Scandalous Figures:
Authorial Self in Eliza Haywood, Laurence Sterne, Charlotte Smith, and Lord Byron

By

Amy Thomas Campion

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Steven Goldsmith, Chair
Professor Ian Duncan
Professor David Bates

Fall, 2010

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Abstract

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Characterized by originality and proprietorship, the modern paradigm of authorship developed in the British long eighteenth century alongside philosophical upheavals in concepts of identity and an increasingly free-for-all literary marketplace in which the author was commodified along with his or her works. Literary historians have associated the "author-function" with the logic of copyright law, introduced in 1710, but the ideology of original authorship also developed as a defense against the more chaotic practical reality of the circulation and ownership of texts. In *Scandalous Figures* I demonstrate how Eliza Haywood, Laurence Sterne, Charlotte Smith, and Lord Byron resisted this defensive formation by acknowledging the fluidity of modern identity, incorporating it into their self-representations, and paradoxically transforming it into a practice of the self. Each of these authors capitalized on the intersection between authorial identity and several areas of cultural fascination: sensibility, the philosophy of personal identity, fictionality, theatricality, and the evolution of a reading public. Especially important was their awareness that scandal blurs the boundaries between categories that were sites of intense cultural energy, in Byron's time as in Haywood's: fact and fiction, private and public, life-writing or history and literature. Rather than pin their authorial names to an essential self, these authors ironically accept the way a name circulates through imaginations, economies, and significations. The striking similarity in their self-performances, across periods and genres, indicates the persistence of an alternative genealogy alongside the development of the mythic status and "fictional identity" of the original, proprietary author. If the formation of the unitary Romantic subject was the result of one strategy to navigate the shifting terrain of identity categories, then the performance of a fictional, scandalized subject was another.

For Haywood, who took advantage of both her celebrity as a well-known actress and the opportunities of anonymous publication, the authorial self was a chameleon whose identity depended upon the genre and market in which she appeared. Emphasizing the theatrical, fictional, associative, and Lockean performance of authorial identity, Sterne took on the selves of his characters and scandalously transformed "Laurence

Sterne" into just another role and written self. Smith's authorial self took the form of a novelistic heroine of sensibility who claimed authenticity even as she exposed the conventional lineaments of this character and their limitations. By infusing the novel and lyric with autobiography, she demystified the "romance of real life" of an author. Byron's written self, the Byronic hero, was eroded by his embrace of the fictionality of his authorial identity and by his "mobility," whereby the self is contingent upon the cultural forms in which it appears. The sign of Byron's recognition of the pervasiveness of fictionality in literature and life was laughter. For all of these authors, the groundlessness of self is not a deconstructive negation of the author but a practical strategy dependent on the author's social construction, which occurs through the forms and discourses that guide the social imagination, and through the desires and anxieties that fire the market.

For Peter and Jack

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Acknowledgments

I am grateful to those professors who always had their doors open to me, and who supported and encouraged my ideas through their development into full chapters: Ian Duncan and Cathy Gallagher. David Bates has been an important reader on my committee, and I want to thank him for his thoughtful questions and good advice, and for making time for my work in spite of the long lapses between my communications. It is Steve Goldsmith to whom I am most grateful, for being so much above and beyond a great teacher, mentor, and advisor. From the first time I worked with him, in his seminar on Romantic literature, his responses to my work and to my conundrums have always been thoughtful, thorough, considerate, insightful, and generous. I want to thank them all, too, for teaching me so much through their own work, which has clearly been so important to my own. I thank my parents for their endless generosity. Finally, I thank Peter for his encouragement, support, love, and friendship through it all.

Introduction: "Masks and Faces on a Field of Representations"

The familiar paradigm of authorship, as it developed in eighteenth-century Britain with the invention of copyright, is characterized by originality and proprietorship. This paradigm depends upon a concept of the self as innate and essential and upon the assumption that the text is a property of that self. Early eighteenth-century articulations of this concept of authorship develop, in this paradigmatic narrative, into the proprietary author and the Romantic self, an interiorized, original, essential subjectivity that expresses itself organically in, and owns—in some sense—its literary productions. Significantly, the figure of the proprietary author arose with the commodification of literature. We may look to familiar, canonical authors to find descriptions of this idea of authorship as it developed. In his historical account, *Authors and Owners*, Mark Rose points to the importance of the Lockean conception of private property, which is created when "an individual removes materials from the state of nature and mixes his labor with them."[1] Rose argues that as early as 1730, James Thomson and his immensely popular poetic sequence, *The Seasons*, embodied this proprietary relationship between author and work:

> A work of literature belonged to an individual because it was, finally, an embodiment of that individual. And the product of this imprinting of the author's personality on the common stock of the world was a 'work of original authorship.' The basis of literary property, in other words, was not just labor but 'personality,' and this revealed itself in 'originality.' (114)

Byron would later mock the mystified representation of this process in *Don Juan* when he describes Juan-as-Wordsworth brooding in a bucolic scene beneath some trees, where "poets find materials for their books" (*Don Juan* I, 90). Before we look to the parodists, however, I would like to offer a few more articulations of the dominant conception of authorship.

