play. He sneers snobbishly at Lady Townley's use of less expensive tallow candles – “How can you breathe in a room where there is grease frying?” he asks – rudely insulting his hostess by failing to observe the differences between what he can choose to afford and what others can. This “proudest, peremptoriest” attitude – these overswollen hyperboles are Rochester's epithets for daring to be a royal prick – is diametrically opposed to the pathetically aspirational *bourgeois*. Speaking for an aristocracy on the defensive from below, the play proposes to control this “tyrannus” of fashion by using Fopling's anxious relation to his own pleasure. The play places true taste beyond the entire world of present signifiers and into the natural manner signifiable only as an absence, the *je ne sais quoi*. At the same time, the play shows that the solipsistically inclined posture of libertinism could motivate an emotionally credible romance between Dorimant and Harriet because this very disposition can be identified in others. When she shoos away the meddling servant, no less than when she finishes his lyric, the audience knows without having to be told. Rochester's most powerful figure for the quiescence of paradox is the image of two boys embracing on the wine-bowl anacreontic, in which all personal identity flushes to the surface and becomes legible as an undifferentiated vegetal tumescence.¹²⁵ Etherege utterly blocks this possibility, or aims to transform it into the standard marriage plot. No less than Dorimant, the sidekick Medley, the “soul of gossip” before whom he must keep face, must remain a spectator. “You see,” he tells Dorimant, “I confine my tongue and am content to be a bare spectator, much contrary to my nature” (IV.1.91–2).

The inevitability of spectatorship in the play is the inevitability of consuming as a consumer. The play figures a positive and a negative relation to the same imperative in the parallel between Fopling's relation to the mirror and Dorimant's relation to Fopling. While Dorimant undergoes his moment of “paroxysm” at the end of Act 3, the climax of the play for Fopling is the bedroom scene with Dorimant in Act 4. It is at this point the play takes one foot out of the world in which taste equals fixed aristocratic prestige and places a foot into the world of the new semantics of taste disseminated by Shaftesbury and the *Spectator* in which it means avoiding foppery. The mirror is seemingly the perfect emblem of foppery and yet Etherege's fop accesses a measure of sympathetic pathos only because the play consistently denies it to him. We are in fact never given the primal scene of foppery we expect, a moment of narcissistic plenitude where the fop stares lovingly at himself. His entrances, already discussed, in Act III and V both present him still fussing over his appearance, as if all the time to adjust himself beforehand had run out. He would cast a far different figure if he appeared like “the Hector of France” before a hall of mirrors. As he prepares to woo Loveit, Fopling tests out his love-song on Dorimant, and upon receiving a sardonic minimum of encouragement he describes his proposed delivery

strategy: “slap down goes the glass [of his carriage window], and thus we are at it” (IV.2.143), implying he will not even risk exiting the protective space of his own vehicle to proffer this performance. As throughout the play, he finds himself irresistibly compelled to draw aside this reflective surface and open an aperture onto the social world that will test him. He has not chosen to stay home and stare at himself in the mirror pretending to be Dorimant. Nothing draws him out more powerfully than the urge to put himself in the withering presence of the real thing. The fop’s detached, solipsistic devotion to the imaginary pleasures of looking is completely subordinated to the far more unpredictable discipline of being looked at.

The climax of the play for Fopling occurs when, very drunk, he bursts into Dorimant’s dressing room at the break of dawn along with Medley and a whole entourage. The play plainly indicates the powerful homosocial longing that draws Fopling, the not entirely unfoppish Medley, and us the audience, as close as possible to the primal scene of erotic consummation with Bellinda, who has been rushed out the door seconds before. In a converse fashion to Fopling’s tentative aperture onto the punishing real of other people, Dorimant greets the intrusion of all three men – Medley (who knows exactly what has just happened), Bellair (who plays along), and Fopling (who tactlessly asks for a confession) – with triumphant equanimity and evident relish. By drawing all three kinds of male peer spectators to the steaming aftermath – Dorimant immediately brags, “Nature has done her part, gentlemen...” (IV.2.76) – the play draws attention to the fact that Dorimant never seeks pleasure without an audience nearby. He charms Harriet by telling her that “you have filled [my heart] with a secret” (V.2.116), and the same is literally true of his brief tryst with Bellinda: she provides him with a secret he can ostentatiously display before the other men. Much earlier, the play hinted at the libertine’s parallel to the fop’s sentimental homoeroticism in the more act-based register by insinuating in the very first scene that the dense homosocial cabal with Medley could shade into sodomitical tendencies, at least to the Orange Woman, who exclaims, apparently unaccustomed to their refined French manners, “Lord, what a filthy trick these men have got of kissing one another! [*She spits*]” (I.1.64–5).

Just as the male banter validating Dorimant’s erotic accomplishment takes shape, Fopling begins to drunkenly dance on his own, ending the company’s caresses and prompting Bellair to change the subject, noting dryly, “See Sir Fopling dancing” (IV.2.90). Dramatically, Fopling’s absurdity creates a dissent from the homosocial exchange as well as a naked image of the self-satisfaction Dorimant feels in this moment but knows how to hide.¹²⁶ In this pivotal moment, the gesture of aestheticization the fop represents reveals its potential for critical dissent, and he steps out of Dorimant’s and into his own light. Or, one might say, into his own darkness, since his act of detachment entails making productive use of his own capacity for unconsciousness, momentarily gliding on the wings of self-induced obliviousness out of Dorimant’s entrapment. Emerging from his self-involution, Fopling suddenly wonders why there is no mirror in Dorimant’s dressing room. Bellair rebukes him, assuming he wishes to observe himself, until Fopling explains: “But I mean in case of being alone. In a glass a man may entertain himself—” at which point Dorimant interrupts him: “the shadow of himself indeed” (97–99).

During his solitary divagation, Fopling has imagined himself into Dorimant’s chambers when the company is not around, and instead of imagining the woman that has just left, as the other men have been evidently doing, he wonders how Dorimant achieves being such “a pretty fellow and wear’st thy clothes well” without a mirror in which a man might “correct the errors of his motions and his dress” (IV.2.106, 101–2). The play has already told us something about

mirrors: Loveit's first words upon coming on stage are to her mirror: "I hate myself. I look so ill today" (II.2.3), indicating that before anyone has told her she will be the big loser in the play she looks in the mirror *and knows*. Unlike Loveit, who is fated to encounter the ugly truth of her object of desire, both Fopling and Dorimant manage to successfully displace the recognition of their mediated desire. Dorimant blames his desire for homosocial recognition on the vacuous fop, a completely familiar phobic step, in Restoration comedy and elsewhere. Treating sex like mere "flesh and blood" is the artifice that allows him to elude the ridicule – at least until Medley's gossip-engine is unleashed on the town – that would otherwise accrue to the foppish longing for homosocial validation. Fopling takes the less familiar, supplementary step of displacing his desire for recognition from Dorimant onto the material object of the mirror. (To stage this scene without any hint of a mirror tacitly grants Dorimant a spontaneous and unstudied sartorial genius that has no use for a mirror, which I have been arguing the play attempts to qualify; my interpretation might suggest intimating that a mirror is somehow hidden in the room). With a convulsive automaticity, Fopling steps out of the scene of homosocial validation, in which he is necessarily the loser, and into a gnomically gestural instance of the aesthetic: instead of facing what he is to the other men, he goes into a dance, which blossoms into a full-scale ballet in the last act. All his signifiers, this pivotal moment implies, substitute for the mirror in the same way that his presence for Dorimant substitutes for the mirror to Dorimant. This moment is irritating to Dorimant, who interrupts him with "the shadow of himself indeed," because it registers ironically that Fopling has uncomfortably given body to his own structure of motivation best left shadowy. As the Chevalier de Méré had said of the principle of *bien-séance* he aspires towards, the "high taste of *bien-séance*" reads what is unspoken in the hearts of others: "this discernment, which penetrates what the senses do not see" and even includes "that which one wants to say oneself."¹²⁷

Fopling's wonder, of course, is that Dorimant achieves such success without the need he so poignantly feels to continually "correct the errors of his motions and his dress" (*M* IV.2.82–88). The play presents Dorimant not as a spontaneous genius but as a canny strategist capable of revision; it is only skeptical of the laborious self-correction when, as Shaftesbury put it, this was "taking his Physic in publick" (*S* 103). The play's erotic ethos stresses privacy, confining the pleasure Rochester's speaker insecurely observes in the rambling topography of St. James's Park to the cameral domestic enclosure, in which the information must be kept as secret as the act itself. Yet while none of the men know for sure the object of his "irregular fit" of nature (*M* IV.3.74) the fact of there being a secret is extravagantly placed on display. The play suggests that putting "flesh and blood" on display for an audience as a secret is a strategically viable avenue for the gratification of desire without crisis, an instance of Rochesterian (self-) "reforming will." The play's great claim, asserted plainly in the plot from the first, is that the modern man of pleasure requires an audience of fops to extend and stabilize his enjoyments: this presence serves him in place of the self-corrective "saying of the wise man [to] study oneself" (2.103–4), which is Bellair's scornful gloss on his demand for a mirror. The play adds onto the sensual and imaginary pleasures of the raw Rochester type a secondary imaginary pleasure in keeping around the fop, who is a visible nothingness. For Etherege's libertine, the enclosure of pleasure in a domestic space was a ruse of erotic reason. The play suggests that the erotic absolutism of visible, public possession is good only for a Loveit. Both Dorimant and Fopling enjoy

themselves under the cover of privacy and the regulating mediation of others. The text renders the lure of the private person – which is the source of the fascination that accrues to Fopling as much as to Dorimant – as the fashioning of an open secret.¹²⁸

Dorimant's strategy, ironically enough, was the very shift to socially mediated secondary aesthetic pleasures that the *Spectator* recommended. He practices the liberal enclosure of pleasure into the domestic space better than Steele does when he “meddles” with Sir Roger's character by placing him far too close to a woman of pleasure. What galled the *Spectator* was that he aestheticized his pleasures, submitting them to social mediation, without the alibi of normative propriety. The sticking point for Steele was Dorimant's undignified penchant for mimicry – which he used both to court Harriet and to bully Fopling – because this piece of citationality puts on display the contortions required to achieve the natural manner. Dorimant's manners showed those promoted by the *Spectator* to be foppish apery, and it responded to him with the same irritation he feels for the fop who enshrines his own need for emulative validation. Of course, the *Spectator* sincerely thought that it was putting to salutary public use the aestheticization of pleasure that a libertine like Dorimant deploys egotistically. Yet it was reluctant to admit where the social technology of governing tastes through secondary pleasures of the imagination originated. It sought to govern the public in the same way that Dorimant governs Fopling, ascribing much better motives to itself.

The genre of comedy was not the place, as the novel discussed in Chapter Three will be, to think through what an aesthetic education might look like. Etherege's fop professes to spend all his hours of retirement in self-correction, but he ultimately learns even less than Dorimant, who accepts with gritted teeth being told that he must “learn to bear being laughed at.” Given that Fopling has so completely internalized the need for what Shaftesbury called the rule of ridicule, and that he manages to attract its most ungently corrective counterparts, we delight in his solipsistic escape from these exigencies, no less than we do in Dorimant's escape from the Rochesterian subject's moment of self-undoing. When Harriet and Bellair enact their parody of marriage, cheerfully declaiming they will never marry, they do so for the audience of their parents who look on at a distance and think them in earnest. As we have seen, the play's final resolution leaves room for doubt that its own commitment to comic resolution in marriage is any more certain. But it displays two things: the duty to aestheticize one's pleasures as a challenging demand, whether one adopts it well or stupidly, and the secret joy of steering spectators, whether one takes joy in manipulating others like Dorimant or whether one finds like the fop sufficient bliss in handling oneself.

We have seen that Etherege's seminal early comedy of taste sets up a neat binary between the libertine man of taste and his foppish imitator. The picture of an ideally detached spectator Addison fashions in *Cato* harnesses both the libertine's capacity to work up an effect of natural detachment while playing to his audience and the fop's ability to use his own unconsciousness strategically. Etherege illustrates the new aesthetic subject because when he splits the man of taste into characters that represent its success and its failure he shifts the burden of visibility to the fop and places the duty to disappear on the man of taste.

Returning to the fop at the origin of modern aesthetics – a character intended as the prototype of the modern consumer – is necessarily irritating. First, it reveals the dependence of aesthetic judgment on purely emulative social mediation. The *sensus communis* walks on stage as a royally proportioned whore in understanding, whose various modes from various fathers flow. In this figure the lack of presence that defines the secondary aestheticization of pleasure

takes shape as a visible nothingness. Second, as a contorted, monstrous attempt at the aesthetically renaturalized manner, he reveals the self-discipline that the successful subject of taste must conceal in order to appear natural. Third, as the object of bullying manipulation at the bottom of which is the fantastical lure of a scene of pleasure which is kept secret, the fop makes visible the pleasure that the aestheticizing reformer of manners takes in governing the masses. Finally, he articulates an affective dissent from the reality of competition – flitting into dance, song, his cache of signifiers – without exiting the scene of competition itself. The fop uses self-aestheticization as an alternative to the anguished and hateful resistance to dominating powers exhibited by Rochester’s libertine. One could think of his strategy as a non-resistance, or (because it is not ultimately even consciously oppositional) a bare *sistence*: like Charles’ aging behind, he merely sits there passively on his imaginary throne, crowned by his massive peruke, wielding his cravat like a scepter that he owns is, like the “pride” shining on the world “in vain” in Dorimant’s opening couplet, made of borrowed gold.¹²⁹ He exhibits nakedly the function of aesthetic subjectivity to take up space, to generate a protective zone for the subject by means of a secret pleasure whose essential purpose is to be bared for others. Within the liberalized and commercially inclined setting he stands for, the fop makes a parody both of himself and of the social system that produced him. In an ultimately evanescent manner, the fop lends his outmoded figure to the aesthetic’s capacity, through the mere power of holding his own space, to irritate his world to some measure out of its dominating pride. Beyond this, as the democratic incarnation of libertine subjectivity, he kept alive, in the mediated and ultimately solitary form of the consumer’s bliss, the belief that pleasure could be a vehicle for truth, or as Rochester put it, that “There’s something gen’rous in meer Lust” (“Ramble,” 98).

Coda: The fop’s erotic education

The fop’s fate was ultimately not very different from that of the libertine he attempted – sometimes literally, as in the cravat scene – to refashion. Within two generations, the universal appeal Dryden asserted this figure should make, and which Behn’s contemporary fop play echoed, receded as the fop type became entangled with the idea of perversion. Rather than offering an enduring representative of the new aesthetic, the fop of the 1670s offers a window into the culture of taste in its genesis. As soon as the fop figured one distinct *goût particulier* instead of a runaway version of the universal penchant for imitation, he could no longer figure the transmutation of the libertine’s self-aestheticization into socially mediated aesthetic detachment. It is at this point that other figures, like that of the connoisseur analyzed in Chapter Four, stabilized aesthetic subjectivity by providing a reassuring framework within which one could pursue “true taste” with a minimal risk of finding oneself in the solipsistic condition of the pervert.

The key transformation, of course, was the gradual “outing” of the fop’s latent homosexualization after what Randolph Trumbach has suggestively called the “great paradigm shift” in the history of male sexuality.¹³⁰ Fop plays have been a constant source for historians of sexuality, and the first fop homosexualized enough to crack through the always-diaphanous veneer of innuendo is the hyper-effeminized fop Maiden in Thomas Baker’s *Tunbridge Walks* (1703).¹³¹ The identification did not stick as a broader category shift right away, in part because it entailed draining off the prestige that was still attached to the libertine non-dentitarian practice

of sodomy.¹³² We glimpsed this furtively in the first scene of Etherege's play, and Rochester's *oeuvre* includes more than a handful of moments of indifference about whether his priapic ardor addresses a masculine or feminine object.¹³³

One important factor that delayed the homosexualization of the fop across the board was Colley Cibber's long career as a successful fop actor in the old universally appealing mode of Restoration comedy. Beginning with *Love's Last Shift* (1696) and its sequel Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* (1696), his increasingly cleaned-up comedy shifted the dramatic emphasis further still towards the fop parts, which he excelled at playing.¹³⁴ Yet hints of an abiding peculiarity about the fop begins to creep in, as when Elder Worthy introduces Sir Novelty Fashion as

one that heaven intended for a man; but the whole business of his life is, to make the world believe he is of another species. A thing that affects mightily to ridicule himself, only to give others a kind of necessity of praising him. I can't say he's a slave to any new fashion, for he pretends to be master of it, and is ever reviving some old, or advancing some new piece of foppery; and though it don't take, is still as well pleased, because it then obliges the town to take the more notice of him: He's so fond of a public reputation, that he is more extravagant in his attempts to gain it, than the fool that fired Diana's temple to immortalize his name.¹³⁵

The passage condenses and pushes further the major parameters of Etherege's fop, noting the strategic anachronism and independence from the law of fashion, the conscious courting of ridicule, morphing Fopling's lighthearted bonhomie into a more deliberate analysis of reputation, and then situating it within the more sharply delimited cultural space of the town. Somehow, it now makes sense to speak of "the whole business of his life," whereas Fopling's existence was so frivolous – and his circumstances so financially independent – that he could scarcely be said to have business of any kind, let alone a life. In short, one begins to suspect this devotee to style is "of another species," and a clear symptom is the demotion of the absolutist trope of a grand ballet for one, which clearly evoked the fire of the Sun King (or, in the context of our investigation, Dryden's pyromaniac Alexander) to the perverse fool who fired Diana's temple for his fifteen minutes of fame.

Nevertheless, Cibber's acting could hold together the persona of the effeminate presumed-heterosexual and regally self-performing foppish man well into the 1730s, welcoming the audience's laughs along with their cash. A major ingredient of Cibber's success was that he managed to appropriate and translate into a self-parodic register the sublime reality effect that Etherege deployed so successfully around Dorimant as a fictionalization of Rochester. Everyone knew that Cibber "had himself a touch of the fop" and his candor in playing to their laughs – which reiterated Dorimant's affectation of natural manners in a farcical mode – lent his audiences an abiding, perhaps even endearing fascination with his character. As late as Bramson's *The Man of Taste* in 1735, which is devoted to wheeling out as many tropes as possible of a much more developed cultural semantics of tastefulness, Cibber plays the grandly self-parodic, wantonly performative but otherwise unperverted fop. Tellingly, in that play the dramatic interest begins to shift away from the fluttery fop himself, the erstwhile representative of self-aestheticization, and onto the new dogmatism of the would-be connoisseur, Sir Positive Bubble, whose name condenses the paradox of his character with apt transparency. Rejected in the last scene, Sir Positive wishes for a mirror to see how ridiculous he must look: "Oh I burst! I

rave! How could I buffet myself; – I wish I had a Glass here, only to see how like an Owl and a Buzzard I must look, after gulling myself in such a lovely Manner.”¹³⁶ By this point, the fop no longer holds the mirror and no longer exerts a monopoly over the figural condensation of reflexively detached aesthetic experience, in a positive or in a negative sense.

One finds evidence that the homosexualization of the fop has taken in earnest in David Garrick’s important and highly successful 1748 farce *Miss in Her Teens*, in which the great actor plays his creation Fribble, which quickly yielded the by-word “Fribblish” for the settling of foppery into perversion.¹³⁷ Gone was the silly self-serious solemnity of the Cibberian fop, which could still feel like a parodic duplication of sovereign power earlier in the century.¹³⁸ Written for Garrick’s almost histrionically expressive acting style, the one-act farce is a well-formed piece of modern homophobia with a clear idea of its satirical object’s identity, including strange psychological depths it dares not explore too closely, placing him within a rather too joyful bachelor knitting circle that lends him the shadow of a differently perverse interiority. It does not wholly erase the potentially universal import of the fop character and all “flesh and blood” heterosexual aims, but Cibber’s suspicion has now matured into the distinct idea that there was something monstrous about the character he was playing: “thou art a species too despicable for correction,” as the Captain will exclaim to Fribble.¹³⁹ It is as if Dorimant’s throwaway moment of mockery (“now for a touch of Sir Fopling”) once banished by the *Spectator* has been brought back in and developed into the entire play, excused on the grounds of its instructive, or perhaps merely interesting, psychological acumen. By comparison to Garrick’s vehement plasticity of expression, the hyper-theatrical Cibberian fop must have retrospectively seemed like an impassively stuffed bubble, stiff and stagy. Garrick’s character inhabits an aesthetic world defined by the psychological development possible in long-form prose fiction; just a year later, we find an important early hostile depiction of a character defined by same-sex desire in Smollett’s *Roderick Random* (1748).¹⁴⁰ For Garrick, a new ambivalence surfaces: can this subject be reeducated or is he beyond hope, and if so are the aesthetic methods of the drama sufficient? In the world of Restoration comedy – and even in the world of Cibber and the *Spectator* – the reforming effects of images of foppery went without saying.

It would take Sheridan in the 1770s to reinvent foppery without the imputation of an abiding perversion, but at that point we are already on the threshold of the new social type of the dandy, eventually epitomized during the Regency period in Beau Brummell. In 1751, however, we already encounter an important development of the fop type in a completely different direction from Garrick in John Cleland’s *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*.¹⁴¹ Taking distance from the old fop (“one who has not the honour to be a coxcomb; there is not stuff in him to reach that character”) and still more from the Fribble (“this no-species ... a silly insipid simper in their countenances”), Cleland defines the coxcomb as a special pitch of vanity legible in the body: “the gravity of an apothecary, who carries his profession printed in his face, is not less a symptom of coxcombry, than a hat and feather in a declared beau... [the] term is of such extensive comprehension, that it takes in near the whole race of mankind, from the throne to the peasant’s cottage.”¹⁴² Universalizing the perversity, a queerness (in both his and our senses) that settled in the Fribblerian type, it still named an abiding peculiarity of character following from foolish involution. Beginning with “So delicate is the pleasure, so superior to defending, is the dignity of confessing one’s follies, that the wonder is so few are capable of it” (39), the redemption promised by the confessional mode the narrator strains just a bit overmuch at is undercut by the quivering “so delicate the pleasure” in reliving it. See Sir Coxcomb confess:

going back to “th[e] seeds of coxcombry,” he explains that “my intense wish to please had even a greater share than my vanity” (49), as pellucid a statement of the *surplus-jouissance* of foppery as one could wish for.¹⁴³ On the one hand, his displacement to the desire of others constantly gets in the way of his own pleasures: “coxcombry is certainly not the vice of a lover. That passion never produces, and generally cures, where it finds, it” (60–1). On the other, he continues the good old cause of the 1670s in a new key: “even our most sensual gratifications were those of rational votaries to pleasure, and had nothing of the grossness of tavern-bacchanals, or brothel-orgies: comparatively too with which I may venture to lay down the maxim, that true taste not only adds to the pleasures of life, but moderates the expenses of them” (102–3). He pushes the Rochesterian “reforming will” all the way to sensible bookkeeping. In an important brothel scene, when his friend, a connoisseur of such women, asks him to choose a partner and he does so poorly, nevertheless “every one of us behaved at least, as if we liked each our partner. I was not come there to give myself the airs of a young Cato, and went of course with the current” (158–9). Yet there was, after all, a touch of the Cato in such stoic commitment to detached spectatorship, in the narration if not in the character.

In sum, where Garrick makes the fop visible as a pervert, draining the type he descends from of validity as an aesthetic subject to all but the ladies who consume whatever it is he offers, in Cleland a mode of consciousness very close to the fop’s furtively dares to a full-scale novelistic treatment. This anti-fop, who displays all the self-reflectiveness the old fop is incapable of, nevertheless still delivers the same performative critique of the discursively highly developed culture of tastefulness from within, appealing, just as Milton did, to a “true taste,” through “so delicate a pleasure” in remembering the truth of what he was, and perhaps still is. This was a highly mediated, although more timidly vocalized version of the libertine pleasures that could be celebrated during the Restoration, but the narrative nevertheless crowns its protagonist’s self-aestheticization with shame. With completely different cultural politics than Garrick’s, the novel nevertheless makes its core subject, the desire to please others by means of one’s own pleasures – the foppish desire at the heart of any aesthetic subject assuming a figurative shape, and which Cleland thinks even Addison required in his ideal gentleman – just as suspect as any Fribble or Daffodil could, at least until the confessional mode could shake off or transmute the shame of taste into a glory with the greater cultural and artistic resources available to a Rousseau, a Byron, or a de Quincey. It is at this point that we look back to Defoe’s famous early novel, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), for evidence of a self-directed aesthetic education that Fopling, Dorimant, Cato, and their successors leave behind the scene.¹⁴⁴

Notes to Chapter Two

¹ In a similar vein, Catherine Gallagher speaks of “vanishing acts” as projections of personal elusiveness, which “themselves are discoverable only as historical occurrences” in *Nobody’s Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1994), xviii.

² On this development more broadly in the eighteenth century, see the classic account in Arthur O. Lovejoy, “‘Nature’ as Aesthetic Norm,” *Modern Language Notes* 42:7 (1927), 105–112.

³ For historiographical reasons to adopt “liberalism” over “republicanism” (or “Whig”), see Annabel Patterson, *Early Modern Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 3–6. Politically, Cato is a republican hero; as a model of spectatorship, I will be arguing, he serves the broader function of exemplifying Addison’s ideal of aesthetic detachment, a broader and less politically specific “liberal” model.

⁴ For example: “The simplicity [of nature] which delights children. Gaudy, striking. ‘Itself a spectacle not the medium by which other spectacles, views are created, raised, exhibited’. Colors the instruments, not the subject-matter. Means: not end. Imitation, lesson, instruction, pedagogy of the eye: to make it learned, erudite, polite, acute, judicious in its choice and discernment of objects; in its fruition of beauty, its taste of good, by which its pleasure consistent and lasting, and by which by easy transition the mind learns its art and fruition: the moral pictures known and proportions discovered” in *Second Characters, or the Language of Forms by the Right Honorable Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. Benjamin Rand (Cambridge, 1914; repr. New York: Greenwood Press, 1969), 146. Note the strict emphasis on “gaudy” spectacular surface appearance. The “pedagogy of the eye” appeals to the spontaneity of the child not as an index of truth, but only in order to make it “learned, erudite, polite.”

⁵ For Shaftesbury’s relation to Locke, see Robert Voitle, *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury, 1671–1713* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1984), 118–21.

⁶ Shaftesbury was no reckless profligate, but the worry about imaginative attachments strikes a definite personal note. It is particularly notable that the first item in his list is “frontispieces,” which presumably occupy only the most precociously literary of youths. Moreover, Shaftesbury is known to have gone to unusually great lengths to craft the frontispieces of *Characteristicks*. For a full account, see Felix Paknadel, “Shaftesbury’s Illustrations of Characteristics,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974), 290–312.

⁷ Shaftesbury delayed publication of his first significant works until after Locke’s death in order to avoid seeming to attack him. The most revealing discussion of his tutor occurs in an important 1709 letter to General Stanhope, where he concedes that Locke is “of admirable use against the rubbish of the schools in which most of us have been bred up” but he staunchly rejects Locke’s relativist conclusion that words are artifacts of social consensus and the possibility of an empirically specifiable “law for fashion and opinion” (meaning a sociological analysis of judgments of taste), insisting instead that “harmony is harmony *by nature*.” His final dismissal occurs in the same register as that of the nasty gentleman: “Had Mr Locke been a *virtuoso*, he would never have philosophized thus.” The letter was first published in *Several Letters Written by a Noble Lord to a Young Man at the University* (London, 1716). I cite here from *The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury*, ed. Benjamin Rand (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1900), 417.

⁸ Summarizing recent work on the social history of consumption, Frank Trentmann argues against a narrow focus on “consumerism” but still upholds the argument for a pronounced shift in the history of consumption, as does Maxine Berg in her material history of luxury goods in the eighteenth century. See respectively “Beyond Consumerism: New Historical Perspectives on Consumption” *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 3 (July 2004): 373–401 and *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005), 1–46, esp. 23.

⁹ In the prefatory dedication to *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, Locke writes: “For Errours in education should be less indulged than any: These, like Faults in the first Concoction, that are never mended in the second or third, carry their afterwards-incorrigible Taint with them, through all the parts and stations of Life” (80).

¹⁰ Baltasar Gracián, discussed further in section 2, had also clearly recognized this possibility: “nor, in avoiding affectation, should you end up being affected by affecting not to be so” (*O* 46).

¹¹ For a fuller discussion of how Shaftesbury deploys the figure of the club, see Ch.1, sect. 2.

¹² Shaftesbury’s tutor Locke repeatedly stresses the importance of early instructions in dancing, which he states almost in terms of the *je ne sais quoi*: “For, though this consist only in outward gracefulness, yet, I know not how, it gives children manly thoughts and carriage, more than anything” (TE §67).

¹³ Luhmann argues at length that the medium of the art system is defined by the ornament. Because it displays “the unity of redundancy and variety,” the ornament “generates its own imaginary space ... it holds the artwork together, precisely because it does not partake in its figurative division” (*AS* 120). Citing Hogarth’s theory of the line of beauty, which I discuss in Chapter Four, Luhmann argues that one receives “from the ornament the electrical charge that accounts for [a work’s] artistic quality” (121). The fop, this chapter will go on to argue, embodies dramatically these functions of the ornament: parodically holding together the unity of variety and redundancy, he generates his own imaginary space and holds the social world of the play together because of his exteriority. “One expects,” Luhmann adds, “art to keep decoration under control” (121).

¹⁴ Rochester’s (in)famous death-bed conversion was a spectacular abdication of the demand dearest to Shaftesbury, that one die as one lived. For an account, see James William Johnson, *A Profane Wit: The Life of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 327–43.

¹⁵ Shaftesbury, whose “rhapsodic” mode was fully on display in *The Moralists*, is frequently regarded as an important precursor of Romantic sensibility; see for example, James Engell, *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1981), 22. Documenting his influence on the French tradition of sensibility, Dorothy B. Schlegel, *Shaftesbury and the French Deists* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1956), goes so far as to call Rousseau the “popularizer” of Shaftesbury’s philosophy (99). For the differing view that his sentimental optimism is much overrated, because it “would fail to convince those most in need of convincing,” see John Andrew Bernstein, *Shaftesbury, Rousseau, and Kant* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1980), 29.

¹⁶ For *Cato* as a central linking point between eighteenth-century sentimentality and republicanism, noting its many imitators and abiding cultural relevance throughout the eighteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic, see Julie Ellison, *Cato’s Tears: The Making of Anglo-American Emotion* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999), 17, 49–73.

¹⁷ *Cato’s Tears*, 70, where she also notes that this strategy was highly significant for Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

¹⁸ *C* 5–6, lines 38–44. The prologue is hereafter cited parenthetically by line number in the text.

¹⁹ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes begins with the same need for the regulation of desire in the state of nature that Rochester points to and derives from it a justification for the artificial absolutist sovereign. The couplet cited earlier in this paragraph amply shows that Rochester could not follow Hobbes in this step, at least not in the literal sense of monarchic sovereignty Hobbes seemed to endorse. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

²⁰ The “reforming will” passage used as an epigraph to this section occurs in “A Satyre against Reason and Mankind,” R 57–62, lines 99–107. I hereafter cite from this poem by line number in the text.

²¹ *Leviathan*, 15ff.

²² James Grantham Turner argues for the coherence of the experience of paradox in a specifically erotic field as “erotic heroism” in “The Libertine Sublime: Love and Death in Restoration England,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 19 (1989), 99–115, where “fire excess, height, greatness, ‘sublimity’, transcendence, in the intensity of pleasure and refinement of taste that combine into the word ‘gust’ – all these are transferred from courtly Romance to bravura sexual performance.” He gives a fuller account centered on Rochester in *Libertines and Radicals in Early Modern London* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 197–251. Earlier love poetry frequently explored paradox in a less achingly physicalized manner, notably in John Donne; see for example A. E. Malloch, “The Technique and Function of the Renaissance Paradox,” *Studies in Philology* 53 (1956), 191–203. I suggest, in spite of some measure of historical anachronism, that these moments of paroxysm can be thought of as “limit-experiences,” on which see Martin Jay, “The Limits of Limit-Experience: Bataille and Foucault,” *Constellations* 2, no. 2 (1995), 155–174.

²³ The best historical account of foppery up to the Restoration materials is Robert B. Heilman, “Some Fops and Some Versions of Foppery,” *ELH* 49, no. 2 (Summer 1982), 363–395, who gives a genealogy of the character type as it evolves from the generic “fool” character to its specificity after Etherege. He emphasizes that *The Man of Mode* presents “the new fop in his first full development” (370).

²⁴ “Tunbridge Wells,” R 49–54, hereafter cited by line number in the text.

²⁵ “A Ramble in St. James’s Park,” R 76–80, hereafter cited by line number in the text.

²⁶ On the location of perceived cultural failures within the category of life this remark participates in, see Jenny Davidson, *Breeding: A Partial History of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia UP, 2004), 19–57.

²⁷ For more details on the literal de-facement of whores in the period, see Turner, *Libertines and Radicals*, 1–46.

²⁸ Compersion, a portmanteau of “compassion” and “perversion,” is the term for the central affective competency that enables polyamory: the supposedly detached pleasure in one’s partner finding satisfaction with others. For a recent theoretical statement, see Jillian Deri, *Love’s Refraction: Jealousy and Compersion in Queer Women’s Polyamorous Relationships* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2015). Rochester suggests the limits of this kind of detachment, when he notes elliptically that had his partner objectified her other lovers instead of responding to their fopperies he would have grounds to “hope sh’ had [thereby] quenched a fire I raised” (96). Even so, I believe Rochester is one of the earliest poets to take seriously the erotic “detachment” that makes possible polyamorous affects, however quickly he forecloses it with virulent misogyny.

²⁹ The poem ends with a vicious fantasy of duped rage, leaving her “in some dirty hole alone” (162), a topographical realization of what he takes to be her fantasy fitting nicely into the scenic imaginary of the poem. He ends with the taunt: “And may no woman better thrive / That dares prophane the cunt I swive!” (165–6). The speaker recognizes, however, that his standard monoerotic wish, with all its hyperbolic imaginary violence, is the impotent fantasy of someone who has found himself alone in some dirty hole. The final couplet’s exclusive focus on the woman’s relationship to her own body, as opposed to the cuckolding agency of the other men, suggests that at bottom the disciplinary agency he invokes is not the patriarchal authority structured by mediated desire but another form of control defined materialistically.

³⁰ In *Schooling Sex: Libertine Literature and Erotic Education in Italy, France, and England, 1534–1685* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), James Grantham Turner identifies the *je ne sais quoi* with “the supplement of libidinal excess” which causes body and beyond to communicate (204), pointing out that it is occasionally associated with anal stimulation (191, 382).

³¹ A notable feature of Rochester’s poetry as a whole is his ambivalent identification with the female position. In this poem, one feels a wry distance from the misogynistic charade to the extent that he identifies with the impulsively wayward woman, and that the ultimately pathetic and impotent voice of the speaker adheres to those that would curb him. Yet he acknowledges the dangerous fact that to feel like a (man-)whore places him at high risk for the more metaphysical infection of becoming a whore in understanding as well.

³² “The Imperfect Enjoyment,” R 13–15. Hereafter cited parenthetically by line number in the text.

³³ On Dorimant as a robust specimen of the sophisticated and seductive rake, not least because of his association with Rochester, see Robert K. Hume, “The Myth of the Rake in ‘Restoration’ Comedy,” *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1977), 25–55, who underlines his “Hobbesian aggressiveness [and] competitiveness,” while saying the fop is merely a “pretender to a libertinism [he] does not practice” (47).

³⁴ On “erotic heroism” see note 22 above.

³⁵ Thomas Shadwell, *The Libertine* (1675) in *Four Restoration Libertine Plays*, ed. Deborah Payne Fisk (Oxford, Oxford UP, 2005).

³⁶ The hint of female foppery was not isolated. Altheia in Dryden’s *Marriage-À-la-Mode* (1671), whose title Etherege echoes, had already furnished a fully drawn female fop. Because foppery was connected to tastefulness, it was not rigorously gender-specific at the outset, even though the burden to show off the mastery of taste was initially more pronounced for men.

³⁷ William Wycherley, *The Plain Dealer* in *The Plays of William Wycherley*, ed. Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981).

³⁸ Luhmann argues that once the man (or “ego”) takes into account the woman’s (or “alter”’s) knowledge that the rhetoric of love can be faked, forcing them to move towards coordinated silences (or “double contingency”) signals the modern social system of intimacy. See *Love as Passion*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Doris L. Jones (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1986).

³⁹ *Love as Passion*, 77.

⁴⁰ *The Poems of Edmund Waller*, ed. G. Thorn Drury (London: Routledge, 1904), 160n.1.

⁴¹ In a piece on the play’s conflicted relation to the artificiality it deploys ubiquitously, Michael Neil reads these lines as intact erotic heroism, placing Dorimant as “conquering Caesar of the boudoir.” The commercial resonance hidden in the allusion suggests we should perhaps restate his success in terms of erotic entrepreneurship. See “‘An Artificial Following of Nature’: Dryden, Etherege, and the Perfection of Art” in *Style: Essays on Renaissance and Restoration Literature and Culture in Memory of Harriett Hawkins*, ed. Allen Michie and Eric Buckley (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), 189.

⁴² In other words: if I use the language of seduction to say “I love you,” all you would know is that I have mastered the social codes for satisfying my bodily needs in a socially acceptable way. So I disavow the rhetoric of romance by

emphasizing bodily needs, albeit presenting them within a cultured enough framework (viz. detached) for you to understand that I am making the standard Romance advance, which purveys the fantasy of perfect congruence between bodily and social demands, without saying so in a way that commits me to meaning what I say. The challenging desideratum of this strategy is that in pretending to treat you as an object to satisfy my desires this might actually be all that I am doing. The fop absorbs the discomfort aroused by this possibility. An older critic like Norman N. Holland was more appreciative of the conservative Romance valence of the play. See *The First Modern Comedies: The Significance of Etherege, Wycherley and Congreve* (Harvard: Harvard UP, 1959), 86–94, esp. 88, 94.

⁴³ Looking back at the first scene, we might ask where the routine gesture of announcing the love interest early in a comedy shades into the depiction of a male protagonist suggesting to himself that a person who happened to have a good estate (among other allurements) might be worthy of his amorous attention. It is a truth universally acknowledged that a woman in possession of a large estate must be in want of an attractive young man to swindle her out of it.

⁴⁴ The play flirts with the line between the fashionable and the philosophical senses of “mode.” In Locke’s epistemology, “man” is an example of the idea of substance, which is defined as “distinct particular things subsisting by themselves,” while “beauty” is an example of a complex modal idea, which is defined as “Dependencies on, or Affections of Substances.” Thus, for Locke “man of mode” would have been an oxymoron (*HU* 165).

⁴⁵ In *Schooling Sex*, Turner argues that the libertine urges towards “intellectual brilliance and passionate sexuality” remain unreconciled, singling out Rochester’s homoerotic anacreontic vine-bowl poem (discussed below) as a vehicle for the tension between libertine autology and ecstatic personal dissolution (266, 264, 271).

⁴⁶ Without destroying his charisma through satire, and without severing his preferences from his bodily libidinal constitution, the play displays a ruse of erotic reason that runs through all of these expressions.

⁴⁷ In a philosophically ambitious chapter on “Rochester’s Mind,” Jonathan Kramnick attempts to recover a non-reductive understanding of libertine sexuality against Carole Fabricant’s reading of Rochester’s understanding of sexuality as “transient and futile” by showing how he radically depersonalizes desire into material things: “while we might expect desire to begin with the person and then move outward to others, Rochester tends to go in reverse, from external forms like parks and poems back to bodies and desires,” in *Actions and Objects from Hobbes to Richardson* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2010), 99.

⁴⁸ For a discussion of Gracián’s influence on eighteenth-century court culture, see Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 387.

⁴⁹ Because of his total focus on “beautiful appearance” as vehicle for truth, Gracián is often regarded as the foundational theorist for the new cultural semantics of taste; see for example Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed., Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, trans., (New York: Continuum, 1989), 3–41, a view that Luhmann echoes, noting that he works at the very limit of the traditional understanding of rhetoric, shifting from traditional persuasion to creating a striking and stimulating image of oneself (see *AS* 240, 110, here 97). He both recommended and demonstrated in his own writing a highly fragmented and performative style that aimed to make a strong impression while rendering narrative and personal clarity elusive – all features we recognize in Etherege’s portrait of Dorimant. Dissenting intellectual historians like René Wellek and Benedetto Croce argue instead for sources in Guez de Balzac and Ludovico Zuccolo, namely early theorists of the *je ne sais quoi*, which tended to treat the “beautiful appearance” as an interesting phenomenon for a passive spectator rather than something to be worked up strategically. See E. B. O. Borgerhoff, *The Freedom of French Classicism* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1950), 14. In spite of these differences, the tradition of the *je ne sais quoi* made creative use of the limits of rationalism in a parallel manner to Gracián’s pushing rhetoric towards self-branding – a fact that Etherege realized when he

emphasizes over and over that even though one wins and the other loses Fopling and Dorimant are playing the same game.

⁵⁰ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Wayne Rebhorn, trans. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003 [1513]) comments “if he changed his nature with the times and circumstances, Fortune would not change” (106). For Machiavelli, one controls half of fortune and one exerts domination upon the realm of contingency with as much flexibility as possible. For Gracián, one goes with the flow of contingent events, reserving oneself as an impassive observer, such that *detachment itself* attracts desirable events.

⁵¹ “I certainly think this: that it is better to be impetuous than cautious, for Fortune is a woman, and it is necessary, if you wish to keep her down, to beat her and knock her about” (*The Prince*, 107).

⁵² The old demand for self-knowledge remains essential but it now includes the negative capacity to know what is better to (as much as possible) not know: “Fathom your depths and weigh up your capacity for all things”; but when it comes to faults, “were it possible, these shouldn’t even be disclosed to yourself . . . know how to forget” (*O* 34, 47). We find this strategy when Dorimant finally breaks up with Loveit (and Bellinda) in Act Five and in Cato’s equally worked up “forgetting” of his personal relation to his son’s corpse for the sake of the Republic.

⁵³ The warning about excessive impetuosity occurs at *O* 83–4; the typical recommendation of nonchalance in *O* 47–8.

⁵⁴ “No one, and especially not a sovereign [will admit] that someone has greater ingenuity. For this is the sovereign attribute” (*O* 3–4). “It’s neither useful nor pleasurable to show all your cards” (3). When secrecy is enjoyed for its own sake rather than for instrumental value, a different order of attraction obtains. Repeatedly invoking the *syndaeresis* tradition that described the inner spark of good sense (see e.g. 36), he shifts the emphasis to its circumspection: “cautious silence is the refuge of good sense” (3).

⁵⁵ *O* 4. On tastes as occasion for personal failure and for controlling other people, see 9, 11, 12, 17, 37; on taste as temporal 16, 25, 103–4.

⁵⁶ The pun on “hanging” is later explored when Dorimant jokes the possibility of “the whole mystery of making love pleasantly designed and wrought in a suit of hangings” (V.2.97–99) cryptically equating a hall of tapestries – or, for that matter, of genealogical portraits – with a mere sequence of copulations. Again, a gesture of materialist unmasking (patriarchal class privilege = a chain of sexual encounters) takes shape in the artificial surface of a textile.

⁵⁷ “Satyr” [Scepter Lampoon], *R* 85–90, “Group-A text,” lines A33–4. Hereafter cited parenthetically by line number in the text, using the A-text version unless stated otherwise. Among the variants, the C-group text notably includes the speaker in the couplet: “Pricks, like Buffoones at Court, / Will governe *us*, because they make us sport” (C21–22, emphasis added). Like the Group-D text, it minimizes the impact of the “I hate all Monarchs” couplet by placing it in the middle of the poem (C14–15). The Group-D text retrenches that line further to “I hate *such* monarchs, and the thrones they sitt on” (D13, emphasis added).

⁵⁸ Donna Haraway proposes that “simians, cyborgs, and women” are the three others of “man”; if some version of her claim holds true for this seventeenth-century subject, woman appears of course as a whore, the sovereign as a cyborg, and the fop as the simian, or ape; see *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

⁵⁹ Recent productions of Restoration comedy have apparently taken a turn in this direction, turning away from campy, homosexualizing performances of Restoration fops and towards the display of mere vacancy according to Deborah Kaplan in “Learning ‘To Speak the English Language’: *The Way of the World* on the Twentieth-Century American Stage,” *Theater Journal* 49, no. 3 (1997), 301–21.

⁶⁰ “Epilogue,” *M* 172, lines 15–16. Hereafter cited parenthetically by line number in the text.

⁶¹ Aphra Behn’s major fop in *The Town-Fopp* makes the same universalizing point, but speaks the epilogue himself: “Were one of you o’th’ Stage, and I i’th’ Pit, / He might be thought the Fopp, and I the Wit. / On equal Grounds you’ll scarce know one from t’other; / We are as like, as Brother is to Brother,” *The Works of Aphra Behn*, vol. 5, ed. Janet Todd (Columbus: Ohio State U P, 1996), 385, lines 12–15. That epilogue brings out the paranoid relation to foppery that Dryden artfully minimizes.

⁶² Endorsing the Hobbesian theory of comedy, Cibber comments on why foppery succeeds on the stage: when “Folly and Foppery, finely drest” is someone’s topic, the audience member “applauds himself, for being wiser than the Coxcomb he laughs at: And who is not more pleas’d with an Occasion to commend, then to accuse himself?” *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*, ed. B. R. S. Fone (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1968 [1740]), 121.

⁶³ In an important piece, Brian Cowan claims that the fop haunts the coffee house and the public culture it represents, a sign of the nullity of self-serving conversation and gossip. The fop stands at the disjunction between Habermas’ normative and practical public sphere. See “What Was Masculine about the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England,” *History Workshop Journal* 51 (2001), 127–57.

⁶⁴ This signifier too will be exaggerated in the later plays, where the fop displays all kinds of verbal tics, such as “zsounds!” in *Sir Courtly Nice*.

⁶⁵ Bellegarde articulates the standard attack on foppery for its narcissism: “*Narcissus* comes to *Celante*’s with an assuming Air, he smiles upon the Company, he applauds himself, he sparkles, he talks of his Finery; he enters, like any Women [sic], into the particularities of his Dress; he values himself upon his Periwig, and the genteelness of his Habit. But now, this is the business of the *Periwig-maker* and the *Taylor*; that which is yours, *Narcissus*, are the Impertinences you speak, and are not aware of... Your embroidered Coat does not cover you from being consider’d as a Fool.” Abbé de Bellegarde, *Reflexions upon Ridicule*, no trans. (London, 1704), 62. Satires on foppery could also touch on women, warning of the danger of sartorial self-delusion, as in Erasmus Jones, *The Man of Manners: or, the Plebeian Polish’d* (London, 1737), whose canny but narrowly middle-class moralizing tells of “Women, of almost the lowest Rank, that wear good and fashionable Cloaths,” warning specifically that one will have to deal with such women believing the illusion they project with their costumes (13).

⁶⁶ Cibber compliments himself on the realism of his performing this part: “if they hated me in *Iago*, in *Sir Fopling* they took me for a fine Gentleman” (*Apology*, 125). He defends his own Sir Novelty Fashion in *Love’s Last Shift*, “which was thought, a good Portrait of the Foppery *then* in fashion” (119, emphasis added).

⁶⁷ Aphra Behn, *The Town-Fopp*, I.2.148–9.

⁶⁸ *Tyrannus* (1661) in *The Writings of John Evelyn*, ed. Guy de la Bédoyère (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), 166, 172. Evelyn recognizes that “Mode is a Tyrant” (172) and he takes a rather Hobbesian approach of recommending we look to the authority of the real king to set the standard. In *The Man of Mode*, this hierarchical solution has lost credibility and no sovereign position seems immune from foppery.

⁶⁹ Turner notes that “in all philosophies of the *honnête homme* the *je ne sais quoi* stands for that undefinable grace that distinguishes the aristocrat from the pretender and allows free interchange between the personal and the aesthetic” (*Schooling Sex*, 382). The foppish pretender thus explains how the *je ne sais quoi* of libertinism was commodified into liberal aesthetic culture.

⁷⁰ Cibber notes the great expense of his coat in playing Lord Foppington (*An Apology*, 126).

⁷¹ Michèle Cohen articulates the view I seek to complicate here, according to which “the fop is a parody of the man who has, precisely, followed the prescriptions for achieving politeness.” “Manliness, Effeminacy, and the French: Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-century England,” in *English Masculinities 1660–1800*, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen, (New York: Longman, 1999), 51. See also in this vein, Moira E. Casey, “The Fop: ‘Apes and Echoes of Men’: Gentlemanly Ideals and the Restoration,” in *Fools and Jesters in Literature, Art, and History*, ed. Vicki K. Janik (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), 207–214.

⁷² John Crowne, *Sir Courtly Nice* (London, 1685), 312.

⁷³ *Sir Courtly Nice*, 310.

⁷⁴ This is not to say that the play is not also negotiating significant cultural tensions around cross-channel relations, as does Lora Gerguis, who underlines the continuity between this play and its ostensibly more cleaned-up eighteenth-century successors in “Monarchs, Morality and English Nationalism in the Comedies of Etherege, Steele, and Sheridan,” *Restoration and 18th-Century Theater Research* 24, no. 1 (Summer 2009), 31–46. She acknowledges, of course, that Fopling is “a conveniently safe, effective, French-ike, but not actually French straw man” while Dorimant represents successful “cultural hybridism” – *not* English authenticity (33).

⁷⁵ Roger de Bussy-Rabutin, *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules*, ed. Roger and Jacqueline Duchêne (Paris: Gallimard, 1993 [1665]).

⁷⁶ “I have not studied, and yet I did it on the first try” [“Cependant je n’ai point étudié, et j’ai fait cela tout du premier coup”], he exclaims in Molière, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1985 [1670]), II.4.16–17. James Miller translated Molière’s play in 1739 as *The Cit Turn’d Gentleman* (London: John Watts, 1739). The fop, who aspired to credibility within both court and town, where the other characters are firmly installed, was altogether different from the upstart cit. For Rochester’s role in forming this distinction (as “anti-town”), see Harold Love, “Dryden, Rochester, and the Invention of the Town,” in *John Dryden (1631–1700)*, ed. Claude Julien Rawson and Aaron Santesso (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2004), 36–51.

⁷⁷ This *je ne sais quoi* was clearly more important to him than his son’s morality: the letter concludes with awkward advice on keeping mistresses. See *The Letters of Philip Dormer Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield*, John Bradshaw, ed., 3 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1926), I.441.

⁷⁸ *TS* III.529–30. The concept turns up again in the number on landscape gardening, where he refers to “that particular Beauty ... that thus strikes the Imagination at first Sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an Effect” (552).