The idea of original genius gained importance over the next few decades. Samuel Richardson describes a version of authorship that is defined by originality and property:

> Suppose, sir, when you ask, What does the name of poet mean? you answer after some such manner as this— *"It means a maker*, and, consequently, *his work is something original, quite his own."* It is not the laboured improvement of a modern cultivator bestowed on a soil already fertile, and refining on a plan already formed; but the touch of Armida's wand, that calls forth blooming spring out of the shapeless waste, and presents in a moment objects new and various, which his genius only could have formed in that peculiar manner.[2]

And, of course, there is the famous essay by Richardson's friend, Edward Young: *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759). For Young, the works of the original genius:

> will stand distinguished; his the sole Property of them; which Property alone can confer the noble title of an *Author*; that is, of one who (to speak accurately) *thinks*, and *composes*; while other invaders of the Press, how voluminous, and learned soever, (with due respect be it spoken) only *read*, and *write*.[3]

True authorship—characterized by originality, integrity, and propriety—is defined against imitation and mechanical re-presentation. Young also defines original authorship as organic, a characterization that will become associated with the Romantic poets. Original composition, Young writes: "may be said to be of a vegetable nature; it rises spontaneously from the vital root of Genius; it *grows*, it is not *made*: *Imitations* are often a sort of *Manufacture* wrought up by those *Mechanics*, *Art*, and *Labour*, out of pre-existent materials not their own" (274).

"By the 1770s the doctrine of originality was orthodox," but like any orthodoxy, sometimes the integrity of this self must be defended against the incursions of others' imitations, definitions, or skepticism.[4] When Samuel Taylor Coleridge attempts to take control of the meanings of his name and to assert his originality against accusations of plagiarism, he writes his *Biographia Literaria*, a self-explication and justification, a text that would be the final word even as it opens out in a proliferation of fragments. (Nearly Shandyesque, not only in its subtitle "Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions," the work was called by Byron a "vagabond life."[5]) Coleridge attempts to pin his name to a significance that derives from his own reading and writing—not from what others would wrongly read into or project upon it. He declares this motivation in the opening sentences:

> It has been my lot to have had my name introduced both in conversation and in print more frequently than I find it easy to explain, whether I consider the fewness, unimportance, and limited circulation of my writings, or the retirement and distance, in which I have lived, both from the literary and political world. Most often has it been connected with some charge which I could not acknowledge, or some principle which I had never entertained. …It will be found that the least of what I have written [here] concerns myself personally. I have used the narration chiefly for the purpose of giving a continuity to the work.[6]

Coleridge's stated motive adheres perfectly to the eighteenth-century expectation that "an authentic *personal* character will observe the same formal logic as the authorial *corpus*."[7] He hopes to define his authorship, the "poetical character," and more generally, the metaphysical self:

> the sum of all that is SUBJECTIVE, we may comprehend in the name of the SELF or INTELLIGENCE. …Intelligence is conceived of as exclusively representative, nature [the objective] as exclusively represented; the one as conscious, the other as without consciousness. …There is here no first, and no second; both are coinstantaneous and one.
>
> …This principle, and so characterized, manifests itself in the SUM or I AM; which I shall hereafter indiscriminately express by the words spirit, self, and self-consciousness. In this, and in this alone, object and subject, being and knowing, are identical.[8]

Rather than appealing to a social ground rule like a Humean collective fiction, Coleridge's baseline is logic and God: "We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD" (300).[9] The figure of the author defined by these characteristics becomes a cultural paradigm of mythic proportions. (One of the interesting aspects of Coleridge's

Biographia Literaria, of course, is the implicit undermining of the myth of the philosophically derived authorial self by the many digressions into matters of everyday contingency such as friendships and poetic "schools," reviews and the literary market.)

This paradigm has by now been thoroughly familiarized, contextualized, deconstructed, and historicized; perhaps the most familiar analysis of these modes of exploring the nature of authorship is Michel Foucault's 1969 essay "What is an Author?" which both demystifies and secures the primacy of this figure—or function. According to Foucault, the author-function is:

> the result of a complex operation which constructs a certain rational being that we call 'author.' Critics doubtless try to give this intelligible being a realistic status, by discerning, in the individual, a 'deep' motive, a 'creative' power, or a 'design,' the milieu in which writing originates. Nevertheless, these aspects of an individual which we designate as making him an author are only a projection, in more or less psychologizing terms, of the operations that we force texts to undergo, the connections that we make, the traits that we establish as pertinent, the continuities that we recognize, or the exclusions that we practice.[10]

This author-function exists in history and came into being, Foucault argues, with copyright, which established "a system of ownership for texts" (108). Prior to the 1710 Copyright Act, writes Martha Woodmansee, texts "circulated more freely" because "more corporate and collaborative norms of writing prevailed." The practices were "promiscuous" rather than "proprietary."[11] My dissertation argues, in part, that notions of corporate and collaborative, and even promiscuous, authorship did not simply end with the establishment of "a system of ownership for texts." Rather than a rupture in the history of authorship, we find a chaotic and gradual transition that is not without contradictions. In the cases on which I focus—in the works of Eliza Haywood, Laurence Sterne, Charlotte Smith, and Lord Byron—the individual authorial self incorporated these former norms of textual production and circulation. My emphasis on alternative versions of authorial self contrasts with and builds upon other recent re-writings of the history of authorship that argue "that the author is not a singular individual with sole power to determine meaning through autonomous acts of literary creation" and that emphasize the collaborative nature of textual production, and the "overlap between authorship, publishing, and printing."[12] Jody Greene, for example, whose important study *The Trouble With Ownership* looks into the Copyright Act's creation not only of new rights but also of new liabilities for authors, points to a site of ambiguity in the Copyright Act:

> Although the nature of the proprietary relationship is never spelled out in the act, the phrase 'Proprietor or Proprietors' stands in, after the opening lines, for the author, *as well as for the printers, booksellers, and others* whose interests might be covered under its provisions. (2, my emphasis)

Other recent scholars, such as Paula McDowell, have focused on the role of these "others" in textual production.[13] My study adds to and differs from the criticism in this field by focusing on authorial identity as it is represented by authors, and which includes those others called readers.

Martha Woodmansee writes that authorship is "the result of quite radical reconceptualization of the creative process that culminated less than 200 years ago in the

heroic self-presentation of Romantic poets."[14] In my study, I look at authors who spanned the period of this reconceptualization and who trouble the idea of a "culmination." I assume a lack of clarity as to whether the author-function and the ideology of the author as original fulfill the logic of copyright law or develop as a defense against the more chaotic practical reality of the circulation and ownership of texts.[15] Since the mid-eighteenth century, according to Foucault, the author "has played the role of the regulator of the fictive," as a constraining, ideological figure "by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning."[16] *Scandalous Figures* explores the ways in which several important authors of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries both respond to and shape the cultural scene characterized by this "fear of [the] proliferation of [the] meaning" of identity and by the increasingly free-for-all literary marketplace in which the author is commodified along with his or her works. Foucault himself posits the author-function as a reaction to cultural anxieties around the flux in categories of identity. The new readings I advance of these scandalous authors show how this flux can paradoxically become the ground for a practice of the self.

A practical and theoretical difference between English and French copyright laws suggests some interesting ramifications for understanding the connection between authorial self and work, and for the functioning of Foucault's author-function in British literary culture. David Saunders points out that French and European copyright laws explicitly consider a work as expressive of an individual's personality:

> Unlike the copyright system that has characterized Anglo-American jurisdictions, continental law has developed a system of moral or personal right, constructing a status for the writer as author which is grounded on notions of the wholeness of personality and its expression in the integrity of the created work. …In effect, in continental jurisdictions, an ethical judgment is made that the work is an integral part of its author's person because it is an inalienable expression of his or her personality. …English and American law about *copyright*, however, remains fixed on the protection not of an expressive personality but of a commodity—the copyable printed work.[17]

We can conclude that the author-function may operate differently in England, where the law—if not the literature on authorial self—seems to be in conflict with the idea of organic originality. While some authors, such as Young or Coleridge, insist on the ethical and organic relation between authorial self and work, the authors I focus on in this study explicitly confront and accept the commodification and lack of ownership of both their works and personalities, rather than constructing through their denial an impregnable figure of originality.