⁷⁹ On fops as ubiquitous in coffee house culture, see also Philip Carter, “Men about town: representations of foppery and masculinity in early eighteenth-century urban society” in *Gender and Eighteenth-Century England*, eds. Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (New York: Longman, 1997), 31–57, esp. 44–48. See also note 63 above.

⁸⁰ Antoine Gombaud, Chevalier de Méré, *Oeuvres Complètes* II, ed. Charles-Henri Boudhors (Langres-Saints-Geosmes: Klincksieck, 2008), 126–7. He appears as a character in Charlotte Lennox, *Memoires for the History of Mme. de Maintenon and of the Last Age* (London: A. Millar, 1757), where she comments “Méré taught [Mlle D’Aubigné] the art of making herself agreeable, an art which when reduced to rules is so well calculated to draw ridicule upon its owner, and he perceived, that without his instructions she was but too agreeable for him” (I.116). He is also remembered in the history of mathematics for posing a problem of probability based on his gambling losses to his friend Pascal, whose resolution was an important step towards modern probability theory.

⁸¹ For Domna C. Stanton, he is the central early theorist of the idea of a natural (rather than hierarchically stratified) aristocracy; see *The Aristocrat as Art: A Study of the Honnête Homme and the Dandy in Seventeenth- and Nineteenth-Century French Literature* (Columbia: Columbia UP, 1980), 45–53, 72–3.

⁸² He rejects the equivocation of “l’avantage d’estre fils d’un grand Prince avec celui d’estre bien fait, d’estre brave, ou d’estre honneste-homme” (Méré, I.99). He puts forward an anthropological constant that defies stratified class (albeit within the class-privilege situation of a chevalier), but its principle is epistemological and not ontological: it is entirely a matter of observation and limited by who can be, in the immediacy of the moment, recognized as human.

⁸³ “ne dit rien de vray ni de réel” (I.106); “parler en l’air” (107), “mots à la mode” (108).

⁸⁴ “ce qu’il avoit de plus brillant et de plus recherché” (101); “s’exerce sur la vérité simple et nue” (96).

⁸⁵ “il faut l’être plus en effet qu’en apparence” (III.82).

⁸⁶ “les graces d’un siècle sont celles de tous les temps” (69, 83).

⁸⁷ “il ne suffit pas de savoir les choses par regles ni par instructions, il faut essayer de se les rendre naturelles” (144). Also, like in Gracián, the supreme principle is taste: “The delicacy of taste is absolutely necessary to know the true worth of things” and “one must work on one’s taste like a science or a habit” [“La délicatesse du goust, elle est absolument nécessaire pour connoistre la juste valeur des choses ... il faut essayer de se faire du bon goust common une science, ou comme une habitude”] (II.127–8). Like Shaftesbury, he thinks of taste as a horizontal self-regulatory alternative to vertical normative rules and as a stable form of knowledge: “this science is properly that of man because it consists in living and in communicating oneself in a humane and reasonable manner” [“cette science est proprement celle de l’homme, parce qu’elle consiste à vivre et à se communiquer d’une maniere humaine et raisonnable”] (III.72).

⁸⁸ “il ne faut ni outrer, ni forcer, ni tirer de loin ce qu’on veut dire, cela réussit toûjours mal” (I.105).

⁸⁹ “la bienséance, c’est une étude infinie, il faut incessamment l’observer, et même dans la solitude comme au lieu de la Cour” (III.144).

⁹⁰ “des chaussures si troussées, qu’elles laissoient voir non seulement toute la forme de ses jambes qu’il avoit belles, mais aussi beaucoup au dessus des genoux” (II.131–2).

⁹¹ The discourse on the *je ne sais quoi* that Méré’s project participated in posed an ideal of nature, constructed via negation rather than being chthonically self-present, against the Baroque worldly artifice that Gracián (and Dorimant) submit to without reserve. For a broader discussion of this trend, see Vernon Hyde Minor, *The Death of the Baroque and the Rhetoric of Good Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 26–61.

⁹² “il effaçà les plus galans de la cour” (132).

⁹³ It was not quite Persia, but Etherege had just returned from a job in Turkey when he wrote the play, and so knew something about the appeal of significant cultural otherness first-hand. See Thomas H. Fujimura, “Etherege at Constantinople,” *PMLA* 71, no. 3 (June, 1956), 465–81.

⁹⁴ In “Some Kind Words for the Fop,” she claims that the fascination he exerts grants him an ambiguous social space, which she thinks makes him a vanguard of new liberal masculinity, or “new sex role ideals for men”; see *SEL* 22, no. 3 (1982): 428. Notoriously, she denies the fop’s status as a queer subject, stressing instead that he represented a universal possibility associated with asexuality. Heilman claims the fop’s detachment is his key trait: “he is a relaxed man, a pleasant relief in a Hobbesian world” (392).

⁹⁵ B. A. Kachur’s piece on the play, particularly valuable for its analysis of recent productions, notes that on stage as opposed to reading “the spectator cannot avoid the centrality of Sir Fopling,” *Etherege and Wycherley* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 122. For the opposite view of Fopling as dramatically inconsequential, no longer tenable as borne out by the many analyses of Fopling that have appeared since, is Robert K. Hume, “Reading and Misreading *The Man of Mode*,” *Criticism* 14, no. 1 (1972), 5.

⁹⁶ Analyzing treatises on hand gestures, Thomas A. King notes “the titled fop was funny ... because his gestural patterns were not those of aristocratic males but of low or comic characters” (105) in “The Fop, the Canting Queen, and the Deferral of Gender,” in *Presenting Gender: Changing Sex in Early-Modern Culture*, ed. Chris Mounsey (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2001), 94–135.

⁹⁷ René Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1965). In Wycherley’s succinct couplet: “Vain fops but court, and dress, and keep a pother, / To pass for women’s men with one another” in William Wycherley, *The Country Wife*, ed. Trevor R. Griffiths (London: Nick Hern Books, 2001), 156; for Sedgwick’s discussion, see note 100 below.

⁹⁸ For Sedgwick in *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), the homosexual is the scapegoat for universal homosocial desire (see her comments on Girard). Fopling seems to fit perfectly this model of the scapegoat: in the position of the king and the reason for everything wrong with the social world. He is the very image of the rival with borrowed, mediated mimetic desire.

⁹⁹ George Haggerty, *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), 50.

¹⁰⁰ In *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985), Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick illustrates her theory of homosocial desire through a reading of rivalry in Wycherley’s *The Country Wife*. She explains: “For a man [Horner], to endanger his own position as a subject in the relationship of exchange: to be permanently feminized or objectified in relation to other men ... requires a willingness and ability to temporarily risk, or assume, a feminized status. Only the man who can proceed through this stage, *while* remaining in cognitive control of the symbolic system that presides over sexual exchange, will be successful in achieving a relation of mastery over other men” (51). This is true enough of Dorimant, but Etherege’s play begins to explore a different strategy in his fop character, who eagerly gives up the very thing Sedgwick’s subject cannot, namely “cognitive control of the symbolic system that presides over sexual exchange.” The phenomenon of artfully simulated castration that Sedgwick describes in Horner can be described in psychoanalytic terms as *jouissance*, a direction that Haggerty’s discussions of fops takes. In my argument, Etherege’s fop attempts to take a step *outside the game of cuckoldry altogether* rather than seeking to achieve mastery within it through the ruse of lack. Of course, there is no outside, and this step just indicates the supplementarily fictitious ruse of going from pretending to *have* the phallus/lack to pretending to *be* the phallus/lack. This aligns him with the new aesthetics: he aims to

succeed at the game by observing the game itself as if he were outside of it. I turn shortly to Lacan's concept of *surplus-jouissance* to describe this step.

¹⁰¹ Where Staves and Heilman were reclaiming the fop against both critical silence and Hume's dismissive reading by underlining the universally representative qualities that made the fop a proto-liberal subject – which is supported by a reading of him as a satire on consumption habits – a number of later critics pushed back, claiming that he was an obvious precedent for the “molly” proto-homosexual identity that surfaced in the first decades of the eighteenth century. Lawrence Sennelick argues that the fop figures the emergence of “certain distinct individuals whose whole natures were defined by an exclusive sexual taste” in “Mollies or Men of Mode? Sodomy and the Eighteenth-Century London Stage,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1, no.1 (1990), 33–67, here 35. For a similar line of argumentation, see Haggerty, *Men in Love*, Chapter 2.

¹⁰² For a detailed discussion of the 17th-century “fashion crisis” around these signifiers, see David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity, England 1550–1850* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2002), 51–77.

¹⁰³ Kristina Straub attempts a synthesis of the view of the fop as a more or less universal possibility of bad taste – anyone's momentary thoughtless participation in the ways of the town – and the homosexualized and perverse deep-seated *goûts particuliers* of one kind of subject, but only starting with Cibber's new polite and liberal fops of the 1690s in *Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth-Century Players and Sexual Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1992).

¹⁰⁴ In a piece on Cibber, the most famous actor to play Fopling, Richard E. Brown notes how much space the fop character takes up: “the roles are written so that the actor is allowed to experience himself expanding delightedly before amused beholder, under the guise of a fop doing the exact same thing before his fellow characters in the play.” “The Fops in Cibber's Comedies” *Essays in Literature* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1982), 39.

¹⁰⁵ In an article that remains provocatively suggestive, Joseph R. Roach links the ballet so beloved by Louis XIV and Napoleon alike to Foucaultian bodily disciplines in their most machinically rote versions. “Ballet,” he claims, replaced the tournament as the courtly spectacle under the watchful eyes of the sovereign” (168). Citing *Spectator* No. 102, which imagines an academy drilling ladies in the use of fans, he claims “the ideology of the aesthetic stands in relation to society as ‘that little modish machine’ does to the ladies in Addison's hypothetical academy” (165). The fop wants to both stand in the place of the monarch and merge with the modish machine itself. “Theater History and the Ideology of the Aesthetic,” *Theater Journal* 41, no. 2 (1989), 155–168.

¹⁰⁶ When Steele attacked a revival of *The Man of Mode* starring Cibber and Wilkes in 1711 as a piece of decadence, he was as annoyed that Dorimant imitates Fopling and jabs at the Orange Lady's corpulence as at his apparent cynicism about marriage (*TS* I.280). The important 1722 rejoinder, affirming the moral value of satirizing the fop and excusing the roughness of its day is John Dennis, “Defense of Sir Fopling Flutter” in *Critical Works*, ed. Edward Niles Hooker (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1939), II.241–50. Dennis also discusses the link to Rochester. For a discussion, see Brian Corman, “Interpreting and Misinterpreting *The Man of Mode*,” *Papers on Language and Literature* 13 (1977), 35–40.

¹⁰⁷ Aphra Behn's *The Town-Fopp* is far more topically radical, pushing the critique of marriage much further by ending the play by cementing the partnership of husband and kept woman while exploring the circumstantial libertinism of the main character Bellmour, who throws himself into debauchery only when sentimental love comes under fire, hinting even at buggery in his case, lesbianism in another character's. Its literal conclusion is “Since Marriage but a larger License is / For every Fopp of Mode to keep a miss” (V.617–18). By contrast to this confidence in both pleasure and upward mobility, *The Man of Mode*, for all its rakishness, pursues a far more qualified materialism, inclined towards sentimentalism and the new aesthetics.

¹⁰⁸ Frank Trentmann invokes the “ideal public park” as an alternative model to the coffee house, “where people freely join and leave different groups at play” and “show a mutual recognition of each others’ tastes and activities” (8). This, perhaps to Trentmann’s horror, is even more legibly a fopling’s haunt. See *Paradoxes of Civil Society: New perspectives on Modern German and British History*, ed. Frank Trentmann (New York: Bergahn Books, 2000).

¹⁰⁹ Anon., *Mundus Foppensis: or, The Fop Display’d* (London, 1691), 8. The text is as blunt about the fop’s libertine ambitions – he jointly brings “French Modes, and *Gallic* Lust home” (15) – as it is about their sodomitical terminus, lumping together his “Addict[ion] all to sport and Gaming, / And that same Vice not worth the naming” (16).

¹¹⁰ Jacques Lacan, *Seminar 17: The Other Side of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. Russell Grigg, (New York: Norton, 2007), 107. In Lacan’s framework, this reflects a shift from the *objet petit a* that ordinarily triggers desire and which is structured by a fantasy relationship around the lack of the phallus, to the desire for a big Other: one desires *someone else’s* enjoyment, which is to say someone else’s lack (see 53). He explains that “we are not dealing with a transgression, an irruption into some forbidden field through the wearing away of vital regulatory apparatuses” but with “an effect of entropy ... being perceived in the sense of loss” (50). He notes that *surplus jouissance* is not a different kind of enjoyment – *jouissance* is already defined as a surplus – but rather a different *mode* of *jouissance* (see 151). For an account of this concept in economic terms relevant to consumption, see Alenka Zupancic, “When Surplus Enjoyment Meets Surplus Value” in *Jacques Lacan and the Other Side of Psychoanalysis: Reflections on Seminar XVII*, ed. Justin Clemens and Russell Grigg (Durham: Duke UP, 2006), 155–178.

¹¹¹ In the most ambitious attempt to date to synthesize both critical trajectories around foppery, Thomas A. King describes the liberalization of the phallus, which is drawn inside the subject as “a sign of organic development within the self” such that “to incorporate difference within the self as the inward space of the self’s privacy, is to exercise the phallus” in *The Gendering of Men 1600–1750* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2008), vol. 2, 147–148.

¹¹² Drawing on a Zizek’s reading of Lacan, George Haggerty sees fops in Burney as symbols for the *jouissance* suppressed by the social-symbolic order in “A Friend, a Fop, and a Feminist: The Failure of Community in Burney,” *The Eighteenth Century* 36, no. 3 (1995), 248–65.

¹¹³ According to Miller, what the racist subject desires is actually the impotence of the other, who seems to have more fun and a more immediate and primitive connection to her impulses, a connection the subject once had and lost, and whose loss (“whiteness” or non-racial specificity) the subject enjoys concurrently. This subject enjoys not having access to the mirror that would show it (like Loveit, who looks into the mirror and sees her color with horror) what it lacks. Dorimant’s mimicry of Fopling is a perfect example: he enjoys a situation that debar him from the fop’s situation of being debarred from his own desire: literally enacting the fop’s mannerisms in his own body, he enjoys the protective effect of distancing thereby created – a strange closeness Lacan calls “extimity.” With *jouissance* pleasure occurs but only mediated through the other; with surplus *jouissance*, it is *my* pleasure but I do not feel it as mine – because Fopling’s manners are imitations of Dorimant’s to begin with – it is apart from me, something of mine which can only be experienced somewhere else. See Jacques-Alain Miller, “Extimity,” *The Symptom* 9 (Fall 2008). [Web: <http://www.lacan.com/symptom/?p=36>].

¹¹⁴ Simon Gokandi finds evidence in a sociological rather than psychoanalytic register for a similar link between racism and the culture of taste in *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012).

¹¹⁵ John Dennis affirmed the moral value of satirizing the fop and excused the play for the roughness of its day. See “Defense of Sir Fopling Flutter” in *Critical Works*, Hooker, ed., 2 vols., II.241–50. For a fuller discussion of the controversy over the moral appropriateness of this play in the early 18th-century critics, see Robert K. Hume, *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 86–97.

- ¹¹⁶ For more details on Cibber's wigs, see Margaret K. Powell and Joseph Roach, "Big Hair," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 1 (2004), 79–99.
- ¹¹⁷ For detailed analysis of "the new Cibberian fops" after the 1690s see Richard E. Brown, "The Fops in Cibber's Comedies," *Essays in Literature* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1982):31–41, and Straub, *Sexual Suspects*.
- ¹¹⁸ Maximilian E. Novak notes Dorimant's continuity with the 17th-century ideal of a "polished gentleman," precisely the association with gentility Steele sought to suppress. "Libertinism and Sexuality" in *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, ed. Susan J. Owen (New York: Blackwell, 2001), 63.
- ¹¹⁹ Abel Boyer, *The English Theophrastus: or, the Manners of the Age* (London, 1702), 337.
- ¹²⁰ The series on wit runs Nos. 58 to 65. The "dangerous sense" is described in C.S. Lewis, *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1967), 86–110.
- ¹²¹ *An Apology*, 35.
- ¹²² For a discussion, see Joanna Picciotto, "Mr. Spectator's Posthumous Body" in *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2010), 566–91.
- ¹²³ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 42.
- ¹²⁴ Eric Santner describes a concept of the flesh as "the bit of the real that underwrites the circulation of signs and values," a horizontal "sublime somatic materiality" that manages and organizes through an "surplus of immanence." *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2011), 12, 18, 20. He explains that this concept describes the regulation of subject at the level of what Agamben calls "bare life" rather than identity or ideology (36). In a note, he adds that "there is a deep connection between the state of exception and the culture of enjoyment/consumption. It is beyond the scope of this study to explore that connection" (36n.22). Introducing foppery into the immanent libidinal life of the libertine is to explore exactly this surplus and its regulatory possibilities; the concept of taste that begins to take shape here is the thread connecting sovereignty to aesthetic experience.
- ¹²⁵ "Vulcan contrive me such a Cupp / As Nestor us'd of old: / Show all thy skill to trim it up / Damask it round with gold. . . Carve theron a spreading vine / Then add Two loveely Boyes; / Their Limbs in amorous folds entwine, / The Type of Future Joyes," "Nestor" in R 41–2, lines 1–4 and 17–20.
- ¹²⁶ Fopling's affective dissent is a particularly gay version of the critically potent "ugly feelings" theorized by Sianne Ngai in *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2005), especially the chapter on "stuplidity," 248–297.
- ¹²⁷ "grand goust de la bien-séance . . . ce discernement, qui pénètre ce que les sens n'aperçoivent pas . . . [ce] qu'on veut dire soy-même" (Méré 2.126–7).
- ¹²⁸ The "open secret" meant putting oneself on display by withholding oneself. This rhetorical mode originated in the *précieuse* milieu this text is to a certain extent satirizing. See Anne-Lise François' chapter on the great *précieuse* novel *La Princesse de Clèves* in *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2008), 66–128.

¹²⁹ A broad argument is made for the highly strategic deployment of passivity in Scott Paul Gordon, *The Power of the Passive Self in English Literature, 1640–1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005).

¹³⁰ The “great paradigm shift” refers to the cultural shift from understanding same-sex eroticism in the context of a libertine and largely non-identitarian model towards a nascent homosexual identity after 1700. See any number of works by Randolph Trumbach, such as “The Birth of the Queen: Sodomy and the Emergence of Gender Equality in Modern Culture, 1660–1750,” in *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, ed. Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, Jr. (New York: New American Library, 1989), 129–40; “Sodomitical Subcultures, Sodomitical Roles, and the Gender Revolution of the Eighteenth-Century,” in *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality During the Enlightenment*, ed. Robert Purks Maccubbin (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987), 109–21; and *Sex and the Gender Revolution* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1998).

¹³¹ The best analysis of these developments in the theater is still Lawrence Sennelick, who makes a similar claim about the emergence legible in the fop of “certain distinct individuals whose whole natures were defined by an exclusive sexual taste,” focusing on the theatrical material in “Mollies or Men of Mode? Sodomy and the Eighteenth-Century London Stage,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1:1 (1990), 33–67, here 35.

¹³² Sennelick notes the continuity between the fop and rake in the earlier material, reading the ephebic Maiden as “an *embourgeoisement* of Lord Rochester’s aristocratic indifference to whether his prick entered a boy or a woman” (46).

¹³³ For the earlier model of priapic and frequently sodomitic libertinism, see Turner, *Libertines and Radicals*, 197–251. Behn too makes her erotic hero Bellmour dabble in sodomy, albeit in a moment of erotic distress; see note 61 above. Moreover, abiding homosexual predispositions could also be represented in non-foppish characters.

¹³⁴ For an analysis of “the new Cibberian fops” after the 1690s see Richard E. Brown, “The Fops in Cibber’s Comedies,” and Straub, *Sexual Suspects*.

¹³⁵ Colley Cibber, *Love’s Last Shift; Or, The Fool in Fashion*, in *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, vol. 1, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (Madison: Associated University Press, 2001), I.1.254–54.

¹³⁶ James Bramson, *The Man of Taste* (London, 1735), 85.

¹³⁷ *Miss in Her Teens* in *The Plays of David Garrick*, vol. 1, ed. Harry William Pedicord and Fredrick Louis Bergman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1980), 69–105.

¹³⁸ Other such hints are abundant in the earlier material, for example when Sir Courtly Nice responds to Leonora, who has just told him “I suffer nothing to come near my Bed but my Gentlewoman,” that “Nor I, but my Gentleman; he has a delicate Hand at making a Bed; he was my Page, I bred him up to it” (337).

¹³⁹ *Miss in Her Teens*, II.423. See also II.158–60.

¹⁴⁰ The first important novelistic fop is Captain Whiffle in Smollett’s *Roderick Random*, discussed in G. S. Rousseau’s “The Pursuit of Sodomy in the Eighteenth-Century: ‘Utterly Confused Category’ and/or Rich Repository?” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 9, no. 3 (1985), 146–51. Haggerty discusses him in “A Friend, a Fop, and a Feminist.”

¹⁴¹ John Cleland, *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*, ed. Hal Gladfelder (Toronto: Broadview, 2005 [1751]), hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

¹⁴² These definitions occur in his *Dictionary of Love* (1753), based on J. F. Dreux de Radier's *Dictionnaire d'Amour* (1741), reproduced in *Memoirs*, 253–5. The last passage immediately continues: “Mr. Addison even thought no fine gentleman could exist without a dash of the coxcomb. My Lord Rochester says, that it is a character not to be acquired by much pains and reflection; that, in short, *God never made a coxcomb worth a groat*” (255).

¹⁴³ The narrator's fascination in reliving his fopperies is watching himself go through the motions: in a more unvarnished specimen of almost Proustian affects, he declares upon meeting his first great love that “though she inspired me neither with love nor respect; I could not help observing that she still very well deserved my desires ... the cox-comb part of me, was too solid in her views not to forgive that, in favour of the taste she had taken for my person” (107).

¹⁴⁴ I note a correlation between the gradual institution of queer identities like the molly that give shape to abiding same-sex desires and the gradual diffusion of the culture of taste without commenting on the etiology of same-sex desire itself, which, unlike our culture of taste, is as old as the hills. A recent text like David Halperin's *How to Be Gay* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2014), which underlines the disjunction between same-sex desire and the gay tastes that give it social legibility, furnishes much evidence that this correlation is still as powerful today as it ever was.

Chapter Three

The Desire for Detachment

Aesthetic Education in *Robinson Crusoe*

To one who was to live alone in a desolate island it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment.

(Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*)

I imagine the minds of children, as easily turned, this or that way, as water itself; and though this be the principal part, and our main care should be about the inside, yet the clay cottage [the body] is not to be neglected.

(Locke, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*)

There were no rivals. I had no competitor, none to dispute sovereignty or command with me... The most covetous griping miser in the world would have been cured of the vice of covetousness, if he had been in my case; for I possessed infinitely more than I knew what to do with. I had no room for desire, except it was of things which I had not, and they were but trifles, tho' indeed of great use to me... My whole story is a collection of wonders.

(Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*)

Robinson Crusoe's privileged location within eighteenth-century prose fiction is connected to its compelling demonstration of a process of self-education. Early in Crusoe's time on the island, we are told that "I was yet but a very sorry workman, tho' time and necessity made me a compleat natural mechanic soon after, as I believe it would do any one else" (*RC* 58). The word "mechanic" here means roughly "artisan," and the word floated between identifying the station of a low manual laborer and suggesting the more positive image of a skilled manager of mechanical devices, who could himself reflect the sparkle of the well-contrived machine. The idea of teaching oneself to become a "natural mechanic" or natural artisan takes us as far away from the urban culture of polite taste on display in *The Man of Mode* as we could wish. Defoe does not, however, try to establish Crusoe's "natural" competency – or even the natural world of the island's environment within which he develops this competency – as a domain of bare factual things lying outside the artificial world of Foplings, Loveits, and Dorimants, in which the concern for survival utterly trumps all matters of taste. Instead, I will be arguing in this chapter that the central device of this novel, namely placing Crusoe alone on an island to develop himself with his own resources, is how the novel depicts him as an aesthetic subject. Crusoe has successfully internalized the principles of governing oneself aesthetically outlined by Shaftesbury and Addison to such an extent that he continues living them when no one else is present. Crusoe's time on the "Island of Despair" (*RC* 57) realizes in a narratively plausible manner Addison's extreme vision of aesthetic pleasures, in which "a Man in a Dungeon is

capable of entertaining himself with Scenes and Landskips more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole Compass of Nature” (*TS* III.537). The novel reinserts those pleasures, at an extreme point, back into the compass of nature.

Initially, of course, Crusoe’s teaching himself to become “a compleat natural mechanic” meant in the eyes of the world a lowering in status.¹ In the first pages of the novel, the narration places Crusoe in between “the mechanick part of mankind” and “the upper part of mankind” (*RC* 6). Having become an upwardly mobile Brazilian plantation owner, he embarks on a risky venture to acquire slave labor cheaply and in an ironic reversal ends up slaving away for his own benefit, a behavior we might now think of in terms of self-exploitation. He devotes “infinite labours” – this is his favorite expression for his own work² – to various projects catering to his needs and convenience. We know that the culture of taste in eighteenth-century Britain was significantly fueled by the profits from the slave trade; for instance, one of the most famous art collectors of the century, William Beckford, derived his wealth from massive slave plantations in Jamaica.³ Through the old Romance device of the storm and shipwreck, the novel positions itself as producing one picture of what happens between the investment of capital and reaping the returns.

We encounter the more positive sense of “mechanic,” which entailed some manner of elevation from brute manual labor, early in the *Farther Adventures*, when Crusoe brings back to the island “a general Mechanick,” whom he calls “*Our Jack of all Trades*,” dextrous at making wheels, mills for corn, pottery, and carpentry.⁴ Readers have always been fascinated by Defoe’s depiction of how, severely pressed by his environment, Crusoe turns himself into such a “compleat” workman; “as I believe,” he adds, being in the same circumstances “would do any one else.” However, something distinguishes Crusoe from this admirably versatile professionalized laborer: Crusoe is a complete *natural* artisan who teaches himself the new skills he needs. He does this within the “meer state of nature” (94) of the island, and all his activities come naturally to him without the direct intervention of other people. The novel is not concerned to show Crusoe’s “natural” activities as the purely mechanical expressions of biological instinct; on the contrary, he shapes his own nature and makes himself into what he is.⁵

In his depiction of the urban culture of taste, Etherege had already underlined the importance of a minimum of “mechanic” work. In one of his many embarrassing moments, Sir Fopling declares that “Writing, madam, 's a mechanic part of wit” (*M* IV.1.222–3). Harriet, the female lead, abruptly shuts him down with: “Bussy was a gentleman” (IV.1.224), meaning the author of a recent, racy French roman-à-clef, whom Fopling then awkwardly confuses with Bussy D’Ambois, the French adventurer depicted in George Chapman’s Jacobean tragedy, by now hopelessly old-fashioned. Etherege plants this reference to show that when it comes to written culture Fopling thinks more readily of exotic adventures than the world of polite intrigue represented in the play. In a memorable speech in Chapman’s play, the French Monsieur, brother of the king, rebukes the misfit Bussy as a mere creature of impulse: “in thy valour th’ art like other naturals / That have strange gifts in nature, but no soul / Diffus’d quite through, to make them of a piece”; he only “dares as much as a wild horse or tiger . . . to feed / The ravenous wolf of thy most cannibal valour.”⁶ Etherege will not go quite so far as to compare Fopling’s desperation to that of a hungry cannibal, yet he clearly wants Fopling to be a ridiculous “natural” in Chapman’s sense, and Fopling’s false step out of the world of gallantry and into the world of adventure stories shows that the social problem of taste could move within the orbit of Defoe’s narrative world.

Etherege was also no doubt savoring the irony that Chapman's Bussy positions himself as willfully unfit for operating in the civilized world composed of Foplings and Monsieurs. This comes out clearly in Bussy's opening speech defiantly proclaiming himself an outsider:

Who is not poor, is monstrous; only need
 Gives form and worth to every human seed.
 As cedars beaten with continual storms,
 So great men flourish; and do imitate
 Unskilful statuaries, who suppose,
 In forming a Colossus, if they make him
 Straddle enough, strut, and look big, and gape,
 Their work is goodly. (*Bussy*, I.1.3–10)

Etherege's joke is that the fop turns out to be exactly what Bussy is rejecting: a hungry consumer shaped entirely by animal needs who makes himself "strut, and look big, and gape." Defoe sets up Crusoe, the upwardly-mobile slave-trading plantation owner, as beginning in the position of the "monstrous" imitator, who is then driven to experience his poverty and his need, that which Bussy says "gives form and worth to every human seed." The little exchange in *The Man of Mode* intends to communicate that writing is *not* "a mechanic part of wit" and it asserts that laboring at self-cultivation, provided it is done tactfully, is a very necessary piece of "mechanic" work. For Etherege, writing reveals, as Dorimant puts it, how "love gilds us over and makes us show fine things to one another for a time, but soon the gold wears off and shows the native brass" (*M* II.2.186–8). Dorimant means the domain of raw needs and desires, which in Etherege's depiction of Dorimant savoring his total power to crush Loveit comes rather close to Chapman's "cannibal valor." In *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe subjects his protagonist to the maximal exposure of "native brass" and many, many "mechanic" labors of self-cultivation: the kind of thing that *The Man of Mode* preferred to present as an open secret, along with the labors behind Dorimant's perfect suits and what might have been seen in his chambers before the men barge in. Yet Crusoe's self-transformation into a "compleat natural mechanic" (which he thinks would occur to anyone in his position) is not the labor of the professional Jack-of-All-Trades but rather the cultural work of self-development that Fopling stupidly disparages as "mechanic."

Up to this point in my analysis, I have discussed two aspects of the new aesthetics as a joint phenomenon: first, the exploitation of the link described by empiricism between non-conscious bodily responses and imaginary structures of motivation (Addison's "new principle of pleasure" acting on the imagination in a "secondary" manner through absence), and second, the practice of heightening reflexivity into an effect of detachment (Shaftesbury called it "self-discoursing") before the eyes of others. Etherege's play draws a stark binary contrast between the character of the libertine, who accepts the decay of his desire (even unto marriage) provided his pleasures continue unimpeded, and the fop, who sacrifices all sensuous pleasures to the self-perpetuation of his imaginary desires, suggesting that both ultimately static types are the positive and negative sides of the same pattern of subjectification. The fop's bad taste did not place him outside the culture of taste; on the contrary, he represented the core principle of that culture in its thoughtless self-perpetuation, and one was meant to observe his vacancy in action as a means to correct oneself in order to not be found in his unfortunate position. When we look for narratives that describe diachronically the formation of a subject corresponding to the new aesthetics, these two different avenues of "aestheticization" come apart: the narratives of desire and of pleasure,

of reflexivity and of embodied perception, of the sovereign consumer and of the governing observer, of the anxiously self-supporting fop and of the self-reforming libertine spectator, of aesthetic detachment and of the delicacy of taste. The first positive figure of aesthetic competence, the connoisseur, will be the subject of Chapter Four. This chapter describes the negative side of tasteful subjectification: the subject who fails to normalize his behavior according to the rule of taste and yet finds himself reinventing this order for himself without direct external stimulus. *Robinson Crusoe* could be said to explore what happens when Sir Fopling is in fact given all the space that he can handle in which to adjust himself: when the desire to detach, to be different, and to reinvent himself is given full scope for physical realization.

As a reading of Defoe's novel, this chapter thus takes on two tasks. First, it shows that Crusoe's narrative, especially the middle portion of the novel describing his time on the island, is fascinating because it demonstrates an empiricist aesthetic self-education.⁷ I demonstrate this by showing that his spectatorship is at least as important as his survival and by showing that he learns to see not the material world as it is but rather to see himself reflexively in the mirror of the material world. Section 1 discusses Locke's theory of education, focusing in particular on the late work in which he considers the problem of self-education and the question of how to form one's own way of perceiving, showing that Crusoe narrates the shift from pedagogy to an empiricist proto-*Bildung* specifically concerned with spectatorship. Section 2 demonstrates that Crusoe's labors reflected the major tenet of eighteenth-century aesthetics that beauty followed utility, arguing that the supplementary beauty of utility is almost more important to the novel than utility itself, a thesis that I discuss via the strong statements in William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* and Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. The last two sections argue that Crusoe's character gives narrative shape to the development of the inner sense. In section 3, I return to one of the founding figures of inner-sense theory, a major intellectual current behind the discourse of taste, the Cambridge Platonist Ralph Cudworth. Section 4 turns to the mature statement of inner-sense theory as a theory of taste in the work of Francis Hutcheson. In sum, I argue that the novel is about the formation of a subject's manner of perceiving – it is a personal history of the senses – and all his fascinating labors of survival on the island mediate this process rather than serving as ends in themselves.

Robinson Crusoe, it must be emphasized, nevertheless represents only one version of tasteful subjectivity: the understanding of taste as spontaneous, visceral knowing, the improvement of this knowing through self-education, and the appreciation of beauty in things that were also useful. It does not represent the version of tasteful subjectivity concerned with cultural refinement, perceptual delicacy, or discriminating judgment, all of which we will find in the connoisseur. I show the importance of aesthetic spectatorship in Robinson's solitude, and of his making objects that artfully reflect on himself, and I also show how the idea of taste is central to his relations with Friday, but I do not make the claim that, like the tempter in *Paradise Regained*, he brings forth all the pleasures of cultural refinement in the wilderness. Crusoe is plainly, polemically, the anti-type of the connoisseur. Although he shared the same broad Whig orientation as Shaftesbury and Addison, Defoe himself was distinctly apart from the officially tasteful polite Augustan culture promulgated by Addison, Pope, and Swift. He had been educated in Charles Morton's Dissenting Academy, was an active entrepreneur and government agent, and participated widely in the print culture of his day as a political propagandist and prolific journalist, writing extensively on commerce and travel, as well as popular fictional narratives and didactic nonfiction we might now think of as early self-help. He was jailed for debt and

stood in the pillory for a satire on High-Church Anglicans.⁸ Pope wrote him into the *Dunciad* as “unabash'd De Foe” (which includes the idea of not behaving tastefully under such degrading circumstances) and in 1710 Swift called him “an illiterate fellow” in print.⁹ Defoe’s stung reply is illuminating: “I know another that is an Orator in the Latin, a walking Index of Books, has all the Libraries of *Europe* in his Head . . . but at the same time, he is a *Cynick* in Behavior, a *Fury* in Temper, *Unpolite* in Language, and *Ungovernable* in Passion – IS this to be Learned? Then *may I be still Illiterate!*”¹⁰ Against the orator’s learned and refined but excessive and antisocial taste, he proposes well-governed passions, self-moderation in temper, and sociable politeness in communication: a different vision of taste than that of the tastemakers, but a vision centered on tastefulness nonetheless.¹¹ Characteristically, he will position himself rhetorically as defiantly “illiterate” – failing, low, tasteless, “mechanic” – in the name of this truer and more natural taste.

In Chapter One, we saw that Milton uses taste in its modern, fully metaphorical sense in order to reject the temptation represented by the prestige of elite high culture in favor of a “true taste” located somewhere else. The denunciation of what passes for tasteful in the official culture is one signature move of the new cultural semantics of taste. Milton’s Samson longs for a decisive encounter in which he will be able to “taste” his own power and divine mandate; yet at least up to the final disaster, all Milton gives him, bound in chains, is a series of rhetorical exchanges. Defoe substitutes the chained relation to other people for the invisible chains of a solitary island, and almost completely substitutes rhetoric for embodied, constructive, yet equally tasteful work with things.¹² We know that the major historical source of the novel, Alexander Selkirk’s sojourn on an island, was written up sensationally in one of Steele’s later periodicals.¹³ Yet none of the authors of the *Spectator* would have readily identified this text as congruent with their project of social reform through aesthetic education.¹⁴ Nevertheless, this chapter argues, *Robinson Crusoe* is evidence that by 1719 the rule of taste had been accepted all the way from the palace to “the cottage,”¹⁵ or at least all the way to the “upper station of *low life*” Robinson begins and ends in (*RC* 6).

1. The self-educating spectator in Locke and Defoe

The will itself, how absolute and uncontrollable soever it may be thought, never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding. Temples have their sacred images, and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But in truth the ideas and images in men’s minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them, and to these they all universally pay a ready submission. It is therefore of the highest concernment that great care should be taken of the understanding, to conduct it right in the search of knowledge and in the judgments it makes.

(Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*)

My Eye, which like that, which *Solomon* speaks of, *was never satisfied with Seeing*, was still more desirous of Wandering and Seeing.

(Defoe, *Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*)

For a text destined to serve as a repository for such a wide array of cultural investments and written for a broad and popular adult audience, it is not immediately obvious that *Robinson Crusoe* should have exerted such a powerful appeal as a piece of children's literature, especially when children's literature did not yet exist as a distinct subfield of textual production.¹⁶ By making Defoe's text into the Bible of Emile's youth, the only book worth carrying along into the desert island of childhood, Rousseau linked the novel's status as a cultural singularity – set apart in the social imaginary from other works in its context and by its producer – with the text's pedagogical function.¹⁷ Rousseau's project of developing a "natural" model of education for children through a drastically minimalist curriculum consisting of a text in which not a single child is represented – in fact, *Robinson Crusoe* makes a point of beginning with Crusoe's majority, at 18 – was counterintuitive and paradoxical. In the same way that the absence of the figure of the child made *Robinson Crusoe* a powerful vehicle for naturalist pedagogy, I argue that the novel's extreme remove from the urban culture of taste allowed it to demonstrate aesthetic self-government in action, bracketing as far as possible the direct interference of others.

This section focuses on aesthetic spectatorship, in Addison's sense as a shift to imaginary pleasures in which the subject and object are not fully present to each other.¹⁸ I begin with Crusoe's particularly self-aware late reflections in the *Farther Adventures* on the driving significance of spectatorship as a motivating factor.¹⁹ Then, I turn to Locke's theory of education, reading both the major work on traditional pedagogy, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, and the posthumous work on self-directed education, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*.²⁰ The later text is primarily concerned with how the subject should be formed to acquire reliable knowledge of things in the world. As Locke grapples turns from traditional relational pedagogy to the problem of self-education, and from naturalistic knowledge of the world to knowledge about one's disposition towards the world, I show that he introduces an aesthetic factor into his epistemological concerns. When I refer to "aesthetic" in this section I mean something more minimal than a concern with art or beauty. Within an epistemological discussion, an aesthetic turn occurs when the object of knowledge is considered as an indirect means towards self-knowledge, rather than an object of inquiry in its own right. Thus, we can speak of aesthetic spectatorship in this minimal sense when an ordinary epistemological engagement is supplemented by a concern for the observer's status as properly (or insufficiently) detached, by a desire for detachment. Within this ultimately Platonic model, beauty appears belatedly as a consequence of a well-disposed inner sense. I argue that within Locke's epistemological concerns, he touches on an aesthetic epistemology around the issue of "bottoming" knowledge, an expression he returns to almost obsessively. Locke recognizes that one cannot be certain that one has "bottomed" one's knowledge on the things themselves; thus, instead of making the criterion for adequate knowledge in the object, he places it in the open-ended disposition of the subject to continuously pursue knowledge until the subject is satisfied she has reached what feels *to her* like the "bottom" of things. This reflexive model of self-conduct is also concerned with the "sacred images" that act as "invisible" influences governing mankind, and how to "conduct" the understanding in relation to them (*CU* 181–2). I go on to show that Defoe's novel is concerned with this reflexive form of learning rather than standard relational pedagogy, arguing that Crusoe's wayward desire for detachment from the social world as he knows it illustrates the Lockean instructions to search out the "bottom" of knowledge in oneself. In the minimal sense of aesthetic I employ here – a sense that the following sections develop in relation to inner-sense theory, which grows into a major strand of aesthetic theory – I argue that Defoe fashions in Crusoe a model of aesthetic education.

Towards the end of his adventures, after a life of seafaring, from Moorish slavery to Brazilian slave-ownership to a quarter-century of solitude on a Caribbean island, after a return to England and a new voyage to the island, after further mercantile adventures in the South Indies, just before he undertakes a (final?) journey across the globe's largest landmass all the way back to Europe, Robinson Crusoe, leaving Peking, relates to his reader a scene of profoundly dilated spectatorship:

We pass'd the great China Wall, made for Fortification against the Tartars; and a very great Work it is, going over Hills and Mountains in a needless Track, where the Rocks are impassable, and the Precipices such as no Enemy could possibly enter, or indeed climb up, or where if they did, no Wall could hinder them. They tell us, its Length is near a thousand English Miles, but that the Country is five hundred in a straight measured Line, which the Wall bounds, without measuring the Windings and Turnings it takes. 'Tis about four Fathom high, and as many thick in some Places. I stood still an Hour, or thereabout, without trespassing our Orders, for so long the Caravan was in passing the Gate; I say, I stood still an Hour to look at it on every Side, near, and far off; I mean, that was within my View. (*Farther Adventures*, 291)

What happened during this precise hour that Crusoe stood still, staring at the wall, as the caravan goes by? This scene is a late and noteworthy instance of Crusoe's scopophilic urge, the impulse he locates at the bottom of a series of adventuresome wandering that, as the novel and its sequel wear on, become only more clearly signs of European tourism motivated by an anxious and restless Wanderlust. "My Eye," he declares, "which like that, which *Solomon* speaks of, *was never satisfied with Seeing*, was still more desirous of Wandring and Seeing" (232). The redundancies of "was" and "Seeing" reinforce the emptiness, associated with repetition, that he saw condensed into the figure of the Great Wall. The walls covers the entire territory not once but twice, a thousand miles of wall for five hundred miles of land. Crusoe sees in the wall his first great labor on the island after stripping the ship writ large: the massively overengineered double fortification around his habitation with "two row of strong stakes . . . so I was compleatly fenced in, and fortify'd, as I thought, from all the world" (*RC* 48–9).

This relic of the "infinite labour" of the Chinese covered the land even unto "Precipices such as no Enemy could possibly enter," and yet was completely useless against the real enemy. He explains to the native guide:

Seignior, do you think it would stand out an Army of our Country People, with a good train of Artillery; or our Engineers, with two Companies of Miners; would not they batter it down in ten Days, that an Army might enter in Battalia, or blow it up in the Air, Foundation and all, that there should be no Sign of it left? Ah, ah, says he, I know that. (*Farther Adventures*, 292)

Robinson himself, however, steps in the shoes of the European enemy who enters not blasting through the wall but passing through the gate, commodiously open to the business he brings. His disposition during this moment of stopping and staring for exactly an hour before going on has first a negative aspect. Tearing down the national pride of his Chinese guide, he imagines the Great Wall's total military annihilation so "that there should be no Sign of it left," like a ship sunk beneath the sea without a trace, or, he suggests, a similarly antiquated European relic:

“After we passed this mighty *Nothing* call’d a Wall, something like the *Picts* Wall, and so famous in *Northumberland*, and built by the *Romans*, we began to find the country thinly inhabited” (292). His spectatorship entails the imaginary destruction of the object of his gaze, declared a “mighty *Nothing*,” and it recapitulates the Ozymandian “nothing” of all labors of civilization.

Defoe might have given Robinson these Eurocentric and not particularly profound commentaries on the artifact before him and moved on. Instead, the narrative dwells on the full hour Robinson spends gazing on the wall in order to point to a positive feeling of wonder, tinged with melancholy and a secret resonance with his own past, which he voices only with great difficulty. What moves him is that this massive object built with infinite collective labor and geared entirely towards practical utility has become a purely aesthetic artifact. Rather than shying away from this uncomfortable reversal of practical exertion, he dwells on the aesthetic turn his speculation takes.²¹ Taking in images of its laborious “Windings and Turnings,” he dwells on this point: “I say, I stood still an Hour to look at it on every Side, near, and far off; I mean, that was within my View,” a pragmatic last bit that tells us the wall did not trigger unbounded speculations on the infinite but rather mirrored back to him, for all its jaw-dropping breadth, the limits of what he could take in. Having evolved from a haplessly stranded wanderer into a commercially purposeful tourist, his gazing is bounded by the practicalities of caravan life. He can only indulge in awe-filled spectatorship with a sidelong glance at the progressing train of camels, many conveying his own goods to be traded, after which he must move along or risk attack by Tartars. Crusoe does not lose his ability to (ac)count; rather he feels its pleasure like an inexpressive secret, as when “surpriz’d with [the old merchant’s] News [that there would be a caravan through China], a secret Joy spread it self over my whole Soul, which I cannot describe, and never felt before or since” (*Farther Adventures*, 284–5).

Crusoe’s response appears very Addisonian: he seems to enjoy the prospect far more than those who own it, and his appreciation indeed “gives him ... a kind of Property in every thing he sees”; he also feels a “secret Refreshment” much like the one Addison points to in narrative descriptions (*SP* III.538). Yet for all its melancholy hue, Crusoe ostensibly feels no pain at the nothingness he perceives in the wall. Formally, the emptiness of the wall reflects a pattern of repetition that encompasses his past on the island and beyond that a national memory (the *Picts* Wall) and even a species-wide one (the Chinese). Affectively, he feels a secret pleasure in looking itself which bonds him to the object he looks at with detachment. He sees both “nothing” – the small nothing of a subject’s labor wasted and the big nothing of the object’s apocalyptic demise – and “only what is in my view.” The labor of imaginary pleasure here, overlaying and enfolding with its own manifold windings and turnings the historical territory of European imperial power, culture, and social formations, crystallizes into a subject that owns its own aesthetic detachment in a way that none of the previous subjects considered in this study have. Standing and staring at himself in the artifact of the wall for one hour, or on the island for twenty-five years, Crusoe in both cases renounces ownership, walking away when his time is up.

Before entering into the main island sequence itself, we will take a detour through Locke’s theory of self-education, which Crusoe renders in narrative form. Some thirty years before Cleland’s narrator in *Memoirs of a Coxcomb* offers to confess his ultimately uncertain self-education out of foppish bad taste, *Robinson Crusoe* submits his intimate self-education to public visibility. Both texts resist the effect of closure that marks the mature *Bildungsroman*.²² Crusoe never wholly dominates his impulse to drift away from social life, and all the text progresses towards is the self-understanding of his desire – he grasps through repetition itself the

cyclopic insistence of the “Eye, which . . . was never satisfied with Seeing, [and] was still more desirous of Wandring and Seeing” – and its channeling towards more constructive (viz. profitable) ends. Locke’s *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) is generally regarded as the first major liberal theory of education.²³ He makes its stated goal the subordination of desire.²⁴ The education of desire has been one of the major ways of reading *Robinson Crusoe*.²⁵ The practical recommendation that Locke makes towards this end, which he frames as an innovation that will meet with resistance, is the role of a cultivated and well-paid governor, “some *Discreet, Sober, nay, Wise Person* about Children, whose Care it should be to Fashion them aright, and keep them from all ill, especially the infection of bad Company” (*TE* 148). In this text, Locke spells out the need for education to be entrusted to a governor who is a person of taste.

Robinson Crusoe begins with the breakdown of this model, and the search for another to fill its void. The novel opens, after three brief expository paragraphs, with a heavy, several-page lecture “not to play the young man” whose “thoughts were so entirely bent upon seeing the world,” hurled in indirect speech towards the narrator by the “very ancient” father (*RC* 5–7). The narrator constantly reminds the reader that this “wise and grave man” would have served Crusoe as a judicious governor, had he not disobeyed and fled from him. The text affirms both the father’s values (the “upper station of *low life*” [6]) and the father’s competence as a governor, making the “Strange, Surprising Adventures” a grand detour, prompted by natural “inclinations” (8), from the station where Crusoe was always going to end up. The thrust of Locke’s approach to education is to teach through play, pleasure, and curiosity – at one point he recommends discovering and teaching to the natural bent of a child’s inclinations (*TE* 162–3) – and he recognizes the power of inclination to overrule reason:

’Tis not the Modes of Civility alone, that are imprinted by *Conversation*: the tincture of Company sinks deeper than the out-side; and possibly, if a true estimate were made of the Morality, and Religions of the World, we should find, that the far greater part of Mankind received even those Opinions and Ceremonies they would die for, rather from the Fashions of their Countries, and the constant Practice of those about them, than from any conviction of their Reasons. (206–7)

This important moment does not quite undo Locke’s emphasis on the need for “Reason,” but it severely circumscribes its availability. The governor’s reason includes everything that falls under “fashioning them aright,” including a tacitly communicated standard of tasteful deportment – hence Locke’s repeated emphasis on the inexplicable usefulness of the dancing-master at fashioning “a manly carriage,” which he states almost in terms of the *je ne sais quoi*: “though this consist only in outward gracefulness of Motion, yet, I know not how, it gives Children manly Thoughts, and Carriage more than any thing” (124–5).²⁶ For Locke, “reason” should dominate pleasure, but inclination, and its spiraling chain of associations, will inevitably fashion what counts as reason. He acknowledges that the governor will only be able to subordinate the child’s pleasures to reason (and good taste) as long as he captures and guides the child’s natural inclinations. *Robinson Crusoe* explores precisely the possibility left open, namely of the child (in this case an 18-year-old child) both acknowledging and leaving the governor because its natural inclinations (*not* its pleasures) run contrary to the “reason” they eventually rejoin via a long detour.

Defoe's own educational theory took the Lockean model to a somewhat more extreme pitch.²⁷ He ardently recommends wider access to education, and argues with much greater insistence than Locke for teaching in the vernacular and on scientific subjects.²⁸ However, he is even less inclined than Locke to recommend the dancing-master (a recommendation Locke had made to a class-specific audience) or humanistic education on matters of taste.²⁹ Yet here is his view about what should happen in the absence of an effective governor:

If the unhappy gentleman has been ill taught or untaught . . . let him consider that defect as the first to be repair'd; and he has this for his encouragement, that this part is to be recover'd without a teacher. . . . He wants nothing but to be convinc'd that it ought to be done; and it would be needless to preach morals to him any long time. Let him but appeal to himself, and he will find teachers in his own breast, that will tell him it is not only necessary to be done, but easie also. . . . For take him in the meer state of nature, as I may call it, namely just as he came out of his ignorant, immoral father's hands, that is to say, uneducated, uninstructed, and consequently foolish, wild, vivacious, and immoral: how unhappily, but unavoidably, unless thus prevented, does he propagate ignorance and vice. (*Compleat Gentleman*, 174–5)

The discussion of morality in this passage helps us establish the importance of *self*-education for Defoe. This is precisely what Crusoe undertakes: left alone, “he will find teachers in his own breast” without great effort. To be sure, Crusoe does not flee his “ignorant, immoral father’s hands”; nevertheless, the passage shows that Defoe did not regard the “meer state of nature” as heterogeneous to the social order. Crusoe’s father gave him “a competent share of learning, as far as house-education, and a country free-school generally goes” (*RC* 5), but everything of significance Crusoe learns on his own. In the novel, Defoe takes the subject’s “meer state of nature” that he sees as the norm upon reaching majority for someone of Crusoe’s class, and thrusts this person into a literal state of nature. What was important about the island experience, then, was less the utter exceptionality of its circumstances than the fact that its external exceptionality brought to light something utterly normal.

Locke’s approach, on the other hand, focused on shifting the emphasis from punitive correction according to normalized standards to preventative care. A consequence of this model was that it tended to turn false steps into monstrosities: “Errours in education should be less indulged than any: These, like Faults in the first Concoction, that are never mended in the second or third, carry their afterwards-incorrigible Taint with them, through all the parts and stations of Life” (*TE* 80).³⁰ Nevertheless, he acknowledged that the governor’s preventative precautions in fashioning his pupils’ reason in a sensible, discreet, and tasteful manner could not suffice in all cases. In *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, written in 1697 and originally intended as a long supplementary chapter for *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, he sets about the problem of adult self-education. *Conduct* deals with the precise problem that Defoe explores in *Robinson Crusoe*, namely, how specifically the understanding should conduct and develop itself in the absence of an external governor.³¹ Its major thrust is the Baconian program of knowledge through things themselves rather than books. He attacks the fashionable intellectual cabal of the Scholastics (*CU* 185) as well as of the Cartesians (*TE* 247).³² Scholars “canton out to themselves a little Goshen in the intellectual world” when they should “venture out into the great ocean of knowledge,” comparing them to indigenous peoples trapped on “their own little spot” and “separated by a large tract of sea from all communion with the habitable part of the earth [and

think] themselves the only people of the world” (CU 185–6). The young Crusoe in Bristol, who longs to flee his little spot to “see the world,” takes Locke’s metaphorical recommendation and realizes it in an extreme and literal manner.³³ The information-filled world Locke wanted to apprehend and celebrate becomes the information-poor redundancy of monotonous ocean travel; the salutary leap from wordish mode into embodied practice appears as an unreflective, stubborn, and plainly Oedipal inclination away from the land of the forefathers. In Defoe’s extreme vision, the whole public intellectual culture Locke sought to expand could appear as its own Eurocentric island.³⁴ In other words, Defoe isolates Locke’s recommendation to go beyond verbal acculturation as a relatively bare, almost thoughtless impulse.

Although Locke does not give an aesthetic vision of social life as Shaftesbury did, he was essentially concerned in the *Conduct* with the specific problem of how to implant the search for truth within the subject as an inclination. It is central to his model that a single person’s understanding is insufficient and must be supplemented by others: “We are all short sighted” and limited, he stresses; “from this defect I think no man is free” (CU 184). Therefore, the growth of knowledge is inherently collective and the medial extension of the human knowledge-gathering apparatus is inevitable: we must trust our colleagues. “How useful it is to talk and consult with others,” he says, “even such as come short of [us] in capacity” because “no one sees all,” and, he concludes, “another may ... have notions of things which have escaped him” (CU 7). The earlier text illustrated this with the example of Newton: one should accept and build on his labors even if one cannot oneself follow the mathematical demonstrations (TE 247–8). Shaftesbury pushed Locke’s vision of knowledge-sharing further when he declares in *Sensus Communis* that “All Politeness is owing to Liberty. We polish one another, and rub off our Corners and rough Sides by a sort of *amicable collision*” (S I.42). These are distinct yet complementary visions: in Locke the goal is knowledge of truth regarding the objects in the world by means of a certain cognitive and social disposition (freedom) while in Shaftesbury the end has become the shaping of the subject himself and knowledge of the objective world recedes altogether.

A similar moment had already occurred in *Thoughts Concerning Education* when Locke downgrades the importance of classical languages, addressing an imaginary interlocutor: “what then, say you, would you not have him Write and Read? Shall he be more ignorant than the Clerk of our Parish, who takes *Hopkins* and *Sternhold* for the best Poets in the World?... Not so fast, I beseech you... I say this, that when you consider of the Breeding of your Son, ... *Learning* must be had, but in the second place, as subservient only to greater Qualities. Seek out some-body, that may know how discreetly to frame his Manners ... [and] secure his Innocence” (TE 208). Locke acknowledges the function of a classical education in implanting taste, and in a manner completely typical of the new aesthetics he helped pioneer he recommends a higher taste instead of the received one, asserted here in terms of the relatively nebulous “greater Qualities” of the governor.³⁵ The truer taste he opposes to the taste of the schools is the taste and the natural reason of the wise governor and not something the child discovers for himself from the nature of things or of his own accord. The same is true once the governor is removed in the later work, when one should launch out in “the great ocean” of possible knowledge, which recollects the opening of the earlier work, wherein “the Minds of Children, ... [are] as Water it self” (83–4). Locke recommends a metaphor that Defoe’s novel realizes literally by sending his narrator on a voyage across the ocean. The strange and surprising irony occurs that in attempting to throw away books and look for “the world,” as Crusoe puts it, he finds himself beset by unpredictable storms that land him exactly in the island of despair Locke stranded his hopeless professional scholastics on. No less than they, Crusoe must teach himself or perish.

Yet in order to frame and implant the proper disposition to knowledge, Locke cannot make do without a tacit and spontaneous fulcrum of knowledge acquired reflexively through the experience of things. His concern in the *Conduct* is a fundamentally solitary aptitude that supplements the cheerful liberal sociability of knowledge-gatherers:

Every man carries about him a touchstone, if he will make use of it, to distinguish substantial gold from superficial glitterings, truth from appearances. And indeed the use and benefit of this touchstone, which is natural reason, is spoiled and lost only by assumed prejudices, overweening presumption, and narrowing our minds. The want of exercising it in the full extent of things intelligible, is that which weakens and extinguishes the noble faculty in us. Trace it, and see whether it be not so. (*CU* 187)

On the one hand, all his recommendations tend towards ways to minimize the mediating distractions that dilute the light of natural reason: pride, prejudice, and a narrow lack of experience in the world – the familiar rhetorical minimalism of the new sciences. On the other, he stresses that the faculty itself behind the mediations will not take shape of its own accord: “we are born to be, if we please, rational creatures, but it is use and exercise only that makes us so” (196). The problem in liberal education is to “give [the child’s] mind that freedom, that disposition, and those habits that may enable him to attain any part of knowledge” (208). Locke expresses faith in the “freedom” or “natural reason” of the subject, provided that a supplementary labor strips away the cultural accretions that inhibit the subject’s ventures towards knowledge. Freedom and reason are inalienable human attributes but they never manifest as such. As Foucault puts it, the subject must be made “free to be free” (*G* 69). The final performative injunction in the passage above, which makes the not unc cartesian gesture of referring any subject that would doubt his own “touchstone” to solitary meditative self-examination, illustrates quite clearly the solitary discipline of perceptual orthopedics Locke desires to stimulate and foster. Defoe’s novel is a narrative realization of the performative demand to “trace it” – perhaps by tracing his own story in writing – “and see whether it be not so.”

Picking up Locke’s image of an inner touchstone that must be unveiled, Defoe develops it into the idea of an animalistic motor that must be unbound and activated. He compares an “untaught, unpolish’d gentleman” to

a noble, stately and beautiful organ without the bellows to fill the harmonious pipes to form the sound. The soul of such a person seems to be like a lion in a cage, which, tho’ it has all the strength, the beauty, and the courage of a lion, is yet surrounded with unpassable bars and a checquer-work of restraints, and can neither exert its strength or its swiftness, or show its terrors among the four footed world as, if he were at liberty, nature would dictate him to do. (*Compleat Gentleman* 61)

Defoe describes the education as the bellows energetically driving the beautiful and polished sounds of the well-cultivated organ, giving an aesthetic metaphor we do not find in Locke. The next sentence, however, compares the soul of the uneducated to the frustrated and stifled energy of a caged lion unable to “show its terrors among the four footed world.” The somewhat mixed metaphors follow, I would suggest, from shifting from the external perspective on the uneducated (static natural potential without energetic living breath) to the inward perception of

the subject who feels as though he has been indirectly silenced for want of culture (and therefore feels an abundance of energy pent up and frustrated).³⁶ *Robinson Crusoe* thus demonstrates how much it is possible for a beautiful lion to do for himself “surrounded with unpassable bars and a checquer-work of restraints.”

Because Locke’s view of natural reason in the *Conduct* comprises the supplementary discipline of making-reasonable – and thus the problem of making-natural readers have always found central to *Robinson Crusoe* – Locke’s definition of the understanding includes rather than subordinates inclination and desire, albeit in less *outré* manner than Defoe. As in *Thoughts Concerning Education*, free play should become the motor of the conduct of the understanding (see, e.g., *TE* 207–9). Counterintuitively, he says, the will actually “never fails in its obedience to the dictates of the understanding” (*CU* 181). His introductory passage, which serves as the first epigraph to this section, defines the understanding in terms of “the ideas and images in men’s minds [which] are the invisible powers that constantly govern them” (182). He quietly demotes the Baconian “idols” to the far less theologically charged categories of “ideas and images in men’s minds,” which we know from his earlier work are unavoidably the building blocks of knowledge. His salutary alternative is not the stripping away of ideas and images (and desires) but rather the reflexive process of owning them for oneself: “knowing is seeing, and if it be so, it is madness to persuade ourselves that we do so by another man’s eyes, let him use ever so many words to tell us that what he asserts is very visible” (227). The necessary precursor to public information-sharing is a labor of finding one’s own eyes, which, as *Crusoe* puts it, are “never satisfied with seeing.”

The understanding thus has the double status of the reforming agent and the object of reform: “Great care should be taken of the understanding, to conduct it right in search of knowledge and in the judgments it makes” (182). This conduct of conduct occurs through whatever mysterious inner agency – associated with the touchstone one “carries about” as if in one’s pocket, though one must perhaps always fumble through one’s culturally granted habiliments to search for it – governs the governing images. *Thoughts Concerning Education* gives an example of what this might look like in one of the rare moments Locke considers what to do if the strategy of urging the children’s “book, or any thing we would have them learn” as something fun and playful breaks down. In this case, Locke suggests, “the Cure is to be applied at the other end” by taking whatever “play [the child] is most delighted with” and making “the *Task of Play*” a strict duty to perform so many hours per day, until the child comes running back to his book (*TE* 189–90). This pragmatic and manipulative reforming will attempts to steer and channel the subject’s inclinations without molding them to a higher norm; the *Conduct* pushes further, exploring how this conduct of conduct might occur only by means of an inner governor. Locke’s central assumption that children “generally hate to be idle” (190) is likewise Defoe’s central assumption in *Robinson Crusoe*, whose title character’s stubborn flight from European public culture is punished by (or simply rerouted into) an interminable “*Task of Play*” in which he recapitulates as many of the accomplishments of culture as he possibly can without other people. Locke does not explore either of the two major strategies of resistance possible for the conducted child: on the one hand, decathecting from pleasures altogether through depression, and on the other, withdrawing attention from all objects through manic hyperactivity. Both are examples of affective withdrawal from the liberal conduct of conduct.³⁷ *Crusoe* touches on both by successfully using his inclination towards hyperactive labor to stave off the constant threat of depression.

In the *Conduct*, Locke gives three ways of failing to conduct the understanding. The first way is never reasoning for oneself from one's own experience and instead taking truth on authority; the second is putting "passion in place of reason" (*CU* 6); the third, however, introduces an aesthetic factor. This person has the best of intentions but fails "for want of having that which one may call *large, sound, round-about sense*, [and therefore has] not a full view of all that relates to the question and may be of moment to decide it" (7). One is struck by Locke's epithet-laden and singsongy "large, sound, round-about sense," where the most transparent thing in the world (good common sense) appears as protuberantly "large," mellifluously "sound," and pirouetting "round-about." The expression suggests the idea of ranging, open-air excursion but also the contrary capacity to twirl on the spot or about-face reflexively. More so than in the first two worries, everyone is subject to the insularity of whatever "little spot" they occupy, which is why intellectual sociability is so important. One of the reasons, that Locke figures the necessary good sense or "natural reason" in such a protuberant fashion is that it is indeed an organ of public concern, something to be examined and tested (indirectly, to be sure) by others from several angles. How to best act as one's own conductor, especially in the matter of enlarging, sounding, and round-abouting one's (common) sense, is Locke's special concern in this text.

Locke skips over an important distinction, the crucial one for our purposes, in this opening segment. Our partial knowledge is a quantitative limit, which others supplement by covering more ground (as it were) than we ever could, things "which reason would make use of if they came into his mind" (7). It is something else, however, for another person to mirror back to us *the limits of our own perspective*, which is exactly the qualitative transformation which Shaftesbury has in mind with his model of "amicable collision," and which in Luhmann's model is the defining feature of the second-order observer, who looks not at *what* another observer sees but *how* it observes, which is to say the positive side of the distinction it uses and the negative side, its blind spot. Locke realizes that other people (viz. the governor) frequently serve the function of remediating this structuring blindness (as in the reverse-cure method just described), but he does not theoretically distinguish this properly aesthetic formation from merely helpful information-gathering the subject can take or ignore at she pleases, as Shaftesbury will. In *Robinson Crusoe*, providence (or unconscious repetition compulsion) plays the role of the governing conductor of conduct, which forces him to confront his own structuring blindness, or "afterwards-[almost-]incorrigible Taint."

Yet Locke nevertheless conceives of the successful ordering of the understanding, the correct conduct of conduct, in terms of an achieved bodily disposition in the subject rather than an ever-expanding collective body of knowledge. He urges the subject to go beyond the "crowd of particulars," encouraging a labor of "digesting" through "sufficient and wary induction of particulars" (209–10). We must go beyond "floating names" received at second-hand to "get true knowledge" by forming "in our minds clear settled notions of things, with names annexed to [them]" (211–12). In fact, he even recommends "taking a taste of every sort of knowledge" as long as the end is not fetishistic "frillery," which is to say having "a head . . . well stored [as] a magazine" instead of "informing [oneself]" in one's "proper and peculiar business to the bottom" (214). Knowledge must be embodied and mediated by language that the subject has invested in substantively "to the bottom." Returning to the figure of the dancing-master, Locke explains that "the legs of a dancing-master and the fingers of a musician fall as it were naturally, without thought or pains, into regular and admirable motions" (190). The example illustrates the negative capacity that is so essential to Locke – one learns "till at last [one has] got a facility in it, without perceiving how" (*CU* 191) – but this freedom is entirely an affair of graceful deportment in the

subject, which has learned to not get in its own way, rather than to take in any particular information about objects.³⁸ Locke thus returns several times to the dancing-master as a model for the aesthetic factor necessary to the conduct of conduct. He evidently saw an affinity between fostering the freedom of “natural reason” and teaching children the orthopedics of “manly” carriage (*CU* 239). Locke’s cardinal rule of minding only the thing in itself – “no other rule but a due and right consideration of things as they are in themselves” – required a supplement of cultural mediation to establish the self-evidence of “due and right.” The point of this piece, which was itself a kind of unfinished supplement, was to instill the necessity of an aesthetic, albeit a minimalist one.

The major, almost obsessively reiterated expression for Locke’s aesthetic demand in this work is “bottoming.” It appears very early as the act or effort of remediating the unavoidable limitations of our perceptual experience of truth: “the grounds upon which we bottom our reasoning, are but a part, something is left out which should go into the reckoning to make it just and exact” (*CU* 185). From this moment on he returns to it again and again as the privileged figure for the subject’s commitment to reality and truth (see *CU* 193, 198, 215, 218, 225, 226, 258, 259), finally devoting the penultimate section (§44) entirely to “Bottoming.” One moment in particular clarifies its relation to desire:

True or false, solid or sandy, the mind must have some foundation to rest itself upon, and ... it no sooner entertains any proposition, but it presently hastens to some hypothesis to bottom it on; till then it is unquiet and unsettled. So much do our own very tempers dispose us to a right use of our understandings if we would follow, as we should, the inclinations of our nature. (*CU* 193)

Inclination itself, Locke claims, guides the subject like a touchstone to the things themselves, if we would leave it alone. Pursuing his enquiry as far as he can out of the “little spot” from which he began, the only criterion he gives is that the subject must reach the point of his own satisfaction. He recognizes that this move replaces all procedural rules with a reflexive criterion bound up with individual inclination, which he had declared to be insurmountably diverse. The bottom, he clarifies later, is not the “train[s] of reasoning” (as “hypothesis” here might suggest) but that “upon [which] they bottom” (*CU* 226). The word exerts such a peculiar insistence because it replaces giving a criterion for having reached the thing itself with the virtual floor of the subject’s experience of *himself* through the detour of embodied experience in the world. “Bottoming” is something the subject does, not the destination of a self-present objective bottom in things themselves. As Locke suggested, the testimony of others serves as a powerful supplement or corroboration (or collusion) to deciding whether the subject has satisfied himself of what he holds to be true. The function of the “touchstone” of truth buried within the subject is to acquaint him with that which his knowledge bottoms upon. In the perfect, unmediated use of this touchstone Locke ascribes to angels, they “in the twinkling of an eye collect together all their scattered and almost boundless relations” (*CU* 7). This ideal of total instantaneous computational power is indistinguishable from the spontaneous and visceral knowing of taste taught, one knows not quite how, by the dancing-master. The faculty of bottoming, even in what we now call scientific reasoning, is an aesthetic one, which occurs in the knowing flash of the eye: “those who are accustomed to it readily, as it were with one cast of the eye, take a view of the argument, and ... see where it bottoms” (218).

Several passages illustrate “bottoming” in terms of beauty and aesthetic artifacts. Fundamental truths, Locke explains with reference to Newton’s mathematical exposition (which becomes in Hutcheson, and even more so with Kant, a privileged site for aesthetic experience), “lie at the bottom ... teeming truths, rich in store, with which they furnish the mind, and, like the light of heaven, are not only beautiful and entertaining in themselves, but give light and evidence to other things, that without them could not be seen or known” (258). Gravity is a beautiful discovery, and it explains many other things; likewise the Gospel’s imperative to “love our neighbors as ourselves” in moral life; and, in the following section (the one entitled “Bottoming”), the “bottom” of political relations lies in natural equality (258–9). The bottom in these cases is precisely an “image or idea” (or mathematical formula) the subject has committed to intellectually as well as corporeally as his truth. Locke gives the further example of painting:

Let any one, not skilled in painting, be told when he sees bottles and tobacco-pipes ... that he does not see protuberances, and you will not convince him but by the touch; he will not believe that by an instantaneous legerdemain of his own thoughts, one idea is substituted for another. (254)

This application of Locke’s views on the Molyneux problem to visual representation clarifies that the “bottom” is always an imagistic surface, and one that can be crafted to deceive. What the naive subject initially deceived by *trompe-l’oeil* discovers upon touching the artifact is the “instantaneous legerdemain” of his or her own visual apparatus, which the image had successfully mimicked. This simple example is an apt description of the foundational gesture of aesthetic education in the minimal sense adopted in this section: realizing through experience (here, literal touch) an illusion one has unconsciously participated in sustaining. One has every reason to believe the moment described here, in which the illusion snaps, was the beginning and not the end of a new wonder and appreciation, which responds to what could touch the subject so intimately and secretly. The connoisseur described in Chapter Four seizes on this elemental gesture of discovery and develops it into a forensic method.

When Defoe lands his castaway on a desert island, savoring the irony that he was fleeing the “little spot” he found himself upon and turning that irony into an autological (or rather autographical) pedagogy, he forms a character who gives maximally free rein to the natural bent of his inclination, driven to see upon what it will bottom in the world. Crusoe leaves because of his desire for detachment. In spite of his occasional animadversions upon his sinful seafaring way of life, he demonstrates the nearly complete transfer from sensual to imaginary pleasures (and discomforts). Like a proper Lockean child, he knows nothing of sensuality and is above all adverse to idleness. Defoe explores in the novel, no less than Locke does in the *Conduct*, how the conduct of conduct can occur without an external governor, based instead on the fulcrum of aesthetic self-satisfaction, supplemented eventually by others. The novel invites the allegorical register in which the island is the “bottom” upon which Crusoe’s desire to see or to know the world settles, at least for a time. In the *Farther Adventures*, this impulse becomes an infinite desire to “wander and to see” without object or end. In this allegorical register, then, hitting the desert island offered the thrill of touching a painting of the European world for oneself, feeling its flatness, or perhaps its gentle curvilinear shape on the globe, and reconstructing its multifarious arts of life with as much ingenuity as possible. Crusoe discovers, or rather proves to himself, that at bottom the world he came from exists here as much as anywhere else. Defoe’s narrative experiment tests the efficacy of the Lockean conduct of conduct using an inward

touchstone rather than external governor. At the same time, it displays the inclination Locke is confident will lead the subject to the bottom of things as a wayward and unsatisfiable disposition to see and to build an experience for itself.

2. Robinson's minimalist aesthetic: the beauty of utility in Defoe, Hogarth, and Smith

Fitness of the parts to the design for which every individual thing is formed, either by art or nature, is first to be considered, as it is the greatest consequence to the beauty of the whole. This is so evident, that even the sense of seeing, the great inlet of beauty, is itself so strongly biased by it, that if the mind, on account of this kind of value in a form, esteems it beautiful, tho' on all other considerations it be not so; the eye grows insensible of its want of beauty, and even begins to be pleased, especially after it has been a considerable time acquainted with it. . . . [For example,] in ship-building the dimensions of every part are confined and regulated by fitness for sailing. When a vessel sails well, the sailors always call her a beauty; the two ideas have such a connexion!

(Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*)

While children were a somewhat surprising yet logical audience for *Robinson Crusoe* appealed, the novel put itself forward in a direct and conspicuous manner as an economic parable, with Crusoe on the island as *homo economicus*.³⁹ Moreover, the most influential twentieth-century discussion of the novel, Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel*, linked the relevance of its economic themes to the crystallization of what Watt called "formal realism," including many of the narrative features of and expectations around the modern novel.⁴⁰ This section argues that in much the same way that the novel frames its interests in pedagogy with reflexivity and imaginary pleasure, the economic themes in the novel are also qualified aesthetically. Here, we turn from the question of aesthetic spectatorship to the link between beauty and utility in eighteenth-century empiricist aesthetics, exemplified in the strong later formulations in William Hogarth and Adam Smith.⁴¹ This section argues that Defoe fashions Crusoe's constant preoccupation with matters of utility with an eye to the supplemental beauty of utility, and I give a number of examples where his mostly unconscious motive towards beauty comes to light.

In the epigraph to this section, drawn from the opening of the first section of *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753), Hogarth pushes as far as any major eighteenth-century aesthetic thinker will the case for a powerful psychological link between beauty and utility, or, in Hogarth's terminology, "fitness."⁴² The passage makes its case with reference to Locke's associationist psychology, evoking the "new Gusto" from habituation (discussed in Chapter One, section 1), which has such powerful charms that it can stimulate one to enjoy what might otherwise seem like an unpleasant but morally or medically necessary course of action. He also alludes to Addison's popular aesthetic philosophy, whose conservative conclusions Hogarth repudiated, but whose premise that the eye is "the great inlet of beauty" he reiterates in these prominent opening lines (25). Whereas Locke tended to illustrate the powers of association with specifically localized events – he frequently gives examples of arbitrary childhood traumas as causing adult likes and aversions – Hogarth modulates the "new Gusto" from individual peculiar cases to the completely ubiquitous principle operative whenever form follows function. He states his claim

with a coy use of double negation, no doubt offering to illustrate the elusive serpentine line of beauty he is setting out to explain: “the eye grows insensible of [a utilitarian object’s] want of beauty, and even begins to be pleased” because the object fits its function so well. Hogarth invokes a completely functional world that would otherwise be wanting in beauty, a plainness or even ugliness that the post-Addisonian spectator grows “insensible” to because of the supervening charms of its being so perfectly, even exquisitely useful. Where Locke and Shaftesbury appealed to the dancing-master for a reliably primitive example of tastefulness, Hogarth’s attempt to fix the “fluctuating ideas of taste” pursues the matter all the way into the shipyard: a sailor gazing at an impressively sea-worthy ship that is ready for anything illustrates an aesthetic response that is at bottom identical to the response of the viewer of Hogarth’s paintings and prints. The model Hogarth articulated a generation later was more rigorously materialist than Defoe’s and it led him to a neo-Baroque aesthetic of ornamental profusion that was far more extreme than anything we find in *Robinson Crusoe*. Nevertheless, Hogarth’s expansive defense of fitness formulates the aesthetic principle behind Crusoe’s self-education on the island.

Defoe’s narrator introduces the portion of his narrative dealing with Crusoe’s silent time on the island by advertising its novelty. We are about to encounter the “melancholy relation of a scene of silent life, such as perhaps was never heard of in the world before” (RC 52). The formulation contrasts the extreme solitude of the “scene of silent life” with this subject’s singular suitability to be a sensation to be “heard of in the world” as much as possible. It places under the sign of melancholy the strange anti-public life it is about to describe, in which the manifold details of living become highly interesting to a reading public because of their unusual environment, but nothing private is ever confessed: no excretory bodily functions, no sexual feelings of any kind, none of the “many dull things” (56) that would have been in Crusoe’s journal had he written right away instead of occupying himself with things in the world. That said, Robinson does give us a brief sample of how boring his narrative should have been had he confessed all his private thoughts:

For example, I must have said thus: *Sept.* the 30th. After I got to shore and had escap’d drowning, instead of being thankful to God for my deliverance, having first vomited with the great quantity of salt water which was gotten into my stomach, and recovering my self a little, I ran about the shore, wringing my hands, and beating my head and face, exclaiming at my misery, and crying out, I was undone, undone, till tyr’d and faint I was forc’d to lye down on the ground to repose, but durst not sleep for fear of being devoured. (56)

The reconstructive “I must have said” simulates a glimpse into what a direct narrative of personal private experience might have looked and felt like through a detached lens. The point of this moment is to communicate his distress: the hand-wringing, the face-beating, the exhaustion, and the fear of attack, without the emotional expansiveness of full-blown narration. It also serves to slip in the religious retrospection (“instead of being thankful to God...”) that the narration will introduce in good time, setting up a stable temporality for the narration as a whole distinct from the immediacy of Robinson’s lived experience but also distinct from full retrospective composure. When the narrative actually gives the journal on the following page in a documentary mode, beginning on September 30, it tells the exact same information:

All the rest of that day I spent in afflicting my self at the dismal circumstances I was brought to, *viz.* I had neither food, house, clothes, weapon, or place to fly to, and in despair of my relief, saw nothing but death before me, either that I should be devour'd by wild beasts, murther'd by savages, or starv'd to death for want of food. At the approach of night, I slept in a tree for fear of wild creatures, but slept soundly tho' it rain'd all night. (57)

Although the journal is a short-lived narrative experiment within the text, the informational redundancy of these two passages creates a powerful trust in the congruence between the retrospective first-person writing from an ironic distance (who notes the physical effects of vomiting salt-water, the verbalized cries and hand gestures on the shore, and a sleepless night on the ground) and the documentary first-person journal (which notes the self-induced “afflicting my self,” the despair of “saw nothing but death before me,” and the nevertheless good night’s sleep in the tree that followed, “tho’ it rained all night”). The ironic private retrospection stresses the aspects of the scene that might have been seen by a third-party observer, or the public aspects of the scene. The journal gives the immediate retrospection of one gathering his private self in writing. Because we had earlier read that he first “r[an] about like a mad man” and then “went to the tree” (39), the dissonance between the two versions of the same narrative actually conveys the impression of their both being about the same experience, taken in two different moments.⁴³ At the same time, however, the question about factual consistency nevertheless arises: on the night of September 30, did Crusoe stay awake all night on the ground or did he sleep soundly in a tree? The fact that the narrator cannot remember at the time of telling the story – as if himself given to a moment of somnolence – conveys in the shape of a symptom how traumatic that first night must have been, whether he slept or not. The result of this moment is a truth-effect pertaining to the character of the narrator delivered just where the reality-effect in the world of the text is wanting.⁴⁴

In between these two moments we are given another redundancy, a retelling of Robinson’s first activity after salvaging what he could from the ship, namely achieving a spectatorial point of view on the island. I give the later passage, then the earlier one:

Some days after this, and after I had been on board the ship, and got all that I could out of her, yet I could not forbear getting up to the top of a little mountain, and looking out to sea in hopes of seeing a ship, then fancy at a vast distance I spy'd a sail, please my self with the hopes of it, and then after looking steadily till I was almost blind, lose it quite, and sit down and weep like a child, and thus encrease my misery by my folly. (56)

My next work was to view the country, and seek a proper place for my habitation, and where to stow my goods to secure them from whatever might happen ... There was a hill not above a mile from me, which rose up very steep and high, and which seem'd to overtop some other hills which lay as in a ridge form me northward ... after I had with great labour and difficulty got to the top, I saw my fate to my great affliction, (*viz.*) that I was in an island environ'd every way with the sea, no land to be seen, except some rocks which lay a great way off, and two small islands less than this. (43)

Because these passages occur thirteen pages apart, a single emotional reality takes shape for the reader: Crusoe climbs a hill, finds he is alone on an island, and experiences great distress. Yet the

earlier passage, a part of the main narration, takes in the topographical details (water all around, rocks, island – he mentions “great affliction” but without textual histrionics) while the latter passage omits these discoveries and focuses only on the straining of his gaze towards what might or might not be a sail to the point of near-blindness and child-like tears. It is important, especially in the context of the earlier passage, that Defoe makes Crusoe’s island large enough to require an arduous climb to see view and small enough that from a height he can see it in its entirety.

Long before Crusoe’s difficult and interrupted attempts to circumnavigate the island, it becomes “his” island by means of Addisonian spectatorship. Addison had explained the aesthete’s “possession” of the landscape in these terms: the spectator’s visual pleasure gives him “a kind of Property in every thing he sees, and [it] makes the most rude uncultivated Parts of Nature administer to his Pleasures: So that he looks upon the World, as it were, in another Light” (*TS* III.538). Crusoe’s self-education on the island consists of learning to see his world “in another Light” by transforming “rude uncultivated nature.” It becomes perfectly clear that Crusoe’s transformation of the landscape goes beyond the utilitarian when he supplements his castle-like house with a “a little kind of bower . . . my country-house” (*RC* 81–2), casting himself as a country gentleman improving the landscape for pleasure. He later tells the Captain that he also “had a seat in the country, as most Princes have, whither [he] could retreat upon occasion” (203), placing his improvements under the sign of leisure, comfort, and tastefulness. Here, however, he hesitates to spend too much time in his vacation home because of the potential for depressive self-enclosure: “to enclose myself among the hills and woods, in the center of the island, was to anticipate my bondage” (81). Of course, literalized in this way, the play of the spectator’s freedom becomes the “great affliction” of insular freedom that Crusoe is condemned to. In a further parallel, the ships sailing down the Thames that so delighted Addison in the Greenwich camera obscura appear to Robinson in the later passage as devastating, utterly maddening apparitions. Taken together, Crusoe’s two descriptions of the same event forge a singular emotional reality around an uncertainty about whether the distress came from an objective recognition of the rocky limits of the island or whether it came from his own overstrained eyesight looking for sails on the horizon it might have placed there itself. From this very early point in the narrative, Defoe fashions an aura of “realism” around Robinson Crusoe’s own apparatus of perception and memory rather than his objective world, presenting him as an aesthetic spectator in Addison’s sense. The safety and comfort of Addison’s warm, dark chamber or personal dungeon within which all manner of instructive spectacles might be projected becomes in Defoe’s hands the blinding and uncertain spectacle under the scorching tropical sun. Defoe, who had stood in the pillory, knew what it was like to be confined to oneself and exposed to spectatorial aggressions.⁴⁵

Robinson immediately extends or duplicates his reluctantly possessive gaze by firing his gun.⁴⁶ “I believe it was the first gun that had been fir’d there since the creation of the world,” he tells us, shooting a strange bird that proves inedible (44). Robinson observes for us the Edenic purity of his surroundings with a statement registering that his gun could be seen to bring “some wonderful fund of death and destruction” able to kill “anything, near or far off” (167). With this comment, he intimates that the reverberating land “felt the wound” of his presence in a way that Eve was not able to feel directly after she falls. The eerie feeling he relays matter-of-factly is the fruit of aesthetic detachment: he sees himself in the mirror of the island, imagining how it sees him. No less than for Addison, his aesthetic spectatorship offers a moment of possession-taking,

which takes place not through placing a flag-like signifier in the ground but through the invisible and temporalized iteration of a look and a shot.

When Crusoe turns to examine the beast he has just killed, Defoe uses this moment to distinguish Crusoe's species of curiosity from that of an observer after scientific knowledge: "I had no sooner fir'd, but from all the parts of the wood there arose an innumerable number of fowls of many sorts, making a confus'd screaming, and crying every one according to his usual note; but not one of any kind that I knew" (*RC* 44). The unexpectedly noisy reflux of his shot nevertheless triggers something like recognition in Crusoe, who seems to know that they cry each "according to his usual note" even though this is the first note he has ever heard and he is unable to make anything of it. The narrative's point is that the exceptional event of the arrival of a European man with his gun is folded into the island's normal order of responses, as the animals respond just as they would at any other loud noise. Again, Crusoe observes the birds as observers of him – doing what they would normally do, as opposed to responding to the exceptional fact of his presence with exceptional cries – even when this mode of observation requires the projection of his presence temporally into the landscape before his arrival or after this initial moment (as in: the cries he learned later were ordinary to them). This important early moment of knowledge-acquisition for Crusoe combines two things. Firstly, no less than for Adam, the whole island down to the birds seems placed there for him, and like a perverse reiteration of Adam's naming of the animals, the birds come out in response to his shot and reveal themselves not as singular individuals but as natural kinds with cries that are habitual to them. They are only intelligible, however, as types that are as monadically isolated as he is, and they are intelligible to him as self-consistent without the possibility of peering into their mechanism further. Thus, secondly, he is only curious about the natural world insofar as it directly affects his interests. All he can say of the bird he has killed is that "I took it to be a kind of hawk, its colour and beak resembling it, but had no talons or claws more than common [and] its flesh was carrion, and fit for nothing" (*RC* 44), whereupon he casts it aside without another thought.

Crusoe does note two things about this bird: that, hawk-like, it seems built for rapine and that with minimal claws it seems strangely unfit for the station in life he ascribes to it. Perhaps he only registers the size of the claws because he is disappointed that, like the flesh, they are useless to him. This cast-away bird seems like as much of a spectatorial supplement as Milton's Satan does perched like a cormorant on the tree of life, preparing to plunder at will, or as Crusoe himself. Analyzing the bird in terms of practical fitness to himself leads directly to an aesthetic evaluation in terms of beauty (or in this case ugliness) and away from scientific interest in whatever truths about that bird might have been learned were it taken as an object for itself. Defoe repeatedly stresses Crusoe's indifference to all efforts towards taxonomy, anatomy, or ethology, in spite of his nearly infinite time and energy: nothing about the island concerns him but what directly reflects upon him. For example, he sees "many sort of sea fowl, which I did not understand" (*RC* 58), though he regrets that they escape him); later he tames some of them, observing that these are "several tame sea-fowl, whose names I know not" (143), as if all further knowledge about the animal belonged to a specialist back in Europe and he had no way of learning it for himself. Likewise, his botanical explorations succeed in locating green tobacco, besides which "there were divers other plants which I had no notion of, or understanding about, and might perhaps have vertues of their own, which I could not find out" (79).

When, a page later, he repeats his initial survey during his first spring on the island, noting "that it look'd like a planted garden," he observes its Edenic qualities:

I descended a little on the side of that delicious vale, surveying it with a secret kind of pleasure, (tho' mixt with my other afflicting thoughts) to think that this was all my own, that I was king and lord of all this country indefeasibly, and had a right of possession; and if I could convey it, I might have it in inheritance, as compleatly as any lord of a manor in *England*. I saw here abundance of cocoa trees, orange, and lemon, and citron trees; but all wild, and very few bearing any fruit, at least not then: However, the green limes that I gathered, were not only pleasant to eat, but were very wholesome; and I mix'd their juice afterwards with water, which made it very wholesome, and very cool, and refreshing.
(80)

Crusoe virtually cites Addison on the “secret” and “inward” pleasures of the imagination as leading to a kind of possession.⁴⁷ In a circular logic, Crusoe’s enjoyment of the fruits of his possession (his consumption) and his organization of the landscape (he helps the trees bear fruit) further reinforce his claim to possession. The “secret kind of pleasure” he takes consists of imagining his hereditary title to possession, something that will live on after he dies. Yet he has no thoughts of what specific children will succeed him: he feels a secret thrill at virtually marking the place with his cultural categories, which, provided the right mediation (“if I could convey it”), will survive his material disappearance, or, as the legal structure in the Brazilian colony he had established called it, his “Civil death” (233). He savors the promise of culture in the form of multifarious fruit, still “all wild” but promising many future fruits, the enjoyment of which he seems to relish proleptically in the little green fruit of the lime that is available. The Addisonian “secret refreshment in a description,” initially the purely fictional and rather overblown feeling of being “king and lord,” becomes over the course of the passage the literal refreshment of a nice cup of limeade after a hard day’s work (but what, if anything, did he sweeten it with?). The function of the passage is thus to demonstrate a relatively even, graduated chain of culture from the sensual pleasure in the little lime to the imaginary pleasure in feeling oneself king. In the middle of this chain is an odd redundancy, the “lemon, and citron trees.” According to *OED*, “citron” usually described the same thing as a lemon, though it could also connote several exotic lemon variants from Africa and Asia and their woods, or the general category of citrus (encompassing the orange, lemon, and lime mentioned here), or the lemon color itself.⁴⁸ This distinction without a clear difference suggests that “citron” appeared either as Crusoe’s exoticized description of the lemons he encounters, or the trace of a taxonomic confusion confirming his indifference to botany, or simply his enchanted view of the prospect before him converting the trees into little flashes of their own color from a distance.

One way to understand how Defoe constructs Robinson Crusoe as an aesthetic observer is that he widens the field of imaginary pleasures to include the kind of minute particulars that Addison had excluded, for example in his strictures on the pseudo-Newtonian appreciator who enjoyed nothing better about the *Aeneid* than tracing the voyage on a map.⁴⁹ Defoe manages to charge a host of minute practical details with intense interest, and he does this by situating the particulars within a gradually unfolding map of the text’s own making. In other words, he pushes the pseudo-Newtonian observer’s pleasures off the map giving him the supplementary pleasure of making the map as he goes.⁵⁰ He illustrates the same point chronologically by giving Crusoe a calendar on a large post he is obliged to circle round repeatedly, manifesting physically the deformation of human time from travel through space.

One of the devices Defoe uses to represent the novel’s reality as constructed in circular manner is adapting the method of double-entry bookkeeping. As Mary Poovey explains it,

double-entry bookkeeping consisted of four stages: first, the invention (a discursive list of a static magazine of items – which occurs at 41–2); second, the memorial (a discursive list of events as they happen – which occurs from his first prospect on 43 to the beginning of his self-reflections on 51); third, the journal (a digest of the memorial stating the relation of the inventory items in a single currency – which occurs in Crusoe’s journal 61–7; his currency is time); and finally, the ledger, which reorganizes the journal, changing it from linear time to the balance according to different type of transactions, in effect resuscitating the inventory with temporally specified relations of debt and credit– which occurs on 54).⁵¹ This system allowed replacing “referential accuracy” with “rectitude of the system,” conveying the horizontal relationships at a glance but obscuring the accuracy of the initial information: “the conventions of double-entry writing simply excluded allusions to what no rules of writing could control: shipwrecks, storms at sea, and . . . wild fluctuations in currency rates” (Poovey, 55, 36). Of course, as readers immediately recognized, Defoe was depicting “economic man” managing his own shipwreck with the same tools that a merchant would use to manage this event from the other side.

It was plain, however, that Defoe was adapting the double-entry method as literary device as opposed to actually demonstrating this technique in action; the whole point of his narrative is to anatomize the effects of a shipwreck, the very kind of thing (referential reality) that this method of bookkeeping obscured. With the kind of coy irony that delighted Defoe, Crusoe gets the order of the last two items wrong, placing the succinct summary ledger before the journal itself, as if Crusoe had never quite completed his course in accounting and struggled to implement the method properly, shifting the focus from the efficacy of the method to a subject’s struggle to remake the method for himself. Traditionally, a ledger would have introduced an imaginary number at the bottom to balance the book; the effect of this technique, according to Poovey, was to “confer cultural authority on numbers” (54; see also 50). It is thus important that Crusoe’s ledger of the pros and cons of his predicament makes no attempt at numerical quantification and ends with the appearance of God at the bottom right, just where the fictitious number would appear to balance the books. The journal, by contrast, ends when he decides it would be too boring to rehearse all the details of his four months of labor building his own great wall of twenty-four yards around his habitation. He introduces the ledger as a technique for alleviating his depression, “to master my despondency,” by stating “very impartially” the positives and negatives of his situation (*RC* 53–4). His conclusion is that “here was an undoubted testimony” that no matter how many negatives could be entered on the left column, some manner of positives could also be adduced on the right. For him, there would be no point in numbering them because both sides could be multiplied arbitrarily and almost without limit. He grasps the method itself as another, albeit less tangible item he has saved from his ship, and presents aesthetically as a kind of artifact. After exercising this “impartial” accounting, he has “now brought [his] mind a little to relish [his] condition, and given over looking out to sea to see if [he] could spy a ship” (54–5). For the first time, he can say that he has, in Locke’s terms, a “new gusto” for the island, which circles around the two imaginary figures at the limits of his world-making: God and the great wall of work.

Because the first stage of Crusoe’s time on the island is devoted to ceaseless work making things for himself it is particularly important that once he shifts into the reflective mode, describing not what he has made but how he has made it, Defoe makes his first extended example something primarily oriented towards the gaze. “For example, if [he] wanted a board” Crusoe has to laboriously shave down a trunk from both sides, yielding only a single plank per tree, and generating incredible waste (55). He uses the refuse of the ship to make a chair and

writing desk (appropriately enough), but his first self-made planks serve to make “large shelves of the breadth of a foot and a half one over another, all along one side of my cave, to lay all my tools, nails, and iron-work, and in a word, to separate every thing at large in their places” (56). This initial use of the island’s resources to make a pleasing frame or stage for his salvaged possessions spaces them out into their own proper places before his eye. Beginning with the items on the plank, “my whole story is a collection of wonders” (203).⁵²

He later returns to board-making as his chief example of the artificially extended labors the island put him to: “for want of tools, want of help, and want of skill ... I was full two and forty days making me a board for a long shelf” (92). Instead of dividing the wood as “two sawyers with their tools” would have done in a few hours, he must painstakingly and artfully sculpt his objects out of a mass of wood. Eventually, he makes further tools out of native materials to sit alongside his European iron-work on the shelves, for example the shovel he sculpts as a singular piece out of “the *Iron Tree*,” which he “work’d ... effectually by little and little into the form of a shovel or spade, the handle exactly shap’d like ours in *England*” (59). Defoe stresses that these fascinating, utterly exceptional products realize imaginary forms in the materials of this new world. His vision, as much as his realization, is aesthetic, and the fascination that accrues to these objects for the reader follows from the aesthetic supplement of their beautiful utility, which the first board stages so nicely. No less than Hogarth, Defoe is intent on showing us how everyday objects and occurrences are charged with strange and surprising imaginary pleasures bound up with their usefulness. Crusoe’s labor thus consists not of new inventions but of reinventing the forms of the old world from a distance.

Crusoe’s aesthetic self-education, which begins when he turns away from looking for sails in the sea and continues when he sculpts exquisitely fit objects from the unresisting matter of the island, beginning with the board that stages and spaces them out before his eyes, gradually yields the kind of objects we would ordinarily associate with the culture of tastefulness. Emboldened by the variety of food sources he has cobbled together, he eventually declares that “*Leaden-hall* market could not have furnish’d a table better than I,” in that he had “plenty, even to dainties” (88). Until he learns to make a wheel to throw clay on, he laments that his pottery is ugly in spite of its functionality: “as to the shapes of them, they were very indifferent ... as the children make dirt-pies, or as a woman would make pies, that never learn’d to raise paste” (97). Even so, after his first successful experiment in pot-firing he joys at his “three very good, I will not say handsome pipkins ... and one of them perfectly glaz’d with the running of the sand,” remembering the beautiful accident of a supplementary, colorfully streaked glaze in spite of the pots’ imperfection.⁵³ Although he denies an interest in achieving a refined or “handsome” pot per se, his wonder at the accidental glaze shows the emergence of his minimal aesthetic even when he seems most to deny it.

In these cases, when Crusoe’s aesthetic forming becomes consciously visible to him as beauty, the environment contributes something unforeseen to his labors. This is especially apparent when the stakes of his wall come alive: “I could not tell what tree to call it, that these stakes were cut from.⁵⁴ I was surpris’d, and yet very well pleas’d, to see the young trees grow; and I prun’d them, and led them up to grow as much alike as I could; and it is scarce credible how beautiful a figure they grew into in three years,” making a perfectly enclosed, camouflaged, and shaded enclosure (84). His pleasure at the “beautiful figure” of the trees is inseparable from his pleasure in their fortuitous alignment with his designs; an extension of the separate view of his tools provided by the board, his living wall separates him off from the world, an effect he enjoys in the anonymous luxuriance of the trees themselves, which grow “as much alike” as

possible. When he eventually shows his improvements to the Captain, this is the item that stands out: “above all, the Captain admir’d my fortification, and how perfectly I had conceal’d my retreat with a grove of trees” (203). What feels so marvelous about these examples is that nature was turned to serve Crusoe’s purposes, governed without a conscious act of domination.

On the other hand, Crusoe never forgets the critical gaze of his country men, which comes up above all in the matter of his clothes and grooming. Once he has finalized his island wardrobe, he presents “the sketch of my portrait” with the following self-deprecating introduction:

Had any one in *England* been to meet such a man as I was, it must either have frightened them, or rais’d a great deal of laughter; and as I frequently stood still to look at myself, I could not but smile at the notion of my travelling through *Yorkshire* with such an equipage, and in such a dress. (118)

Defoe slips in the interesting detail that, unlike Milton’s Eve and Etherege’s fop, who are ineluctably drawn away from their mirror by the lure of some real thing, Robinson Crusoe apparently “frequently stood still to look at” himself.⁵⁵ His “great high shapeless cap, made of goat’s skin, with a flap hanging down behind” might evoke the fop’s massive “full fair double-bottomed” peruke, a different use of leather (and no doubt a different smell) than Fopling’s scented gloves from Orangerie, or perhaps a deformed, non-denominational pontifical mitre. What is so funny (or scary) about his costume is that every choice follows function, exhibits fitness, and uses the available materials, and yet is by his own admission extremely ugly, a fact he regularly verifies with a chuckle in whatever reflective surface is available. Whereas Milton’s Adam walks in his garden, and “in himself was all his state” (*PL* V.353), Crusoe is covered in a protective second skin of leather (perhaps evoking God’s skin coverings for Adam and Eve after the Fall), complicated utility belts, weapons of all kinds, rifle, and umbrella – a burdensome state to the point of ridicule. Defoe slips in the detail of the massive, “*Mahometan*” whiskers that “were of a length and shape monstrous enough, . . . as in *England* would have pass’d for frightful,” which Crusoe lets grow as prosthetic extensions of his seldom-used lips above an otherwise trimmed beard, to remind us that he enjoys the bad taste he can indulge in here, where “I had so few to observe me” (*RC* 119).⁵⁶

Few, but not none, and he proves down to his dress that the gaze of England (or even more specifically of York) provided whatever remained of “so few” that keeps him from going naked like the savages (107). Rejoining the excessive self-indulgence of the fop from the side of function, he continually enjoys being “a formidable fellow to look at, when I went abroad” (132) even though no one is there. When Crusoe finally appears before the stranded English sailors in his extravagant costume, they don’t see him as either ridiculous or savage but as otherworldly. In his own estimation, he makes an “uncouth . . . *spectre-like* figure”; the men exclaim, “*Am I talking to God, or man! Is it a real man, or an angel!*” (200). “Be in no fear about that, sir, *said I*, if God had sent an angel to relieve you he would have come better cloth’d, and arm’d after another manner.” Crusoe’s slow and self-deprecating reveal, aided by the narration’s comic relief, sensitively mediates the profound embarrassment in producing himself after decades alone. But in spite of his redundantly over-skinned self-portrait, he seems to have too little body, not too much. The proof of his humanity, he suggests, is the fact he is not “better cloth’d” (and armed).

Hogarth uses his principle of fitness to defend expressive distortion; his first example is the *Hercules Farnese*, represented in the accompanying plate as illustration number 3 (viewed from behind) and number 4 (viewed from the front) (see Fig. 7). Figures 7 and 8 depict well-known engravings of the original, showing the back and front respectively, both of which Hogarth presents in reverse. Hogarth argues that by gradually slimming the descending muscles and thickening the neck, the sculpture expresses Hercules' "supposed active strength" not "burdened with unnecessary weight" (*Analysis*, 15). Separating his illustrations into front and back images allows him to further emphasize the disjunction between a massive upper body and gracefully slender, comparatively underdeveloped legs, as opposed to the naturalistically correct reproductions in Hyde Park he loathes. It is no accident that a representation of the supremely fit demi-god of great labors should illustrate the aesthetic principle of fitness. The composition of the *Hercules Farnese* illustrates Hogarth's serpentine principle quite well: most of the weight rests on the left leg (which Goltzius renders almost perfectly vertical) while the right leg floats up hinting at motion. The left arm displays his active strength in almost hunched repose on his animal skins while the right arm holding the golden fruit behind his back softens his right pectoral muscle (shown in the *Bos*) without disturbing the even poise of his chest as a whole. In his assemblage of illustrations, Hogarth places another pair of figures in front of the doubled Hercules: "the Antinous's easy sway" (number 6) illustrates the principle of variety alongside the "stiff and straight figure of the dancing master" (number 7) he "must submit to" (*Analysis*, 29). No less than Hogarth's Hercules, Defoe's superhuman model worker, although he presents himself hidden within a baggy assemblage of animal skins rather than triumphantly resting his cyclonal musculature besides them, displays his form in slim, beguilingly centrifugal, almost angelic proportions. Furthermore, the Goltzius Hercules clearly shows the golden fruit, whereas

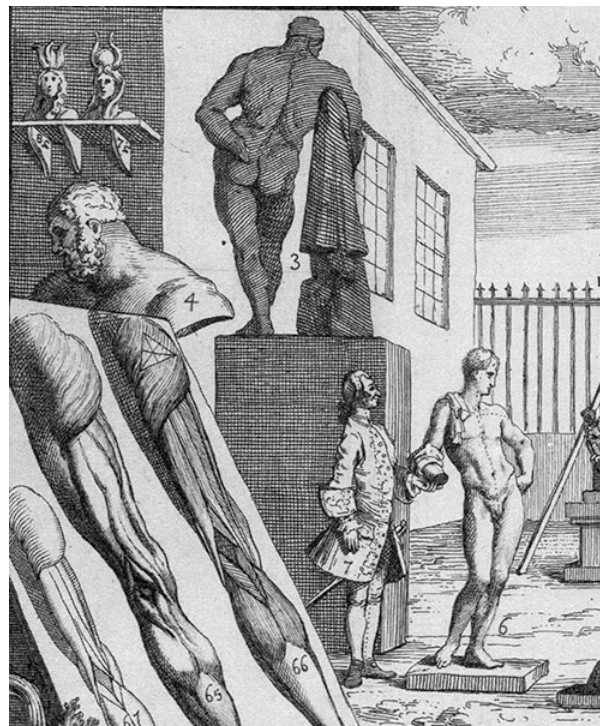


Fig. 6. William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*, Plate 1, 2nd state (detail). 1753. Engraving. British Museum.

Hogarth's version is missing a hand, which has the effect of further disconnecting him from the labor he has just accomplished as well as connecting him visually to the Antinous, who is also missing a hand. Interestingly, rather than drilling the Antinous out of his foppish posturing and into a more correct posture, Hogarth's perfectly erect dancing master fondles his missing hand like a fascinated connoisseur. Hogarth's assemblage thus suggests that the principle of fitness illustrated in the hunky (yet svelte) laborer Hercules replays the same aesthetic principle as the foppish (yet assisted) Antinous in a different register. Hogarth's epigraph, from *Paradise Lost*, is: "So vary'd he, and of his tortuous train / Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve / To lure her eye."



Fig. 7. Hendrick Goltzius, *Hercules Farnese*, 2nd state. 1592 (published 1617). Engraving. British Museum.



Fig. 8. Jacob Bos, *Hercules Farnese*. 1562. Engraving. Rijksmuseum.

Crusoe's Herculean labors, and his occasional Antinous-like posturing, covering and recovering the island, from his great wall to his perambulations alluringly "close within my own circle" (*RC* 132), offer just this spectacle of a real form snaking through a garden.

Adam Smith's competing account of an aesthetics of utility in the 1759 *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, which became far more normative in eighteenth-century culture than Hogarth's almost perverse and libidinous defense of the fitness of ornamentality, explains this principle of taste with the example of *Robinson Crusoe* explicitly in mind.⁵⁷ Smith develops Addison's observation that the detached observer "takes a kind of possession in all that he sees" into a full-blown social principle. "The utility of any object," he says, "pleases the master by perpetually suggesting to him the pleasure or conveniency which it is fitted to promote"; thus, "when we

visit the palaces of the great, we cannot help conceiving the satisfaction we should enjoy if we were masters” (179). Smith isolates the principle of mediated desire that Addison had tactfully left in solution within the landscape: “we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned” (182) – even when this person is oneself. Rather than deploring the confused relation to one’s own pleasure or the envious satisfaction of the imaginary spectator, Smith takes his subject into solitude, giving the following remarkable example:

When a person comes into his chambers, and find the chairs all standing in the middle of his room, he is angry with his servant, and rather than see them continue in that disorder, perhaps takes the trouble himself to set them all in their right places with their backs to the wall. The whole propriety of this new situation arises from its superior conveniency in leaving the floor free and disengaged. To attain this conveniency he voluntarily puts himself to more trouble ... since nothing was more easy, than to have set himself down upon one of them, which is probably what he does when his labour is over. What he wanted, therefore, it seems, was not so much this conveniency, as that arrangement of things which promotes it, [which] bestows upon it the whole of its propriety and beauty. (180)

Unlike Hogarth’s hunky object of taste, who stands around energetically self-enclosed, yet also somnolent, an angelically slimmed offering to the eye, Smith’s subject of taste anxiously reorganizes the furniture until it is just so, angrily wondering where his sleeping servant has gone off to, leaving him to do everything himself. Like Crusoe’s laborious shelf designed to display his collection of useful things and to leave the floor of his cave uncluttered, Smith’s subject is after the feeling of freedom provided by the *tabula rasa* of his floor, upon which, Smith wryly notes, he will place his chair to sit down once he is finished. Even though he could have done this without the laborious detour of the musical chairs of tasteful reorganization, the fatigue of his efforts has somehow motivated the need to sit down and rest that he did not feel upon storming in, and which he can now do contentedly within a circle of absent placeholders for people he has formed around himself. Smith’s choice of example plainly reveals that the tasteful “arrangement of things” necessarily entails both the arrangement of people and the necessity of doing so indirectly without their presence. The whole scene would look quite different if all the chairs were occupied by spectators vicariously enjoying the host’s palatial chambers, even though the host’s anxiously fussing with the furniture – placing the chair backs fully against the wall as far apart from each other as possible, creating an island of clear space in the center for him to sit himself in – obviously reflects the invisible pressure of their gaze. Addison’s spectator simply carried around, like Dorimant, the cool and protective chamber of his imaginary pleasures; in Smith, the arranging of gazes becomes a diachronically spelled-out action, a problem, a story.

When Smith actually invokes the *Robinson Crusoe* scenario, he does so in two conflicting ways. First, he imagines the desert island as an escape from the otherwise inevitable need to organize oneself tastefully:

To one who was to live alone in a desolate island it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of such small conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. (182)

He is clearly channeling Crusoe's many declarations early in the novel about the uselessness of money in his condition as compared to functional (and thus beautiful and fascinating) objects. Yet Crusoe extensively plunders his ship, and Smith reduces "the biggest magazine of all kinds now that ever were laid up, I believe, for one man" (*RC* 45) to a magazine of "such small conveniencies" that they could fit in an ultra-ornamental tweezer-case. Of course, Crusoe's very Smithian next clause is: "but I was not satisfy'd still."

When Smith returns to the figure of the castaway at the end of his section on utility he backtracks, changing the desert island from a relaxing escape from the tasteful duty to move chairs around in some titanic palace to the full and manifest realization of this impulse:

So far as the sentiment of approbation arises from the perception of this beauty of utility, it has no reference of any kind to the sentiments of others. If it was possible, therefore, that a person should grow up to manhood without any communication with society, his own actions might, notwithstanding, be agreeable or disagreeable to him on account of their tendency to his happiness or disadvantage... He might view his own temper and character with that sort of satisfaction with which we consider a well-contrived machine, in the one case; or with that sort of distaste and dissatisfaction with which we regard a very awkward and clumsy contrivance, in the other. (192–3)

The desert island, Smith tells us, is where we must go to find the core impulse of taste – a pleasure he understands as the delight or distaste at a machine according to how it performs – because only there does the beauty of utility appear with a minimum of distraction from "the sentiments of others." Only under such circumstances would the sensitive chair-mover devote himself with utter purity to the reflexive labors of taste. These involve reorganizing himself and the medial extensions that stand (or sit) in order to direct other people; all tasteful self-movement is thus an approximation of the desert-island experience of aesthetic self-education. Only within some margin of solitude – we have already learned from Fopling, who both wanted and recklessly ventured out from "some little place to adjust oneself" in, and now from Crusoe, who is condemned to the freedom of such a space – does the pressure of socially mediated desire fashion a subject without breaking him, or collapsing him into thing-like ridicule.

In solitude, these labors are so pure, Smith says, because the Crusoe figure is perfectly unconscious of the fact that this is what they are. Yet in the very sentence in which Smith unveils Crusoeian activity as the labors of taste, he claims that real solitude will almost never turn the subject to the delicate "species of perceptions" it nevertheless facilitates like none other. The passage goes on to explain that even though solitude ideal for the reflexive labors of taste, too much solitude will eventually undermine the impulse towards tastefulness: "As these perceptions, however, are merely a matter of taste, and have all the feebleness and delicacy of that species of perceptions... they would probably not be much attended to by one in this solitary and miserable condition" (192). Because of this extreme distance from others, whose chairs have been moved across the ocean instead of up against the subject's walls, Smith believes a degeneration will always set in: "such sentiments suppose the idea of some other being, who is the natural judge of the person that feels them" (193). If all other persons are so distant as to be absolutely removed and absolutely other, the subject will stop caring about what other people think – or even, we could add, he will perversely enjoy their absence. Crusoe does not enjoy the absence of others enough to go naked, but we have identified the counter-impulse to tastefulness

from solitude that Defoe describes in the foppery of his enormous, “Mahometan” whiskers – an instance of willfully idiosyncratic bad taste rendered with a tint of a weirdly lateral orientalism, referring back to the margins of Europe instead of the indigenous reality before him – to remind us that he brings all his tasteful self-construction, both good and unfortunate, along with him.

3. Crusoe’s inner sense: the post-secular spirituality of *Robinson Crusoe*

In sleep or dreams [the soul] frames interlocutory discourses betwixt itself and other persons, in a long series, with coherent sense and apt connections, in which oftentimes it seems to be surprized with unexpected answers and repartees, though itself were all the while the poet and inventor of the fable.

(Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*)

I afterwards made it a certain rule with me, that whenever I found those secret hints, or pressings of the mind ... I never fail’d to obey the secret dictate; though I knew no other reason for it, than that such a pressure, or such a hint hung upon my mind.

(Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*)

The major problem for the economic reading of *Robinson Crusoe*, which has tended to view the novel in a secular light, is explaining its relation to the spiritual motives Crusoe dwells on at length, which have been persuasively contextualized within the religious discourse of the period.⁵⁸ Building off the previous discussion of the beauty of utility, this section turns to the theory of the inner sense, the hypothetical inner organ that perceived such forms of beauty. This section argues that the moments of spiritual experience within the narrative are framed by naturalistic and secular explanations, but not with the aim of skeptically undermining Crusoe’s experience. Rather, the text contextualizes his religious experience as his own culturally specific construct unfolding from within him against the backdrop of the desert island. The island itself functions as a secular frame within which Robinson shapes a spiritual life for himself, and like the rest of his existence it is a *bricolage* of the culture he has salvaged. Because of this secular frame, I argue that Crusoe’s growing faith should be understood in the context of an inner sense rather than in terms of a specific, theologically articulated religious identity. Inner-sense theory was introduced by Cambridge Platonists and developed into an aesthetics by Shaftesbury. The sense itself was defined aesthetically and then extended to explain moral and spiritual intuition. Because Crusoe’s spirituality should be understood in terms of the inner sense, which was a major basis for the new aesthetics, I conclude that it too is defined in aesthetic terms.

Just a few pages after Defoe has brought Crusoe’s spiraling movements, Defoe changes the tone of the novel as he embarks Crusoe on “a new scene of my life” (*RC* 122). His labors began out in the water by salvaging the ship, continued by encircling his domestic space, then expanded again to circumnavigate the island, then contracted to describe his perfected dress, all the way to a moment of narcissistic self-reflection that touches him with foppish self-absorption. At this point, Crusoe’s attentions shift from himself to other people, saving him from the degeneration of taste that Smith thought would inevitably follow from true and absolute solitude. Although Crusoe does begin reflecting more seriously on the matter of religion after he finds the

corn and rice growing spontaneously within his enclosure and after the earthquake, Defoe makes it very clear that from his first seconds on the shore that Crusoe is already carrying his religion along with his extreme and utterly imaginary fears of everything. As soon as he emerges from the water, he tells us he

began to look up and thank God that my life was sav'd... I believe it is impossible to express to the life what the extasies and transports of the soul are, when it is so sav'd, as I may say, out of the very grave; and I do not wonder now at that custom, *viz.* that when a malefactor who has the halter about his neck, is tyed up ... and has a reprieve brought to him ... that they bring a surgeon with it, to let him blood that very moment they tell him of it, that the surprise may not drive the animal spirits from the heart, and overwhelm him: *For sudden joys, like griefs, confound at first.* (RC 38)

Like a good Christian, his first thought upon landing is to look up and praise God. However, the text frames his “extasies” by a Cartesian theory of automatic mechanical action, according to which his distinctly European gesticulations were inevitable, the outcome of blood rising to his head, perhaps like Descartes’ widower who mechanically cries for his wife amidst the cultural apparatus of her funeral even though he is secretly glad that she is dead. To be sure, the narration exhibits the intention of saddling Crusoe with theologically understood guilt, or at least a momentary awareness of it, through this event. However, unlike the “malefactor” surrounded by the disciplinary apparatus of an execution designed to punish him before the eyes of others, Crusoe only recognizes – and then very provisionally, like the fair-weather Christian he declares the typical sailor to be – the fact of his guilt in the moment of reprieve.⁵⁹ In the analogy, the malefactor’s convulsions are triggered not by the alteration of his material circumstances (for example, the noose removed from his neck without explanation) but the verbal event (when “they tell him of it”) of speaking his reprieve like a secret into his ear. Thus, Defoe qualifies Crusoe’s awareness of guilt, first as the natural outcome of a material process, and second as the response not to a matter of fact but to something of the order of language and culture. Furthermore, the last line of the passage quotes a 1672 poem celebrating Charles II’s act suspending penal laws against Dissenters, inscribing Crusoe’s “sudden joy” at being saved within the “sudden joy” at a political victory for toleration in a denominational struggle.⁶⁰ The narrative voice remembers Crusoe’s landing as it remembers an event that significantly affected the socially-situated religious system as it operated in the previous generation.

Initially stimulated by the sprouting of the grain and the earthquake, Crusoe’s thoughts turn to religion seriously only after his long illness, during which he has the dream of a fiery angel approaching him menacingly with a “long spear or weapon in his hand” (71) and demanding repentance. The journal narrates his dream on June 27, when Crusoe again convulsively responds with pious ejaculations: “I had alas! No divine knowledge ... but a certain stupidity of soul ... I never had so much as one thought of it [his circumstances] being the hand of God, or that it was a just punishment for my sin ... But I was meerly thoughtless of God, or a Providence, acted like a meer brute from the principles of Nature, and by the dictates of common sense only, and indeed hardly that” (71). Crusoe has forgotten that, as we have just seen, his first act upon landing was to thank God (even if rather mechanically) and to feel his guilt like that of a malefactor set free. Retrospectively, then, those religious ejaculations were folded into the “principles of Nature” he has been following, which is to say some approximation of his culturally-conditioned common sense. Because Defoe gives this narrative within the journal, the

chronology provides an informative context to Crusoe's gradual religious awakening. He becomes ill on June 19; on June 21 he writes that "I pray'd to GOD for the first time ... but scarce knew what I said, or why; my thoughts being all confused" (70), and only on June 27 does he have the dream. The journal thus frames the dream as the answer to a prayer that Crusoe initiated (or self-suggested) rather than a spontaneous divine appearance out of nowhere. The June 27 narrative ends with his cry for help after the dream: "this was the first prayer, if I may call it so, that I had made for many years" (73). His "first prayer" happens three times: when he lands, on the third day of his illness, and again after his dream. Each time the narration reminds us that he has forgotten the fact that the "divine knowledge" he "alas!" lacks has been secretly carried along with him the whole time.⁶¹

Shortly after his conversion moment, the narration invokes the Hobbesian theory of the decay of impressions to explain Crusoe's slow spiritual progress.⁶² His rise in religious sentiments "ended where it begun, in a meer common flight of joy, or, as I may say, *being glad I was alive*," just like the average seaman who instantly drowns "all in the next bowl of punch" (72). We know, however, that Crusoe has access to a large reserve of rum, which he does not touch here, suggesting that his own Crusoe-as-punch-guzzling-sailor narrative is colored with a retrospective moralizing lament and that, at this point, he has not yet hit his personal spiritual rock bottom.⁶³ As in the corn episode, as soon as Crusoe realizes that his deliverance is not directly miraculous, "as soon as that part of the thought was remov'd, all the impression which was rais'd from it, wore off also." And just as after the earthquake, "tho' nothing could be more terrible in its nature, or more immediately directing to the invisible power which alone directs such things, yet not sooner was the first fright over, but the impression it had made, went off also."⁶⁴ The reader sees both Crusoe's all-too-human decay of religious consciousness and the narrator's all-too-human moralizing use of the decay narrative to set up his later spiritual progress. Defoe makes frequent use of the empiricist mode of explanation, as when he self-consciously declares, "Let the naturalists explain these things [viz. Crusoe's mechanistic behavior] and the reason and manner of them; all I can say to them, is, to describe the fact, which was even surprising to me" (149). Yet Defoe is unwilling to demystify Crusoe's experience too radically or explicitly. When the narration describes Providence in standard terms as an "invisible power," it adds that these inner promptings should be "immediately directing," if it were not for that fact that, as Crusoe later puts it, "my unlucky head always [lets] me know it was born to make my body miserable" (153).⁶⁵

The chief intellectual source for the inner-sense approach to aesthetic theory in Shaftesbury and Hutcheson was the group of late seventeenth-century Cambridge Platonists who attempted a hybrid of the empirically-based associationist psychology and a view of religious experience that takes seriously a directing "invisible power" behind the world.⁶⁶ In what follows, I give a short discussion of a leading figure of this movement, Ralph Cudworth, arguing that the detached or secularized spirituality of the inner sense in his model fits exceptionally well the ambiguous spirituality in Defoe's narrative. Cudworth's great enemy in the *True Intellectual System of the Universe* (1671) is Hobbes. His strategy is to accept the fundamentals of his antagonist's associationist psychology, and then to turn them against him by explaining atheism as itself a mental illness, a "Pneumatophobia" coupled with "Hylomania."⁶⁷ Buttressed with a vast display of erudition, his argument traces the origins, genealogy, and fine nuances of this cognitive disorder all the way back to its original in Homer, who made the ocean, or "fluid matter," the father of the gods (*Intellectual System*, 103). The problem with the perennial oceanic malaise he identifies – the hankering for the freedom of the sea, we should recall, sets

Robinson's adventures in motion – is not the dualistic view that isolates matter from spirit, nor an analysis of the material basis of causality, nor even the ascription of autonomous action to matter. The issue is the reification of matter as “a certain blind she-goddess, called Nature or the life of matter” and treating it as “a very great mystery, a thing that is perfectly wise, and infallibly omniscient” (107).⁶⁸

The key concept Cudworth introduces, which I will go on to argue provides a helpful context for how Crusoe thinks of his spontaneous intuitions, is the “plastic mediator.” Against the idols of matter, Cudworth develops instead a strong understanding of matter as invisibly directed by a spiritual double, which sometimes acts God's will directly but usually acts with vacant and automatic repetition. This “plastic power” subtends the entire material world, which is completely inert in and of itself and thus utterly unworthy to be treated as the “fate of things” (133). Like Milton's “mimic fancy” writ large, the plastic mediator “doth drudgingly execute that part of providence, which consists in the regular and orderly motion of matter” (150), an office it performs with vacant and automatic repetition. An “immediate workman and operator” (153), it “goes on in one constant unrepenting tenor from generation to generation” (156) and thus has only “a certain dull and obscure idea of that, which it stamps and prints upon matter” (160). The plastic mediator is active, energetic, and spontaneous but utterly vacant, which explains why material things are free from the power of language, or “not commendable nor governable by ... force of a verbal law or outward command.” Like Coleridge's “esemplastic power” of the imagination, which attempted to reinvent the idea of the plastic mediator in a more plausible and less cosmically grandiose manner, the concept was a way of understanding causal efficacy for imaginary processes.⁶⁹ “He that asserts a plastick nature,” Cudworth declares, “asserts mental causality in the world” (154–5) – but only through the means of automatic repetition compulsion. On the eve of psychoanalysis, Pierre Janet would return to the idea of the plastic mediator not as an account of the world, but as a pioneering description of psychic automatism.⁷⁰

As a refutation of Hobbes, this could look like a desperate move. Cudworth subverts the demystification that seemed to follow from associationist psychology by declaring the entire universe to be interfused with inwardness of mind, and then limits it to a “drowsy, unawaken'd or astonish'd cogitation” (161). In a similar fashion, Crusoe explains the decay of his impressions, his drowsiness, and forgetfulness as a materialist process doubled by an “invisible power” that acts as a medium behind matter and which should be “immediately directing.” Cudworth provides the further example of tacit knowledge: “clear and express consciousness is not essential to life ... Even the sleeping geometrician hath, at that time, all his geometrical theorems and knowledges [*sic*] some way in him; as also the sleeping musician, all his musical skills and songs: and therefore why may it not be possible for the soul to have likewise some actual energy in it, which it is not expressly conscious of?” (162). Crusoe carries Europe – its economic order, its religion, its politics – with him as the sleeping geometrician does his theorems. According to Cudworth, the “superior” vital principle, the “archeus” and “curatrix” of disease, is “a lower unconscious power lodged” within (167). During the pivotal episode of Crusoe's illness, a scene I discuss further below, he emphasizes that his spiritual cure is inextricably entwined with the tincture of tobacco he uses to treat his body. For Cudworth, segmented “knowledges” are at work inside the slumbering subject unawares as the “mere virtual intention of our minds” (162). These manifest themselves in Crusoe, who, as we saw in the introduction to this chapter, began “a very sorry workman, tho' time and necessity made [him] a compleat natural mechanic soon after, as ... it would do anyone else” (RC 58). The

plastic mediator, of course, manifests itself most clearly in dreams, and Defoe's detached attitude towards the spiritual influences he gives some measure of credence to fits well with the ambiguity introduced by the plastic mediator. "In sleep or dreams," Cudworth states, the soul "frames interlocutory discourses betwixt itself and other persons, in a long series, with coherent sense and apt connections, in which oftentimes it seems to be surprized with unexpected answers and repartees, though itself were all the while the poet and inventor of the fable" (*Intellectual System*, 163). The combination of empiricist analysis in terms of self-suggestion and a positive affirmation of surprising "unexpected answers" emanating from within is the psychology that I have argued we find in Crusoe's journal. The plastic mediator, for Cudworth, was the basis for both spontaneous knowing and the destructive compulsion to repeat; instead of good or evil supernatural powers intervening on the subject or the world directly, this self-supporting spiritual veil explained material phenomena in terms of a spiritual empiricism.⁷¹

Henry More had proposed a psychological parallel to Cudworth's grand cosmic narrative, which he called the "boniform faculty"; in turn, Shaftesbury was shrewd about adapting Cudworth and More while trimming back the idealist extravagance.⁷² The "intellectual system" becomes a "UNIVERSAL SYSTEM" (S II.162), and the cosmic drama of Pan and Echo shifts to the portrait of a Promethean "plastick Artist" who manages others artfully from a distance through representations (II.115). "A *Poet* is indeed a second *Maker*," Shaftesbury says, "a just PROMETHEUS under JOVE. Like that Sovereign Artist or universal Plastick Nature, he forms a *whole*, coherent and proportion'd in it-self, with due Subjection and Subordinacy of constituent Parts" (I.129). Shaftesbury equates the work of the artist on the audience with the automatic and repetitive shaping power of the plastic mediator upon matter. By shaping himself in a way that is beautiful rather than "deformed," and knowing himself to be doing so, the poet becomes a "moral artist" who knows "the inward form and structure of his fellow creatures," such that his spontaneous inner sense becomes theirs.

Defoe describes in Crusoe the techniques of the Promethean artist operating on his own unconscious or instinctive life through an indirect "forming power" in both its actively forming and its passively formed aspects.⁷³ When Crusoe explains how he learns to trust his intuitions, Defoe is careful to avoid explaining this as either a directly divine inspiration or a purely associational pathological compulsion. When we are in a quandary, Crusoe explains,

a strange impression upon the mind, from we know not what springs, and by we know not what power, shall over-rule us to go this way; and it shall afterwards appear, that had we gone that way which we should have gone, and even to our imagination ought to have gone, we should have been ruin'd and lost ... I afterwards made it a certain rule with me, that whenever I found those secret hints, or pressings of the mind ... I never fail'd to obey the secret dictate; though I knew no other reason for it, than that such a pressure, or such a hint hung upon my mind. (139)

He describes Providence as acting through the medium of associationally contingent "pressings of the mind," twice woven in with the *je ne sais quoi* ("from we know not what springs," "by we know not what power"). These pressings clearly reflect an invisible spiritual world – they are "proof of the converse of spirits, and the secret communication between those embody'd, and those unembody'd" – but they also operate according to laws which are mechanistic, and therefore vacant. The same type of inner prompting that saves him caused him to disobey his father and leave home in the first place: what has changed is that he has become better at reading

what passes in his own mind. These promptings, he further specifies, do not have the shape of a definite message from the other side; they are rather a way of observing the world as it is: “if I had [only] seen,” he exclaims, “with the same eye then, that I saw with now.” In the same way as for Cudworth, More, and Shaftesbury, Crusoe’s moral knowledge occurs as a species of perception. For all of these thinkers, the inner sense that registers these impressions is the common source of moral and aesthetic knowledge.

The common source for moral and aesthetic perceptions becomes especially clear when Crusoe explains his ardent longing for other people by alluding to the theory of secondary imaginary pleasures from the *Spectator* (discussed at length in Chapter One, section 3). The narrative suggests what it feels like to be the “moral artist” acting through the plastic mediator when Crusoe feels powerful distress before the shipwreck he observes, from which nothing escapes but a drowned corpse (and a dog):

there are some secret springs in the affections, which when they are set going by some object in view, or be it had some object, though not in view, yet render’d present to the mind by the power of the 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 (148–9)

Addison had discussed the heightened pleasures possible when an object is physically absent and instead made present through the mediation of the imagination; here, the fact of distance or detachment becomes excruciating. Crusoe continues that secondary imaginary experience can lead to convulsively automatic physical manifestations: no longer satisfied playing the part of Addison’s man isolated in a dungeon who amuses himself with fantastic aesthetic spectatorship, Crusoe becomes so inflamed with longing for the objects of his fantasy (other people) that “my fingers would press the palm of my hands, so that if I had any soft thing in my hand, it would have crush’d it involuntarily” (149). The “secret springs” of Crusoe’s inner sense act like the Cudworthian “lower unconscious power lodged” within. Crusoe also finds his teeth clenched beyond control, as he repeats “a thousand times” the words “*O that it had been but one!*” The Addisonian spectator delighted by a softly quivering sail in a camera obscura is replayed here as a gnashing distress before the tattered sails of a ship. Defoe again conceives of Crusoe’s excitation as the outcome of a mechanistic process as opposed to direct inspiration; these processes are a “drowsy, unawaken’d or astonish’d cogitation.” Like Cudworth, Defoe accords his character some contact with invisible powers, while framing them in the automatic reflexes of the sensitive and imaginative body, which make a reading the hand of providence with certainty fundamentally impossible. Crusoe thus concludes that the “impression was so strong upon my mind, that it could not be resisted, that it must come from some invisible direction, and that I should be wanting to my self if I did not go” (149) to explore the ship, in spite of the dangers this presented. If he were not to go, he would not be wanting to God, or even to his duty, but *to himself*, the ground upon which he sees the signs of “some invisible direction” projected.

Defoe builds up to the eventual appearance of other humans on the island by strongly correlating their arrival with Crusoe’s ardent desire to manifest them. Further agitated by yearnings for “some-body to speak to” (156), Crusoe explains with significant physiological specificity that he worked himself up to the dream foreshadowing the appearance of Friday:

When this [the Addisonian thoughts just discussed] had agitated my thoughts for two hours, or more, with such violence, that it set my very blood into a ferment, and my pulse beat as high as if I had been in a fever, meerly with the extraordinary fervour of my mind about it; Nature, as if I had been fatigued and exhausted with the very thought of it, threw me into a sound sleep. (157)

Within this sleep, he dreams of Friday's appearance. Crusoe then follows this dream, the outcome of his own self-suggestion, and tries to manifest it, recalling Cudworth's explanation of unconscious causality, in which the soul is "itself ... all the while the poet and inventor of the fable." Once the dream begins occurring in real life, the narration notes with wry amusement that Crusoe edits its script because "I could not depend by any means upon my dream for the rest of it, (*viz.*) that the other savages would not pursue him thither" (159). This underscores the dream's status as an extremely helpful self-induced spiritual perception rather than a revelation from above to place one's faith in uncritically, whence his agency to change the script as needed on the go.

Crusoe also notes that, unlike the sailors who had "laughed out of [him]" his first ideas of religion – we recall here that, according to Shaftesbury, raillery was the nucleus of the rule of taste (see Chapter One, section 2) – he later seriously talks himself into faith in God by performing the same work that they did in reverse. "With these reflections," he says, "I work'd my mind up, not only to resignation to the will of God in the present disposition of my circumstances; but even to a sincere thankfulness for my condition ... that I ought never more to repine at my condition, but to rejoyce, and to give daily thanks for that daily bread, which nothing but a croud of wonders could have brought" (105). Along with the division of labor that makes the production of bread a complex and virtually miraculous affair, which Crusoe replicates artificially in the wilderness as best he can, the gesture of thanksgiving recommended in the easiest of prayers ("give us this day our daily bread") becomes for him a difficult and beguiling task. Crusoe does not erase the "croud of wonders": they are and remain enchanting, and the text does not pursue its mechanistic demystification so far as to give us a reason to laugh at his religion, any more than we laugh at his labors, except perhaps in the matter of the silly baggy hat, and then we laugh with him. The novel does not throw him into the ocean of matter – nor the oceanic expanse of unbounded naked compulsive repetition. It merely dips him into it in order to throw him onto an island for him to remake himself. On that island, his Puritan self-discourse has the same order of reality as the script he coaxes out of his subconscious – or (who knows?) out of some grand cosmic astral mediator – which he fashions for his benefit and leaves himself free to edit later. His wonders are not mystical enchantments emanating from a domain of unconditioned otherness but rather aesthetically mediated re-enchantment conveyed through the pragmatic frame of the world.

Nowhere is that frame more powerfully on display than in the tobacco he consumes in alternating breaths with his first real taste of the Bible:

I went [to the chest], directed by Heaven no doubt; for in this chest I found a cure, both for soul and body, I open'd the chest, and found what I look'd for, *viz.* the tobacco; and as the few books, I had sav'd, lay there too, I took out one of the Bibles... I burnt some [tobacco] upon a pan of coals, and held my nose close over the smoke of it as long as I could bear it ... In the interval of this operation, I took up the Bible and began to read, but my head was too much disturb'd with the tobacco to bear reading. (75)

A zeugma worthy of Pope is delivered to the reader in this performance: Crusoe picks up a sheet of the holy book along with a sheet of a potentially curative intoxicating substance. Yet in Defoe's hands, the effect is to neutralize whatever might be risibly satire-worthy about this juxtaposition under any other circumstances. On the one hand, the same rum that he scoffed at the sailors for quaffing wantonly when they should have been seriously thanking God becomes, powerfully enhanced with a tincture of tobacco, the means to his reconnection with God. Moreover, this coincides with a more powerful instance of forgetting, in which he loses (or thinks he loses) a whole day. On the other hand, his intoxicated reading of the Bible – which has nothing very mystically revealing about it, since the passage he opens to, “*Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me,*” remains utterly relevant to his circumstance by the sober light of day – finally sticks just when it duplicates and echoes the initial intoxicating circumstance of the fever. His biggest moment of conversion, just like the ultimately convincing demonstration of Stoic virtue in Addison's Cato, happens by semi-intentionally going unconscious. God only seems to appear for Crusoe when the pages of the Bible disappear into smoke – his conversion is an event burned into him along with its somatic vehicle, completely depriving him of temporalized self-observation just as he would have been were he cast back into the ocean – this in spite of whatever pertinence he reconstructs for those pages with much effort later, in order to, not without some signs of strain, make a theologically coherent narrative plausible to himself and to his audience.

4. Absolute and relative otherness: pedagogy on Fridays

There is something like to [the natural appetites] in the Desire of *Society*, or the Company of our fellow Creatures. Our Nature is so much formed for this, that altho the *Absence of Company* is not immediately painful, yet if it be long, and the Person be not employed in something which tends to Society at last, or which is designed to fit him for Society, an uneasy *Fretfulness*, *Sullenness*, and *Discontent* will grow upon him by degrees, which Company alone can remove.

(Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*)

One might perhaps chuckle a bit with Defoe that Crusoe takes in the Bible and tobacco in the same breath, but at the pivotal encounter with the footprint things stop being funny, for him as well as for the reader, who must now confront a number of much uglier feelings. Crusoe's lifeworld, heretofore an arduous but not unenjoyable new Eden fashioned for his own spectatorship, now becomes contaminated with murderous fantasies. During this final stage of his time on the island, Defoe gives Crusoe a different kind of conversion experience, both secular and self-induced, in which he subdues his violent desires and discovers (and then forgets) liberal tolerance of others. Whereas his religious conversion repeated an earlier, less deeply-impressed conversion-like moment, his political transformation is powerfully legible as the shift from one way of viewing the world to another, and yet it too proves unstable and liable to oscillate back to his earlier view. The novel sets up its socio-political narrative to interrupt its spiritual narrative in the same way the spiritual narrative interrupts the economic one.

The most mature statement of the inner sense tradition in eighteenth-century aesthetics was in Francis Hutcheson, who sought to base a more elaborate theory of spontaneous and benevolent social bonds on the same foundation of the immediate and reflexive aesthetic perceptions of the moral sense, in effect drawing out Shaftesbury's model of the tastefully self-governing club to civil society as a whole. Hutcheson introduces a distinction between representationally mediated "relative" beauty and unmediated "absolute" beauty, which restates Addison's distinction between primary and secondary imaginary pleasures in terms of mediation rather than physical presence or absence.⁷⁴ Including both the ideas of the beautiful and the sublime, Hutcheson's idea of absolute beauty goes beyond Boileau's rhetorical sublime but stops short of the fully physicalized sublime in Burke (in which pain plays a central part) and the wholly secular aesthetics of Hume.⁷⁵ In this section, I argue that the profoundly disturbing experience of the footprint introduces a break in both Crusoe's accumulation of beautiful utility and his growing reflexive spirituality in the same way that absolute beauty represents a break that goes beyond relative beauty. In the aftermath of the footprint, which includes the benevolent relation with Friday, the final stage of the novel extends Crusoe's aesthetic self-education beyond governing himself to govern others aesthetically as well. It does so, I believe, along the very lines of inner-sense theory that Hutcheson would soon develop into an aesthetically grounded vision of social life.

Whereas the loss of a day, which causes his budding faith finally to take root, provides a temporal gap in Crusoe's perceptual life – it is literally a negative experience – his traumatic vision of the footprint in the sand interrupts the imaginary spatial order of the island as he had previously understood it. Crusoe later reflects that he might have seen many such prints long before he did, whether they were actually his own or a native's (or even the devil's): "how infinitely good that Providence is, which has provided in its government of mankind, such narrow bounds to his sight and knowledge of things; and tho' he walks in the midst of so many thousand dangers, the sight of which, if discover'd to him, would distract his mind, and sink his spirits; he is kept serene, and calm, by having the events of things hid from his eyes" (155). As we have seen, even though no immediate threat presented itself, Crusoe was extremely depressed and distracted upon his arrival; therefore, his first major work was building a great wall around himself. Like that wall, and like the island itself, providence has provided protective "narrow bounds" to filter what Crusoe will and will not register, framing his field of experience via his own unconscious cooperation.⁷⁶ Crusoe infers that he had been walking around for years as oblivious to the other footprints that may or must have been present the whole time, perhaps not unlike someone wholly self-absorbed moving through a city taking notice of no one. This is the case even though the acute Hobbesian fear of all against all is a way of looking he brings with him, and which the island's cooperation with his presence gradually subdues, until this moment in which it returns with a vengeance.

Addison had speculated that the negative counterpart to the pleasures of the imagination – in other words, pains of the imagination – looked like madness.⁷⁷ When Robinson sees the footprint, the narration stresses the imaginary excess of his worry rather than its basis in pragmatic analysis: "like a man perfectly confus'd and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on" (122). Significantly, his way of perceiving his world changes entirely: "I came to my castle, for so I think I call'd it ever after this." At this point, Crusoe has already built himself a bower-like "country-house" (82), and the madness-inducing encounter with the footprint has an immediate impact on how he sees his work on the landscape, transforming his first home into a Feudal castle. Defoe artfully juxtaposes the

footprint that literally makes an impression into the landscape with Crusoe's experience after seeing it of hovering without feeling "the ground I went on." The visual impression that caused his "terror of mind," immediately altering his habits of perception, occurs midway between an instance of physical impression and the reorganization of an aesthetic impression suggested by the shift to "castle."

Defoe underlines the imaginary nature of the shift: "the further I was from the occasion of my fright, the greater my apprehensions were, which is something contrary to ... the usual practice of all creatures in fear: But I was so embarrass'd with my own frightful ideas of the thing, that I form'd nothing but dismal imaginations to myself" (122–3). Importantly, he dismisses the theological hypothesis that the print was supernatural using a pragmatic reason: "the Devil might have found out abundance of other ways to have terrify'd me than this of the single print of a foot" (123). The print's ephemeral and punctual nature – it was made "in the sand too, which the first surge of the sea upon a high wind would have defac'd entirely" – only makes the shocking impression it offered worse, by proving it to be fresh and provoking him to wonder how many other such prints he has missed.⁷⁸ Up to this point, Crusoe has believed himself to be left alone with God, suspended within the vacant medium of nature. With this event, he remembers the fear that he brought with him when he landed on the island: only now does he remember that he is in a state of nature in which he cannot assume he is alone. Amidst the paranoid militarization that ensues, he explains his state of mind in distinctly Hobbesian tones: "All this labour I was at the expence of, purely from my apprehensions on the account of the print of a man's foot which I had seen ... which indeed made my life much less comfortable than it was before; as may well be imagin'd by any who know what it is to live in the constant snare of *the fear of man*" (129).⁷⁹ Because no one else is actually there yet, Defoe is stressing the secondary imaginary level on which his fears are activated. The narration thereby also observes that living in constant and abiding political fear is a specific way of seeing the world that can be triggered by contingent circumstances which may not have to do with the clear and distinct presence of danger. This affective state, the novel suggests, has been learned by "any who know" the fear of man. Crusoe thus clearly interprets this pivotal event in socio-political and not religious terms. Its immediate effect was that "my fear banish'd all my religious hope, [and] all that former confidence in God ... now vanish'd" (123).

After this traumatic moment, the first reassurance that proves effective occurs when Crusoe succeeds in half-heartedly laughing at himself. It could have been, he reasons, "the print of my own foot, when I came on shore from my boat," in which case "I might truly be said to start at my own shadow" (125). If so, "I had play'd the part of those fools ... who strive to make stories of spectres, and apparitions, and then are frighted at them more than any body." Stressing reflexivity at the level of form rather than the new informational content, Crusoe suggests that the ridiculous part is not that he is so naive as to fall for the ghost story suggested by the print in the sand but the fact that he forgot he might have made up the "story" of the print himself. When further research casts this hypothesis in doubt (the print is too big and in the wrong place) he feels the cataclysmic urge, like Alexander firing Persepolis in Dryden's lyric, to destroy everything he has built on the island pyromaniacally. Upon cooler deliberation, he decides instead to build a second great wall in a wider semicircle around his cave, estimating that he uses some 20,000 stakes in all (128). Although the post-footprint panic causes him to redescribe his "sea-coast-house" (82) as a Feudal castle, when he eventually tours his properties for the Captain he describes the space within the wall as a tasteful "retreat with a grove of trees" (203), uniting the practical fortification with gentlemanly leisure. The secondary wall turns out to be a home for

the benevolent and sociable Friday: “I made a little tent for him in the vacant place between my two fortifications ... and as there was a door, or entrance there into my cave, I made a formal fram’d door case, and a door to it of boards” (164). Even though Friday’s eventual presence illustrates a point about the natural and benevolent sociability of humankind that was central to inner-sense thinking, he also ushers in the utterly civilized improvement of the formal door separating the gentleman-prince Crusoe from his semi-civilized acolyte.

Before Friday appears, however, the narration works Crusoe up with all kinds of murderous schemes; then, without any pedagogical intervention from outside, he talks himself out of them. After the sight of the print, his whole *modus operandi* is defensive, until one day, as “[he] went about the whole island, searching for another private place,” he sees a boat on the sea full of natives. He “should easily have known,” he declares retrospectively, “that nothing was more frequent than for the *canoes* from the main ... to shoot over to that side of the island” (130–1). The expedition he has caught sight of leads him to a graveyard of human bones, which has been there all along at the Southwest point of the island. Observing that “the shore [was] spread with skulls, hands, feet, and other bones of human bodies,” Crusoe tells us that he “turn’d [his] face from the horrid spectacle” with such disgust that he “vomited with uncommon violence.” From this point onward, he hatches plan after plan to exact “revenge” (134) upon these natives for their crimes against humanity, until one day, upon performing his usual morning tour, he experiences an abrupt about-face. Defoe discreetly motivates Crusoe’s change of heart with the sudden impression of futile, wasted effort, which he apparently never experienced in all his constructive works, not even the failed gigantic *periagua*, which he looks to as an instructive memento of his own poor planning. Here, however, he tells us that his change of heart begins “when, as I have said, I began to be weary of the fruitless excursion, which I had made so long, and so far, every morning in vain, so my opinion of the action itself began to alter, and I began with cooler and calmer thoughts to consider what it was I was going to engage in” (135). Wearied and frustrated by his own “fruitless” efforts, it dawns on him that he has no moral right to exact judgment upon the natives: “these people had done me no injury” (136). He thanks Providence for intervening via the medium of this materially conditioned inner sense, which was held to be the common cause of moral and aesthetic perceptions. Although “the murdering humour” returns when he sees the indigenous people about to eat Friday, this significant moment of spontaneous moral reflection is precisely the kind of “secret hints, or pressings of my mind” he tells us he has learned to discriminate. Later in this section, we will see that his moral perceptions bleed into aesthetic intuitions when he describes Friday.

Before discussing Friday, however, I will show that the most sustained case for the common source of aesthetic and moral perceptions in the inner sense, Hutcheson’s *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense* (1728), provides a mature theoretical framework for understanding Crusoe’s refinement of intuition.⁸⁰ Like Cudworth and Shaftesbury, Hutcheson seeks to absorb an associationist psychology based in pleasure and interest in order to subvert its usual hedonistic conclusions. Thus, he observes early on that “it may perhaps seem strange, that when in this *Treatise* Virtue is suppos’d *disinterested*; yet so much Pains is taken, by a *Comparison* of our several *Pleasures*, to prove the *Pleasures* of *Virtue* to be the greatest we are capable of” (*Nature and Conduct*, 5).⁸¹ Interpreting senses broadly as “every *Determination of our Minds to receive Ideas independently of our will*,” he explains that inner senses are truly “senses” because they provide no content of their own besides what they receive from the world, and yet they are differently “inner” because they are reflexive, registering how something in the world has made the subject feel.⁸² His main line of

argumentation follows from the observation that inner senses “do not arise upon our *wishing* to have them” (27). Being involuntary yet indirectly accessible was the defining features of Crusoe’s secret promptings. Hutcheson defines these “*Moral Perceptions*” as a species of taste: they “arise in us as necessarily as any other Sensations; nor can we alter, or stop them . . . any more than we can make the Taste of Wormwood sweet, or that of Honey bitter” (16–7). Robinson’s irresistible crushing motions of the hands following from his imaginary activity are inevitable in just the sense that Hutcheson intends.

Yet unlike ordinary secondary qualities like colors and the tastes of the palate, these sensations are mediated by an inward imaginary factor connected with the subject’s desire. The desire that pursues sensual pleasures (which we saw Rochester subject to an inward libertine “reforming will” in Chapter Two, section 2) and the desire for imaginary pleasures (for public happiness, virtue, and honor) both entail, Hutcheson argues, “*secondary Desires* of every thing imagined useful to gratify any of the primary Desires, with strength proportioned to the several original Desires, and the imagined Usefulness, or Necessity, of the advantageous Object” (19). These secondary desires, in case we had forgotten, are all ordered by the same mechanism of taste that orders “*Dress, Retinue, Equipage, Furniture, Behavior, and Diversions*” (20). The inner sense comes in, he argues, as the medium between the object of a desire and its cause: “no Desire of any Event is excited by any view of removing the *uneasy Sensation attending this Desire itself* [i.e., the cause] . . . Our Desire is never raised with a view to obtain or continue [the sensation accompanying desire] nor is the Desire raised with a view to *remove* this uneasy *Sensation*” (24). Likewise, the “*pleasant Sensation of Joy*” that attends gratified desires is distinct from “the *Object itself*, which we directly intended.” Desire lunges towards or away from an object and the cause which excites or irritates is the invisible medium. Developing the moral sense in oneself or others is thus developing control of this medium, and all of Crusoe’s inward growth, as in his spontaneous conversion to a liberal perspective on the natives, consists of working indirectly on the invisible medium of his inner sense. Self-interest, he argues, may certainly be the *object* of desire, but the philosophies of Hobbes and Mandeville confuse the end in view (self-love) with the invisible inward *cause* or medium of desire. This cause works spontaneously with the certainty of taste. At the end of his first paper on laughter, Hutcheson wryly summarizes the Hobbesian view of laughter as conscious superiority, originating in Lucretius: “this pleasure must indeed be a secret one, so very secret, that many a compassionate heart was never conscious of it, but felt itself in a continual state of horror and sorrow.”⁸³ He does not, however, replace this false and pernicious secret pleasure with a public, exoteric alternative nor does he attempt to exclude pleasure from the discussion. Instead, he reinvents the secret as a sympathetic bond: “our desiring such sights flows from a kind instinct of nature, a secret bond between us and our fellow-creatures.”

Like the broader discourse of taste that Hutcheson’s argument draws from, the naturalization of virtue as a “secondary desire” that appears spontaneously whether one “wishes to have it” or not has a clear prescriptive thrust – the same moralizing thrust in Defoe’s novel. In the earlier *Inquiry*, discussed further below, Hutcheson argues that “tho’ no Man can immediately either *approve* or *disapprove* as *morally good or evil* his own *moral Sense*, by which he approves only *Affections* and *Actions* consequent upon them; yet he may see whether it be *advantageous* to him in other respects, to have it constituted *one way* rather than another” (*Inquiry*, 151). Hutcheson recommends fostering an “advantageous” arrangement of one’s moral sense, desiring to “have it constituted” a certain way. In the *Nature and Conduct*, most of his examples of benevolent attraction or repulsion put forward one response as natural, for which

many real-life exceptions could be offered. For example, following Addison, who had noted the spectator's aversion to over-strong stimuli, Hutcheson asks: "who can dwell upon a *Scene of Tortures*, tho' practiced upon the vilest Wretch" (96)? Two years before, the Black Act of 1723 had introduced 50 new categories of capital punishment across Great Britain. Hutcheson thus maintains that a distaste for gory spectacles is naturally correct just when they were more in the public eye than ever.

In his naturalization of morality as a sense, Hutcheson was pointing to a somatic, unconscious, and spontaneous domain that caused action more immediately than conscious reflection, whether it was a matter of deliberative ethics or self-interested calculation. He emphasizes the limits introduced by a physically conditioned process behind all judgment:

We find violent *Motions* in our Bodies; and are often made unfit for serious Deliberation about the Means of obtaining the Good desired. When it is first obtained, we find violent confused *Sensations of Joy*, beyond the Proportion of the good itself, or its Moment to our Happiness. . . . Our *publick Desires* are in the same manner accompanied with painful Sensations, . . . [none of which] depend upon our Choice, but arise from the very *Frame of our Nature*, however we may regulate or moderate them. (42)

For Hutcheson, the urge towards some good can send us into spontaneous convulsions, like Crusoe's initial joy upon landing on the island, which was *both* explained mechanistically *and* taken seriously as meaningful spiritual gesture, albeit one mediated by his culture. Hutcheson notes that, in the same way, concern for the welfare of others can spur unreasonable "*Fretfulness, Anxiety, and Impatience.*" Acknowledging these spontaneous surplus reactions caused by secondary desires suggests to him, of course, how important it is to "regulate and moderate them."⁸⁴

In an even stronger sense than Locke, Hutcheson thus sees failing to respond correctly not as miscalculated but as "depraved" (92). The decadent indigenous people in *Robinson Crusoe* stand for precisely this threatening possibility. Because of this, his recommendation is to bond with "persons of corrected imaginations":

The Distinction of Pleasures and Pains into *real* and *imaginary*, or rather into *necessary* and *voluntary*, would be of some use, if we could correct the *Imaginations* of others, as well as our own; but if we cannot, we are sure, whoever thinks himself miserable, is really so; however he might possibly, by a better Conduct of his Imagination, have prevented this Misery. All we can do in this affair, is to enjoy a great Share of the Pleasures of the *stronger Ties*, with fewer *Pains* of them, by confining the stronger Degrees of Love, or our Friendships, to Persons of *corrected Imaginations*, to whom as few of the uncertain Objects of Desire are necessary to Happiness as is possible. (75)

Hutcheson thus expresses some doubt about the pedagogical function of imaginary pleasures that had seemed evident to the *Spectator* and to Shaftesbury. Here, the subject who does not take imaginary instruction must be left alone as his own judge, like Crusoe: "whoever thinks himself miserable, is really so." Hutcheson goes further than Shaftesbury in admonishing the reader to strategically form "stronger ties" with the right people, namely those who are least attached to uncomfortable wayward desires, and to exclude the rest. The novel thus displays this strategy of social isolation from the other side: cast out from all social "ties" for his misconduct, Crusoe

learns to correct his imagination on his own, at which point he rejoins society. “We know,” Hutcheson says, that the pleasures of the imagination tend to make us happy, and thus “the Desires of them therefore must have the like *Sensations* assisting them, to prevent our indulging a nasty solitary Luxur” (45). The supplementary desire *to have* imaginary pleasures, to arrange everything for one’s perfect convenience, is the moral sense that Crusoe works up for himself within the frame of his world. Phobically reinventing this depraved and dangerous other from the merest print of otherness, he works up this moral sense, again and again, against the “nasty solitary Luxury” of the natives, who “were left, and perhaps had been for some ages, to act such horrible things, and receive such dreadful customs, as nothing but Nature entirely abandon’d of Heaven, and acted by some some hellish degeneracy, could have run them into” (RC 135).

When Friday actually appears, however, he illustrates precisely the “natural sociability of mankind” that Hutcheson adduced from the supplementary presence of the inner senses. Their life together does not take them out of the state of nature, but is rather the fulfillment of the state of nature according to Hutcheson: “‘State of nature’ should certainly denote either that condition of men which most encourages them to exercise all their natural aptitudes and desires, or that most perfect state to which men can rise by the intelligent use of all their forces and faculties... We are therefore right to call that state which is most cultivated the *natural* state of the human race.”⁸⁵ Defoe sweetens his illustration of natural sociability in the character of Friday by charging Crusoe’s description with aesthetic engagement, almost to the point of desire. “He was a comely handsome fellow, perfectly well made,” he begins (162). Adding that he was “well-shap’d” and possessed “a great vivacity and sparkling sharpness in his eyes,” Crusoe takes him in as offering an element of aesthetic interest in addition to the social gratifications he craves so much. His engagement with Friday as an aesthetically interesting figure may in fact be what keeps his attraction within the bounds of what was proper (or, indeed, of what was thinkable at the time). Although his verbal portrait also involves a composite of racist nuances, orientalist stereotypes, and Eurocentric compliment, Defoe inserts an allusion to the *je ne sais quoi* – he is “of a bright kind of a dun olive colour, that had in it something very agreeable, tho’ not very easy to describe” (RC 164) – to remind the reader that Crusoe produces this portrait from within the aesthetic frame of what strikes *him* as appealing.

Once he has taught Friday “Master” and his own name, and clothed him in a manner that was “very convenient, and fashionable enough,” Crusoe’s first attempt to change him is to reform him out of his cannibalism. When Friday suggests that they eat his dead compatriots, “I appear’d very angry, express’d my abhorrence of it, made as if I would vomit at the thought of it” (163) – which Crusoe had actually done earlier – later adding that “I had, by some means let him know, that I would kill him if he offer’d it” (164). Friday’s first lesson in civil behavior bridges the gap between physiological taste (the flesh he is not supposed to eat) and the metaphorical extension of taste into a principle of the ordering of culture, at least how Crusoe understands it (he offers to vomit at the mere thought or mention of it). It apparently took an encounter with an indigenous refugee on a desert island to realize the rule of taste as a truly life-and-death-matter. Tastefulness is the first, foundational law that Crusoe gives to his new subject.

Friday is to abstain specifically from the thing that Crusoe fears most: being devoured, especially by his fellow humans, which he believes would have been inevitable had he landed on the beast-swarming shores of Africa. When, towards the end of the novel, Crusoe’s party is attacked by hordes of wolves upon crossing the Pyrenees, this possibility presses more closely upon him than it ever did on the island. Under attack, the party closes itself into a little circle, just as he did on the island. Robinson “saw about a hundred [wolves] coming on directly towards

us, all in a body, and most of them in a line, as regularly as an army drawn up by experienc'd officers" (234). As when he was surprised by the stakes coming to life, the natural world seems to recapitulate the self-ordering powers of human culture, only now directed towards a savage and anthropophagic end. Crusoe declares that "I was never so sensible of danger in my life ... I gave myself over for lost" (238). Defoe makes a point of placing back in Europe, albeit in a remote corner, the scene where a violent aggression presses most closely upon Crusoe and in which he comes as close as he ever will to realizing his fear of being consumed. The *real* eating of men – the kind that literalizes the Hobbesian fear that man will be a wolf to man, a fear that Crusoe has carried with him all over the world – happens in Europe, precisely where this idea came from. The rule of taste acted as a *pharmakon* for this idea, administering it in a small enough dose to immunize him from it. Crusoe, who so fears being consumed, makes himself into the model consumer, who, as Foucault puts it, "produces his own satisfaction," frumpy hat and all. When Friday appears and he is now in a position to, as Hutcheson puts it, "correct the imaginations of others," the first and only absolute rule is to not taste of your own kind. This is precisely the fear that the footprint incident – which could always, he concludes, have been his own – sets in motion.

Friday also teaches Crusoe about taste, albeit in a much less serious register. Very early in their relationship, as Crusoe demonstrates his advanced hunting techniques and they sit down to enjoy their catch, Crusoe observes:

that which was strangest to him, was, to see me eat salt with [my food]; he made sign to me, that the salt was not good to eat, and putting a little into his own mouth, he seem'd to nauseate it, and would spit and sputter at it, washing his mouth with fresh water after it; on the other hand, I took some meat in my mouth without salt, and I pretended to spit and sputter for want of salt, as fast as he had done at the salt; but it would not do, he would never care for salt with his meat, or in his broth; at least, not for a great while, and then but a very little. (167–8)

Initially, Friday seems to repeat exactly the disgusted gesture Crusoe had made against cannibalism about a trivial matter and is rebuffed. However, the narrative quickly turns the display of distaste into a way of communicating that they both engage in. Crusoe pretends to be disgusted at the meat without salt and Friday correctly distinguishes that this is a 'play' version of disgust with no serious consequences. They agree to disagree, except for the little bit of salt Friday finally assents to consume "after a great while," little white kernels that represent the limits of his amenability to Western reeducation, the limits of his plasticity. Against the background of the flesh they both enjoy consuming and the life together they happily share, the narration intimates that about such things perhaps *de gustibus non est disputandum*.⁸⁶

Defoe clearly intends the segment of the novel featuring Friday as a reflection on benign cultural differences that should be tolerated – behind which lies a general human urge to sociable bonding – and this way to account for cultural variation also appears within inner-sense theory in Hutcheson's notion of "relative beauty." In his earlier aesthetic treatise, Hutcheson had introduced the distinction between absolute and relative beauty, one of the functions of which was distinguishing between deep cultural differences based in nature and superficial cultural differences based in representational habits.⁸⁷ Both categories, he stresses, are relative to the material constitution of the subject; they are "Determinations to be pleas'd with any Forms, or Ideas which occur to our Observation" (*Inquiry*, 8). Even absolute beauty is emphatically not

“any Quality suppos’d to be in the Object, which should of itself be beautiful, without relation to any Mind which perceives it” (27).⁸⁸ Likewise, both types of beauty are quite distinct from any factual information that a Virtuoso or “dull Critick” could provide about the object. In contrast to the factually minded observer, “the Poet shall have a vastly more delightful Perception of the Whole; and not only the Poet but any man of a fine Taste” (24).⁸⁹ Having made both types of beauty relative to the human observer, Hutcheson attempts to isolate anthropological constants as “absolute” or “original” beauty. He gives the principle of absolute beauty in “the Mathematical Style” of Leibniz, as the “compound Ratio of Uniformity and Variety” (29), which he illustrates with geometrical figures, beginning with the superiority of a square to an equilateral triangle, surpassed by a pentagon, a hexagon, and so on. As the number of sides are increased, provided the sides are regular and the number increased evenly, the figure becomes more beautiful, up to an undefined point at which it “is so much lost to our Observation, that the Beauty does not always increase with the Number of Sides.” He uses this principle to explain the enduring appeal of complex regular figures like cylinders, prisms, obelisks, as well as the natural beauty of revolving planets, the bilateral symmetry of animals, and the repetitive profusion of plants, even the single-colored tincture of a bird feather (29–34).⁹⁰

The important and interesting aspect of the distinction – and which sets apart this strictly constructionist distinction from the beautiful/sublime distinction, which stages a confrontation between the subject and the envioning thing in itself – is that absolute beauty does not aim to provide a static criterion for the beauty of the thing itself. Hutcheson notes that his principle of unity and variety is particularly good at explaining the “mysterious Effect of Discords [which] often gives as great Pleasure as continu’d Harmony” by refreshing the ear with variety and “by awakening the Attention” (35). Because it reflects the subject’s construal, he can declare that “there is no Form in Nature concerning which we can pronounce, ‘That it has no Beauty’” (61), and he will consequently defend, under the heading of “absolute” beauty, the natural appeal of non-Western aesthetic artifacts (65). Luhmann’s constructivist terminology is particularly helpful here to describe how Hutcheson’s distinction works.⁹¹ The distinction between absolute and relative “reenters” into the first, “marked” side of the distinction, the absolute, as the double criterion of unity (which is absolute) *and* variety (which is relative). In other words, the criterion for “absolute” beauty is to compass a maximum of diversity within a unifying frame, which preserves this natural complexity – like the bodies in the Hobbesian image of the sovereign discussed in Chapter Two (Fig. 5) – as a cherished sign of the natural basis of its authority. Only by including (and even tolerating) the chaotic complexity of the relative, does absolute beauty in Hutcheson’s sense make itself absolute.⁹² At the beginning of the section on absolute beauty, Hutcheson adds in passing that “we see Animals fitted for every Place; and what to Men appears rude and shapeless, or loathsom, may be to them a Paradise” (28). On the one hand, Hutcheson acknowledges that animals may have aesthetic responses that are unknown to us; on the other hand, he makes human divergences in responses to absolute beauty imply some degeneracy from humane responses. Defoe’s novel places Friday, the savage who agrees to remain set apart from his indigenous lifeworld, in a relation to Crusoe defined by absolute beauty leading to benevolent, mutually beneficial relationality, even colored with the *je ne sais quoi*. It casts the cannibal natives, on the other hand, as the “rude and shapeless, or loathsome” animals, who are nevertheless fitted to their place.

Something quite different is the case when it comes to relative beauty, the unmarked side of the distinction, which Hutcheson defines as any experience of beauty in which one is cognizant of the object imitating some other object. Once again, for Hutcheson “all beauty is

relative to the Sense of some Mind perceiving it” (42); what distinguishes relative beauty is the supplement of comparison to an original. Because of this comparative factor, which makes use of analogies, relative beauty is always allegorical: in the same way that “a Tempest at Sea is often an Emblem of wrath . . . every thing in Nature, by our strange inclination to Resemblance, shall be brought to represent other things” (44). All relative beauty – like the inner sense Friday exhibits when rejecting the salt, but not (according to Defoe) like the inner sense Robinson exhibits when proscribing cannibalism – is subject to significant and mostly benign cultural variation. The effect of custom, Hutcheson says, is to weaken rather than strengthen the spontaneous pleasures, “else how is it possible that any Person could go into the open Air on a sunny Day, or clear Evening, without the most extravagant Raptures, such as Milton represents our Ancestor in upon his first Creation” (71). One reason that Robinson is less inclined to rhapsodize at the beauty of his natural environment is that, in Hutcheson’s terms, he remains completely absorbed in the effect of “custom” even when no one else is around. The beauties he notices, at least until the arrival of Friday, are virtually all relative to him.

As we will see in Chapter Four, a mainstream theorist of taste like David Hume, who despised the Grub Street hack Ogilby and snubbed the dissenter Bunyan, would hold that a character such as Crusoe dwells so little of the natural beauty around him because he has no delicacy of taste. Yet this summary judgment misses the powerful self-development of the inner sense to which Defoe gives a complex narrative shape in *Robinson Crusoe*. Another important change in Crusoe’s frame of mind occurs shortly after he explains that he has given up on his gigantic *periagua*, the one major failure of his enterprising spirit. During its construction, and assisted by his readings in Scripture, he begins to “entertai[n] different notions of things,” realizing that

I had all that I was capable of enjoying: I was lord of the whole manor; or if I pleas’d, I might call my self king, or emperor over the whole country which I had possession of. There were no rivals. I had no competitor, none to dispute sovereignty or command with me. . . . The most covetous griping miser in the world would have been cured of the vice of covetousness, if he had been in my case; for I possessed infinitely more than I knew what to do with. I had no room for desire, except it was of things which I had not, and they were but trifles, tho’ indeed of great use to me. (*RC* 102–3)

Crusoe declares that the situation of Hobbesian generalized rivalry, which defined the culture of taste in Etherege’s play, has been completely eclipsed for him. His initial spiritual insight (the “different notions of things” he begins to entertain) morphs almost imperceptibly into a political declaration in which he crowns himself “lord,” then “king,” and finally “emperor,” an escalation that casts an ironic shadow on the political identity he assumes, which is inconsequential without other people. Unlike Cato, who finds in his rest a respite from political tyranny, Crusoe does not rejoice that in this condition he is free from all tyrants; rather, he places himself in the position of the tyrant. However, he quickly qualifies that having achieved through self-development a state beyond rivalry – this self-development consisted of how he observed his existence and not the reflexive satisfaction of all his wishes, since he still badly misses the many objects (for example, shoes) that he has learned to see as “trifles” – he is a chastened monarch, one that was “cured” like the miser of his vices, and this by circumstance. As he tells it, what he learned did not ultimately have to do with a tough-love subjection to scarcity (even though from an external perspective this is exactly what happens), but a change that follows from his arriving at a place

of abundance: “for I possessed infinitely more than I knew what to do with.” At this point, all of his possessions are the fruits of his own labor, which is why even in his reformed state he crowns himself emperor rather than give thanks to God. The change occurs somewhere through the production of the *periagua*, as it gradually dawns on Crusoe that his solitary labors will not prove sufficient to build an ark that will allow him to escape his captivity. His labors cannot serve as his own Archimedean point.

Instead of changing the object of his desires, Robinson has learned to indirectly alter their cause. Realizing Hutcheson’s ideal of minimal attachment to objects, which is also the perfection of Rochester’s inward “reforming will,” Crusoe can now declare “I had no room for desire” – even though the objects of desire, he immediately adds, are naturally still there. Hutcheson explains that a benevolent impulse is secretly enclosed in even the most self-serving impulses:

The *Luxurious* [person] ... has likewise all Ideas of *Good*, or *Worth*, and *Importance* in Life confounded with his Coffers. A romantick Lover has in like manner no Notion of Life without his *Mistress*... The *Connoisseur* has all Ideas of valuable *Knowledge*, *Gentlemanlike Worth* and *Ability* associated with his beloved Arts. The Idea of *Property* comes along with the Taste, and makes his Happiness impossible, without *Possession* of what he admires. A plain Question might confute the *Opinion*, but will not break the *Association*: ‘What Pleasure has the Possessor more than others, to whose Eyes they are exposed as well as his?’” (*Nature and Conduct*, 70–1)

Putting just this question to him, the novel teaches Crusoe to find the ideals that he lives by as “confounded with his Coffers.” Hutcheson intends to wake the miser up to this secret virtue by posing the “plain Question” of whether or not he would desire the possession of what he finds beautiful if he were not pursuing it in the relative domain defined by competition rather than the absolute domain defined by spontaneous benevolent bonds in-woven with pleasure. Defoe illustrates this “plain Question” forcibly by taking Crusoe as far away as possible from the game of social competition over who is more delicate than whom. The novel gives a sharply-drawn narrative shape to the gesture of rejecting the allurements of polite culture for the sake of something else, the gesture we first encountered in Milton’s Christ in the wilderness who knows with certainty what is “to all true tastes excelling.”

However, this is only half the story, as Defoe shows that Robinson will play the gentleman, the man of luxury, “the Possessor,” even in his condition of extreme detachment. Even after the painful experience of his laborious *periagua* going nowhere, instead of shedding his obsession with possession, as Hutcheson implies will happen when absolute beauty is at stake, Crusoe holds all the more tightly onto the political title of grand possessor he has crowned himself with, even though he acknowledges this title is empty without other people. In the final analysis, his ruling desire is not territorial but scopic: his adventures produce the education of an “Eye [that] was never satisfied with Seeing, [and] was still more desirous of Wandring and Seeing.”⁹³ Critics have always found in Defoe’s desert island narrative, which takes its exemplary subject into an extended period of solitude, a model of various aspects of social existence: a politics, an ethics, a theological allegory, a social theory. On the face of it, the culture of taste is the one aspect of social life Defoe was *not* reflecting upon. Yet, I have shown that the reason that the narrative routes its social theory through the drastic minimization of all representable social relations – substituting for them relations to oneself against the background of a circumscribed environment – is the novel’s investment in aesthetic, materially conditioned

self-fashioning. In the next and final chapter of this dissertation, we turn to the subject Hutcheson alludes to along with the material voluptuary and the sentimental lover, namely the connoisseur, who figures the investment in tasteful possession. In that chapter, we will study how the attachment to the “relative beauties” of aesthetic artifacts was developed into a subjective identity, and even an authority, that was sustainable in the normal social world. Defoe’s novel, on the other hand, has depicted in fully-realized narrative form the desire for detachment and it has given narrative shape to the growth of the inner sense under conditions of maximal detachment. Giving us an expansive treatment of a subject learning to rule his pleasures through the inner sense, the novel takes this self-regulating mechanism into the society of other people.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹ The phrase echoes the titles of Defoe's later works, *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726), often regarded as the first English business manual, and the very late work *The Compleat English Gentleman* (1730), both of which use "complete" to indicate they are framing a social identity. The same year, Gracián's *El discreto* was also retranslated as *The Compleat Gentleman*, 2nd ed., trans. T. Saldkeld (London, 1730).

² These are repeated at RC 46, 49, 55, 97, 101, 62 ["inexpressible labour"], 92 ["exceeding laboriousness"].

³ Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012), esp. 137–43. For readings of Beckford's collecting practices that resist a narrative of straightforward consumption, see also "The Hell of Ownership: Beckford on Collecting" in James Noggle, *The Temporality of Taste* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), 178–203, and Whitney Davis, "Queer Family Romance and Collecting Visual Culture," *GLQ* 17:2–3 (2011), 309–330.

⁴ Daniel Defoe, *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Being the Second and Last Part OF HIS LIFE, And Strange Surprising Accounts of his Travels Round three Parts of the Globe*. Written by Himself., 2nd ed. (London: W. Taylor, 1719), 13.

⁵ The novel has been read many times as articulating a modern myth of individualism, which involves a return 'back to nature', and which functions as an allegory for modern economic, spiritual, and political experience. My argument here is that the new interpretation of nature entailed by the new aesthetics – specifically in its use of distance – frames how the novel presents those large thematic clusters. We should therefore read the novel as a raw depiction of the nascent *homo aestheticus*. For a recent appraisal of readings of Defoe's novel as a myth, see John Bender, "The Novel as Modern Myth" in *Defoe's Footprints: Essays in Honour of Maximillian E. Novak* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 223–37.

⁶ *Bussy D'Ambois. A Tragedy in The Plays of George Chapman*, ed. Thomas Marc Parrott (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961), vol. 1, pages 1–74, here III.2.435–40.

⁷ I add "empiricist" here to distinguish my sense of "aesthetic education" from the more well-known and much later account in Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982). Among the several important differences, Schiller clearly separates the ideas of humanist growth and material profit, which is plainly not the case in *Robinson Crusoe*.

⁸ Defoe's political affiliations were complex and shifting, yet his principles were solidly Whiggish. For biographical details, see Maximilian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), esp. 168–188, 262–288. J. G. A. Pocock observes that "if one desires to study the first great ideologist of the Whig system of propertied control, one may study not Locke, but Defoe" in *Virtue, Commerce, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985), 67.

⁹ Pope's line, referring to Defoe's defiance while standing in the pillory, was "Earless on high, stood unabash'd De Foe" (*Dunciad* II.147). For the 1710 scuffle with Swift, see *Master of Fictions*, 44.

¹⁰ Cited in the introduction to *The Compleat English Gentleman and Of Royal Education in Religious and Didactic Writings of Daniel Defoe*, Gen. Eds. W. R. Owens and P. N. Furbank (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), vol. 10 (ed. W. R. Owens), 16.

¹¹ For a longer account of Defoe's writings on gentility, discussing his investment in both learning and manners, see "The Born and the Bred Gentleman" in Michael Shinagel, *Daniel Defoe and Middle-Class Gentility*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968), 223–245, esp. 230. He summarizes: "[Defoe] endeavored to make learning fashionable again to the class of 'born' gentlemen" (238).

¹² Reappraising Defoe's periodical writing in *The Review*, Brian Cowan argues that he participated just as actively in the new culture of politeness as the *Spectator*: "without a doubt, Defoe's style of politeness was distinctively different from that of Shaftesbury and Addison, but this does not mean that he did not have a sense of the 'polite' that functioned within his own worldview.... Whereas Mr. Spectator sought to elevate discourse through popularizing a polite high style ... Mr Review addressed readers on their own terms" in "Daniel Defoe's *Review* and the Transformations of the English Periodical," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 77:1 (Spring 2014), 79–110, here 101.

¹³ Steele tells the story of Selkirk in *The Englishman*, No. 26 (1–3 December, 1713).

¹⁴ Although he also edited popular journals in the same years as the run of the *Spectator*, Addison and Shaftesbury are remembered as the "Polite Whigs" (Pocock, 236) while Defoe is typically cast as a lower popular writer. Joanna Picciotto argues convincingly that Defoe's periodicals were less successful at projecting a seductively universal voice because of their obtrusive signs of individual difference and their ostentatious display of the labor that went into them; see *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010), 578–9. Defoe, who also owned a hosiery business, makes an amusing cameo in the pages of the *Spectator* through an advertisement for his clothing warehouse in No. 112, as the purveyor of the sensibly "reduced ... outward Petticoat" Mr. Spectator had brought into fashion (see *TS* II.74).

¹⁵ "If the palace be unnatural, the cottage is so no less," declares Adam Ferguson in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 14.

¹⁶ Andrew O'Malley argues that the novel became so popular as a piece of children's literature because it accorded so well with the educational theories of Locke; see *Children's Literature, Popular Culture, and Robinson Crusoe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), esp. 19, 24–5.

¹⁷ Rousseau recommends the novel "disencumbered of all its rigmarole," meaning the sections before and after the central island sequence, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile, or On Education*, trans. Alan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 185. "I want it to make [Émile] dizzy ... I want him to think he is Robinson himself, to see himself dressed in skins, wearing a large cap, carrying a large saber and all the rest of the character's grotesque equipment," noting that the novel is meant to put Émile through an excessive emulative relation that will make him rather "grotesque." Aside from the great works Rousseau mentions (Aristotle, Pliny, Buffon – let alone the Bible), one alternative would have been Fénelon's *Télémaque* (1699), a popular French updating of the old style of shipwreck romance. For a probing discussion of this text's somewhat later use in experimental, radically self-directed pedagogy, see Jacques Rancière, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, trans. Kirstin Ross (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1991).

¹⁸ See Chapter One, section 3.

¹⁹ The narrative tells us in the first paragraph that "Robinson Crusoe" is a composite of his mother's surname followed by a modified version of his father's surname (from "Kreutznaer" to "Crusoe"), meaning that he does not have a first name which is personal to him and distinct from a patronymic. It is a delicious irony that this hero of modern individualism should lack a proper first name, except for one completely unmemorable point in which his name is shortened to "Bob" (9). While most critics refer to him as "Crusoe" he is also sometimes spoken of as "Robinson," notably in the accepted description for imitations and adaptations of the novel, "Robinsonade." For a fuller discussion, see Artur Blaim, "The English Robinsonade of the Eighteenth Century," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 275 (1990), 5–145. In order to register the undermining of nominal identity scripted into the novel – to be sure, not one as pronounced as *Rousseau juge de Jean-Jacques* – I slip promiscuously between the two ways of addressing him.

²⁰ John Locke, *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*, included in *Some thoughts Concerning Education*, ed. John William Adamson (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2007), 180–265.

²¹ Maximillian E. Novak argues that Crusoe's domestic spaces are saturated with fantasy and he claims that this imaginary supplement enhances rather than subverts the "realist" quality of the fiction. He also notes that the grotto that Robinson creates is traditionally "the place where art and nature were to meet" in "The Cave and the Grotto: Realist Form and Robinson Crusoe's Imagined Interiors," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 20:3 (Spring, 2008), 445–68, here 458.

²² In *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture*, trans. Albert Sbragia (London: Verso, 2000), Franco Moretti makes the stark claim that the *Bildungsroman* is an "Anti-Robinson." The issue circles around the status of work: "the most classical *Bildungsroman* [*Wilhelm Meister*]," he says, "conspicuously places the process of formation-socialization *outside* the world of work" (25). Furthermore, unlike *Robinson Crusoe*, which keeps calling for sequels until Defoe turns it into an allegory, "A *Bildung* is truly such only if, at a certain point, it can be seen as concluded" (26).

²³ In *John Locke and Education* (New York: Random House, 1971), John W. Yolton gives a useful overview of Locke's positions and influence, also observing that the *Conduct* should be read in the context of the main educational treatise (13). He stresses the active role of the child in Locke's model, as against a simplistic reading of the *tabula rasa* (see 52–55).

²⁴ "It seems plain to me," he says, "that the Principle of all Virtue and Excellency lies in a power of denying our selves the satisfaction of our own Desires, where Reason does not authorize them ... Children should be used to submit their Desires, and go without their Longings, even *from their very cradles*" (LE 107–9).

²⁵ In his important chapter on the novel in *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1987), Michael McKeon updates Watt's classic view of *Robinson Crusoe* as Bourgeois secularism (in the tradition of Marx, who laughed at Crusoe's religion), while attempting to incorporate the scholarship which has shown Defoe's extensive use of spiritual sources and his investment in religious discourse. The idea of a "transvaluation of desire" makes possible his synthesis: "the distinctive language of God's workings on the mind [reappears in] the logic of inner conviction Robinson has prescribed for himself. A passion that is initially distinguished explicitly from providential directive [ie. it is secular] succeeds, through the sheer force of its persistence, in redefining itself as nothing other than the irresistible dictate of providence" (331). Because of this fusion of desire and spirituality, McKeon concludes that the novel is an important early specimen of "progressive ideology" (336).

²⁶ See also TE 252. In the *Conduct*, he observes that "the legs of a dancing-master and the fingers of a musician fall as it were naturally, without thought or pains, into regular and admirable motions" (190).

²⁷ For a broader overview, see D. P. Leinster-Mackay, *The Educational World of Daniel Defoe* (Victoria, BC: 1981).

²⁸ In *Defoe and the New Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), Ilse Vickers shows Defoe's abiding commitment to the Baconian experimentalist program. Sorana Corneanu has developed this line of inquiry further, arguing for taking seriously the spiritual dimension of the text in light of Defoe's experimentalist commitments, claiming that the novel "is not incompatible with a substantial (rather than 'blank space') idea of providence" because of Defoe's understanding of "Experimental philosophy as a natural theological experience" in "Passions, Providence, and the Cure of the Mind: *Robinson Crusoe* meets the Christian Virtuoso" in *The Body and its Images in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, eds. Sabine Arnaud and Helge Jordheim (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), 259–76, here 262–3.

²⁹ Defoe rants against the withholding of education in notably hyperbolic language: it is "a kind of rape committed upon the genius of the child, imposing a negative upon him, dooming him to ignorance in spite of a capacity given for knowledge" (*Compleat English Gentleman*, 117).

³⁰ On Locke's abiding view of individual corruptibility, against too strong an emphasis on the "environmentalism" of the *tabula rasa* idea, see W. M. Spellman, *John Locke and the Problem of Depravity*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 120–6.

³¹ Ultimately, it is this aptitude to internalize that makes it possible for the governor's labor to work in the first place.

³² For a reading of the *Conduct* in the context of the tradition of spiritual self-cultivation, see Sorana Coreanu, *Regimens of the Mind: Boyle, Locke, and the Early Modern Cultura Animi Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 145–54.

³³ For Defoe's version of this view: "Upon the whole, the study of science is the original of learning ... Latin and Greek are indeed great helps to make the work easie, [but] the knowledge of things, not words, make a scholar" (*Compleat Gentleman*, 159).

³⁴ As Joanna Picciotto has shown, Defoe's narrative of his tour through England put his experimentalist views into practice (*Labors of Innocence*, 541–60). See also Frances Ferguson's comments on the tour through England as a renaturalized "garden of liberalism" in *Solitude and the Sublime* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 131–5, here 132.

³⁵ See Dabney Townsend, "Lockean Aesthetics," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 49:4 (1991), 349–361.

³⁶ Defoe gives a further narrative reconstruction of what such a subject would have to say: "How came I to be thus? What, every body taught but I? ... None bred up fools but I! I that have the inheritance! I have the estate, indeed, but what else have I? How unfinish'd, how unfurnish'd! How do I look among Gentlemen! ... How handsomely do they discourse! How do they reason and argue upon the nicest things, and how acceptable in the company of the men of learning; and how do I sit and say nothing, because I can say nothing to the purpose" (*Compleat Gentleman*, 118–9).

³⁷ Sianne Ngai describes such forms of affective desistence in *Ugly Feelings* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2005).

³⁸ See Ernest Tuveson, "Locke and the 'Dissolution of the Ego'," *Modern Philology* 52:3 (1955), 159–74, by which he means the introduction of a fluid, rather than "hard-core" model of the subject (168). Tuveson claims that Locke's popularity (especially in the new aesthetics of Addison and Shaftesbury) followed from his ability to integrate Hobbesian associationism and elements of the theory of the subject found in the Cambridge Platonists, namely the idea of plasticity (see, e.g., 161).

³⁹ On the novel's status as an economic parable, see Maximilian E. Novak, "Robinson Crusoe and Economic Utopia," *Kenyon Review* 25:3 (Summer 1963), 474–90, and Stephen Hymer, "Robinson Crusoe and the Secret of Primitive Accumulation," *Monthly Review* 23:4 (1971), 11–36. Noting that it mobilizes the theme of class through an absence, Janis Svilpis suggests that "*Robinson Crusoe* is perhaps the first English novel dedicated to the erasure of class" in "Bourgeois Solitude in *Robinson Crusoe*," *English Studies in Canada* 22:1 (March, 1996), 40. This was, of course, a highly class-specific erasure.

⁴⁰ Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 60–92.

⁴¹ In "Beauty and Utility in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 35:3 (2002), 439–53, Paul Guyer shows that the link between beauty and utility remained a central feature throughout eighteenth-century aesthetics from Shaftesbury onward; the latter argued that responding to beauty is independent of possession, yet he also claimed that beauty and utility are "plainly joined" (cited at 440).

⁴² William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Ronald Paulson (New Haven: Yale UP, 1997 [1752]), 25–7.

⁴³ For a discussion of these three versions of his first day on the island, see Paul Goetsch, “The First Day on the Island: Robinson Crusoe and the Problem of Coherence” in *Modes of Narrative*, ed. Reingard M. Nischik and Barbara Korte (Wurzburg: Konighausen and Neumann, 1990), 191–202.

⁴⁴ On the “truth effect” in Defoe’s fiction, see Novak, “Picturing the Thing Itself, or Not: Defoe, Painting, Prose Fiction and the Art of Describing,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 9 (1996), 1–20, and his *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe’s Fiction* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). See also *The Rise of the Novel*, 62. On the confluence of formal realism with the use of “factually untrue” material, see *Origins of the English Novel*, 120–1.

⁴⁵ Defoe’s “A Hymn to the Pillory” (London, 1703) opens with “Hail! *Hi’roglyphick State Machin, / Contriv’d to Punish Fancy in: / Hail that are Men, in thee can feel no Pain, / And all thy Insignificants Disdain. / Contempt, that false New Word for shame, / Is without Crime an empty Name*” (1), scorning the substitution of text for thing even under these circumstances. “What need of *Satyr* to Reform the Town?” he continues, “Or Laws to keep our Vices down? / Let ‘em to *Thee* due Homage pay, / This will Reform us all *the Shortest Way* / Let ‘em to *Thee* bring all the knaves and Fools, / Vertue will guide the rest by Rules” (21). The “shortest way” is an allusion to his offending pamphlet.

⁴⁶ For more details, see Christopher Loar, “How to Say Things with Guns: Military Technology and the Politics of Robinson Crusoe” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19:1–2 (2006–7), 1–20.

⁴⁷ For a fuller discussion, see Chapter One, section 3.

⁴⁸ See “Citron” A.1.a, b., 2, 3. A notable usage a few years earlier in the exotic sense is: “Let the soft Zephirs from the Citron Groves Disperse their evening Sweets,” in John Oldmixon, *Governour of Cyprus* (1703), cited in *OED*, “Citron,” A.1.b.

⁴⁹ See *SP* III.529n.1.

⁵⁰ Beginning with the fourth printing of 1719, Defoe added a map of the world tracing Crusoe’s adventures, which makes a point of representing the spherical nature of the globe. Another map, consisting exclusively of the island itself and depicting no relations to the outer world was eventually included in the *Serious Reflections*. Both of these visual representations, however, occur on such radically different scales as to be incommensurate.

⁵¹ Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 42–53.

⁵² Pat Rogers has argued that the interior of his home resembles a London shop in “Crusoe’s Home,” *Essays in Criticism* 24 (1974), 375–90.

⁵³ In a sophisticated discussion of Crusoe’s pottery, Lydia H. Liu argues for a rich context in the Chinese porcelain trade; on her reading, the pot has everything to do with luxury commodities: it “evokes porcelain by metonymic association and calls up the existence of the latter by virtue of its absence,” going on to whimsically speak of his text in terms of a “ceramic realism” in which Crusoe realizes the Dutch potters’ attempts to replicate Chinese porcelain domestically; see “Robinson Crusoe’s Earthenware Pot,” *Critical Inquiry* 25:4 (Summer, 1999), 728–757, here 732, 738.

⁵⁴ The traditional view of Crusoe’s relation to the natural world is one of capitalist improvement, if not exploitation; for this view, see Vickers, 99–131. For a revisionist attempt to see Crusoe’s presence in terms of a more benign “embeddedness” in the landscape, see Emmanuelle Peraldo, “‘Two broad shining eyes’: Optic Impressions and Landscape in *Robinson Crusoe*,” *Digital Defoe* 4:1 (2012), 17–30, here 21. For another recent eco-critically inspired approach to the novel which downplays its exploitative aspects, see Geert Vandermeersche and Ronald Soetaert, “Landscape, Culture, and Education in *Robinson Crusoe*” in *Comparative Literature and Culture* 14:3 (2012), 1–10.

⁵⁵ It is thus perhaps not quite true that, in Dickens' quip, "*Robinson Crusoe* [is] the only instance of an universally popular book that could make no one laugh," cited in Manuel Schonhorn, *Defoe's Politics: Parliament, Power, Kingship, and Robinson Crusoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 144.

⁵⁶ Taking a swipe at Watt's thesis in favor of her *longue durée* approach, and skeptical of the premise of a new realism altogether, Margaret Anne Doody, writes that "it is almost a definition of the kind of 'Novel' meant in *The Rise of the Novel* that we must meet no Muslim characters. If there are Muslim characters, this is not a novel" – yet we have Crusoe's Mahometan whiskers. See *The True Story of the Novel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1997), 293.

⁵⁷ Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D. D. Raphael and A. L. Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2009 [1759]).

⁵⁸ See G. A. Starr, *Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1965), esp. 74–105, and J. Paul Hunter, *The Reluctant Pilgrim* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1966).

⁵⁹ In *Imagining the Penitentiary* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), John Bender argues that a "formulation of imprisonment ... lies at the heart of *Robinson Crusoe*," which also "assumes and incorporates the experience of the city as the seat of power" (56). He too is attempting a synthesis of the economic/realist and the spiritual views of the novel, and his solution is that Defoe "took the traditional Puritan methods of reading the world allegorically and ran them backwards," meaning that "salvation becomes a matter of self-confirmation through psychological insight" (48).

⁶⁰ Robert Wild, "Wild's Humble Thanks for His Majesties Gracious Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, March 15, 1672," cited in RC 249n.24. Michael Seidel observes that the first 28 years of Defoe's life occurred during "what he saw as the political oppression of the Restoration period in England," suggesting that Crusoe's period of "confinement" on the island replayed a domestic political experience; see "*Robinson Crusoe*: varieties of fictional experience" in *The Cambridge Companion to Daniel Defoe*, ed. John Richetti (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 189.

⁶¹ Starr reads the issue of Crusoe's multiple conversions, within the context of the tradition of Puritan self-narrative, in terms of relapse; see *Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography*, 115, 195.

⁶² While Defoe's politics and social theory are more frequently discussed in relation to Locke, a number of scholars have argued that Hobbes was the more significant influence. See Schonhorn, *Defoe's Politics*, and Sara Soncini, "The Island as Social Experiment: A Reappraisal of Daniel Defoe's Political Discourse(s) in *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Farther Adventures*" in *Wrestling with Defoe*, ed. Marialuisa Bignami (Bologna: Cisalpino Istituto Editoriale Universitario, 1997), 11–43.

⁶³ On the "constructivist" aspect of "rock bottom" experiences, see Gregory Bateson, "Cybernetics of the 'Self': A Theory of Alcoholism," in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 309–37. Luhmann bases his constructivist account of the subject on this piece (without mentioning that it has anything to do with alcoholism).

⁶⁴ "Imagination ... is nothing but *decaying sense*; and is found in men, and many other living Creatures, as well sleeping, as waking. The decay of Sense in men waking, is not the decay of the motion made in sense; but an obscuring of it, in such manner, as the light of the Sun obscureth the light of the Starres ... For the continuall change of mans body, destroyes in time the parts which in sense were moved: So that distance of time, and of place, hath one and the same effect in us" in Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 15–6.

⁶⁵ We know both from later passages in this novel and from Defoe's oeuvre as a whole that he was fascinated by the supernatural, particularly the communication of spirits. He tended to present supernatural material sensationistically, with a narrative posture of interested but ultimately agnostic witnessing of the fact of other people's experience. See, for example, *A True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal* (London, 1705). Hobbes, by contrast, more consistently tried to provide reductively naturalistic explanations for apparently supernatural experiences: men "feign unto themselves, severall kinds of Powers Invisible; and to stand in awe of their own imaginations ... men have created in the world innumerable sorts of Gods" (*Leviathan*, 75).

⁶⁶ Michael B. Gill has argued for Cudworth's proximity to the discourse of enthusiasm, in spite of his far more elevated social position as a university intellectual in *The British Moralists on Human Nature and the Birth of Secular Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 38–57.

⁶⁷ Ralph Cudworth, *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*, trans. John Harrison (London, 1845 [1678]), 135.

⁶⁸ Even the Stoic Seneca, he says, was just a hysterical dissenter in the other direction, one of the "bewitched Enthusiasts and Spiritati ... blind goddess Nature's Fanaticks" (134). For a fuller analysis, see John Passmore *Ralph Cudworth: An Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013 [1951]), 19–28. For the filiation to Shaftesbury, see 90–106.

⁶⁹ See Douglas Hedley, "Platonism, Aesthetics, and the Sublime at the Origins of Modernity" in *Platonism at the Origin of Modernity*, ed. Douglas Hedley and Sarah Hutton (Dordrecht: Springer, 2008), 276.

⁷⁰ See Pierre Janet, *Essai sur le médiateur plastique de Cudworth* (Paris, 1860).

⁷¹ Instead of the absolute Homeric ocean that reifies matter, Cudworth endorses "the ancient mythologists" who represent "the nature of the universe by *Pan* playing upon a pipe or harp, and being in love with the nymph *Echo*; as if nature did by a kind of silent melody, make all the parts of the universe everywhere dance in measure and proportion ... delighted and ravished with the re-echoing of its own harmony" (160). Anticipating Addison's popular vision of the orderly and beautiful great chain of being (as discussed above in Chapter One, section 3), Cudworth casts matter as *Echo* and the universal mediator behind matter as *Pan*.

⁷² Henry More, *Enchiridion Ethicum*, trans. Edward Southwell (London, 1690 [1667]).

⁷³ Shaftesbury identifies "that *third* Order of Beauty, which forms not only such as we call mere Forms, but even *the* Forms which form. For we our-selves are notable Architects in Matter, and can shew lifeless Bodys brought into Form, and fashion'd by our own hands" (S II.227–8).

⁷⁴ This distinction was not (at least not clearly) anticipated in Shaftesbury, however the absolute, which does away with the distinction between conscious and unconscious, bears an affinity to the use of absence in Addison's secondary imaginary pleasures. On Hutcheson's adoption of Addison's model, see Peter Kivy, *The Seventh Sense: Francis Hutcheson and Eighteenth-Century British Aesthetics*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 2003), 29–33.

⁷⁵ On Hutcheson's non-secular view of the relation between aesthetics and sociality, see Paul Guyer, *Values of Beauty* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), 3–26.

⁷⁶ This is Jacques Rancière's view of the function of the aesthetic: to set the bounds of what can enter into visibility. See *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004).

⁷⁷ For a fuller discussion see Chapter One, section 4. "There is not a Sight in Nature so mortifying," he says, "as that of a Distracted Person, when his Imagination is troubled, and his whole Soul disordered and confused. *Babylon* in Ruins is not so melancholy a Spectacle" (*SP* 579).

⁷⁸ “For though the geometrician perceive himself to make lines, triangles, and circles in the dust with his finger, yet he is not aware, how he makes all those same figures first upon the corporeal spirits of his brain, from whence notwithstanding, as from a glass, they are reflected to him, fancy being ... but a weak and obscure sense” (*True Intellectual System*, 162).

⁷⁹ “There are two maxim which are surely both true: *Man is a God to man*, and *Man is a wolf to Man*,” Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993 [1647]), 3.

⁸⁰ Francis Hutcheson, *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, with Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, ed. Aaron Garrett (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2002 [1728]).

⁸¹ He will also archly declare: “One has better Reason to deny the Inclination between the *Sexes* to be natural, than a Disposition in Mankind to *Religion*” (*Nature and Conduct*, 116). Are they then modifications of the same impulse? Hutcheson further argues that “the Gratification of our internal Senses are as natural, real, and satisfying Enjoyments as any sensible Pleasure whatsoever” in *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, ed. Wolfgang Leidhold (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004 [1725]), 76.

⁸² According to Kivy’s interpretation of Hutcheson, the perception of beauty is thoroughly “non-epistemic,” meaning it does not involve any knowledge. Wishing to avoid collapsing Hutcheson with reductive versions of aesthetic formalism, and to show instead how Hutcheson’s view nevertheless does “do justice ... to the extra-artistic world,” James Shelley underlines the “reflex” or constructivist formation of knowledge in his model in “Aesthetics and the World at Large” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 47:2 (April, 2007), 169–83, here 169.

⁸³ Francis Hutcheson, “Reflections upon Laughter,” reprinted from the *Dublin Journal* (1725–6) in *Philosophical Writings*, ed. R. S. Downie (London: Everyman, 1994), 51.

⁸⁴ In the *Art of Judgment* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 53–62, Howard Caygill reads Hutcheson as the disciplinary “institutionalization” of the theory of taste.

⁸⁵ Francis Hutcheson, *Logic, Metaphysics, and the Natural Sociability of Mankind*, ed. James Moore and Michael Silverthorne (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2006 [1730]), 199–200. He adds, touching on all of Crusoe’s motives for his improvements, that the moral sense is “the only way by which nature herself directs us to the things we most desire, namely security, tranquility, felicity, and, I may even say, pure pleasure, untroubled by repentance or pangs of remorse” (216).

⁸⁶ Pushing further still McKeon’s view that the “naturalization” of desire provides a more fundamental explanation for the novel’s secular and spiritual motives, Hans Turley argues that a specifically homoerotic desire is what lies behind “Crusoe’s passion for spiritual and economic profit” in “The Sublimation of Desire to Apocalyptic Passion in Defoe’s Crusoe Trilogy” in *Imperial Desire: Dissident Sexualities and Colonial Literature*, ed. Philip Holden and Richard R. Ruppel (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 3–19, here 4.

⁸⁷ Francis Hutcheson, *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Rev. ed., ed. Wolfgang Leidhold (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2008 [1725]), esp. 28–35, 42–45. For a discussion of the distinction between absolute and relative beauty, see *The Seventh Sense*, 95–105, 272–8.

⁸⁸ Both the Burkean and the Kantian notions of the sublime (which Hutcheson does not distinguish from beauty, and is thus included within his concept of beauty) avoid precisely this constructivist stipulation.

⁸⁹ A good ear is a “Determination of the Mind to receive necessarily certain Ideas” no less than physical hearing; however, because of its reflexivity, the subject can usually turn it on and off as appropriate: “the finest Ear is not

offended with tuning of Instruments if it be not too tedious” yet a little dissonance in the performance is grating (*Inquiry*, 67, 62).

⁹⁰ G. Gabrielle Starr locates Hutcheson as a predecessor to scientific research into the neurological basis of aesthetic cognition in *Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 15–18.

⁹¹ For Luhmann, Hutcheson’s distinction is a sign of the modern art system. This distinction, he declares, “should not be underestimated. It is a decisive step towards rehabilitating the ornament and towards pushing back the semantics of imitation. Original or absolute beauty is nothing other than (the subjective idea of) the ornamental” (*AS* 219–20).

⁹² Hutcheson can at times be quite inclusive, at least by eighteenth-century standards: thus, “Swines, Serpents of all Kinds, and some Insects really beautiful enough, are beheld with Aversion by many People, who have got some accidental Ideas associated to them” (*Inquiry*, 63). Hume mocked him for this view: “For on [Hutcheson’s] principle, the wedgelike snout of a swine, with its tough cartilage at the end, the little sunk eyes, and the whole make of the head, so well adjusted to its offices of digging, and rooting, would be extremely beautiful” (cited in Guyer, “Beauty and utility,” 35).

⁹³ Robert Markley argues that the sequel limits some of the novel’s imperialist ambitions in “‘I have now done with my island, and all manner of discourse about it’: Crusoe’s *Farther Adventures* and the Unwritten History of the Novel,” in *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture*, eds. Paula R. Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia (London: Blackwell, 2005).

Chapter Four

Living Standards

The Connoisseur and the Ruling of Passion

Both must alike from Heav'n derive their Light,
 These *born* to Judge, as well as those to Write...
 Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
 Most have the *Seeds* of Judgment in their Mind;
 Nature affords at least a *glimm'ring Light*;
 The *Lines*, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.

(Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*)

Every Man resembles a Statue made to stand against a Wall, or in a niche,
 on One Side it is a *Plato*, an *Apollo*, a *Demosthenes*; on the Other it is a
 Rough, Unformed Piece of Stone.

(Jonathan Richardson, *An Argument on
 Behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur*)

It is almost impossible not to feel a predilection for that which suits our
 particular turn and disposition.

(David Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste")

The same year that *Robinson Crusoe* appeared (1719), Jonathan Richardson, the painter and famous collector of Old Master drawings, published *An Argument on Behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur*, which articulated a method for what he called "connoissance."¹ Beginning with Richardson's portrait of the new connoisseur, which included a self-directed pedagogy, an epistemology whose object was knowledge of style, and a vision of the authority of the person of taste, this chapter introduces the connoisseur as the first widely available social identity built around the new aesthetics.² Unlike the solitary self-formation of a subject's ways of perceiving that Defoe's novel works out, the connoisseur was a gregarious and urbane figure concerned primarily with aesthetic artifacts. Yet he entailed a complex process of personal growth and the shaping of a personal authority that could compel others to conform to his standards. The connoisseur represented a stable and socially intelligible way of being a person of taste without risking the extremes of the libertine's reckless pursuit of pleasure or the fop's vacuous and embarrassing habits of consumption. In contrast to the early figures of aesthetic experience in Milton and Dryden, the influence of aesthetics on Richardson's connoisseur goes beyond experience and behavior to become a socially intelligible way to style oneself as a person.

While Richardson's model was a significant yet ultimately specialized endeavor, I argue that the model of self-fashioning he articulated enjoyed a wide social currency within the cultural semantics of tastefulness that went beyond those who used the word "connoisseur" to think of themselves. I show this through a sustained reading of Alexander Pope, who made tastefulness a central preoccupation throughout his work; encompassed within his oeuvre a breadth of eighteenth-century approaches to taste as a form of social authority; and wrote the period's most influential poem on taste, the *Epistle to Burlington*.³ Pope was not a great collector, but there is

no better example of a literary figure whose self-understanding and cultural authority were fashioned around tastefulness and the knowledge of style. Through the lens of Pope's work, the figure of the connoisseur appears as a central preoccupation of early-eighteenth-century culture. By the watershed decade of the 1750s, which saw the publication of major works on taste by Edmund Burke, Alexander Gerard, and David Hume, the connoissance of tasteful appreciation was operating in such a wide register that we can speak more generally of the "person of taste." The central preoccupation in all these works is the relationship between a style of subjectivity construed in distinctively aesthetic terms and the notion of a standard of taste. The connoisseur, who becomes simply the person of taste, both is shaped by and shapes others by means of a standard of taste, however it was conceived. Of course, the ways to obtain specialized forensic knowledge of artifacts continued to evolve, and the most important step toward this goal, after Richardson, was Johann Joachim Winckelmann's work in the 1760s.⁴ My objective in this chapter is to use Richardson's lucid depiction of the connoisseur to enquire into the subjectifying and regulative power of the new aesthetics at its maximal point of cultural relevance.

The immediate social context of the new connoisseurship was the rapid expansion of the art market in the first decades of the eighteenth century, and Richardson's work both reflected and catered to a broad audience interested in collecting and appreciating the arts, especially continental painting, antique sculpture, Old Master drawings, and prints.⁵ His popular texts took connoisseurship seriously as a type of knowledge (a "science") and methodized its acquisition to be as accessible as possible, producing amiably conversational and digressive guides that paint a rich portrait of the connoisseur as a gregarious personality and social type. Section 1 of this chapter shows that the new connoisseur represented something more general than a collector or a virtuoso. Such a figure exhibited a forensic knowledge of artifacts, independently of who owned them, and he modeled a fine-grained appreciation that was especially evident in how he chose to curate and display his artifacts. Unlike that of the experimentalist, the object of the connoisseur's knowledge was not directly visible: the style of an artist and the relationships between them were abstractions that evolved through encounters with new works or through repeated viewings. The style is analogous to the "Rough, Unformed Piece of Stone" on the back of a beautifully polished statue (*Connoisseur*, 199–20). The connoisseur's method was to quantify, to the extent possible, his own qualitative responses, treating his own spontaneous reactions (and sometimes those of other people) as instruments rather than using technologically assisted perception.

As we have seen in earlier chapters, the first generation of new aesthetic critics moved away from "laws" of criticism – even the sublime, which John Dennis made into a kind of aesthetic canon, is presented in Addison and Shaftesbury as one effect among others – toward psychological principles and the reflection of some form of natural order. The only serviceable aesthetic norm was "the natural," and because natural forms of relationality tended to appear only as *je ne sais quois*, negatively articulated performative criteria such as detachment predominated, and one was recommended to follow specific modes of conduct as opposed to inhabiting a specific social role. The connoisseur ushered in the return of norms and abstract aesthetic principles, but these are grounded in life rather than in transcendent categories.

The first section of this chapter reveals a close affinity between the epistemology of Richardson's connoisseur and Pope's early model of the natural authority of taste in *An Essay on Criticism*. Reading these works together demonstrates that Pope's typically "Augustan" deployment of positive aesthetic norms, designed to exert a regulatory effect, assumed a surprisingly contingent mode of authority, which I call an "experimental" authority. I then show that Burke's version of the standard of taste develops the construction of experimental authority

into a full-blown aesthetic model. I describe Burke's model as a "negative" standard of taste because the thrust of his project is that taste is naturally available to anyone who bothers to inquire into its causes and, therefore, that taste can exert strong regulative powers without the need for a positive standard, provided for the cohesion of common sense.

Section 2 describes a second version of the standard of taste, the "weak" version put forward by Alexander Gerard, and sections 3 and 4 consider the "strong" version proposed in Pope's later work and in David Hume. In section 2, I show that in the *Epistle to Burlington* and several other works, Pope expands the model of a tasteful gentleman accessing the light of truth available naturally to anyone toward the positive influence of specific persons of taste, such as Burlington, and the figure of the connoisseur-like prince, who actively conducts both nature and other people. I argue that Pope exhibits the same equivocation about the final authority of these models that is the hallmark of Gerard's theory. In the third section, I turn to Pope's late theory of the ruling passion, which looks behind the problem of localized influence through the use of imagistic content to invisible structures of motivation. I then show in section 4 that Hume's theory of taste was, probably to some degree consciously, a theoretical development of Pope's model. Aside from the last example, and there only with some degree of speculation, I do not claim that theorists of the standard of taste were directly adapting discussions of taste or connoisseurship in Pope or Richardson. Rather, Richardson introduced the figure of the self-developing person of taste as a distinct social possibility and Pope struggled with and fashioned himself around this persona more pervasively, I believe, than did any other literary figure in the first half of the eighteenth century. Thus, when theorists of the 1750s sought to formulate a standard of taste in relation to their own versions of aesthetic subjectivity, they were giving theoretical shape to a configuration of experience we can reconstruct within Pope's work. I show that Pope displays the ambitions and contradictions in what it felt like to be subject to standards of taste. To varying extents, all three of these theories depart from the strict inner-sense model of Hutcheson discussed in Chapter Three, assigning a strong role to the "delicacy" or refinement of physical and mental tastes rather than to the cultivation of spontaneous inward perceptions. Delicacy is developed through association, and the gradual rise of robustly associationist models takes us up to the shift from the constructivist versions of taste studied in this dissertation to a hermeneutics of taste that reads taste as an insight into the intimate constitution of subjects, rather than as a vehicle to make them anew.

1. The connoisseur's experimental authority from Richardson to Burke

In some fair Body thus th'informing Soul
 With Spirit feeds, with Vigour fills the whole,
 Each Motion guides, and ev'ry Nerve sustains;
It self unseen, but in th' Effects, remains.

(Pope, *An Essay on Criticism*)

The Taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise.

(Burke, *Enquiry into ... our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*)

The new connoisseurship begins with Richardson's attempts to methodize the appreciation and acquisition of forensic knowledge of visual art.⁶ His innovation focused on specialization: unlike earlier how-to manuals of technique, he focused exclusively on appreciation, taking seriously the connoisseur's special knowledge.⁷ Earlier connoisseurs and virtuosi, notably Roger de Piles and John Evelyn, had pioneered technical guides to cultural artifacts.⁸ Richardson was interested in both educating his audience about the physical properties of the objects themselves and initiating them into appreciating the correct objects, and his project was to present his readers with manuals on polite appreciation, delivered personably and without abstract theorizing, with the goal of developing competency as a spectator.⁹ Richardson consciously presented connoisseurship as a new activity appropriate for a large population of gentlemen. In the first pages of his second discourse, he enthusiastically recommends this "New Science" to the world: "I open to Gentlemen a New Scene of Pleasure, a New Innocent Amusement; and an Accomplishment which they have yet scarce heard of" (*Connoisseur*, 5).¹⁰

In this section, I show how Richardson adapted the methods of the new science to a new object: the connoisseur observes artworks in order to understand the artist as an observer, rather than solely as the maker of objects in the world. With the new figure of the gentleman connoisseur he helped to codify came a distinctive style of authority, a closeness to objects that was based neither on sponsoring their creation as a patron nor even on possessing them, except insofar as collecting signifies a gesture of selection. The connoisseur's authority was an amalgam of repeated sensuous experience, informed knowledge, and a developed imaginary engagement that evaluates the object. I show that Pope's influential early work, *An Essay on Criticism* (1711), fashions itself as the authority of the connoisseur codified a few years later by Richardson. Pope's connoisseurial vision does not present any particular snapshot of the world as the truth; rather, he exerts pressures, typically through the uncomfortable pleasures of satire. Having interpreted Pope's Augustan critical values as the modified, reflexive empiricism of connoisseurship, I argue that Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) should be read as an extension of this model. Skeptical of the potentially wayward intuitionism of the inner-sense model of taste, Burke argues that the inward faculty of "natural good taste" (*PE* 20) is virtually the same in everyone, and he recommends a process of external conditioning rather than the laborious inward self-development pursued by Robinson Crusoe. Burke believes that this orderly "logic of Taste" (11) will "communicate to the taste a sort of philosophical solidity" (6).

A late piece of anti-virtuoso satire, Mark Akenside's early poem "The Virtuoso" (1737), helpfully illustrates the distinction between the social type of the promiscuous collector and that of the new connoisseur.¹¹ In Akenside's obviously fascinated portrait, the decadent virtuoso has become a rapaciously omnivorous consumer, appropriating "beasts, fishes, birds, snails, caterpillars, flies" along with historical costumes, medals, classical sculpture, and sundry antiquities. The result was a Baroque mélange that gathered everything "uncommon" and "rare" in one place (5). The form of the collection joined into an orderly frame items that had no natural relationship to one another: "In seemly order furnish'd every drawer, / Products of art or nature as was meet; / Air-pumps and prisms were placed beneath his feet, / A *Memphian* mummy-king hung o'er his head" (125–8). Behind the forced, artificial order of the collector, and likewise behind Akenside's own mannered Spenserian stanzas satirizing him, lies "a wight ycleped *Phantasy*" (65). The collector's erotically sublimated hunt ends with a horrified image of the death's-head-like truth of consumption: "And when [the object is] obtained, with enraptured eyne, / He'd run it o'er and o'er with greedy view, / And look, and look again, as he would look it

thro” (34–6). Whereas Robinson’s scopic longing led him to wander without end, here the same impulse encircles the object with a powerful gaze, running it over so many times it seems to have run it through. This collector’s gaze enfolds the object like the wrappings of the mummy-king Akenside evidently intends to figure the truth of this kind of subject. Like this compressed figure, the whole scene of aesthetic experience has been drawn in from the expansive horizon of the world from which all these objects came to a constricted and cluttered domestic space in which the collector is virtually alone with the objects that reflect to him what he is.¹²

Richardson’s project was to transform the kind of figure depicted in this satire into a respectable, polite, and sociable individual who could present to the world his own distinctive competency and knowledge. In contrast to Akenside’s idiosyncratic bric-à-brac, Richardson’s specialty was one type of artifact; with his modest income from his career as a portrait painter, Richardson assembled a large collection of Old Master drawings and prints.¹³ Excluding natural (as well as ethnographic) specimens, his model specifically addressed objects that reflected a human maker within his or her network of cultural relations rather than objects that were inherently beautiful, interesting, or wonder arousing. He was a shrewd art buyer who devised his own method of binding drawings and prints into books with an elaborate system of cross-references designed to make visible both the evolution of a master’s style and its points of contact with the influence of other masters.¹⁴ Yet Richardson completely elides the how-to model, virtually never giving advice about making purchases or organizing a collection in space. He specifically warns against a fascination with unusual and highly polished objects. In Akenside, the connoisseur’s pleasure is the justification for inclusion and the organizing principle of the assemblage. In Richardson, the connoisseur’s pleasure becomes the open secret behind an impersonal labor of methodization that could be alluded to from time to time in such asides as “[t]he vast pleasure I take in these great curiosities [Old Master sketches] has carried me perhaps too far” (*Essay on the Theory of Painting*, 64). The specter of the obsessive, sublimated, and melancholy collector certainly haunts Richardson’s new connoisseur, but the persona he assumes is that of someone healthy and happy, both scientific and refined.

While the term “connoissance” that Matthew Prior suggested to Richardson (63–4) itself went the way of Prior’s literary reputation, Richardson’s framework for the methodical study of style codifies many of the assumptions behind more systematic and theoretically sophisticated successors such as Winckelmann and Morelli. These principles are laid out in digressively unsystematic but eminently personable prose, which mingles theoretical contributions to this new science with an unreservedly warm advocacy for the social benefits and financial advantages of practicing it.¹⁵ The main feature that distinguishes Richardson’s work from that of a notable predecessor such as Roger de Piles, himself one of the most eminent connoisseurs of his day, is the volume of advice for developing this competency from scratch. Even in his moments of elitism, he pitches his text to a broadly popular audience.¹⁶ Whereas it is ultimately possible for someone to be “incapable” of the pleasures of connoisseurship from “a mind [not] tuned for Painting” (*The Works*, 92), he thinks they are nevertheless within the reach of most: “for asmuch a Superfluity as these things are thought to be, they are such as no Body will be without, not the meanest Cottager in the Kingdom, that is not in the extremest Poverty, but he will have something of Picture in his Sight” (*Connoisseur*, 50–1). Given the rapid expansion of the art market from the 1680s on, with art purchases coming within reach of less elevated (and educated) consumers, Richardson addresses an audience for whom a personal visual culture is ubiquitous.¹⁷ “Here we are all *Connoisseurs* as we are Protestants,” he concludes, “tho’ (as it must needs happen) Some are Abler *Connoisseurs* than Others” (231). It was clearly tempting to

compare his sense of religious freedom (perhaps with its attendant problems) to the conditions of the new art market (specifically, the need for one to develop a competency competitive with everyone else's) and its liabilities (for example, detection of the consequent proliferation of copies and forgeries).¹⁸

Richardson's distinctive situation at the intersection of knowledge production and cultural consumption is neatly captured by his mannered opening to his section on the "Goodness of a Picture." "Wherefore callest thou me Good? There is none Good but One, that is God, said the Son of God to the young Man who prefaced a Noble Question with that Complement" (*Theory of Painting*, 11), he declares, stopping in his tracks the market-conscious reader turning to this chapter for information. The connoisseur's aptitude, he stresses over and over, is never a matter of information ready at hand but the result of a prolonged inductive labor. Of course, his half-serious invocation of Gospel truth also mystifies the goodness of any one image, and the analogy positions Richardson as the guru who possesses the sought-after knowledge. At the same time, however, the analogy directs the neophyte not to a secret knowledge belonging to an expert but to the artifacts themselves, which, similar to Christ in the anecdote, are present in the flesh if one only has eyes to see. In good empiricist fashion, his method refers us away from the authority of tradition (*Art of Criticism*, 15), the artist's prestige, or even the artist's self-descriptions. "What Ideas the Artist had we can only Guess at by what we see," he says of the knowledge of hands; "the Work like the Corporeal, and Material part of Man is apparent" (98–9). He understands that even the greatest masters vary in quality and character throughout their careers, and through repeated exposure, he develops imaginatively clear and distinct ideas of these infinitely graduated tracks. Unlike the private interests of mere "picture-jockeys" (*Connoisseur*, 149), the new connoisseur studies material artifacts carefully and sees the results of his competency as benefiting the public.¹⁹

However, the core move of his method causes any publicly shareable result to disintegrate. The limitation of Richardson's approach is that, as Lawrence Lipking puts it, he devises "procedure[s] for parceling out reactions to paintings" to achieve "an expert and judicious eye which can assign any moment of painting to a place on a scale" but never explicates philosophically what that eye sees.²⁰ Richardson compares his method to coming "into a Forrest of a thousand Oaks and [knowing] how to distinguish any One leaf of all those Trees from any other whatsoever, and [forming] so clear an Idea of that One and [retaining] it" (*Art of Criticism*, 201). The connoisseur builds his distinctive knowledge not by accumulating factual information about the work but by visualizing a mental double; at one point Richardson even recommends creating an imaginary collection in the mind (*Connoisseur*, 191). This process is naturally sprawling and open-ended: every time a new object ("leaf" in his analogy) comes into view, it causes every other mental image to adjust slightly. To be sure, these fine mental discriminations are based on refined perceptual habits, such as noticing the differences between barely different tints or a barely curved line (*The Works*, 14–15). Yet the connoisseur's special aptitude goes beyond technical knowledge; it resembles nothing so much as the painter's original work of transforming perception into artwork.²¹ Richardson treats the spectator as the privileged location of judgments of taste over the roles of maker and patron, but he does this by granting the spectator a powerful constructive share: to see a picture (as a connoisseur) is to make one. Lipking's complaint that Richardson remained a belles-lettristic amateur registers that his method never goes beyond the ineffable *je ne sais quoi*: it consists of methodizing and ordering invisible intensities of response. The connoisseur begins with frequent exposure and assiduous

comparisons, and he works toward the goal of forming a perfectly singular, genetic, evolving idea of a work within its context.²²

The idea that is the object of the connoisseur's knowledge is not itself visible in the world, even though it can be formed only through detailed knowledge of material artifacts. Rejecting pictorial flattery, the fetishization of high finish, and representational exactitude ("Tame, Insipid Resemblance" in *Theory of Painting*, 21) alike, the elusive object of the connoisseur's knowledge – like the portrait painter's – is the expressive character or peculiarity of his subject (*Theory of Painting*, 24), much like Shaftesbury's "characteristics." Like Defoe, Richardson stresses the importance of "mechanic" work: "A Painter must not only be a Poet, an Historian, a Mathematician, &c. He must be a Mechanick, his Hand, and Eye, must be as Expert as his Head is Clear, and Lively, and well stored with Science" (*Theory of Painting*, 24). Richardson, who painted "mechanically" for a living, conflates in this passage the genteel hand that organizes collectibles into a sequence and the hand that draws or paints, and must sell its work for a living. On the one (mechanical) hand, he advances the connoisseur not simply as the recipient of the labor of the artist but also as a figure that enters into and recapitulates that labor, reconstructing the infinite system of relationships in the work before him. On the other (gentlemanly) hand, all this work at accomplishment, all this movement of the "hand," focuses on the invisible knowledge of an author's style and, thus, remains under the sign of leisure.²³ On the painter's part as well, the end of the "mechanical" work is the display of his own style: "Painters paint themselves" (*The Works*, 92–3).

Richardson thus conceived of connoisseurship explicitly in terms of social communication, which acted as a "reforming will" in Rochester's sense, discussed above in Chapter Two, section 2. The social location of connoisseurship was somewhere between the public world of the coffee shop and print culture (in which his published manuals participated) and the private circles of the stratified economic and cultural elite.²⁴ He envisages something closer to an "open elite" of cultural consumers who were both capable of mutual recognition and in competition with one another.²⁵ Although he participated in England's first academy of painting, the Queen Street Academy, his vision of the connoisseur did not lend itself directly to public institutions.²⁶ The amateur consciousness of the dilettanti, which mingled methodical knowledge with clubbishness, drinking, rituals, and almost frank eroticization, was a more direct outgrowth of the methods he recommended.²⁷ In the tradition of Addison's "pleasures of the imagination," Richardson unabashedly celebrates "the Single Principle of Pleasure on which All turns Ultimately" (*Connoisseur*, 160). He frames connoisseurship with disarming frankness as a refined alternative to gross libertinism and stupid luxury expenditure, yet he is motivated by essentially the same impulses. "I would not make the Way of Virtue Rough, and Stony," he says; "that of Vice should be so" (173). Good connoisseurs are "good Oeconomists at the same time" (154).

Although the connoisseur's goods are not ultimately public, they are not entirely a matter of private possession, because they participate in a mediated and tacit form of social communication.²⁸ Assimilating painting to a theory of communication about and through art, Richardson argues that painting is not only "an Enjoyment, but ... another Language, which completes the whole Art of communicating our Thoughts" (*Theory of Painting*, 2–3).²⁹ Of course, far from degrading painting against the more overtly communicative verbal arts, he argues that painting is a swifter alternative to tedious verbal communication. Painting "is a Language that is Universal ... it Pours Ideas into our Mind [whereas] Words only Drop 'em" (4). Thus, the forensic task of approximating absolute certainty of attribution is less important to him

than full imaginative participation in an artifact's "hieroglyphick" language. The method for establishing one work as original and another as a copy requires understanding the minute evolution of a style, its material circumstances, and the heterogeneous influences – in short, everything the work communicates – all of which undoes the concept and authority of an immutable "original." The artist himself was but a connoisseur of the world.³⁰ In this conception, art was not a form of public knowledge; it was a technique for communicating with objects without a shared representation of the world.³¹

In *An Essay on Criticism*, Pope explains that his understanding of true taste reveals itself socially.³² When he declares "[t]is not enough, Taste, Judgment, Learning, join; / In all you speak, let Truth and Candor shine" (*Essay on Criticism*, 562–2), the abstract categories "Truth" and "Candor" never quite escape the underdetermination of the *je ne sais quoi*. The next lines urge the reader to verify truth in the reactions of other people: "That not alone what to your *Sense* is due, / All may allow; but seek your *Friendship* too" (563–4). Echoing Milton's appeal to "true tastes" in *Paradise Regained*, Pope declares that "[i]n *Poets* as true *Genius* is but rare, / True *Taste* as seldom is the *Critick's* Share; / Both must alike from Heav'n derive their Light" (11–12). In Milton, one knew where to find the divine light, namely in "Sion's songs" (a formula vague enough to include both Biblical texts and Milton's own). Pope makes the same appeal to the divine spark, but for him true taste is both more elusive (as rare as true poetic genius) and less specific to one class of objects. In Pope's model of "true taste," the emphasis shifts from the rich sensual apprehension of specific objects to the ways in which individual objects occasion and uphold the impression and authority of truth. He expressly describes the manifestation of truth in taste as occurring through the social attractions of friendship. In what follows, I show that Pope bases this socially constructed authority on pleasure; that, when he argues for "nature" as the most important abstract critical category, he conceives of it as Richardson's knowledge of style, as only visible through mediation; and, finally, that his account of critical authority as the outcome of the reiterated construction of a mental picture also accords with the major points of Richardson's understanding of the connoisseur.

Pope conceives the ideal critic as a conjunction of seemingly incompatible extremes. He asks rhetorically:

where's the Man, who Counsel can bestow,
Still *pleas'd* to *teach*, and yet not *proud* to *know*? ...
Tho' Learn'd, well-bred; and tho' well-bred, sincere;
Modestly bold, and Humanly severe? ...
Blest with a *Taste* exact, yet unconfin'd;
A *Knowledge* both of *Books* and *Humankind*. (630–40)

The contrasts Pope employs in this passage establish an expansive notion of taste that covers both the visible world of cultural artifacts (e.g., knowledge, learning, formal good breeding, books) and the unmarked tacit world of human communication (e.g., teaching, good breeding in the sense of ineffable *complaisance*, sincerity, "Humankind"). For Richardson, the connoisseur absorbs all the available technical knowledge about an artwork as a means to grasp and transmit how the artwork communicates a knowledge "of ... *Humankind*." According to Pope's opening lines, the critic's role as medium or transmitter is the reason for his meta-poetical intervention into criticism in the first place: "Ten Censure wrong for one who Writes amiss.... Now *One* [fool] in *Verse* makes many more in *Prose*" (6, 8). Against the dangerous, foppish self-multiplication of bad criticism Dryden warned of, Pope suggests the warm sociality of those who

know better, a circle of mutual affirmation within which, similar to Richardson's connoisseur and the master he admires, "we but praise *Our selves in Other Men*" (455).³³

At the center of the social circle of people of taste is the standard of "nature." Like Richardson, Pope makes the concept upon which the authority of the connoisseur hangs not directly accessible. He explains the standard of nature in circular terms:

First follow NATURE, and your Judgment frame
 By her just Standard, which is still the same:
Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,
 One *clear, unchang'd*, and *Universal Light*,
 Life, Force, and Beauty, must to all impart,
 At once the *Source*, and *End*, and *Test*, of *Art*.
Art from that Fund each *just Supply* provides,
 Works *without Show*, and *without Pomp* presides:
 In some fair Body thus th'informing Soul
 With Spirit feeds, with Vigour fills the whole,
 Each Motion guides, and ev'ry Nerve sustains;
It self unseen, but in th' *Effects*, remains. (68–79)

Pope speaks first of the standard of nature as an invisible, universal light that "without Show" informs the artwork ("the Source"), its proper critical appreciation (its "Test"), and its "End" (the real model or a divine spark conveyed through it). As the passage develops, Pope modulates the invisible light of natural truth, "*it self unseen*," to "some fair Body" that is much more physically present, in which the effects of "th'informing Soul" may be apprehended in every nerve and motion. Like Richardson, Pope advises assembling knowledge drawn from material objects into a complex imaginary mental picture: "Know well each ANCIENT's proper *Character*, / His *Fable*, *Subject*, *Scope* in ev'ry Page, / *Religion*, *Country*, *Genius* of his Age," bring "all these at once before your Eyes" every time a critical judgment is to be attempted (119–23). Like the style of the artist that forms the objects of the connoisseur's knowledge, the standard of "nature" mediates all critical judgment for Pope while being "*it self unseen*."

Pope was even more daring than Richardson or Addison in making pleasure the motor of his aesthetics, and this emphasis comes out particularly well in his rewriting of Boileau's account of poetry as a source of social order:

Avant que la raison, s'expliquant par la voix,
 Eût instruit les humains, eût enseigné les lois,
 Tous les hommes suivoient la grossière nature,
 Dispersés dans les bois couroient à la pâture:
 La force tenoit lieu de droit et d'équité;
 Le meurtre s'exerçoit avec impunité.
 Mais du discours enfin l'harmonieuse adresse
 De ces sauvages moeurs adoucit la rudesse,
 Rassembla les humains dans les forêts épars,
 Enferma les cités de murs et de remparts,
 De l'aspect du supplice effraya l'insolence,
 Et sous l'appui des lois mit la foible innocence,
 Cet ordre fut, dit-on, le fruit des premiers vers.

Before reason, declaiming aloud at full voice,
 Instructed humans and taught them laws,
 All men followed slovenly nature
 Ran freely at pasture dispersed through forests:
 Force ruled instead of right and equity;
 Murder took place with impunity.
 But finally through discourse a harmonious address
 Softened the rudeness of these savage customs,
 Assembled humans within the sparse forests,
 Closed cities with walls and battlements,
 The sight of the gallows kept insolence in check,
 And placed feeble innocence under the rule of law,
 This order was, it is said, the fruit of the first verses.³⁴

Pope tells us he admires this author greatly, but the program of critical order in the essay is radically distinct from Boileau's vision of the civilizing passage out of "la grossière nature." For Boileau, subjects in the lawless and murderous state of nature are "adoucit" by the urbanizing communal effects of the "premiers vers," which are not unconnected with the walls and military fortifications that clear and protect the social space in which these verses are uttered. Richardson's pragmatic tone reads more clearly as an extension of the epistemic humility of the new science, whereas Pope places greater emphasis on the authority that the connoisseur's expertise in the standard of nature, acquired indirectly through careful study of artifacts and context, entitles him to. Yet Pope is far more aligned with the experimentalist's recovery of spontaneous innocent perception than poetry's function, according to Boileau, of protecting "la foible innocence" by bringing it under the order of law.³⁵

Pope explain the reach of criticism through a physical analogy with the gradual unfolding of the Alps to the traveller:

Fir'd at first Sight with what the *Muse* imparts,
 In *fearless Youth* we tempt the Heights of Arts,
 While from the bounded *Level* of our Mind,
Short Views we take, nor see the *Lengths behind*,
 But *more advanc'd*, behold with strange Surprise
 New, distant Scenes of *endless Science* rise!
 So pleas'd at first, the tow'ring *Alps* we try,
 Mount o'er the Vales, and seem to tread the Sky;
 Th' Eternal Snows appear already past,
 And the first *Clouds* and *Mountains* seem the last:
 But *those attain'd*, we tremble to survey
 The growing Labours of the lengthen'd Way,
 Th' *increasing Prospect tires* our wand'ring Eyes,
 Hills peep o'er Hills, and *Alps on Alps* arise! (219–32)

Pope takes seriously the epistemic humility that follows from the gradual unfolding of objects in perception through experience. Initially carried ecstatically beyond the eternal snows and into the skies, the curious observer quickly encounters "the growing Labours of the lengthen'd Way" as

the hills beyond hills go from pleasant illusions to objects of knowledge to be climbed themselves. The impression Pope alludes to of a hidden, supplementary domain of experience could even suggest the technologically assisted perception through a telescope, especially given that Pope had never seen the Alps and was thus casting his eye telescopically towards the continent assisted by travellers' descriptions. In a like manner, the precocious young poet "fir'd at first Sight" should realize, assisted by Pope's text, that behind his first construction of nature "distant Scenes of *endless* Science rise." Putting it this way, Pope merges the object of knowledge (in his analogy, the endlessly receding mountain landscape) with the observer's poetic reconstruction of it. The poem works up the discrepancy between the physical world, in which mountains succeed mountains on a horizontal axis, and the poetic world calibrated to the situated observer, in which hills "peep" over other hills, and Alps seem stacked vertically on top of other Alps, utterly unpassable. The point of Pope's poetic telescoping effect is to bring the observer to see that something lies beyond the limits of all perception, which unlike a real telescope must labor to see and eventually grows tired.³⁶ Seeing the *endlessness* of "science" (the object of knowledge) is the special prerogative of the arts, which construct an artificial double of nature: a secondary hill behind the visible hills and a secondary Alps beyond the visible Alps. This description of poetic knowledge aligns precisely with the epistemology of connoisseurship according to Richardson: to use the methods of the new science directed towards the invisible object of style.

Unlike Boileau, for whom the first verses draw humans close into an ordered circle within which precarious nature is protected, Pope envisions a poetry of open-ended passionate expansion, based on nature but in which nature itself is not present.³⁷ The great wit of the poet and critic alike must boldly dare to "[f]rom *vulgar Bounds* with *brave Disorder* part, / And *snatch a Grace* beyond the Reach of Art" (154–5), staking Pope's ultimate critical value on the *je ne sais quoi*.³⁸ This passionate transgression against the "vulgar" (tasteless) bounds of order as he finds it, however, must, like Rochester's "reforming will," bring into being a new rule: "If, where the *Rules* not far enough extend, / (Since *Rules* were made but to promote their End) / Some Lucky *LICENSE* answers to the full / Th' Intent propos'd, *that License* is a *Rule*" (146–9). Richardson, too, was drawn to the category of the sublime as a way to specify the social circulation of unsharable yet regulated experience.³⁹ Similar to Pope, Richardson's aim was to reject the easy and vacuous *je ne sais quoi* of fashionable appreciation (bestowing epithets such as "Divine" and "Surprizing" [*Art of Criticism*, 52]) and to substitute it with a grander, more developed, frequently sublime *je ne sais quoi*: "For there is in All the Masters, tho' not All Equally, a certain Character, and Peculiarity that runs thro' all their Works in some Measure, and which a Good *Connoisseur* knows, tho' he cannot describe it to another" (*Connoisseur*, 137). An example of this limitation, hardly distinct from basic appreciation, is a moment like this one: "In that admirable carton of St. Paul preaching, the expressions are very just, and delicate throughout" (*The Works*, 42). As Luhmann puts it, Richardson's "discussion still reflected the effects of rhetoric. One praised the beautiful and the good, and presented in a negative light what one rejected," but this discussion gave no grounds for criteria; "it became virtually impossible to distinguish art criticism from the mere assertion of reputation."⁴⁰ Pope's fiery and transgressive self-regulation, confirmed by social relationships in the critic's fitness for friendship, makes the same "mere assertion."

Whereas Pope thinks of the good critic as appropriately wary of the telescopically receding objects of his knowledge, Richardson outright compares the connoisseur's trained eye to technologically assisted perception. Unrefined fashionable epithets reflect "Imperfect,

Uniform'd, and Confus'd Ideas" (*Art of Criticism* 52). The reason for this, Richardson believes, is the presence of imperfections and interferences in the medium of visual perception: we see objects through "the Coats, and Humours of the Eye, besides the External Mediums," and he infers that "Mental Sight has the like Defects" (*Connoisseur*, 105). As he refines these mediums, Richardson's connoisseur experiences the effects of technologically assisted perception: "their Eyes being once open'd 'tis like a New Sense, and New Pleasures flow in as often as the Objects of that Superinduc'd Sight present themselves" (199). As the connoisseur experiences a "Superinduc'd" secondary sight, he does not use the instrument but rather himself becomes the instrument. As Whitney Davis puts it, "the connoisseur's trained eye must be trained not only on the artworks but also on *itself* as an instrument . . . [T]hat same trained eye also serves as the exact analog of the zoologist's microscope or the astronomer's telescope."⁴¹ Richardson adds that the appearance of this new sight occurs "(to People of Condition especially) very frequently . . . or [it] may be procur'd, whether Here at Home, or in their Travels Abroad" (*Connoisseur*, 199). This internalized sense seemed especially new because of how efficacious it was as a new organ of elite privilege.

The lens-like quality of the connoisseur's eye could also be turned against him as a social construction that obstructs his knowledge. A satirical print (Fig. 9) mocks Richardson's use of his son's knowledge of ancient languages (and his first-hand observations from Italy) as a kind of telescope. The image does not try to unmask prurience slipping in under the pretext of scientific inquiry; rather, it suggests the formal perversion of turning a (phallic) instrument of scientific observation away from the natural world and onto humans, an exercise that could seem unnatural, incestuous, and silly. Instead of real Alps beyond Alps, the image suggests that behind the use of the connoisseur's refined lens is simply the mound of another person. A somewhat later satirical sketch of various connoisseurs (Fig. 10) is fascinated with the various physiognomic manifestations of this inner telescope, the assimilation of an expensive instrument into the subject yielding it. This image illustrates well the sociality of the connoisseur-critic: each of the figures is depicted as intensively absorbed in some object that is not depicted, and all the figures read as different manifestations of the same telescopically absorbed vision, yet none of them interact directly with any of the others. These deeply attentive figures, focused on nothing besides the white of the paper that holds them in solution before us, seem ready to bounce on or float into one another without ever seeing eye to eye.⁴²

In the opening sequence of the poem, Pope explains the common ground of the arts and criticism using the analogy of drawing:

Both must alike from Heav'n derive their Light,
 These *born* to Judge, as well as those to Write . . .
 Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
 Most have the *Seeds* of Judgment in their Mind;
 Nature affords at least a *glimm'ring Light*;
 The *Lines*, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.
 But as the slightest Sketch, if justly trac'd,
 Is by ill *Colouring* but the more disgrac'd,
 So by *false Learning* is *good Sense* defac'd. (13–25)

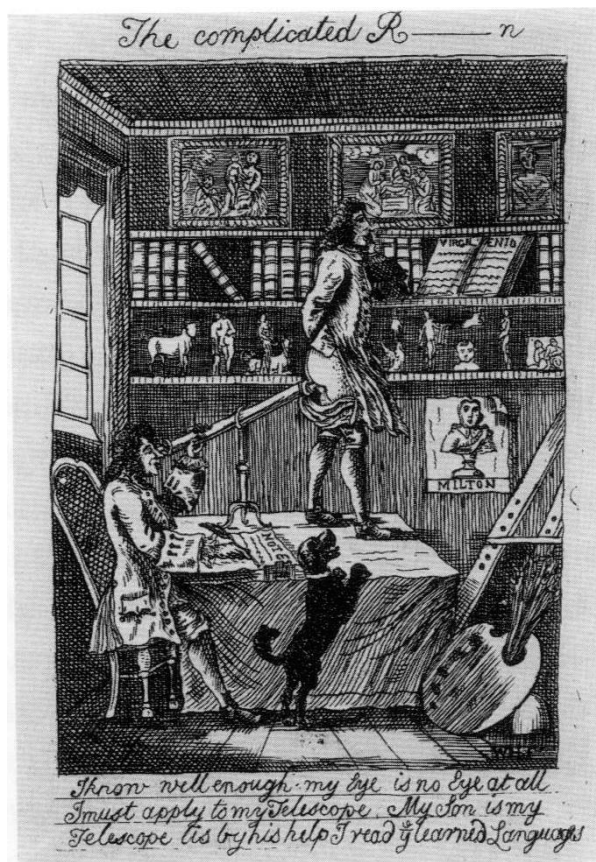


Fig. 9. Anon, after a drawing by William Hogarth, *The Complicated Richardson*. Nd. Drawing. British Museum.



Fig. 10. Anon, *Collectors and Virtuosi*. c. 1760. (Portraits of Dr. Bragge, Dr. Charles Chauncey, Matthew Duane, Duke of Argyll, George Leigh, Demaseau, General Guise). Drawing. British Museum.

Instead of the precociously bold overreaching of the poet-critic “fir’d at first Sight with what the *Muse* imparts,” here the first fruits or “seeds” of judgment are like the faint glimmer of a correct drawing available to most anyone.⁴³ Pope is perhaps thinking of the image in a camera obscura, which is “drawn right” by the light of nature, can be “justly trac’d” with relative lack of competence, but might require greater expertise to color in agreeably. Being “born” to judge means enjoying perfect congruence between how one sees and the impersonal correctness of the camera obscura: like the machine, the connoisseur-critic’s eye sees things as they are. When poor critics see things otherwise, it is not because they are evil or possess incorrect principles but because they are hungry and write in need of cash and distort the truth accordingly.⁴⁴ Pope describes such “half-learn’d Witlings” who fail to make something of these seeds in the language of physical degeneration as “half-form’d Insects,” which are “Unfinish’d Things, one knows now what to call[;] / Their Generation’s so *equivocal*” (40–43). The judgment rings true because the equivocality of such critics (the clipped, half-formed being of their “Generation”) is set off against Pope’s metrically dilated, powerfully unequivocal use of “equivocal.” Pope can point to

the failure of other critics to mediate the truth properly not by presenting that truth itself but rather by recapitulating their distinctive style of perception.

Like the alps over the alps, Pope's verse uses circular ekphrastic devices to make things look like what (we are told) they are. He explains the importance of "seeming," or of projecting self-conscious artifice, rather than spelling out ideals: "Tis not enough no Harshness gives Offence, / The *Sound* must seem an *Eccho* to the *Sense*" (364–5). Not falling into foppish or other failures is not enough; a sense of integrity must be projected through a circular relation of appearances. The sound must *seem* an echo, not merely *be* one. Whereas the natural light of sense should register as the image in a camera obscura, the pleasing "colors" applied to communicate it in verse stick not because they are naturalistic but because of their echolalic boldness. What Richardson says of painting is eminently true of Pope's verse: "I repeat it again, and would inculcate it, Painting is a fine piece of workmanship; it is a beautiful ornament, and as such gives us pleasure" (*The Works*, 118). When he declares that "True Ease in Writing comes from Art, not Chance, / As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance" (*Essay on Criticism*, 362–3), Pope's art must show not that it keeps contingency outside the frame of artifice but rather that the artwork includes and dominates contingencies, yielding art as the highly improbable product of a specific body. Amusingly, the meter adds an extra unstressed syllable in "easiest" (*Ea-si-est-Who-have...*), seemingly a faint verbal stumble in the dance of the line on the very word that captures the purported value. Beneath Pope's mantle of Augustan serenity swarms all the noise and equivocal pleasures of an imperfectly digested culture of consumption.⁴⁵

Richardson, too, sees the connoisseur-critic as effectively mediating the artist's original mediation of nature. An artwork does not show us "how Things Appear, but tells us what they Are" (*Theory of Painting*, 10). "An original," he says, "is the echo of *the voice* of nature, a copy is the echo of that echo" (*The Works*, 159, my emphasis).⁴⁶ Nevertheless, he strongly encourages the use of prints as a mediated acquaintance with the originals – one suspects that, to a certain extent, this was making a virtue of necessity – and he argues for their autonomy as connoisseurial interpretations of the original, as removing coloring can even sometimes show the master "naked" (143). He illustrates this delight in mediation with a set-piece description of

a Gelder-Rose, which is White; but having many Leaves one under another, and lying hollow so as to be seen through in some places, which occasions several Tincts of Light, and Shadow; and together with these some of the Leaves having a Greenish Tinct, all together produce that Variety which gives a Beauty not to be found in this Paper, tho' 'tis White" (*Theory of Painting*, 157).

He goes on to list various atmospheric variegations, all of which manifest the diversities of coloration that the guelder rose (a relative of the honeysuckle with complex, translucent white flowers) is capable of communicating because it has a color that looks like none at all. Standing for any natural object as mediated by art, the flower is itself interesting not for what it is but rather for all the changing atmospheric conditions flowing through it, so it provides an occasion to mediate.⁴⁷ This is a perfect opportunity to promote the advantages of visual art over the medium of print that Richardson writes in: the white page is inert in and of itself, whereas the visual flower communicates a whole world. However, because Richardson makes the virtue of the flower its ability to remediate qualities that are not visually present (the hidden leaves lending a "Greenish Tinct," hollows, refracted light, atmospheric conditions), he views the image as a composite of secondary imaginary pleasures based on absence. The object of the

connoisseur's knowledge is similar to the white flower, a crumpled piece of paper waiting to be deciphered.⁴⁸

What made it possible to methodize the ineffable qualities that were the objects of Richardson's *connoissance* was its accessibility by degrees. Like Pope's unchanging divine light, the final reference for the mysterious communication of the artwork is of course the mystical *je ne sais quoi*: "this is a Sense of the Divine Presence" (*Connoisseur*, 194). However, anticipating Hutcheson's concept of relative beauty, Richardson explains that "there is another Improper, Imperfect, Comparative Goodness ... in the Works of Men, and this admits of various degrees" (*Theory of Painting*, 11–12). He approaches these degrees in a quantifiable system for grading the pleasure produced by a work on a scale adapted from Roger de Piles.⁴⁹ The viewer measures the comparative pleasure produced by this work as against other works previously viewed. He recommends repeated and open-ended quantitative evaluation (*Art of Criticism*, 72), noting that reactions recorded will vary over time as the connoisseur becomes more experienced. He selects as an exemplary specimen for his demonstration Van Dyck's portrait of the Countess Dowager of Exeter, now lost, but see Fig. 11.⁵⁰ He gives the painting low marks for drawing and composition but the highest marks on everything else, totaling 16/18 for pleasure and 18/18 for "advantage" (meaning edificatory value). The scale illustrates Richardson's general point that a sublime effect frequently includes significant flaws. In a similar vein, Pope declares that "Great Wits sometimes may *gloriously offend*, / And rise to *Faults* true Critics *dare not mend*" (*Essay on Criticism*, 152–3). The unmethodical critic will latch onto the flaws as proof of his critical acumen; by contrast, the multiplication of categories of appreciation provides a better computational reconstruction of the work's *tout-ensemble* effect. Where his method yields statistical accumulation, the connoisseur can say with Pope that "[t]hose RULES of old *discover'd*, not *devis'd*, / Are *Nature* still, but *Nature Methodiz'd*; / *Nature*, like *Liberty*, is but restrain'd / By the same Laws which first *herself* ordain'd" (88–91).

In this example, the work's sublime effect consists in a moment of formlessness, in which "the Eye is deliver'd down into that Dead Black Spot the Drapery" (*Art of Criticism*, 58). In the painting that survives, the "Dead Black Spot" could refer to the subject's entire darkened mid-section. Richardson explains that his appreciation is colored by the thought of his wife in mourning after his death (68). Quantification acts as an occasion for multiplying (not excluding) "personal" responses, which could potentially be tabulated without possibility of synthesis. Confessing this personal detail lends his assessment a sentimental tone – perhaps a quaint taste for somber, didactic, visual moralization – yet Richardson justifies it not programmatically (the image represents the right thing) but rather statistically (the quantitative matrix shifts the source of the connoisseur's knowledge from the aesthetic object to how it strikes *him*). No amount of inexperienced looking at any one image will disclose whether the object is a copy, or of such a hand, or so good; only the connoisseur who has seen many images and has honed his eye through comparison, memory, and factual research can make these assessments. The ideas that the work communicates require him as their medium. The evaluation is a material record of his fleeting responses, similar to a sensitive film between him and the object that carries the traces of fleeting impressions. Because impressions can be multiplied serially both within and between viewers, the aesthetic sovereignty of the subject who decides on their worth is divested into whatever laws of public opinion can be extrapolated from their unlimited temporalized multiplication. The starting point for this technique is treating the value in the object as inaccessible, as if no amount of technological mediation will wrest it from the invisible, even if it is hiding in plain sight. Richardson thus latches onto an example of the elliptical disintegration of form – we are told it

happens, not coincidentally, in the region of the Countess's waist, in an indistinctly folded space – sucking the viewer in. The cozy embrace of ideological security that the image confers (*to him*) relies on a pregnant void between the “idea” and its “logical” formalization in visuality. The matrix of quantification latches onto the gaps of formal legibility in the work like a parasitical growth.⁵¹



Fig. 11. After van Dyck, *Frances Brydges, Wife of the second Earl of Exeter*. Nd. Oil on canvas. Burghley House Collection.

As we saw in the print satirizing the Richardsons', the sociality of the connoisseur too could seem parasitical. More kindly disposed than the satirist, Carol Gibson-Wood reads a similar combinatory sociality in the often-reproduced double portrait of the two Richardsons, where the son, looking to the father, seems to grow out of his head. In *The Artist and his Son, Jonathan, in the Presence of Milton* (Fig. 12), it is the father whose darkened midsection reads as an indistinct belly encroaching on Jonathan Jr., as both look down on Milton from a certain distance. Milton's opulent robe flung onto the balustrade reflects as much of the (divine?) light streaming didactically from a source above their heads – taking up almost as much space as the rest of him – as the drapery over Jonathan Sr.'s stomach absorbs all light into a black vortex (similar to the one he praised in the lost Van Dyck) that merges with the shadow it casts on his son. Below them, the same contrasting items from his description of coloration are replayed in a purely visual register: the dynamic whites of a rose (the sublime painterly communication of manifold corporeality) and the inert white of the paper (slower written communication). Richardson does not see Milton as absolutely singular, unapproachably elevated, or perfectly

uniform: they are, after all, *in the Presence* of a great dead man. Their little company of two, like the *two* sheets of paper between them and directly above the cluster of white roses, remediates (perhaps the sheets are evaluation rubrics?) the organic and multiform greatness of the poet.



Fig 12. Jonathan Richardson, *The Artist and His Son, Jonathan, in the Presence of Milton*. Nd. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

The nature of the ideas that art communicates are recursive and self-referential; they do not transmit an ideal or a natural representation. For example, Richardson claims that “after having read *Milton*, one sees Nature with better Eyes than before, Beauties appear which else had been unregarded” (*Theory of Painting*, 11–12). But in his gloss of the descriptions of Adam and Eve in the *Remarks on Milton* we are referred back to other arts:

[T]heir Complexions cannot be Conceiv'd but with *Pittoresque* Eyes; Neither can their Forms by one who is not Acquainted with Antique Sculpture ... the *Apollo* of the *Belvedere*, the *Antinoüs*, the *Meleager*, the *Venus* of *Medicis*, with the Body, and part of the Thighs of a more Ancient, and more Exquisite Statue of that Goddess ... in the Collection of the Great Duke, &c. These will help our Imagination as to their Limbs, and their Harmony One with Another, but let us still Imagine the First of the Human Race were not only of more Excellent Forms than any Since, but more Excellent than any of their Descendants, even the Best of the *Greek* Sculptors” (156–7).⁵²

This passage condenses the “lettered-leisure” of the connoisseur.⁵³ Milton refers us to looking at natural objects with “Pittoresque eyes,” which refers us to antique statuary, which refers us to earlier still fragments of limbs. Richardson doubts that any one object of the connoisseur’s knowledge or desire, even when it seems most present to the eye or hand, actually is – without

the material, serialized amplification that lends it shape – what its appearances promise to be. To the extent that his recursive loop of identifications is the substance of his knowledge, the possessive activity of collecting is a crystallization – particularly susceptible, according to Baudrillard, to reifying and regressive impulses – rather than its final manifestation.⁵⁴

So far, this section has argued that Pope and Richardson share a common critical epistemology, which uses an empirical method of assessment turned onto an object that is ineffable (like a style or the faint tracings of natural light), sublime (like the white rose or the alps), or otherwise beyond direct reach as an object in the world. I now argue that Edmund Burke's account of taste in the *Enquiry* is a continuation and expansion of this model. A major thrust of Burke's project in the *Enquiry* is to provide an alternative to Hutcheson's inner-sense aesthetic theory, discussed in Chapter Three, section 4. Hutcheson argued that some unconscious desire mediates every pleasure, claiming that in uncorrupted persons this desire is benevolent; behind the "relative beauty" of representations, he argues that an "absolute" or "original" beauty causes virtually everyone to be unconsciously moved by similar object-causes, and he locates these responses in a special inner sense that can be more or less developed. When Burke titles his treatise *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, he argues for a different "origin" of these ideas than the inner sense. Suspicious of "this delicate and aerial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition" (11), he argues against invisible and unconscious senses, basing his theory instead on pleasure and pain, stipulating that "pleasure is only pleasure as it is felt" (31). He spends two sections arguing against "the Platonic theory of fitness and aptitude" (92; see 95–99), which was central to the inner-sense model (see Chapter Three, section 2); instead, he argues that "the effect is previous to any knowledge of the use" (98). Against the overly optimistic theory of natural sociability, Burke proposes "a diligent examination of our passions in our own breasts" (1) as they actually are rather than how they should be. Pushing remarks in Addison further, he regards beauty as intrinsically bound up with sexual attraction (39), and he explicitly repudiates the benevolentist thesis, claiming that "I am convinced we have a degree of delight and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others" (42). He categorically rejects the thesis that

the Taste [is] a separate faculty of mind, and distinct from the judgment and imagination; a species of instinct by which we are struck naturally, and at the first glance.... [Instead,] wherever the best Taste differs from the worst, I am convinced that the understanding operates and nothing else; and its operation is in reality far from being always sudden, or when it is sudden, it is often far from being right.... The Taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise. (25)

Against the perceived idealism of inner-sense theory, which makes taste a separate organ, Burke argues that taste is improved through understanding, practice, and cultivated expertise. For example, suppose two people were feeling a marble table and attempting to assess just how refined its smoothness is; the professional marble polisher, he says, "will unquestionably determine the most accurately" (21). In this matter, he will be able to discriminate best because, like this mechanic figure, he has improved his judgment through experience as a connoisseur. For Burke, "the true standard of the arts is in every man's power" (49).

Burke wants to provide a general aesthetic theory "founded on experiment" (5) and proceeding by induction (4), yet, similar to that of Richardson and Pope, his version of human nature can be studied only indirectly through effects. Throughout the "Introduction on Taste" –

which Burke added to the second edition of 1759, often regarded as a response to Hume's essay on the standard of taste, published in the same year as the first edition of the *Enquiry* – he repeats that “natural good Taste” (20) is common to everyone, as the basic structures of the human body are the same and differences in taste follow different degrees of cultivation. He acknowledges, however, that taste is not perfectly identical to the understanding: “the Taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment” (25). He explains the gap between the natural tastes of the body and the imaginary tastes constructed in the imagination with the familiar example of a drug such as tobacco, whose taste we learn (by an imaginary process) to enjoy because of its pleasant effects. “There is in all men a sufficient remembrance of the original natural causes of pleasure,” Burke argues, “to enable them to bring all things offered to their senses to that standard, and to regulate their feelings and opinions by it” (16). He gives a strong, positive account of the constructive power of associations in the imagination (it “possesses a sort of creative power of its own”), but the imagination is *not* constitutive of the standard of natural taste. On the one hand, the imagination causes individuated deviations from the natural standard of taste based in the structure of our bodies, such as the superinduced pleasures of tobacco. On the other hand, the imaginary pleasures can and should be developed, refined, and cultivated, as in the example of the marble connoisseur. The reliable way to do so is through understanding and experience, even though taste “(whatever it is)” is an imaginary double of material reality in the imagination.

Burke's definition of taste thus approaches natural artifacts through the medium of cultural artifacts formed by and for the imagination: “I mean by the word Taste no more than that faculty, or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgment of the works of imagination and the elegant arts” (13). Burke does not call the person who has cultivated taste in this sense a connoisseur, because he wishes to extend this competency as widely as possible. For example, Burke tells the story of a Turkish emperor who critiques Bellini's painting of the decapitated head of John the Baptist because the skin did not shrink back properly: “the sultan on this occasion, though his observation was very just, discovered no more natural Taste than the painter who executed this piece, or than a thousand European connoisseurs who probably never would have made the same observation” (19). Burke's point is not to degrade the Turkish emperor to the level of the shoemaker who pedantically critiques the construction of shoes in a painting – we are told that “he praised many things, but he observed one defect” – but rather to show that his special experience of the thing represented did not grant him a special competency as a connoisseur in assessing the representation. From a natural taste perspective, Burke believes that all observers, from the emperor to the connoisseur to the humble shoemaker, are on a basically equal footing; none has a more delicate inner sense.

The example of the decapitated head silently illustrates the “delightful horror, which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime” (67), the concept that the *Enquiry* is best remembered for. Whereas Burke based his account of beauty on the appeal of pleasure, he associates the sublime with pain, privation, and obscurity (53–9); with power (59–65); and with the distant masculine appeal of the father (101). Burke's theory places so much weight on the sublime because it is the experience of the limit separating physically conditioned natural taste and the imaginary double that the connoisseur (or the tobacco smoker) works on. Explaining the sublimity of a dome, he argues that it conveys the impression of “the artificial infinite” because, even though it is a “bounded object,” the eye can continue without hindrance, “and the imagination has no rest” (68).⁵⁵ A few pages later, he generalizes this artificial effect, that “no work of art can be great, but as it deceives; to be otherwise is the prerogative of nature only”

(70). The worrisome presence of this artifice is exactly why Kant restricts the sublime to nature. Similar to Richardson's, Burke's account of the sublime remains tied to rhetoric, even when it explains the sublime as a gap, an instance of repetition, or a suggestively incomplete "artificial" presentation of infinity. Burke's section concludes with precisely the example that is most dear to Richardson: "because the imagination is entertained with the promise of something more ... in unfinished sketches of drawing, I have seen something which pleased me beyond the best finishing" (70).

The major area in which Burke seems to depart from the model of the connoisseur – who constantly updates, often explicitly computationally, his mental picture of a master's style – is his critique of mental imagery in Part Five of the *Enquiry*. Words, he argues, do not communicate by suggesting a mental image of their objects; neither does poetry "depend for its effect on the power of raising sensible images" (155). Instead, words show how the speaker is affected sympathetically, offering "a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another" by which means "poetry, painting, and other affecting arts transfuse their passions from one breast to another" (41). The habitual imagistic vacancy of those engaging in communication facilitates this sympathetic substitution. Likewise, and recalling Descartes's widower, "when words commonly sacred to great occasions are used, we are affected by them even without the occasion" (152). These typical patterns of virtually mechanical association closely follow the bodily level of universal natural taste: according to Burke, the normal sympathetic sociality triggered by artworks is an imaginative process that closely tracks a physical one ("the influence of reason in producing our passions is nothing near so extensive as it is commonly supposed" [41]). Yet Burke believes that tastes are as compelling and bond-effecting as reasoned discourse: "If Taste has not been so happily cultivated, it was not that the subject was barren, but that the labourers were few or negligent." If only differences of taste were seen as of greater moment, he continues, "the logic of Taste, if I may well be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason" (11–12). Instead of a consciously held standard, Burke proposes a "logic" of taste, and his playful usage of "digested" reminds us that this standardizing process happens in close conjunction with the physical body. Taste is not, however, identical to bodily processes but creates a bond only to the extent that a sympathetic exchange is mediated by the absence of a mental image. This "digesting" and reiteration of the artwork's communication – in close proximity to the body but distinct from it – were precisely the connoisseur's labor of cultivation. For Burke as for Richardson and Pope, as one builds knowledge empirically taste will follow. We cultivate our imaginations (the inaccessible side of our tastes, which in Richardson is the knowledge of the master's style from a distance) by cultivating its sensitive and reasoned correlates (the artificial "works of the imagination and the elegant arts"). Burke's critique of mental imagery thus underscores that the connoisseur's mental construct of a master's style does not consist of a positive mental picture but rather of a "logic" or a system of relations. As we have seen, Burke assigns a strong role to association and the labors of forming it, but he excludes it from the natural taste that is always already present for everyone and is being worked upon by all the imaginary, reasoned, and experiential processes that double it. For him, there is no standard of taste except for the open-ended standardization of bodies; I therefore call his model a "negative standard" because he explains how subjects are bonded through negative experiences. In sum, the figure of the connoisseur articulated by Richardson, his method, and his mode of authority were central to the

Augustan poetics of *An Essay on Criticism* and were rendered into a broader aesthetic theory by Burke a generation later.

2. Cultivation by association: the weak standard of taste in Pope and Gerard

[The imagination is] capable of a closer union [with our senses] than even our ideas; for they may not only, like them, be *conjoined*, but also *mixed* and blended so perfectly together, that none of them shall be distinctly perceivable in the compound which arises from their union.

(Gerard, *Essay on Taste*)

You too proceed! Make falling Arts your care,
Erect new wonders, and the old repair.

(Pope, *Epistle to Burlington*)

We have seen that the connoisseur's aptitude required an individualized formation and also lent him a social authority. This section goes into greater detail about how Pope conceived of his own authority as a tastemaker and his power to influence others, especially in his *Epistle to Burlington*, perhaps the most famous poem about taste in the eighteenth century. I show that Pope uses techniques of verbal portraiture to methodize experience, self-consciously remediating visual art into painterly poetry. As his satire on failed aspirations to good taste in the *Epistle to Burlington* draws out an idea of the true connoisseur, Pope builds into this figure a legislative power connected to the moralizing effects he aims at through his verse. Whereas the early *Essay on Criticism* yielded a strong but quite abstract portrait of the true critic's authority, when it comes to modeling the true person of taste in action, Pope softens his absolute mien, makes his judgments more elusive, and renders the standardizing power of his specific selections weaker. The figure of the strong critic in the early work – refined, expert, but remote as an ideal father – grew into the aesthetic subject of Burke's *Enquiry*, who was tacitly shaped by the “negative” standard of shared human nature (and his own diligent work). The more fleshed-out and qualified figure of the critic in the epistles I discuss here exerts a weaker lunar power of compulsion rather than the sublime solar certainty of critical truth. This figure was developed theoretically in the weak standard of taste Gerard developed on an associationist model, which attempted a compromise between the inner-sense model and the more physiological theory of delicacy.

In the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas*, the artist from whom Pope took painting lessons, Pope portrays a vivid scene of connoisseurial bonding, saturated with nostalgia. “With thee, on Raphael's Monument I mourn,” he says,

Or seek some ruin's formidable shade;
While fancy brings the vanish'd piles to view,
And builds imaginary *Rome* a-new.
Here thy well-studied Marbles fix our eye;
A fading Fresco here demands a sigh:
Each heav'nly piece unweary'd we compare,
Match *Raphael's* grace, with thy lov'd *Guido's* air,
Caracci's strength, *Corregio's* softer line,

*Paulo's free stroke, and Titian's warmth divine.*⁵⁶

Whereas Burke stressed the bonds that occur without a conscious effort to visualize, Pope describes two subjects fired with imaginary fervor, whose reveries seem to interpenetrate, lending their private experiences a supplementary thrill, as all four of their eyes seem to merge into a single “our eye.” The artifacts are so stimulating they seem “heav’nly” rather than material, and there seems to be virtually no difference between the double absence of “some ruin’s formidable shade” (which suggests a whole imaginary city) and the experience of looking at present artworks (which intimate precisely the descriptors that Richardson liked to use: grace, air, strength, free line, softer stroke, warmth divine⁵⁷). The social supplement to these robust imaginary experiences distinguishes Pope’s good connoisseur from the ridiculous and fetishistic collector he mocked in his epistle to Addison responding to Addison’s book about medal collecting. There, Pope laughs at the antiquarian’s passionate fondness for signs of historical damage: “With sharpen’d sight pale Antiquaries pore, / Th’ inscription value, but the rust adore. . . . Poor Vadius, long with learned spleen devour’d, / Can taste no pleasure since his Shield was scour’d.”⁵⁸ In the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas*, the shared passion for ruins is anything but anemic, and like Richardson, Pope suggests that the poet and the painter, in poring over artworks together, repeat something the work itself was communicating: “Smit with the love of Sister-arts we came, / And met congenial mingling flame with flame; / Like friendly colours found them both unite” (13–15). As the natural light available to all that we encountered in *An Essay on Criticism* ignites into a flame, the differences between their sister media reenter the medium of painting as a harmonious play of colors, while the congeniality of the sister arts creates a bond akin to that of sisterhood between the two men.⁵⁹

Toward the end of the first discourse, Richardson offers a critique of Locke’s *Conduct of the Understanding* (discussed in Chapter Three, section 1), which illuminates the sociality of connoisseurs that Pope describes. Locke, Richardson says, “makes our Liberty to consist in the Power we have of Suspending the Will” (*Art of Criticism*, 210), for example, by checking the “unreality” of a painting’s perspective by touching it: “Let any one, not skilled in painting, be told when he sees bottles and tobacco-pipes . . . that he does not see protuberances, and you will not convince him but by the touch; he will not believe that by an instantaneous legerdemain of his own thoughts, one idea is substituted for another” (*Conduct*, 254). Locke sees the mimetic work of painting as an illusion that only touch will dispel; tastes and their fashionable succession are obstacles to clear-sightedness. For Richardson, the “instantaneous legerdemain” of the eye is what communicates the transpersonal, impersonal intimacy of connoissance, as the connoisseur apprehends the light touches of the master sketch. Richardson agrees that knowledge begins with experience, but he disputes the implication that people assent against the evidence *as they see it*; Locke conflates evidence as it appears to *him* with evidence as it might appear to someone else (*Art of Criticism*, 215). He compares Locke to a bad connoisseur, a great master of managing ideas but forgetting himself, echoing what he had said earlier of the fallibility of Raphael and Michelangelo (212). Richardson’s connoisseur does not check the perceptual experience of a painting against other kinds of perceptual experience as more or less real. The connoisseur’s formation occurs only in an unproductive interval set apart from ordinary perceptual experience: “I am altogether as Free when I Write, or Paint, as when I Suspend both, in order to Consider which I shall do” (*Connoisseur*, 211). His competence grows only within this unproductive suspension, looking and comparing. Yet his individual experiences are sources of knowledge only insofar as they are interpersonally repeatable in himself and others (for example, Richardson’s son). This is not a deep knowledge of subjective causes but a shallow knowledge

available through the checking of boxes. In a candid moment in the Preface to the *Accounts*, he says that “I can never tell what his [Jonathan Jr.’s] Real Sentiments Are, but [what] I think they Should be” (*An Account*, v). The connoisseur’s knowledge bottoms in his own competency (rather than public things), but this competency is reflected in others who remain, sometimes irritatingly and sometimes charmingly, distinct from him.

A useful contrast can be found in Matthew Prior’s *Alma; or The Progress of the Mind* (1718).⁶⁰ As we have seen, Pope integrates the epistemological premises of connoisseurship and its style of authority as a fundamental procedure within his work; he was not, however, a great collector and remained at a distance from the material cultures of connoisseurship.⁶¹ By contrast, Prior used his diplomatic connections to build a significant collection and suggested the term “connoissance” to Richardson.⁶² *Alma* is a playfully crypto-materialist philosophical pastiche in the manner of Butler, which imagines “Alma” as the “mind” that is coextensive with the power of animation within the body, “slap dash, is All again / In every Sinew, Nerve, and Vein. / Runs here and there, like Hamlet’s Ghost; / While every where She rules the roast” (I.18–19). The point is that the brain is not the organ of the mind; instead, it is a vital double of the body, and he makes it responsible for taste: “By Nerves about our Palate plac’d, / She likewise judges of the Taste. / Else (dismal Thought!) our Warlike Men / Might drink thick *Port* for fine *Champagne*” (I.60–3). Finally, as Alma rises to the brain, Prior depicts the collector’s obsessiveness, in similar register as Pope, but with a slightly different logic, as tossed about by the whimsy of psychological automatism: “What Toil did honest Curio take? / What strict Enquiries did He make, / To get one Medal wanting yet, / And perfect his Roman Sett? / 'Tis found: and O his happy Lot! / 'Tis bought, lock’d up, and lies forgot” (III.448–52). The problem is not distortions from emulation but rather the collector’s relationship to his own collection, which threatens to become – like the form of the poem itself, which resolves itself in a Humean turn from writing to drinking – repetitive nonsense that gives pleasure by showing the limits of pleasure: “I view with Anger and Disdain, / How little gives Thee Joy, or Pain: / A Print, a *Bronze*, a Flow’r, a Root, / A Shell, a Butter-fly can do 't. / Even a Romance, a Tune, a Rhime / Help Thee to pass the tedious Time” (III.480–5). The bottom line, then, is the cynical reaffirmation of class security as meaningless but real: “He then, quoth Dick, who by Your Rule / Thinks for Himself, becomes a Fool. . . . Believe what friendly I advise: / Be first secure; and then be wise. / The Man within the Coach that sits, / And to another’s Skill submits, / Is safer much (whate’ver arrives) / And warmer too, than He that drives” (III.123–40). By insisting on the union of pleasure and judgment, which is no principle but the reason for asserting them, Pope avoids this bottom line.

In the final section of the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas*, Pope modulates from the two men’s erotically charged descriptions of Italian painting to a factor behind this enthusiasm: the two men’s frustrated depictions of desirable women, Elizabeth Bridgewater and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu [whose surname was later altered to “Worsley” (60)], lending the sociality behind the “endless streams of fair ideas flow[ing]” (43) a distinctly homosocial flavor. The poem to Addison contrasted the moribund collector with the serial multiplication of “living medals” (55). “How Plato’s, Bacon’s, Newton’s looks agree,” he exclaims, “Or in fair series laurell’d Bards [are] shown, / A Virgil there, and here an Addison” (60–3). For Pope, good connoisseurship transmits not a lack but living intensities, which are confirmed in present social experience. Here the social experience reenters the aesthetic experience as the serial link with other objects: Newton’s “looks” seem to flow agreeably into “Plato’s, Bacon’s,” even Addison’s. Pope realizes that shifting the emphasis from the ruin to *its shade* – where one may find refreshment with like-minded fellows – does not make it any less ruined. Nor, he wistfully notes, does writing about or

painting someone make that person love you. The imaginary presence that characterizes the sociality of the connoisseur does not do away with the bad collector's voluptuous nostalgia stimulated by an object showing signs of absence; rather, he projects the absence of the object of his longing to the future: "still [Bridgewater's] charms in breathing paint engage; / Her modest cheek shall warm a future age" (55–6). The poem or painting cannot make the object of desire present (she is too cold and "modest"), but it can act as a medium (for "warming" a future age). The serial multiplication of the flames of connoisseurs stretching into the future do not convey the presence of the woman but the sign of her absence, remediated first by the artwork itself and then further by the appreciating gaze that transmits it: "Thou preserv'st [only] a Face and I a Name" (77). The bond occurs with the absence of the original.

In the prologue to *Cato*, Pope reveals that the model of serial flame-sharing, which he illustrates in the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas* in two ardent, sexually frustrated connoisseurs, is how he conceives of the moralizing influence of the arts more generally. The arts create imaginary images whose objective is "[t]o make mankind, in conscious virtue bold, / Live o'er each scene, and be what they behold."⁶³ Pope's model unites three components: virtue itself; its conscious manifestation in an image for the viewer to behold; and the "bold," fiery emotional passage from the appearance of virtue to actually "be" that virtue through living over each scene. Virtue itself (Cato's, or anyone's) exists only in the "living" serial multiplication of so many little Catos, which is why the experience of "living o'er" must be continually enjoined as a conscious imagistic experience, and propped up where necessary. Yet Pope does not load "virtue" with positive meaning. Similar to the objects of desire in the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas*, virtue exerts a "warming" effect, firing other spectators, only because their own passionate living over has sympathetically substituted them for the object they behold. The poet's role, in Pope's couplet, is not actually to grant "conscious virtue bold" but "to make mankind ... live o'er each scene"; each viewer must bring his or her own enthusiastic virtue, and one must already somehow be "in" conscious virtue in order for this process to embolden one in it. Behind the serial transmission of virtue thus lies a more basal Promethean intent: "to make mankind" out of a mere succession of individual scenes.

Pope creates a circular relationship between the serial, replicative succession of appearances (artifacts, ruins, medals, portraits, poems, plays, passions) and the "being" of the abstract concepts such as nature and virtue that he appeals to behind them. The serial appearances can close into the circular effect of being only when the poet or painter pressures or otherwise works up the audience of fellow critic-connoisseurs to produce the signs of their imaginary experiences as a supplement to his own. Pope attempts to mediate this move through a more or less disingenuous self-erasure. He draws a "bard" series from Virgil to Addison, rhymed awkwardly with "shown"; strikes a posture of modest flattery; but also leaves open the possibility that *he* completes both the bard and thinker series. In *An Essay on Criticism*, he recalls the plot of Dryden's *Alexander's Feast* ("the World's Victor stood subdu'd by Sound!" [381]), declaring that "what *Timotheus* was, is *Dryden* now" (383). His aim, naturally, is to inscribe himself in this same lineage, but his performance ends with unexpected *sprezzatura*: the author is "[a]verse alike to *Flatter*, or *Offend*, / Not free from Faults, nor yet too vain to mend" (743–4). Pope was not averse either to flattery or to offending people, yet the posture of self-effacing humility was essential to him because it promises or expresses the desire to be inscribed in the living, serial chain of other like-minded appreciators. These others, too, consider Dryden as *Timotheus* – and perhaps Pope as Dryden as *Timotheus* – and thereby give a transpersonal substance to the *Timotheus/Dryden/Pope* series as a whole. The painter who renders in an

artifact Bridgewater's cheek in "modest" unblushing hues insinuates himself as a medium in the sympathetic "warming" of future ages. The fiery, passionate ego that Pope performs as a narrator anchors a circular relationship in the poetry between the true character of what he is writing about (the traits of great men manifested serially) and the self-consciously artificial seeming conveyed through a transfer of medium (Bridgewater's modesty-signifying pallor, oddly redolent of the balefully pale antiquarians). The author's warmth, in order to be shared like a flame among a narrow circle of complicit acquaintance stretching out into the future, divests itself onto the object in another medium, as the speaking subject stands frozen, watching on at a distance, unsure of his fate.

In the *Epistle to Burlington*, Pope models the communication of good taste by presenting Burlington as a model of tastefulness and then deconstructing this model as radically inimitable.⁶⁴ The poem begins with a nuanced psychology of the foppish imitators: "Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door; / Conscious they act a true Palladian part, / And if they starve, they starve by rules of art" (36–8). The imitators fail because, through fussing, they neglect the comfort of the body: "complaisantly help'd to all I hate, / Treated, caress'd, and tir'd, I take my leave, / Sick of his [host's] civil Pride from Morn to Eve; / I curse such lavish cost, and little skill, / And swear no day was ever past so ill" (164–8). By contrast, Burlington, as the positive model, shows "us, Rome was glorious, not profuse, / And pompous buildings once were things of Use" (24–5). With the importance of "Use," Pope evokes the criterion of fitness, which he produces in a more qualified manner than does Hutcheson as a happy reciprocity between convenience and expensive ornamentation. He sums up this core message early on:

Oft have you [Burlington] hinted to your brother Peer,
 A certain truth, which many buy too dear:
 Something there is more needful than Expense,
 And something previous ev'n to Taste – 'tis Sense:
 Good Sense, which only is the gift of Heav'n,
 And tho' no science, fairly worth the sev'n:
 A Light, which in yourself you must perceive;
 Jones and Le Nôtre have it not to give. (39–46)

Pope ironically disguises his message of common sense as a secret truth whispered from peer to peer. Sense is aligned with use, convenience, and comfort, and Pope places these considerations as external to good taste. This explains why the master term from his original subtitle "Of Taste" was gradually demoted in later editions to "Of false taste," and finally to "Of the use of riches." In a corresponding fashion, as Julian Ferrero has shown in detail in manuscripts of the last edition that Pope supervised, Burlington's viability as a model for imitation becomes more and more equivocated until his Palladian style finally stands only as inimitable.⁶⁵ Yet the satire on false taste yields to a model of standardization: as in the *Epistle to Mr. Jervas* and the preface to *Cato*, the poem must instigate a serial continuation of tastefulness, even if "Taste" itself cannot (like truth or virtue or nature) appear in its own light.

A key to the dissemination of tastefulness lies in Pope's psychology of bad taste. His opening lines swiftly deconstruct the emulative principle behind the empire of fops who take their desires at one remove: the man of bad taste "buys for Topham, Drawings and Designs, / For Pembroke Statues, dirty Gods, and coins" (7–8), referring to well-known collectors. Addison had noted that a charm of collecting coins is seeing the dissociation from their original scale of value and the reassumption of value in the collector's completely heterogeneous scheme.⁶⁶ Among the

people of bad taste, the informed and sensitive collector's transvaluation of coins into objects of tasteful appreciation happens in reverse, as an object charged with ineffable value collapses into its price tag. The inestimably valuable coin collapses into nothing more than the coins spent on it. Pope's bad collector, wanting to possess someone else's "dirty Gods," goes beyond a pornographic impulse to the appropriative repetition of someone else's pleasure shorn of any personal gratification. The equivocation between his choosing to collect coins, paintings, or whatever, underlines the social induction of a repetitive pattern "to purchase what he n'er can taste" (4). By the light of good sense, real tastefulness therefore begins with the fact of enjoyment.

Although Pope bases his account of taste on pleasure, as we have seen, he always insists on the element of mediation that hides the object of pleasure from view. In this poem, the mediating element is the use of money towards tasteful ends, and Pope takes for granted that taste will require some outlay of cash, whether shrewd or foolish. Even though this is a satire of conspicuous consumption, he rejects neither expensive tastes ("Tis Use alone that sanctifies Expense" [179]) nor their aim of personal distinction ("Splendor borrow[s] all her rays from Sense" [180]). Categories such as use, sense, and mind are mediated by the text's own ornamental appearances. For Pope, the virtues of usefulness, good sense, or mindfulness require the supplement of a text that wants to *be* of use, to make sense, and to stay stubbornly in the reader's mind. The circular relationship between being and seeming transforms mediated desire into a formal remediation that places its object beyond representation. The beauty of Pope's description of Jervas's portrait of Bridgewater "warming" later ages differs from the bad collector's mediated erotica only in that it claims to face the future rather than the past. The master-words in which he invests the substance of tasteful knowledge operate as stimulants rather than yardsticks or pigeonholes.

When it comes to providing a more detailed positive account of taste at the end of the poem, Pope gives two distinct visions in evident tension with each other: the revenge of natural taste over false cultivation and the apogee of culture, a princely connoisseur utterly dominating nature. In the first,

Another age shall see the golden Ear
 Imbrown the Slope, and nod on the Parterre,
 Deep Harvests bury all his pride has plann'd,
 And laughing Ceres re-assume the land. (173–6)

In this picture, nature appears in the mannered persona of "laughing Ceres" making a ruin of the stupidly angular landscaping, and transforms the sterile and uncomfortable improvements in bad taste into something warm and fertile. There is a fantastical hue to this turn of events, in which nature takes its revenge in a perfectly regular and quiescent mode – the golden ear turns to brown and "nods" drowsily – as if Pope is imagining the continuation of the serial transfer of good taste all the way into the unconscious vegetal realm.

In a transitional sequence between these passages, Pope explains that his criteria of use and good sense will place fertile cash-creating cows back on lawns; near the fields, "rising Forests, not for pride or show, / But for future Buildings, future Navies grow" (187–8). He ends by addressing Burlington more directly, having explained in the prose summary of the poem's Argument that he is speaking more generally of "the Great and Public Works which become a Prince" (P 587):

You too proceed! Make falling Arts your care,
 Erect new wonders, and the old repair,
 Jones and Palladio to themselves restore,
 And be whate'er Vitruvius was before:
 Till Kings call forth th' Ideas of your mind,
 Proud to accomplish what such hands design'd,
 Bid Harbors open, public Ways extend,
 Bid Temples, worthier of the God, ascend;
 Bid the broad Arch the dang'rous Flood contain,
 The Mole projected break the roaring Main;
 Back to his bounds their subject Sea command,
 And roll obedient Rivers thro' the Land;
 These Honours, Peace to happy Britain brings,
 These are Imperial Works, and worthy Kings. (195–204)

In these lines, Pope declares tastefulness to be a most important aspect of government, whose effects are seen all over the natural and the social landscape. He introduces Burlington as a patron especially concerned with “falling arts,” someone who undertakes new works and restoration projects as a knowledgeable connoisseur. His role is founded on connoissance: a mediator, he enables the great works to be “themselves.” Princes then take this aptitude and apply it to visionary public works with a royal budget, in which the free flow of commerce echoes the harmonious flow of light through “public Ways.” These tasteful improvements coalesce into the figure of a grandly curving arch (he had earlier mocked the bad taste that “turn[s] Arcs of triumph to a Garden-gate” [30]) that restrains the chaotic potential of nature with such perfect continence as to suggest that via the prince, the connoisseur commands the sea and “roll[s] obedient rivers through the land.” The hyperbole indicates that the person of taste’s mastery through princes entails an imaginary, even fantastical means of assistance. When good taste appears in a positive figural form, Pope displays it under the shade of “Imperial Works.”⁶⁷

In the early *Essay on Criticism*, Pope gives a passionate, almost vitalist twist on the ideal critic-connoisseur as *honnête homme*; in the *Epistle to Burlington*, the sociable and sensible man of good taste matures into a prince of good taste who undertakes projects affecting other people and the natural world on a vast scale, uniting pleasant views and profitable harvests. As the aesthetic takes on a broader reach through a potentially infinite series of imaginary ornaments, progressing like the flame of one connoisseur touching the flame of another, the idea of a positively articulable standard of taste actually weakens. Pope still places faith in the “Light, which in yourself you must perceive” (45), but he also significantly divests responsibility for the natural light of good sense found in virtually everyone onto the princely connoisseur whose kingly taste is so powerful that it seems to dominate the “subject Sea” and guide the rivers of everyone else’s light, which are otherwise unleashed in a deluge of dullness. Pope’s “imperial” promise to the subject of good taste was not the appeal to a singular absolute tastemaker, but rather the promise of personal sovereignty through following the duty to self-development available to a meritocratically constituted elite. From the strong anti-standard in the early work, which I argued aligned with the early theory of connoisseurship in Richardson and with Burke’s aesthetic program and in the 1750s, Pope shifts in the *Epistle to Burlington* to a compromise between dispensing with a positive standard and the strong version of the standard, based on the idea of the critic’s delicacy that we will find in Hume in the final section of this chapter. This

section concludes by arguing that the position Pope sketches was given a full theoretical treatment in the work of Alexander Gerard.

Gerard's book on taste was a serious philosophical account engaging with all the major aesthetic theories of his day, and the most extensive treatment of the topic until Archibald Alison's 1790 work.⁶⁸ The main reason that his theory is less well remembered than the powerful but pithy treatments in Hume and Burke is that Gerard attempted a synthesis between the inner-sense approach in Hutcheson and the physical delicacy approach in Hume and achieved a weak or deflationary view of the standard, which I now argue develops Pope's hybrid view of the standard in the *Epistle to Burlington*. Unlike Burke, Gerard approaches taste in terms of inner-sense theory (69), allowing utility an intrinsic role (37–9) as well as visualization or mental imagery (29, 81). In his later work, Hutcheson shifted his terminology from "inner sense" to "reflex sense," and Gerard places even more emphasis than Hutcheson on the reflexive quality of aesthetic experience ("nothing gives us greater pleasure than what leads us to form a lofty conception of our own faculties" [35]). This leads him to the importance of the novelty (3–10), to allowing, like Hutcheson, the charm of dissonance and imperfection (22–3, 51, 55, 60) and, like Hogarth, the appeal of intricacy (31); it also leads him to note the potential fatigue and boredom in what Burke calls the "artificial infinite" (33; also see 52). Whereas Burke completely brackets associational deviations from the natural taste common to all, Gerard argues for taste as formed almost entirely through association. His discussion of the sublime proceeds by noting the apparently natural appeal of immensity without limit, then observing how the mind "imagines itself present in every part of the scene which it contemplates" (12) even in such cases. He then argues that the sublime may be artificially excited: "objects which do not themselves possess that quality, may nevertheless acquire it by *association* with such as do" (18). In spite of his emphasis on the associational plasticity of tastes and the artist's capacity to steer them by "imparting sublimity" (26) where she chooses, Gerard agrees with Burke on some natural basis for standards: "there are qualities in things, determinate and stable, independent of humour or caprice, that are fit to operate on mental principles common to all men, and, by operating on them, are naturally productive of the sentiments of taste in all its forms" (72).

Gerard's solution is that an autonomous and reflexive associationist process occurs in the inner senses while, in parallel, the delicacy of the physical senses is cultivated using experience and understanding. He speaks of "the union of the Internal Senses, and the assistance they received from delicacy of Passion" as "necessary" (73). Wedded to processes of association in the inner senses, even "our *external senses* may be rendered more acute than they were at first" (91). Because of this double process, all exertions of taste are too complex for straightforward causal analysis, and he frequently describes aesthetic experience with expressions such as "complicated joy" (74). Instead of bracketing art from morality and other social pressures, Gerard sees the irreducible complexity of taste introduced by the reflexivity of association as the occasion for its own process of ordering through a different order of pressure: "something moral has insinuated itself, not only into the serious designs of Raphael, but also into the humorous representations of Hogarth" (69). The associationally constituted "internal governor prescribe[s] a law of life" (71), but without delicacy of passion the judge would only "examine, with coldness and indifference, the beauties and the faults of a composition" and be "totally at a loss to determine" its "main end" (82). Delicacy is what provides contact between association, with its "laws of life," and the things themselves. Fully realized delicacy becomes genius (see 166–9), which was the subject of Gerard's subsequent work.⁶⁹ Together, delicacy and association open "a new field" (78) of "complicated pleasure" (82) and this "enlargement of taste" creates "a

sensibility of heart" (79). This dualistic view of taste consists "not only of *culture*, but *culture judiciously applied*" (96). In his view, the delicate, judicious, ingenious application of culture remains a central ingredient within all tastefulness, and he derives an elite "man of taste" from the careful cultivation of association, as opposed to inspired departures from it: this person "places the pleasures of imagination in a higher class than other men are apt to do" (101).⁷⁰

Although Gerard argues for a standard of taste and an elite subject acting in accordance with it, in practice his dualistic model yields only a weak internal standard that can never be publicly verified. We "establis[h] within ourselves an exact standard of intrinsic excellence, by which we may try whatever is presented to us" (131). Early on, he declares that "good sense is an indispensable ingredient in true taste, which always implies a quick and accurate perception of things as they really are" (83). He echoes Pope's description of sense as a natural light "previous ev'n to Taste" and that mediates all tasteful decisions. Later, Gerard grants sense, delicacy, and genius an even more external role: "to form an able critic, taste must be attended with a philosophical genius, which may subject these materials to a regular induction, reduce them into classes, and determine the general rules which govern them" (171). Even so, taste remains "properly a kind of sensation" (144), and it "is not one simple power but an aggregate of many" (133). Therefore, "there cannot be an *external* standard by the application of which the merit of different tastes may be compared ... the standard of taste must be something *internal*" (220).

The core insight of Gerard's associationism is a pluralistic one that acknowledges the construction of "natural" consensus, especially through imagistic triggers. The "associating power" exerts a "magical force" that "sets all the members in that position which it points out as the most natural" (164). Because taste is a "complicated machine" (251), all of the rules and internal standards formed by the philosophical critic can be trumped by pleasure: "when a thing is contrary to rule, and yet actually pleases, we conclude with reason that the rule is false" (258). In those cases, we are actually dealing with "a different species of pleasure" (259), which is not justly comparable. Nevertheless, the internal standard has a powerful regulatory effect, creating an "authority of sentiment ... [as] when a man, who is conscious of his good taste, finds himself delighted with a new work, [and] he hesitates not to pronounce it excellent" (239). One person's internal standard may even convince another: "the person who *feels* in a certain manner, and who cannot, by any means, bring himself, at present, to feel in a different manner, may yet be convinced that he feels amiss, and yield readily to a *judgment* in opposition to his feeling" (216). Nevertheless, this judgment retains only an unverifiable internal authority, and Gerard's view amounts to a tacit oligarchy of tastemakers within a basically pluralistic frame that does not allow them a manifest, exoteric rule, except for the powerful effects of their "magical" dominance over others.⁷¹

Pope's princely connoisseur exerts precisely this type of dominance over others: he puts forward an abstract standard in the name of words such as sense and virtue, but with the proviso that these are his internal standard. He then invites the savvy reader into the privileged circle of those whose judgments are tacitly aligned (as peer whispering to peer) and whose pleasures ignite each other's, reassuring the subject of taste that he is not a pale, solitary, and fetishistic pervert. The core insight of Gerard's weak internal standard of taste – an opposite insight to the bonding power of cognitive voids in Burke – is a theory of the subliminal regulative power of images. The imagination is "capable of a closer union [with our senses] than even our ideas; for they may not only, like them, be *conjoined*, but also *mixed* and blended so perfectly together, that none of them shall be distinctly perceivable in the compound which arises from their union" (161). In spite of the imagination's weak, ornamental, and externally unverifiable quality, in its

positive fantastical mode it exerts lawlike associative patterns. Presenting objects to the senses triggers a parallel mental imagery, and “even after an object is removed, the frame which it produced, the *impetus* which it gave to the mind, continues, and urges us to go on in the same direction” (149–50). It is plausible that these serially self-transmitting bonds of unconscious beauty form the principle behind the contemporary logic of branding.⁷² This teaches us that Pope’s abstract principles, realized through serial imagistic bonds, have all the strictly formal allure of beautiful brand names; they must be continuously marketed to the reader. Gerard’s dualistic account gives a theoretical shape to Pope’s view of taste in the *Epistle to Burlington*, in which the man of taste has a powerful authority that can take shape socially only through the serial self-perpetuation of his enthusiasm.

3. Pope’s ruling passion as the strong standard of taste

On different senses different objects strike;
Hence different Passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak, the organs of the frame;
And hence one master Passion in the breast,
Like Aaron’s serpent, swallows up the rest.

(Pope, *Essay on Man*)

The strongest vision of the regulative power of taste in the first half of the eighteenth century occurs in Pope’s doctrine of the ruling passion. We have seen two versions of the connoisseur, or the positive subject of taste: the modest connoisseur, who develops his knowledge of an invisible standard of nature by training his senses and his understanding, and the more ambitious princely connoisseur, whose tasteful decisions are compelling to others through the sympathetic force of his inner standard. This section turns to a third version of this figure, who claims for the standard an external and objective authority accessed by means of delicacy rather than the inner authority of the cultivated eye. As we will see in the following section, the strong standard of taste presented in David Hume’s theory refrains from abstract critical principles and instead bases that standard on something obscure within the life of the subject. Before analyzing Hume, I once again turn to Pope, whose work provides a vivid portrait of this third model of the subject of taste, in the theory of the ruling passion.⁷³

Pope’s earliest statement of the doctrine appears in the second epistle of the *Essay on Man* (1733–4), where he refers to “one master Passion in the breast, / [that I]ike Aaron’s serpent, swallows up the rest.”⁷⁴ His problem in the epistle is human self-knowledge, and his discussion of the passions grows out of the discord between mind and body: man is “[i]n doubt to deem himself a God, or Beast; / In doubt his Mind or Body to prefer” (8–9). As the figure of Aaron’s serpent in the dust suggests, the ruling passion occupies the liminal space between consciousness and matter, and, energetic, it acts the part of mediator between them. Working up to the ruling passion, Pope develops a binary between reason and self-love:

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;
Reason’s comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end;
Fix’d like a plant on his peculiar spot,

To draw nutrition, propagate and rot;
 Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,
 Destroying others, by himself destroy'd. (59–66).

The first two couplets present a clean binary between the active power of self-love, the antecedent to the ruling passion, and the stabilizing, curbing rule of reason. Pope means both the third and fourth couplets to illustrate the excess of self-love without reason, and this comes through very clearly in the figure of the lawless meteor in the fourth couplet, which recalls the success of Newton's natural science at explaining the apparently irregular motion of comets. Pope wishes to provide a corresponding "science of Human Nature" (P 502), considered not statically in the abstract but in living motion: "Life's stream for Observation will not stay, / It hurries all too fast to mark their way... / Like following life thro' creatures you dissect, / You lose it in the moment you detect" (*Epistle to Cobham*, 31–2, 39–40). Pope positions his human science not as the study of a new kind of object but as the study of an observer who remains elusive: "Could he, whose rules the rapid Comet bind, / Describe or fix one movement of his Mind?" (*Essay on Man*, II.35–6). The third couplet of the passage above is ambiguous: does Pope mean being "Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot" to illustrate the opposite, decadent effect of self-love unassisted by reason, or does he mean to illustrate reason without the impetus of self-love, which "no action should attend"? The plant's fertile fixity does not seem to exemplify an excess of "reason's comparing balance"; at the same time, being fixed in a "peculiar spot" is an odd way to figure too much impulsive self-love. What keeps the plant-person fixed on his peculiar spot? Is it a species of reason or of passion? Pope later explains that self-love is the well-spring of the passions ("Modes of self-love the Passions we may call" [93]), and the problem registered in the ambiguity of Pope's couplet about where the driving, snake-like passions rejoin something like reason, a master-snake producing order in the dust where Aaron's rod is cast into a snake, prompts Pope to look beyond categories like self-love or pride for a different order of order.

In the *Essay on Man*, Pope places the ruling passion beyond good and evil at the very edge of the material body, and he deduces from it a distinctive style of governance. In the build-up to the passage I opened with, it is closely connected to the organs of sense, just like good taste: "On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike; / Hence diff'rent Passions more or less inflame, / As strong or weak, the organs of the frame; / And hence one master Passion in the breast" (128–31). Also, like taste, "the organs of the frame" must have a certain innate spark, which then grows with the subject:

As Man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
 Receives the lurking principle of death;
 The young disease, that must subdue at length,
 Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength:
 So, cast, and mingled with his very frame,
 The Mind's disease, its ruling Passion came. (133–8)

Yet Pope quickly qualifies this somber view of the ruling passion as a disease inhaled invisibly with the first breath of life and growing interfused with the subject as his cast of mind. Through an "Eternal Art," providence "Grafts on this Passion" all our virtue as well, as "Wild Nature's vigor work[s] at the root," whence "the same ambition can destroy or save" (175–6, 184, 201). In this transmutation of vice into virtue, Pope comes close to sounding like Mandeville.

Nevertheless, he believes that the doctrine of the secret master passion, a subject's abiding bent of mind and cardinal taste, should confirm our apprehension of moral absolutes. He explains this by comparing the good and ill manifestations of the ruling passion to the variegations of light and shade in a "well-wrought picture": "If white and black blend, soften, and unite / A thousand ways, is there no black or white?" (208, 214–5).

The analogy to painting serves the important purpose of linking the *hidden* order within the apparent chaos of life to the *visible* order of the well-wrought, artificial work of art. The ruling passion is Pope's best hope for achieving a reliable critical judgment about passions without leaving the circle of passion: "This light and darkness in our chaos join'd, / What shall divide? The God within the mind" (203–4). In Pope's analogy, the ruling passion as a painter has a double knowledge: it knows the nature of the pure pigments outside the frame of everyday life, an extremely tactile way to figure abstract categories like good and evil, and it controls the mixture of passions on display in everyday life, as well as in works of art representing them. Unlike in *Burlington*, where Pope construed the positive influence of taste in terms of a manifest imagistic succession and a strong tastemaker controlling it, the ruling passion is a "weak queen" that exerts influence with the sway of a "fav'rite" behind the scenes (150). As he transitions to the third epistle on social life, Pope weaves a social vision around the "weak" but objective ruling passion: "Heav'n forming each on other to depend . . . Bids each on other for assistance call, / 'Till one Man's weakness grows the strength of all" and these frailties "endear the tie" (249–54). Sympathy certainly bonds people through strong passions, but Pope is describing a different order of "tie" that occurs through the weakness of the ruling passion. Weak though we are, our secret ruling passion orders that in the last instance "not one will change his neighbor with himself" (262). The antipathy to sympathetic substitution causes people to look for "assistance," and the chief form of assistance Pope has in mind is art's function as an observer that mediates the real.

When it comes to "deduc[ing] the *rivers*" flowing from his doctrine of the ruling passion and "to observe their effects" (P 502) in the first two *Moral Essays*, Pope's presentation is bifurcated in terms of gender difference in a manner the *Essay on Man* did not lead us to expect, even though it made the ruling passion a weaker lunar principle. The first *Epistle to Cobham* echoes the ruling passion as a quasi-divine nature principle: "Know, God and Nature only are the same: / In Man, the judgment shoots at flying game, / A bird of passage! Gone as soon as found, / Now in the Moon perhaps, now under ground" (154–7). By this point, the essay has wheeled out a number of illustrations drawn from experimental science, and Pope is signaling that the object of his human science concerns the limits and mediating factors on observers caused by the fleeting nature of observation itself. For example, in his rendition of the standard warning against prejudiced observation – "To Observation which ourselves we make, / We grow more partial for th' observer's sake" (11–12) – the object of observation disappears within the observer's relation to himself. His argument in *Cobham* is that, just like the diversity that experimentalists have discovered in nature, a similar diversity of fundamental tastes exists in humans:

There's some Peculiar in each leaf and grain,
Some unmark'd fibre, or some varying vein:
Shall only Man be taken in the gross?
Grant but as many sorts of Mind as Moss. (15–18)

Pope looks for signs of invisible mental diversity not in the soul but in the tiny "peculiar," the "unmark'd fibre" or the infinitesimal variation of a vein, that eludes methodical observation. By

joining the eminently substitutable words “Mind” and “Moss,” Pope lines each of them up as commensurately ineffable.

Because he is now considering the diversity of ruling passions, he becomes less optimistic that this inner god will prompt correct judgment and be conducive to harmonious social relationships that remediate individual weakness. “Something as dim to our internal view, / Is thus, perhaps, the cause of most we do” (49–50), he declares; “Darkness strikes the sense no less than Light” (112). Only in rare, peculiar “plain Characters” (one of which is an allusion to Swift) does the “strong . . . bent” show itself legibly (123).

Judge we by Nature? Habit can efface,
 Int’rest overcome, or Policy take place:
 By Actions? Those uncertainty Divides:
 By Passions? Those dissimulation hides:
 Opinions? They still take a wider range:
 Find, if you can, in what you cannot change.
 Search then the Ruling Passion: There alone,
 The Wild are constant, and the Cunning known.
 The Fool consistent, and the False sincere;
 Priests, Princes, Women, no dissemblers here.⁷⁵

The key factor, standing between passions and the ruling passion, is the mediating power of dissimulation, which unconsciously affects the subject himself, who is enjoined to “[f]ind, if *you* can, what [even] you cannot change.” Reason does not even make the list of hypotheses, because the ruling passion substitutes for it with the same final authority. Unlike the epistles to Burlington and Jervas, in which association exerted a powerful bonding effect even (or especially) in the absence of a present external standard, here association, beginning with “habit,” is a noise factor that causes judgment to deviate unpredictably. Whereas the ideal princely connoisseur checks the “dangerous flood” with his good taste, Pope is exploring a different territory here, where chaos and order interpenetrate, “the Wild” is simultaneously “constant,” and “the Cunning [is] known” without dispelling the illusion. On this level, the problem of finding appropriate models disappears and an objective factor appears, heralded by the redundancy of a taste being what it is. Pope’s line “Search then the Ruling Passion: There alone” leaves ambiguous whether one searches *within* the ruling passion or whether one searches *for* it; in any case, the emulative factor recedes at this level, and the subject appears “there alone.”

Pope presents the ruling passion as a limit in relation to which a hermeneutics of human nature and a project of government can begin to proceed. “*No Judging by Nature,*” he summarizes; “*It only remains to find (if we can) his [anyone’s] RULING PASSION: that will certainly influence all the rest, and can reconcile the seeming or real inconsistency of all his actions*” (P 551). One never found in Shaftesbury the idea of a singular key to the profusion of personal characteristics, especially not one that promises to unite his seeming and his being; however, the ruling passion is very close to the idea of a master’s style in Richardson, which the connoisseur strives to comprehend in all its multifarious complexity. Pope’s little qualifications “(if we can)” and “seeming or real” point to this kind of methodical work of reconstruction that he explains in terms of cross-referencing snapshots of action: “*Yet to form Characters,*” Pope adds, “*we can only take the strongest actions of a man’s life, and try to make them agree: the utter uncertainty of this, from Nature itself, and from Policy*” (549). The work of forming the

stable portrait of a character from different actions is very much like the reconstruction of the unity underlying a serial succession of connoisseurial passions (Pope and Jervas) or a series of resemblances in great men's faces on medals. This project is subject to "utter uncertainty," yet Pope is confident that in the obscure realm of life there exists a principle called the "ruling passion" that doubles, with all the plenitude of being, the artificially unified appearance of a character drawn from discontinuous characteristics. Here, Pope presses beyond the notion of swaying people through attractive, repulsive, but ultimately indeterminate images (as in *Burlington* and Gerard), but he does not appeal to the unchanging universal nature of the *Essay on Criticism*; instead, he argues for influencing subjects through a determinate, objective cause behind taste that remains invisible. It is only because this fundamental truth of a character is not directly available that multiple artificial representations can mediate it; its absence authorizes ornament and diversity as so many mediated cross sections of the singular ruling passion, each manifesting and modulating it.

The second *Moral Epistle* gives a name to the limit on the possibility of governing other people through artful appeals pitched to their ruling passions. Not everyone has a fully formed ruling passion – an individuated character on par with the species identity of one out of 300 varieties of moss – and Pope describes this lack under the heading "Women (consider'd as contradistinguished from the other Sex)" (P 559). Where *Cobham* still spoke of the ruling passion in relatively abstract terms, once Pope turns to women, elaborately fleshed out, cruel portraits of the deformities and absurdities of feminine bad taste rush onto the page. Reminiscent of the structure of misogynistic denunciation without transcendent principles in Rochester's "Ramble in St. James' Park," Pope mocks the woman who lectures "[o]n the soft Passion, and the Taste refin'd, / Th' Address, the Delicacy – [and then] stoops at once, / And makes her hearty meal upon a Dunce" (84–6). Another woman is a "[w]ise wretch! With Pleasures to refin'd to please, / With too much Spirit to be e'er at ease.... And die[s] of nothing but a Rage to live" (95–100). Pope condescendingly ascribes to these women various repetition compulsions that mingle an aspect of death with the drive towards life, which is the aspect in which he had first introduced the ruling passion in the *Essay on Man*.

Pope's opening lines – "Nothing so true as what you [Martha Blount] once let fall, / 'Most Women have no Characters at all'" (1–2) – artfully conceal his central point. Pope does not actually think that women lack character; rather, he believes that their ruling passions are somehow more direct and unmediated. A woman says this, and the apparent lack of "character" (the diversity of ruling passions in men) in women actually provides a shortcut to the ruling passion:

In Men, we various Ruling Passions find,
In Women, two almost divide the kind;
Those, only fix'd, they first or last obey,
The Love of Pleasure, and the Love of Sway. (207–10)

Pope avoids speaking of "Woman" as an abstraction, and he qualifies this misogynistic performance as addressing women "as contradistinguished from" men. Men have various ruling passions, whereas the tastes of women are like "variegated Tulips" (41), recalling the troublesome figure of the man-plant in the *Essay on Man*. Most of their inconsequential diversities of personality are "best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair" (4); he will go on to provide portraits of stronger (and more pernicious) examples of perversely variegated feminine tastes. Pope explains away the love of sway as an effect of patriarchal oppression (213–14),

boiling down the female ruling passion into pleasure: “That [pleasure], Nature gives; and where the lesson taught / Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?” (211–12). This passage echoes in a softer key Rochester’s “something gen’rous in meer lust” and concludes that “ev’ry Woman is at heart a rake” (216). Pope inserts the masculine descriptor “rake” at one of the few moments in the epistle where the text attempts a more ontological description of “Woman”; contrapuntally, he had described the ruling passion as a “weak queen” in the *Essay on Man*. Here, “ev’ry Lady would be Queen for life” (218). When it comes to women, the queenly character inherent to all ruling passion shines through; instead of *having* tastes, women are *being* creatures of taste entirely. All of the scientific vocabulary that Pope mobilized in *Cobham* to explain how his poetry will function as a science of the mediations of man recedes in the second epistle because women become the mediating, observational apparatus come to life. What they reveal is that behind the apparent diversity of ruling passions lies pleasure as a final ruling passion, and the “absence” of character in women provides a clear medium through which this rule becomes visible.

Pope may style himself as a brilliantly cranky misogynist, but from the perspective of the theory of the aesthetic conduct of conduct outlined in the *Essay on Man*, and whose limitations he sketched in *Epistle to Cobham*, the appearance of “women” is the solution to a problem. When it comes to ruling passions, women are simply a more “naked” version of men: “’Tis well – but, Artists! Who can paint or write, / To draw the Naked is your true delight: / That Robe of Quality so struts and swells, / None see what Parts of Nature it conceals” (187–90). The masculine ruling passion “struts and swells” in (or under) a robe of quality, whereas women present both the allurements and frustrations of a “naked” ruling passion. Pope is certainly making an unremarkable point about finding women attractive as objects, but he also turns to women for necessary and structural reasons in his discussion of ruling passions. His project for a science of man considered not as an object but as an observer led him to women as more “naked” versions of the universal self-observing (or aesthetic) subject. Pope’s vacantly self-regarding women are all instances of the reflexive, aestheticized observer pushed to emotionally solipsistic extremes. In a third version of the ideal aesthetic subject, Pope delivers not the *honnête* connoisseur nor the princely connoisseur but rather women as quintessential subjects of taste. With a phobic recoil, Pope registers that, considered in terms of ruling passions, women are the default standard and representative of what the human is. Pope wheels out all the old stereotypes about women having no tastes of their own in order to conclude that they give him access to the vacant plastic mediator behind all human impulses, sparing him a detailed hermeneutic investigation into every subject’s personalized ruling passion. If one addresses women as the anonymous everyperson, then one addresses all. Even more persistently than in Rochester’s occasional moments of rage-inducing feminization, such an address requires one to become soft, feminine, and ornamental: “ev’n the best, by fits, [are] what they despise” (*Essay on Man*, II.234).

How, we must ask, does Pope’s text invite us to understand his own ruling passion? Two passages, one brilliant and central and the other obscure and minor, provide insight into how Pope uses his own tastes to rule the passions of others. The following famous passage from the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* poses the problem of Pope’s own ruling passion:

Why did I write? What sin to me unknown
Dipt me in Ink, my Parents’, or my own?
As yet a Child, nor yet a Fool to Fame,
I lisp’d in Numbers, for the Numbers came.

I left no Calling, for this idle trade,
 No Duty broke, no Father dis'obey'd.
 The Muse but serv'd to ease some Friend, not Wife,
 To help me thro' this long Disease, my Life,
 To second, ARBUTHNOT! Thy Art and Care,
 And teach, the Being you preserv'd, to bear. (125–34)

Attempting the very self-knowledge or human science recommended in the *Essay on Man*, Pope searches for his ruling passion – as in that text, it encompasses both the sparkle of the verses on display and the grimy obscurity suggested by the image of being “dipt” in ink – and he rules out the love of fame, the urge to transgress (he was no Robinson Crusoe, disobeying his father), as well as, more elliptically, the influence of women. Rhyming “not Wife” with “my Life” in the following line. The passage suggests a formal and a descriptive answer to the question about Pope’s ruling passion. The anonymous and gender-nonspecific “some Friend” becomes the doctor, yet this friendship, replacing the “not Wife,” seems to bring out the “not” in his name rather than provide a satisfactory substitute. The muse, who appears as a disease intermingled with Pope’s first breaths, also serves “to second” the doctor, providing “art and care” that teach him to bear the life they brought with them. One recalls that Shaftesbury had recommended a form of self-discourse that did not amount to “taking physic in public”; here, Pope follows this rule only to the letter. He conceives of art as supplemented by a therapeutic governing “care” on the life of the audience of “some friends,” not considered as objects but as observers, a care that is thus mediated reflexively by his own naked self-display. The ruling passion behind his art is “care” in the mode of impersonal friendship. Unlike the sociability of a Burlington or a Jervas, the relationality Pope conceives of here seems to manifest itself virtually before mature social relationships, as he “lisp’d in Numbers, for the Numbers came.” The artful care that the mature Pope gives a figural shape to in the persona of the good doctor preexisted him in the redundantly formal and formative power of the numbers that came, an infantile *Bildung malgré lui*. Pope does not present us with specimens of his juvenile work as proof but tells about a spontaneity that is no longer directly available. This exaggeration of his own precocity, pushing it back to the lisping threshold of language acquisition, retrospectively naturalizes, through the vehicle of the unformed yet polished lisp, his internalization of a program of care through numbers, of the self-management of life through the beautifully ordered ornament, and of others through artful self-exposure.

Pope’s triumphant vulnerability in these lines was not the only mode in which he produced his poetry as a therapy of life. As a mode of governing oneself and others, the ruling of passion was also subject to obsolescence, and the serially self-transmitting sociality he idealized could lapse into obscurity. In an occasional late poem, Pope reflects in a solitary mode on the limiting factors around the poetic care of passions; the occasion, quite appropriately, is spending the night in Rochester’s bed. In contrast to the *Epistle to Jervas*, in which material objects provided an occasion for the luxuriously sociable and compensatory mingling of fantasies, when he is surrounded and enveloped by the material object of a noted libertine wit’s bed, he feels performance anxiety: “With no poetick ardors fir’d, / I press the bed where *Wilmot* lay / That here he lov’d, or here expired, / Begets no numbers grave or gay.”⁷⁶ Yet something is “bred” from the experience, as the second of the poem’s three stanzas explains, addressing the current owner of the house:

But 'neath thy roof, *Argyle*, are bred

Such thoughts, as prompt the brave to lie,
Stretch'd forth in honour's nobler bed,
Beneath a nobler roof, the sky. (5–8)

On one level, Pope's aim in the poem is to turn his back on Rochester, claiming to prefer to the open and public (but nocturnal) space of nature to the close domestic space where Rochester privately loved and died. As a part of this stance, Pope rejects the fetishistic appeal of the bed, declaring himself to be stoically unmoved by its potential for inspiring imaginary constructions. Typically, he enlists the friendly support of the Duke of Argyle, who is presumably sleeping elsewhere in the house. The artifact does, however, stimulate a poem, and his noble alternative to lurid imaginations comes very close to madly fleeing the bed and running outside in a panic.

If the bed does not stimulate anything, Pope must explain why he is writing this poem, and his answer is that instead of inappropriate "ardors" fired by the bed, it is being under Argyle's roof that breeds a different kind of fire:

Such flames, as high in patriots burn,
Yet stoop to bless a child or wife:
And such as wicked kings may mourn,
When freedom is more dear than life. (9–12)

Pope probably meant to exclude Rochester from the "brave" company of himself and Argyle, the patriotic "flames" they feel, and the sentimental "stoop to bless" family values, but Rochester's love and death are the absent center around which Pope chooses to articulate these. The "poetick ardors" that would have been inappropriate to explore are transformed into "such flames," which must necessarily include Rochester's flames as well, as a piece of furniture metonymically connected to them too remains under Argyle's roof. Positioning Rochester, Argyle, and himself all in passionate opposition to "wicked kings," Pope folds his republican "freedom" into Rochester's freedoms but with the addition of a distance or a decay of "ardor" that prevents clear mutual recognition. One could say that Pope is enjoying the bed aesthetically; that is, he enjoys it more for the absence it conveys than for what it makes present. The poem makes perfectly clear that Pope's detached and obviously idealistic aesthetic pleasure is mediated by the sublime presence of a dangerously englobing material object. Stiffer and more contrived than *Arbutnot*, this poem reveals that Pope's project of artful care – in other words, his ruling passion for ruling passions through "numbers" – necessarily includes a decay or suspension of passion in addition to passions triggered by compelling images. He compares the occasion for "such flames" as those he proposes to engender to sharing a bed and feeling nothing, transmuting this imperfect enjoyment into a passionate freedom that "is more dear than life." In the *Epistle to a Lady*, he vociferously projects this lack of feeling onto women, whereas here – appearing most naked, I think, when he is most eager to put on a mantle of dignified sentiment, he neglects (or not) the fact that he is doing this in (Rochester's) bed – he unifies the feminine and the masculine, the unmediated and the mediated, the unfeeling and the affected manifestations of the ruling passion. In this poem, the solitary sociability of the subject of taste shows itself clearly, and the condition of a Robinson Crusoe, irresistibly drawn beyond culture to being "stretch'd forth . . . beneath a nobler roof, the sky," which seemed so remote from the culture of taste, merges with the age's greatest promulgator of taste as the rule of life.

4. Aesthetics as public pressure: ruling passions in Hume

Almost every one has a predominant inclination, to which his other desires and affections submit, and which governs him, though, perhaps, with some intervals, through the whole course of his life.

(David Hume, "The Sceptic")

While Pope was perhaps the first great exponent of the new aesthetic culture of the eighteenth century, illustrating at various moments in his career several different ways in which taste could be formed into a standard, the period's most ambitious theory of taste is put forward in the work of David Hume. I call this a strong version of the standard because it claims that there is an objective, external basis for judgments of taste, even when this basis in fact is unrepresentable. In what follows, I argue that Hume's model for the tasteful conduct of conduct is a theory of the ruling passion, in the sense that my analysis discovered in the late work of Pope, as it comprehends a secret individual bent, the human science that grasps through the medium of artifice the bent of this fleeting observer in action, and the use of this human science to stimulate the self-regulation of individuated subjects. This theory is an appropriate final work to consider in this dissertation because it lays the groundwork for the transformation that occurred after the key statements of the 1750s, when taste shifted from a problem of performative self-regulation to a hermeneutical principle for understanding subjects. On the one hand, Hume's relatively rigid hierarchy of aesthetic values limited his interest in the causes of deviation to quite general explanations. On the other hand, my presentation emphasizes the impersonal and highly mediated sociality around tastefulness that Hume envisaged, a sociality that signaled paradoxically that, by this point, the rule of taste addressed a mass culture, and the promise of a respectable mode of aesthetic subjectivity proffered by Richardson now reached beyond circles of fashionable gentlemen of means.

In his collection of *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Hume gives a special place to the question of taste. The brief first essay, "Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion," makes a sharp contrast between the negative and feminine "delicacy of passion," which responds to life events compulsively with nervous extremes, and the "delicacy of taste," a cultivated masculine attribute that sharpens pleasures and mediates passionate excesses. "I am persuaded," Hume says, "that nothing is so proper to cure us of this delicacy of passion, as the cultivating of that higher and more refined taste, which enables us to judge of the characters of men, or compositions of genius, and of the productions of the nobler arts" (*EPM* 6). The person of taste accurately judges humans and artworks alike because he has himself been "cured" through distancing from the dangerous overdelicacy of passion. Hume evidently wanted this distinction between bad, unmediated taste and good, mediated taste to reverberate throughout the essay collection, as the eight essays that follow are all on political topics, which gradually broaden to more general topics of culture and return to properly literary topics only at the end, concluding the long first part of his collection with the famous essay on the standard of taste.

The issue of taste comes up several times in the essays that prepare us for "Of the Standard of Taste," most prominently in an essay called "The Sceptic," which posits that "there is something approaching to principles in mental taste; and critics can reason and dispute more plausibly than cooks or perfumers" (163). The frame for this argument is the question about the philosopher's role in dictating "what desire we shall gratify, what passion we shall comply with, what appetite we shall indulge" (161). The problem that Hume attempts to answer with the theory of "something approaching principles" of taste, with the authority to dictate in matters of

desire, appetite, and passion, is the following: “Almost every one has a predominant inclination, to which his other desires and affections submit, and which governs him, though, perhaps, with some intervals, through the whole course of his life”; for the philosopher, too, “his own pursuits are always, in his account, the most engaging: The objects of his passion, the most valuable: And the road, which he pursues, the only one that leads to happiness” (160). Twice in this piece, he critiques Pope’s optimistic conclusions in the *Essay on Man* (167, 173), but he silently adapts the theory of the ruling passion set forth in that work as the defining attribute of tastes. The challenge in adjudicating contests of taste is the hidden aspect of the ruling passion: “you have not even a single argument, beyond your own taste, which you can employ in your behalf” against someone else ruled by his own favorite passion (161). Yet Hume is convinced that “there seems to be always a real, though often an unknown standard, in the nature of things; nor is truth or falsehood variable by the various apprehensions of mankind” (164) – a statement that closely echoes Pope’s analogy to light and dark in painting in the *Essay on Man*.

Hume’s answer to what makes one taste superior to another is the cultivation of mental delicacy, and he offers clear critiques of both positions in Hutcheson and Burke. As the first essay intimated, delicacy of taste is not an automatic physical or nervous process but rather a reflexive act of mediation that creates distance. Hutcheson’s inner-sense theory acknowledges reflexivity, but he believes that reflexive aesthetic responses are also senses acquainting us with the world and that, with these responses condensed into a suitably general formula such as “uniformity and variety,” we could apprehend the “absolute” beauty of, say, a regular geometric figure. Against this view, Hume argues that “beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line *whose* parts are all equally distant from a common center”; likewise, “the beauty, properly speaking, lies not in the poem, but in the sentiment or taste of the reader” (166). In other words, he draws more radical conclusions from the postulate of reflexivity that guided inner-sense theory and that made room for dissonance, ugliness, and diversity of tastes; these individualized reflexive experiences are *so* diverse for Hume that we cannot hope to search them for absolutes, as a neuroscientist might search for relatively formulaic constants within different aesthetic experiences.⁷⁷ We will not find within the “point” of anyone’s experience the beauty as a matter of fact that we find in the regular figure of a circle or poem, because the observer is a necessary ingredient to finding any beauty there. When he severs the nervous delicacy of passion from the mediated delicacy of taste, Hume parts ways with traditional inner-sense theory, which was confident about reconstructing standards of taste from some version of perceptual experience.⁷⁸

Hume’s allegiance to Hutcheson (and to the associationist hybrid inner-sense theory Gerard was developing concurrently) involves the importance of reflexivity in aesthetic experience and the real diversity of tastes; this is his fundamental point of disagreement with Burke, who held natural tastes to be basically identical because they follow from the elementary structures of the human body, with association introducing any diversities. Explained clearly early in “Of the Standard of Taste,” Hume allows that “a thousand different sentiments, excited by the same object, are all right: Because no sentiment represents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind” (230), in other words it agrees or disagrees with the ruling passion, what Hume had called “the one . . . predominant inclination . . . which governs him.” Hume’s position implies that Burke’s view of a singular standard in nature (ultimately manifest in the sublime) is the projection of his own ruling passion onto all. Yet Hume is invested in a strong version of the standard, and he locates it not in nature but in culture, conceived as the human mediation of

nature; within this domain, there exists a standard of taste that is objectively compelling, specifically because it brackets the chaotic diversity of natural tastes in its capacity as a mediating factor that “cures” us of them.

Hume thus speaks of “a true standard of taste and sentiment,” of “the catholic and universal beauty,” and of “certain general principles of approbation or blame, whose influence the careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind” (233). These principles are not the absolute beauty of Hutcheson that uses the reflexivity of subjective mediation to put us in touch with natural absolutes, nor are they Burke’s natural order that is sublimely indifferent to all human principles. The good critic has a refined delicacy that is closely related to physical organs but distinct from them: “those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumstances to make them play with facility and exactness, according to their general and established principles. The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine” (232). Thinking of inner sense theory, Burke was deeply skeptical of “this delicate and aerial faculty, which seems too volatile to endure even the chains of a definition” (*Enquiry*, 11), and Hume reinvents this suspiciously refined inner perception in the vocabulary of Cartesian mechanism as an extremely sensitive cybernetic device that reacts to how the world reacts to it.

Hume’s favorite expression for what the inner sensor detects are the qualities “naturally calculated to give pleasure” (*EPM* 234; also see 233, 240), speaking also of “that point of view, which the performance supposes” (239). Whereas the Burkean subject reacts as a robust individual who knows that he is tacitly bonded to others who share his common sense (the same little vacancies in perception, the same sublime symbols), the Humean subject must cultivate quiescence of individualized passion, “considering [him]self as a man in general [and] forget, if possible, [his] individual being and peculiar circumstances” (239). This means only that he brackets his manifest passions: his goal is not to conform to any natural standard of the true taste but to use dispassion (“a proper violence on his imagination” [240]) so as to make his tastes absolutely compelling ruling passions for others in the human world. It is customary to read Hume’s standard as the taste of the best and most delicate critics, even when these are difficult to find, because in practice this is exactly what it amounts to. But Hume is making a more refined point about how governance through taste actually happens: it is only when subjects are addressed not through their passions (as in Burke) or images that solicit their passions in an ultimately optional way (as in Gerard) but through their secret ruling passions (in which the *personal* authority and passions of the critic is effaced) that tastes acquire the objective authority as matters of cultural “fact, not of sentiment” (242).

Hume’s understanding of influence requires a complicated picture of the true man of taste or the true connoisseur of the arts and human nature. On the one hand, “a true judge in the finer arts is observed, even during the most polished ages, to be so rare a character,” made up of “strong sense, united to delicate judgment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of prejudice” (241). Asking “where are such critics to be found?” is an “embarrassing” question. On the other hand, “though men of delicate taste be rare, they are easily to be distinguished in society” because their judgment acquires an “ascendant” as other people acknowledge its superiority once it “is pointed out to them,” frequently causing “some new conversion” (243). For the first two-thirds of the essay, Hume describes the development of the delicate inner machine on a scale from lesser to greater refinement, conceived as a progression from coarseness (bad, nervous delicacy of passion) to transparency (good, mediated delicacy of

taste). Hume's view leads him to reconstruct a stratified scale of aesthetic value with popular forms on the bottom and utmost polish at the top. He writes that "a great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellence of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity: As the most finished object, with which we are acquainted, is natural supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the highest applause" (238). Although he concurs with Addison on many essentials (especially the rigorously "mental" nature of taste), the latter could appreciate popular forms such as the Chevy-Chase ballad, while Hume takes for granted that intricate Italian music necessarily eclipses "a Scotch tune" for the true person of taste (163). When Burke mocks Hutcheson's theory by pointing to the wonderfully fit but hideously ugly pig's snout, he is also defending a similarly stratified scale of aesthetic value with coarse and common items at the bottom and refined ones at the top, but for completely opposite reasons, because he thinks that anyone would agree, commonsensically, that this would be the popular opinion, whereas for Hume it is a process of painstaking cultivation that elevates us from popular taste to something better.

In the final stage of Hume's argument, he supplements a stratified scale from popular to refined that is based on the invisible inward delicacy of the observer with the benign variations introduced by the ruling passion. "We choose our favorite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humour and disposition" (244), he says. Refusing to make the sublime or any other aesthetic category universally appealing, he observes that "one person is more pleased with the sublime; another with the tender; a third with raillery.... [C]omedy, tragedy, satire, odes, have each its partizans.... It is almost impossible not to feel a predilection for that which suits our particular turn and disposition." Preferences that follow from ruling passions dispose us to a particular *type* of aesthetic experience (a medium, a mode, a genre, or a type of work); when we prefer Ovid at twenty and Horace at forty, these authors are thought to offer different things. However, Hume thinks comparisons are warranted in other cases: "Whoever would assert an equality of genius between OGILBY and MILTON [both made verse renditions of classic works], and BUNYAN and ADDISON [both wrote allegories and literary nonfiction on moral subjects], would be thought to defend no less an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as TENERIFFE, or a pond as extensive as the ocean" (231). John Ogilby was popular and forgotten, whereas Bunyan is still popular and more critically discussed than Addison, in spite of his lack of refinement. Does Bunyan survive because the scale of refinement has changed between Hume's day and ours, or because he appeals to different kinds of ruling passions than those of Hume? Both must be true. Hume is correct that Addison is a more refined moralist than Bunyan, but history has paid more attention to the humble molehill than to Addison's kind of peak. However, once Bunyan comes into focus as a different kind of aesthetic product catering to a different kind of ruling passion, he could certainly be compared with lesser moralists attempting something similar, at which point he appears a "Teneriffe" of his own – jutting out of the ocean on the Canary Islands, thus intimating the isolation of one peak from another – and Addison appears as his own incomparable peak, similar to Horace and Ovid. Gerard opted for a weaker version of the standard, leaving indeterminate whether any work could turn out to be an Ogilby or a Bunyan, specifically so that he could account for the proliferation of new species of beauty.

The object of Hume's standard is not common sense, as it specifically rejects popular notions as unrefined, but rather an abstraction of what common sense should be according to one observer. Its "foundation is ... experience," but experience of "general observation, concerning what has been universally found to please in all countries and in all ages" (231), namely that

which could never actually be experienced by one situated subject. Yet Hume is confident that the posture of detachment (rather than, as in Burke, a study of common passions) makes some critics objectively better than others: “a man of learning and reflection can make allowance for th[e] peculiarities of manners [of culturally remote works]; but a common audience can never divest themselves so far of their usual ideas and sentiments, as to relish pictures which no wise resemble them” (245). The necessary self-effacement of the good critic might render him unmanifest, but Hume is satisfied if he can bring to light the bad critic, showing that “the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing,” because there are objective grounds “to silence the bad critic” (242, 236). At the very end of the essay, Hume gives another pair of examples that have aged in such a manner as to elucidate the scope of his standard. His first example is a moment of melodramatic religious intolerance in Corneille’s *Athalie*, which he finds ridiculous and ideological: “such sentiments are received with great applause on the theater of PARIS; but at LONDON” something different is the case (248). As an observer of what happens in Paris, London is more detached and sensible to how this performance is not calculated to please *all* viewers. At the same time, according to Hume’s own theory, the good critic should be able to bracket his consciousness as a Londoner and assess the work from the perspective of its intended audience and its ruling passions, which Hume makes no attempt to do here. This example illustrates that Hume’s abstracted and detached common sense will always be limited by the specific critic’s capacity to conceive of what should please universally. It will always project the boundaries of its own common sense as a universal norm.

The example also reveals Hume’s two-track model of taste and the regulating intention behind it. On one level, the good critic maximizes his delicacy as a connoisseur, focusing on “the finer touches [that otherwise] pass unnoticed and disregarded” (241), who “form[s] comparisons between the several species and degrees of excellence” (238). The critic aims at a knowledge of “the true characters of style,” which Richardson called *connoissance*. The result is a stratified hierarchy of cultural achievement apprehended dispassionately. Behind this level is the order of the ruling passion, which defines a style in the first place and provides the framework to compare works: are we deciding which work is the mountain and which is the mole-hill, or are these different kinds of mountains? The ruling passion is the ocean that all aesthetic passions appear to dramatically jut out of. Unlike Gerard’s, Hume’s standard does not address the spikes of passion themselves or the imagistic content that triggers them; his whole project is keeping a channel of separation between the nervous delicacy of passions and the inner delicacy of taste, even though taste mediates the passions and would have no object without them. For Hume, the point of this separation is to act on the nervous passions from a distance, without entering into the variously excitable delicacies of passion. By forming a standard of taste for oneself, one reaches beyond externalized passions to the ruling passion, as tastes rule tastes, passions rule passions, and conduct conducts conduct. The good critic forms a standard from which he disappears, and his ultimately fictional standard seeks to impose itself on the order of the ruling passion as objective human culture. We can thus call the hierarchical level the standard of life, because it aims at a regulative therapy that operates on life from within. With Hume, the objective of an aesthetic “governmentality” that I argued for in previous chapters (see especially Chapter One, section 2) transforms into a “biopower.”

Earlier in this section, we saw that considering the ruling passion led Pope to confront a troubling reversal of gender hierarchy, as regulating others in this way was to address them as women – both passively impressionable and overruled by their own passions – according to the standard misogynistic typology he updates. At the same time, his idea of women provided a

shortcut to all ruling passions: the love of (the idea of) pleasure. Hume's portrait of the person of taste is gendered in precisely the same way: masculine delicacy of taste remediates feminine delicacy of passion, whereas delicacy remains at bottom a relatively feminine affair. In "Of the Standard of Taste," the self-effacement of the true man of taste has a counterpart in the effacement of the standard itself, which finally takes shape as a female body. Hume explains the conjunction of a necessary standard and its contingent manifestation in the most famous passage of the essay, a story borrowed from *Don Quixote*. Sancho's two kinsmen taste a valuable hogshead of wine, and one taster remarks a taste of metal, the other of leather: "you cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogshead, there was found at the bottom, an old key with a leathern thong tied to it" (235). By analogy to this example of physical taste, Hume believes that in matters of "mental" taste as well there exist objective factors behind the diversity of experience, which some critics are more sensitive to than others, even if no such "key" presents itself to verify this. Hume makes the key to the standard of taste distinct from the critics who competently pick up on it. It is important to the structure of his example that the critics did not attempt chemical analyses of the wine and discover traces of the metal and leather; instead, the key appears as a *sign* for a causal process that is itself inaccessible. The key and the thong are tied together to base the kinsmen's apparent disagreement on a common ground in fact, bonding their tastes exactly where they seem to diverge, and creating a family-like sociality, connecting them genetically to Sancho, that sets them apart from the ridiculing audience. The key is a fiction in the same way that the man of taste's idea of what appeals universally is necessarily partial; like the true form of a master's style, it appears only between the lines, surfacing once the intoxicating object has been consumed and is no longer distinct from one's own corporeal makeup. Even though it appears through contingent experience, the process of mediation that is central to Hume's theory makes it necessarily absent in experience itself.

An analogue of this example appears in the final stage of Hume's argument, when he discusses the influence of ruling passions:

We may allow in general, that the representation of [archaic or foreign] manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece; but we are not so sensibly touched with them. For this reason, comedy is not easily transferred from one age or nation to another. A FRENCHMAN or ENGLISHMAN is not pleased with the ANDRIA of TERENCE, or CLITIA of MACHIAVEL; where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the spectators, but is always kept behind the scenes, suitably to the reserved humour of the ancient GREEKS and modern ITALIANS. (245)

Hume explains that works displaying more remote manners such as these will affect only a delicate critic capable of abstracting from his own cultural expectations. The role assigned to the women in these plays – who are either silent or entirely off-stage – reflects the "reserved humour" of these cultures. A popular audience would be unsatisfied without the presence of a leading woman, but the cultivated critic can be satisfied with distance: her distant appearance on stage, the cultural distance of the work, and the gender difference encoded in the proper nouns Hume uses. *Andria* is the name of a female character but is very similar to the Greek word for "man," and *Clitia* (*Clizia* is Machiavelli's spelling) resembles the Greek word for "to shut," which is also thought to yield "clitoris." The good critic produces his standard as an objective key to the quality of a text, and Hume illustrates this object with the voice or body of a woman. In a more obscure fantasmatic register, he hints that behind the person of this woman is the fact

of gender difference, at least as conceived of by the “reserved” patriarchal humor of men, or as Pope put it, women “consider’d only as contradistinguished from the other Sex.” Recalling Steele’s intercalating a woman of pleasure in between Addison’s pleasures of the imagination, this example shows that Hume conceives of the cultivation of taste as a distancing from the object of pleasure it nevertheless holds dead center.

In his final round of examples, the figure of the lady reappears, this time as the object of ridicule. Hume declares that Petrarch comparing his mistress to Jesus “must for ever be ridiculous” (248), adding, as the very last words of the essay, “nor is it less ridiculous in that agreeable libertine BOCCACE, very seriously to give thanks to GOD ALMIGHTY and the ladies, for their assistance in defending him against his enemies” (249). In other words, Hume objects to both a heavy and a breezy linkage between desire and moral or spiritual subjects. He feels not that they are indecent by moral standards but rather that they are simply ridiculous on their own, “objective” merits. These gestures do not transgress; they are tasteless. Such opinions are the inward counterparts to Hume’s hierarchy of refinement, showing in a performative way the regulation of Hume’s passion by means of materialist refinement.

This chapter has traced the evolution of the positive vision of a tastefully socialized subject from its first appearance as the connoisseur’s passionate knowledge of the intangibles of human style to Hume’s vision of a strong subject of taste impressing his standard on others as the absent object of pleasure. Hume takes us to the threshold of the hermeneutics of taste: he outlines a key to the standard of taste, which is also the force that Pope called the “queen” in the soul, but his model ensures that the key remains necessarily beyond reach. A hermeneutics of taste begins in earnest once taste becomes a way of observing the socio-somatic constitution of differential subjects, embarking on a search for a specific subject’s ruling passion through his aesthetic self-construction, which Boswell will search for in Johnson and Rousseau will search for within himself. Within the stage of the evolution of the new aesthetics covered in this dissertation, from its beginnings in the Restoration to its shift toward a hermeneutic mode at midcentury, I have argued that the literary figure that best exemplifies the specific regulative interests of the new culture of taste and the variety of its expressions is Alexander Pope. Within the breadth of his work, I have found the Burkean notion of a strong shared common nature recognizable by anyone; Gerard’s moderate version of a positive standard led by qualified tastemakers, none of whom could be certified categorically as normative models; and finally the strong standard of the ruling passion that Hume articulated into the period’s most influential version of the theory. Bottoming in a mannered, confessional mode, Pope performs a subjectivity oriented around the new aesthetics, which maintained integral ties with the preceding cultures of both libertinism and of the radical search for a purer or “true” taste beyond that of the world as it is. By the efflorescence of interest in the standardization of taste in the 1750s, Pope’s problems, his methods, and even aspects of his positions had been definitively accepted as the most relevant aesthetic problems. Robinson’s aesthetic self-education no longer required a remote corner of the world, and the cognitive vacuity that seemed so threatening in the fop could be presented as the commonsensical backbone of social life as we know it.

Notes to Chapter Four

¹ Throughout this chapter, when I refer to Jonathan Richardson it is to Jonathan Richardson, Sr., as opposed to his eldest son, Jonathan Richardson, Jr., with whom he had an intense collaborative relationship. His major works are *An Essay on the Theory of Painting*, 2nd ed. (London, 1725 [1715]), the *Two Discourses. I. An Essay On the Whole Art of Criticism as it relates to Painting. II. An Argument on Behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur; Wherein is shown the Dignity, Certainty, Pleasure, and Advantage of it* (London, 1719). *An Account of some of the Statues, Bas-reliefs, Drawings and Pictures in Italy, &c. with Remarks* (London: J. Knapton, 1722), a text authored by both father and son, based on the latter's notes from his trip to Italy, became a standard art-historical guide on the Grand Tour. The separately paginated *Two Discourses* are cited individually as *Art of Criticism* and *Connoisseur*. A selection of Richardson's works was edited as *The Works of Mr. Jonathan Richardson* (London: T. Davies, 1773), hereafter cited as *The Works*.

² The two discourses were expanded and, with Richardson's collaboration, translated into French, with the addition of an influential account of classical sculpture, *Traité de la peinture et de la sculpture, divisé en trois tomes* (Amsterdam: Herman Uytwerf, 1728), an exceptional recognition at the time. On the significance of the Richardsons for the appreciation of classical sculpture, see Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 60–61, 99. For a survey of their influence in France, notably on Dubos, see Louis Olivier, "The Idea of the Connoisseur in France; Roger de Piles and Jonathan Richardson," *Annali Sezione Romanza* 24:1 (Naples, 1982), 1–21.

³ The fourth of the *Moral Essays*. Its full title is "To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington. Of the Use of Riches" (P 586–97).

⁴ Winckelmann, not sparing of praise, notes a faulty attribution but concedes "his book is the best we have," even though he describes Roman works "as if they had appeared to him in a dream." See *History of the Art of Antiquity*, ed. Alex Potts, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2006 [1763]), 73. In an impressionistic way, to be sure, Richardson notes that a master's stylistic particularity can be identified in a finger or toe (he will add a leaf and the line as well; see *The Works*, 81, 141), anticipating the reflex *Grundformen* Morelli would identify through hands and toes. See Giovanni Morelli [Ivan Lermolieff], *Italian Painters: Critical Studies of their Works* (London: John Murray, 1900), 77–82.

⁵ The major factors in this development were the decriminalization of imports, the auction system adapting to the art trade (both occurred in the 1680s). Full-time independent international dealers such as Andrew Hay appear around the same time as Richardson writes. The standard account of this development is Iain Pears, *The Discovery of Painting: The Growth of Interest in the Arts in England, 1680–1768* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 51–106, especially 77–87.

⁶ Carol Gibson-Wood, "Jonathan Richardson and the Rationalization of Connoisseurship" *Art History* 7:1 (March 1984), 38–56. See also her survey of the scholarship in *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 6–9.

⁷ The most popular of the former were William Sanderson's *Graphice. The Use of the Pen and Pensil. Or, The most excellent art of Painting* (1658) and William Salmon's *Polygraphice, or The Arts of Drawing, Limning, Painting, etc.* (1701 [1672]); one of the few English examples of the latter is William Aglionby's *Painting Illustrated in Three Dialogues* (1685). It is with Richardson that a serious effort at method in discussing visual art begins in the English context.

⁸ Roger de Piles was Richardson's major precedent and the source of the term "connoissance." His major works are *Conversations sur la connoissance de la peinture et sur le jugement qu'on doit faire des tableaux* (Paris, 1677) and *Cours de Peinture par Principes* (Paris, 1708). On de Piles's limitations as a theorist of connoisseurship within the commercial art world after 1700, see *Kings and Connoisseurs*, 233. John Evelyn wrote *Sculptura* (1662) and translated Fréart de Chambray's *An Idea of the Perfection of Painting* (1668 [1662]); see Michael Hunter, "John

Evelyn in the 1650s: A Virtuoso in Quest of a Role” in *Science and the Shape of Orthodoxy: Studies of Intellectual Change in Late Seventeenth-Century Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), 67–98.

⁹ Louis Olivier, in “The Idea of the Connoisseur in France,” notes that Richardson shifts the discussion from the qualifications of the painter to those of the spectator (14).

¹⁰ In the major monograph on Richardson, Gibson-Wood emphasizes the self-conscious link to Locke behind this move (8, 198–208). She notes his association with members of the Royal Society (77) but does not describe where his model departs from that of the virtuosi. However, she convincingly distances him from “bourgeois” civic humanism (235.n23) as well as from Shaftesbury’s aristocratic elitism (8, 145, 153–4).

¹¹ “The Virtuoso, in Imitation of Spenser’s Style and Stanza” (1737), *The Works of Mark Akenside*, vol. 2 (New Brunswick: John Garnett, 1808), hereafter cited by line number in the text.

¹² The joke about the antiquarian’s mummy had already been introduced in the 1717 farce *Three Hours After Marriage*, a collaboration between John Gay, Pope, and John Arbuthnot.

¹³ He makes constant and rather proud reference to drawings in his personal collection, which at his death numbered roughly 5000 items, but also to which pieces he had not seen or seen only in reproductions. The fullest accounts of his collection are in Gibson-Wood, “‘A Judiciously Disposed Collection’: Jonathan Richardson Senior’s cabinet of drawings” in *Collecting Prints and Drawings in Europe, c. 1500–1750*, Christopher Baker, Caroline Elam and Genevieve Warwick, eds. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 155–171, and her *Jonathan Richardson*, 89–104.

¹⁴ We know from George Turnbull that Richardson arranged them into historical series tracing a progression sequentially into schools, but also cross-referenced to show the progress “from one to another.” Of this essential learning tool, he concludes that “[d]escription is not sufficient; the best Writer cannot possibly express all that is to be observed and read in such a Series of Examples and Monuments” – even what can be “read” cannot actually be read. See *A Treatise on Ancient Painting* (1740), Vincent M. Bevilacqua, ed. (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1971), 37–8.

¹⁵ Drawing on Bourdieu’s concept of an “autonomous artistic field,” Isabelle Baudino claims this moment happens in England with Richardson. See “From Continental Influence to British Independence: Jonathan Richardson’s Art Theories” in “*Better in France?*” *The Circulation of Ideas across the Channel in the Eighteenth Century*, Frédéric Ogé, ed. (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2005), 55–70.

¹⁶ In a series of articles, Brian Cowan showed first the extent to which auctions in the 1780s were marketed toward a virtuosi demographic (see “Arenas of Connoisseurship: Auctioning Art in Later Stuart England” in *Art Markets in Europe, 1400–1800*, Michael North and David D. Ormrod, eds. [Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998] and “An Open Elite: Virtuosity and the Peculiarities of English Connoisseurship” *Modern Intellectual History* 1:2 [2004], 151–83), subsequently revising his position to emphasize the broader mass appeal they nevertheless had. See “Art and Connoisseurship in the Auction Market of Later Seventeenth-Century London” in *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe, 1450–1750*, Neil de Marchi and Hans van Miegroet, eds. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 263–84). Gibson-Wood argues for a broadly middle-class market, not consisting specifically of virtuosi, in “Picture Consumption in London at the End of the Seventeenth Century” *Art Bulletin* 84:3 (2002), 491–500. More evidence for a resolutely post-virtuosi audience after 1700 can be found in Gerrit Verhoeven, “Mastering the Connoisseur’s Eye: Paintings, Criticism, and the Canon in Dutch and Flemish Travel Culture, 1600–1750” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 46:1 (Fall 2012), 29–56, and Dries Lyna, “Name Hunting, Visual Characteristics, and New Old Masters: Tracking the Taste for Paintings at Eighteenth-Century Auctions,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 46:1 (Fall 2012).

¹⁷ Before the 1680s, the major art collections were centered on life in the major European courts; the dispersal of collections such as those of Buckingham and Arundel after the English Revolution was an important precursor to the widespread culture of connoisseurship. See Jonathan Brown, *Kings and Connoisseurs: Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 10–94, especially 57–61.

¹⁸ Rémy G. Saisselin's comment that "taste becomes the Protestant's way of making pleasure and beauty acceptable" seems apt here; see "The Man of Taste as a Social Model, or, 'Sense and Sensibility'" in *The Crisis of Courtesy: Studies in the Conduct Book in Britain, 1600–1900*, Jacques Carré, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 120. The spiritual ambitions of the discourse of taste (as distinct from the nineteenth-century afterlives), steeped in empiricism and only amphibiously secularizing, remain underexplored. But see Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960).

¹⁹ He frequently uses the rhetoric of public good and actively sought to promote an English school of painting (see *Connoisseur*, 54). At one point he even compares the painting studio to "Eden before the fall" (*The Works*, 78), drawing on the rhetoric of innocent labor dear to experimentalists. On his adoption of a "plain style," see Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, 139. On the invisible public this discourse generated, see Joanna Picciotto, *Labors of Innocence in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 112–28. In spite of these sincerely held professions, the social model implied by Richardson's epistemology ran against the grain of the experimentalists, even when he was speaking their language.

²⁰ Lawrence Lipking, *The Ordering of the Arts in Eighteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970), 123, 125. The section is titled "The Uncomplicated Richardson." As the fashioning of authority around a cultivated and methodized *je ne sais quoi*, I suggest that what frustrated Lipking's assumptions may be what interests us about Richardson now. See also the critique of his scholarship in Gibson-Wood "Rationalization," 54n.1.

²¹ In *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), David Summers argues that the theoretical discourse of the judgment of sense, intuitive knowledge variously linked to sensation, continuously informed artistic production (see especially 103–7, 311–36). Richardson participates in this tradition dealing with the sensuous apprehension of truth, but when he demands that we look outside the work in order to compare it with other works, he hybridizes it with the experimentalist one.

²² Richardson does not distinguish between what Whitney Davis calls "pure style," following from the embodied reflexes of the maker (a "primal habit" that cannot pass into a symptom but collectively are the "essential alterities of human makers"), and "stylisticality," the conscious or unconscious projection of a style as a rhetorical intention. See *A General Theory of Visual Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), especially 75–120, here 89. For him, everything is stylisticality: everything there is to say about the work the work *tells* us. While Richardson could sound like the "impressionistic *geistliche* connoisseurship" (108) that Morelli rejected, his objective was a methodical analysis that was as artifact based as possible, which is one reason he so frequently models what appreciation is with engraved replications. Pure style appears in the connoisseur as he encounters the work – or in the material traces of an act of copying or being influenced by it – even when he positions himself as void of pretensions to stylishness. Richardson thus theorizes the "stylistic succession" without any of its dialectical tensions.

²³ Perhaps tellingly, Richardson described his writings as the fruit of his "leisure" hours – which were typically from 5 AM to 8 AM, when his work day began. See Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, 25–38.

²⁴ Noting the emergence of a type of "the new connoisseur" at the end of the seventeenth century, Brown notes "at the moment when painting was becoming recognized as a superior human activity, it became a vehicle for investment and speculation" (*Kings and Connoisseurs*, 247). Stephen Copley makes this point specifically about Richardson, namely that even though "direct appeals to material interest and privilege" are eschewed, his work is still a piece of aesthetic ideology. See "The Fine Arts in Eighteenth-Century Polite Culture" *Painting and The Politics of Culture: New Essays on British Art, 1700–1850*, ed. John Barrell (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1992), 37.

²⁵ See Cowan, "An Open Elite." The best-known argument, made against Bourdieu, for taste as a democratizing force, at least as it is presented within intellectual history alone, is in Luc Ferry, *Homo Aestheticus: The Invention of Taste in the Democratic Age*, Robert de Loiza, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), especially 7–27.

²⁶ Richardson founded the Academy in 1711 with Kneller, Thornhill, and others, though we now know relatively little about it. See Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, 236n.64.

²⁷ See Bruce Redford, *Dilettanti: The Antic and the Antique in Eighteenth-Century England* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2008), especially “The Amateur Moment,” 1–12. Although Redford does not link the dilettanti’s activities to Richardson, John Brewer does in *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997), 256–8.

²⁸ In *The Discovery of Painting*, Iain Pears describes a largely open albeit richly textured domain of public “interest,” the seeming universality of which has been chipped away by later critics such as Cowan, Copley, and Gibson-Wood. While he does not use the category of the public sphere – Habermas’s major work was translated the year after it appeared – Pears means something quite similar; see, for example, his comments on “bourgeois ideology” (24). John Barrell forcefully argues that the “republic of taste” fits comfortably within civic humanism in *The Political Theory of Painting from Reynolds to Hazlitt: “the Body of the Politic”* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). Of course, both Pope and Richardson were deeply public-minded individuals and privately active people. I argue that, in addition to the sociality of the public sphere, they were invested in an aesthetic model based on tacit and immanent communication, a parasitic mode of communication operating within the logic of the open secret that requires the public/private distinction but also deconstructs it.

²⁹ In his 1744 *Three Treatises*, John Harris attempted to combine the aesthetic theory of “characteristics” he found in Shaftesbury with early modern communication theory, developed around the idea of universal language theory in John Wilkins and others. This led Harris to a theory of the several “natural media” that the several arts make use of. See *The Works of James Harris*, 2 vols. (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2003 [reprint of 1801 edition]), 31–60, here 42. In spite of his innovative media theoretical approach, Paul Oskar Kristeller does not see his work as fully participating in the modern conception of the fine arts, because he includes morality and “happiness” within aesthetic problems; see “The Modern System of the Arts,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 4 (1952): 496–527. A commendatory poem in Wilkins’s earlier work on communication (whose title Harris adopts in a later work) perfectly articulates the disciplinary character of the media approach before it was adapted to aesthetics: “We shall now henceforth be in pay for Air, / Transported Words being dear as precious Ware; / Our thoughts will now arrive before they’re stale / They shall no more wait on the Carriers Ale... / You tell us how we may by Gestures talk; / How Feet are made to speak, as well as walk; / How Eyes discourse, how mystick Nods contrive; / Making our Knowledge too, Intuitive.... / Dark Subtleties we now shall soon define, / Each Organ’s turn’d the Sense of Discipline.” Richard West, Prefatory poem to John Wilkins, *Mercury, or the Secret and Swift Messenger, Shewing, How a Man May with Privacy and Speed Communicate his Thoughts to a Friend at Any Distance*. 3rd ed. London, 1707 [1641]).

³⁰ This was an old trope in the sense judgments (or “pneumatic physiology”) tradition; see Summers, 125–50.

³¹ Niklas Luhmann sees in Richardson’s account of communication through art an acknowledgement of the social system of art in AS 322n.24.

³² *Essay on Criticism* in P 143–68, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

³³ When Pope calls out fops in the *Essay on Criticism*, they tend to illustrate the disruption of the beneficial and educative diffusion of social emulation rather than figure an unstoppable and pernicious emulative mode. They either stand their ground when they should learn (“Some positive persisting Fops we know, / Who, if *once wrong*, will needs be *always so*” [568–9]) or they are so socially labile as to forget where they are (“Name a new *Play*, and *he’s* the Poet’s *Friend*... No Place so Sacred from such Fops is barr’d... For *Fools* rush in where *Angels* fear to treat” [620–5]).

³⁴ Nicholas Boileau Despréaux, *L’art poétique in Satires, Épitres, Art poétique*, ed. Jean-Pierre Collinet (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), Chant IV, lines 134–46, translations mine.

³⁵ Joanna Picciotto comments on Pope’s ambiguous self-positioning in relation to experimentalism: “Pope ... [was] in fact steeped in the experimentalist culture [he] pretended to deplore ... [He] was happy to versify Locke, attend coffeehouse lectures on physic-theology, and collect curiosities for his grotto, but the experimentalist vision of a knowledge-producing public was exactly what he defined himself against” (*Labors of Innocence*, 589). I have

argued that the transmutation of experimentalist methodology into the human science of the observer that Picciotto describes reflects the rise of the new aesthetics.

³⁶ In *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), Kevis Goodman traces the evolution of the “microscopic eye” from the optical-objective context in 17th-century experimentalist to its function as a semantic figure for the social mediation of sensation, what she calls “an uncomfortably charged international socio-optics” (40) in which optical overstimulation, potentially vacuous sonority, and other forms of noise operate as mediating agents for sense experience in mass culture. (This is the same phenomenon that I describe in terms of self-regularizing order in the senses). She traces this shift within descriptive poetry, arguing for Thompson as the tipping point, and noting that an “extremity of . . . wounded perception” occurs in Pope as well (50), which is perfectly illustrated in the fatigue of the telescopic eye confronted with alps beyond alps. This “noise” is even registered in Pope’s penchant for redundancy. What makes him interesting to me here is that he connects the sublime limit of telescopically expanded perception with ornamentality and circular repetition. In his work, nonmeaning has a positive imagistic force, which he condensed into the figures of Dullness, fops, and eventually “women.” The wound in his perception is indeed the old phallogo(optico)centric one: the poet is “Fir’d at first Sight” but then discovers his verbal telescope is inadequate to his hopes. Pope’s emphasis on the production of ornamental seeming to voluptuously compensate for his rattled perception underlines that the cultural mediation of sensation through vacancies was an essentially aestheticizing process (here, the aestheticization of technologically assisted perception) and that via the rule of taste it claimed a powerful regulative agency.

³⁷ Here, and throughout, my view of Pope is indebted to James Grantham Turner, “Pope’s Libertine Self-Fashioning” *The Eighteenth Century* 29:2 (Spring 1988), 123-44, which shows how important it was to Pope to uphold both his highhanded morals and a pervasive self-identification with libertine tropes of masculinity: “I situate him at the edge of masculinity, poised uneasily between the old libertinism and the new refinement” (124).

³⁸ Samuel Holt Monk argues that the likely source for these lines was the account of “grace” from the continental theory of painting, especially Roger de Piles, Richardson’s immediate predecessor. See “A Grace Beyond the Reach of Art” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 5 no. 2 (April 1944), 131-50.

³⁹ He is remembered as one of the earliest writers on the sublime in visual art. Notably, the main revision between the 1715 and 1725 versions of the *Essay on the Theory of Painting* was the expanded final section on the sublime. See Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), 174-8.

⁴⁰ See AS 270-1.

⁴¹ See Davis, 119.

⁴² A fair amount is known about their friendship. See especially William Kurtz Wimsatt, *The Portraits of Alexander Pope* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1960), 73-82, 137-54, Morris R. Brownell, *Alexander Pope & the Arts of Georgian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 26-38, and Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, 80. Pope’s friendship with the eminent older painter apparently did not scruple to play with the limits of the latter’s taste. He sent a few lines to Richardson hinting that they were newly discovered lines of Milton (see Wimsatt 141). Richardson was taken in, and the practical joke was only revealed just as the lines were about to be published in his new Milton edition. They appear to have been regular acquaintances from 1722 or earlier.

⁴³ Importantly, the “most” excludes not those too poor to be concerned with making judgments, but the privileged whose third-rate emulations are beyond redemption.

⁴⁴ See “Characters III: Atticus” (1715), P 293-4: “Hunger, not Malice, makers such Authors print, / And who’l wage War with Bedlam or the Mint?” (lines 5-6).

⁴⁵ Ann Bermingham shows the heavily gendered nature of the figure of the connoisseur, arguing that it stems from the object’s status as a seductive *je ne sais quoi* in “Elegant females and gentlemen connoisseurs: The commerce in

culture and self-image in eighteenth-century England” in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 489-513 esp. 496 (discussing Richardson briefly at 504).

⁴⁶ On the non-finality of attribution, see *Connoisseur*, 134.

⁴⁷ Winckelmann likewise recommends that we go beyond “high beauty” which “should be like the purest water drawn from the source of a spring: the less taste it has, the healthier it is seen to be, because it is clear of foreign particles” and towards the tastier image of a “beautiful youthful creature . . . which from a distance appears flat and still, like a mirror, even though it is constantly in motion and rolls in waves” (*History of the Art of Antiquity*, 196-7). He compares the unity of the image to a mirror because it is a kind of imaginary tentacle whose own analog undulations keep us in touch with its object’s; Richardson’s sheet of paper bumps us, leaving the undulating world behind to digitally give us information.

⁴⁸ In the terms of media theory, this is not a *remediation*, where one medium (eg script) is subsumed in another (eg print), but rather a *demediation*, where the transition to a new medium presents the information as unavailable (obscured, erased, destroyed). See respectively Jay David Bolter and Richard Gruskin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), and Garrett Stewart, “Bookwork as Demediation” *Critical Inquiry* 36 (Spring 2010), 410-57.

⁴⁹ See *Art of Criticism*, 55-75. He includes seven comparative categories while de Piles and Du Fresnoy (in *De Arte Graphica*, translated by Dryden as *The Art of Painting* [London, 1695]) only used four: the more parameters, the greater the resolution.

⁵⁰ This portrait is now lost. However, Richardson owned a copy of another Van Dyck of a very similar description. See Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, 189.

⁵¹ One of the main reasons that Richardson could not achieve the comprehensive knowledge of Renaissance art that Winckelmann acquired of antique art is that his expertise was largely confined to drawings and prints. He never went to the continent, and his son was only there a few months, producing travel notes to be worked up into their guide.

⁵² J. Richardson, father and son, *Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Milton’s Paradise Lost* (London, 1734), 156-7. He also notes Milton has not depicted Adam with a beard, and guesses this is because “the Statues of the Gods or Men I have spoken of as Helps to Conceive properly on this occasion have none” (158) – but he has other hypotheses as well.

⁵³ The expression, which seems apt here, is from Cowper’s translation of Milton’s *Elegy I to Diodati*, line 17.

⁵⁴ Jean Baudrillard, “The System of Collecting,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, Eds. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1994), 7–24.

⁵⁵ He was combining the views of Addison, who argued that domes (and the pleasures of architecture more generally) were primary imaginary pleasures having to do with presence, in this case the presence all in one moment of the visible half of the dome, with Hogarth’s view of the swerving progress of the eye into a “line of beauty” (radicalized in his account as an inescapable repetitive structure rather than gently graduated undulation).

⁵⁶ *Epistle to Mr. Jervas* (1715), P 249-51, lines 27-38, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

⁵⁷ Like Richardson, these terms avoid both vacuous compliment (“how divine!” — the inert, or the literally fabulous *je ne sais quoi*) and descriptions using technical terms (like *chiaroscuro*). It is significant Richardson does not provide a lexicon of terms.

⁵⁸ “To Mr. Addison, Occasioned by his Dialogues on Medals” (1713), P 215-16, lines 35-42.

⁵⁹ Jean Hagstrum's classic work on "literary pictorialism" in the 18th century shows that the revived interest in the "sister arts" was connected to the Horatian project of moral regulation by means of the arts (the formula was "to please and instruct"); see *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1958).

⁶⁰ In *The Literary Works of Matthew Prior*, eds. H. Bunker Wright and Monroe K. Spears (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 1.470-516, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text. On Hume's uses of Prior, see Christopher MacLachlan, "Hume and Matthew Prior's 'Alma'," *Hume Studies* 26:1 (April 2000), 159-170.

⁶¹ On Pope's collecting practices, which were prosaic and sentimental, see *Alexander Pope & the Arts of Georgian England*, 37.

⁶² For a description and catalog of his collection, which included works by major Italian and Northern masters, see H. Bunker Wright and Henry C. Montgomery, "The Art Collection of a Virtuoso in Eighteenth-Century England," *The Art Bulletin* 27:3 (Sept 1945), 195-204.

⁶³ "Prologue to Mr. Addison's Tragedy of Cato" [1713], P 211-12, lines 3-4.

⁶⁴ In *The Temporality of Taste in Eighteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012), James Noggle makes the *Epistle to Burlington* the central early document around which the cultural semantics of taste crystallizes, which persistently "linked Pope to the idea of taste in the contemporary imagination" (40). He argues that the poem was a "dramatization of the [cultural] split" between diachronic historical formations of taste (like the "Gothic, classic, female, British, and Chinese" [1]) and the synchronic instantaneity of judgments and preferences. By placing far greater emphasis on the "taste's instantaneity" (45) than his earlier work did, Pope strikes the pose of an "outsider's attitude" (42) in a text that crystallizes poetically "the regulating passion par excellence" (43). In other words, the poem was so successful (on the ubiquity of its language in later texts on the polite arts, see 40n.1-4) because its persona performs the cultural ambivalence around the idea of tastefulness.

⁶⁵ Julian Ferraro, "Taste and Use: Pope's *Epistle to Burlington*," *British Journal For Eighteenth-Century Studies* 19:2 (Autumn 1996), 141-59.

⁶⁶ Joseph Addison, *Dialogues on the Usefulness of Ancient Medals: Especially in Relation to the Latin and Greek Poets* (London, 1726), 283.

⁶⁷ For a critique of Pope's imperialistic ideology, see Laura Brown, *Alexander Pope* (Oxford, 1985).

⁶⁸ Alexander Gerard, *An Essay on Taste*, ed. Walter J. Hipple (Gainesville: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963 [1759, enlarged 3rd ed. 1780]). His book was written for an essay prize in 1756, before the works of Hume and Burke; he added a fourth part with critical discussions of their positions in the 1780 edition. For a longer outline of Gerard's theory of taste, presented as a development from Hutcheson's view and a less compelling theory than Hume's (a "blind alley"), see George Dickie, *The Century of Taste: The Philosophical Odyssey of Taste in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996), Ch. 2.

⁶⁹ Alexander Gerard, *Essay on Genius*, ed. Bernhard Fabian (Munich: W. Fink, 1966 [1774]).

⁷⁰ The failure at taste thus has to do with hard-heartedness (79, 72), or perversion (190), but not degeneracy.

⁷¹ For Gerard, "general approbation is ... not itself the standard, it is the materials of which the standard must be composed: it is the block from which it must be hewed out" (248).

⁷² Ioan Couliano finds the source for the bond-formation through beautiful appearance (which he links to contemporary media influence) in Giordano Bruno's magical theory in *Eros and Magic in the Renaissance* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987), Ch. 9. This model was an interpersonal extension of the "arts of memory" tradition, which used imaginary mental spaces to store memories and later trigger spontaneous recall, acting on the

unconscious through the medium of imaginary constructs. If such imaginary constructs could be externalized into art forms, which Frances Yates has shown they routinely were, it was but one further step from the cultivation of a measure of control over one's own unconscious through subliminal self-suggestion to the control or "binding" of other people by means of beautiful (or sublime) images. Richardson's mental map of master's styles and their genealogical relations is an updated version of the techniques of "memory palaces" originates in Simonides, Cicero, and the *Ad Herennium*. The function of the new aesthetics as a constructivist discipline is inscribed in this largely hidden genealogy.

⁷³ In "Mediation as Primal Word: The Arts, the Sciences, and the Origins of the Aesthetic" in *This is Enlightenment*, Clifford Siskin, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 384-412, Michael McKeon argues, in much the same vein I do here, that instead of a break between aesthetic and scientific knowledge, the latter is turned against itself reflexively, or remediated. As he puts it, "in the aesthetic attitude ... the arts discovered a mode of experiment whose aim is an empirical removal from sensible actuality to imaginative virtuality that bears with it the evidence of its own removal" (407-8). He too sees Pope's writing as a poetic experiment (411). The authority of the connoisseur is the social consequence of the epistemology McKeon describes.

⁷⁴ *Essay on Man* in P 501-49, II.131-2, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

⁷⁵ Its full title is "Epistle I, to Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham," P 549-59, lines 168-75, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

⁷⁶ "On Lying in the Earl of Rochester's Bed at Atterbury" (1739), P 706, lines 1-4, hereafter cited parenthetically in the text.

⁷⁷ See Chapter Three, section 4.

⁷⁸ Hume is sometimes called an inner sense theorist, but this is true only in the most general way. His subjectivism completely blocks him from the idea that we apprehend beauty as something that exists in the world with some degree of "absolute" independence from us.

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