Some recent studies have looked at the fertile ground between the original proprietary figure of the author and the infamous, fantastic fakes who proliferated in this period. Margaret Russett, for example, argues that:

> spectacular fakes participated in defining the 'fictional identity' bequeathed to the modern subject by Romantic culture. The deliberately ambiguous term, fictional identity, links two apparently unrelated phenomena: the philosophical notion of 'personal identity' that began in the eighteenth century to displace both soul and lineage as the foundation of the individual; and the question of literary ontology—

> or the 'identity' of fiction—that motivates Romantic and post-Romantic literature.[18]

Russett's study traces an historical trajectory of authorial self-representation ending in the romantic idea of authenticity. Another important study, which also problematizes the dichotomy of proper and improper, proprietary and impostor authors, Susan Stewart's *Crimes of Writing*, finds connections among cases of forgery, imposture, and plagiarism in this period. Because these cases are defined by the law as criminal, she writes, they "connote the ways in which such practices are in fact inversions or negations of cultural rules and so have opened a more 'properly' transgressive space for those aesthetic writings stretching from Romanticism to the avant-garde."[19] I am interested in exploring this crossover between propriety and transgression in four figures who achieved great success and fame, and in some cases canonical status, and yet who blur the distinctions between original proprietary author and spectacular, fictive impostor explicitly, consistently, and scandalously, in their groundbreaking literary innovations and in their performative, commodified personalities.

The authors I focus on span a century and therefore face different challenges in the evolving literary marketplace. I argue, however, that they develop strategies of self-representation that are strikingly similar in their negotiation of the mythic status and "fictional identity" of this new original, proprietary authorship. While it has become customary to see these authors as satirical parodists dependent on the norms they try to undermine, I suggest that the direction of influence is not so clear: their ironic performances develop alongside of the emergence of the proprietary author figure which in some cases may be seen as a response to the former. If Coleridge's attempt at self-definition, and his Kantian Christian concept of self mark the endpoint of one trajectory, the authors in this study mark another in which Lord Byron has more in common with Eliza Haywood than with his contemporary. Rather than attempt to pin the authorial name to an essential self, these authors accept and play into the way a name circulates through imaginations, economies, and significations. This contrast suggests the possibility that the formation of the unitary Romantic subject was the result of one strategy to navigate the newly shifting terrain of identity categories; the performance of a fictional, scandalized subject was another.

My work thus participates in the recent re-periodization of these eras in criticism by employing a long-eighteenth-century view. Consequently, one of the new contributions *Scandalous Figures* makes to the criticism on these individual authors as well as to the history of British authorship is to explore these points of contact in the practices of diverse and historically asynchronous authors. By doing so, I hope to enrich the contexts in which we study these authors as well as our understanding of the how the complexities in their understanding of their own authorship contributes to the significant literary innovations each of them made. One of the unique aspects of *Scandalous Figures* is its treatment of genres, historical moments, and authorial classes and genders that differ significantly from each other. The study is both wide ranging, in that sense, and intensive, combining revisionary readings of Charlotte Smith's sonnets with close readings of *Tristram Shandy*, or comparing the narratorial strategies of Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator* with those of *Don Juan*, for example. My interpretive approach grows

directly from the concerns I see these authors addressing: their innovative opening and mixing of genres was an active response to the critical hardening of generic boundaries, as it was an expansive embrace of new possibilities that came into being with the evolution of fiction as the dominant discursive mode of literature toward the end of the eighteenth century. To divide up their oeuvres according to genre, or to divide a study of these authors according to their favored genre or their gender would be to ignore the energies they found in these sites of exciting interplay—those between author and readers, lyric and fiction, prose and poetry, fiction and "real life," paratext and proper text. As a consequence, my interpretation reveals some of the cultural discrediting of these authors to be a negative/inverse reaction to their releasing of these energies. In other words, they are scandalous figures because of their sometimes explicit, sometimes subtle personal, generic, sexual, gendered, professional, or, more generally, discursive *impropriety*.

Scandal

The rest of this introduction will lay out several historical and cultural contexts which nourished the development of both the proprietary and the scandalized versions of authorship. Throughout, I employ the term *scandal* as a model for the strategies of these authors because of its inherent blurring of fact and fiction. During the long eighteenth century, *scandal* referred not only to the morally problematic or socially damaging (and usually sexually transgressive) act but also to the discourse describing or "authoring" the act. It also described the feeling resulting in the audience from witnessing the act or discourse. *Scandal* was used in the way we now use *gossip* and, like its synonym, implied an ambiguous relation to fact. In William Congreve's 1695 drama *Love for Love*, the character named "Scandal" plays a subtle but crucial role in the plot. He doesn't seem to *do* anything, but he often has the first or last *word* of the scene, which it is up to the characters and audience to interpret. The title of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's 1777 drama, *The School for Scandal*, suggests that scandal-mongering (or –making) is an art or craft in which one can be trained. Some, though, have a natural genius for it. In the play, the character traits key to the mastery of scandal-mongering are social attractiveness and savvy, and a facility for both imposture—or at least striking a pose—and narration.

In its complex history this word has had ambiguity at its core: how can we decipher subject from object, fiction from reality? This central ambiguity, along with the image of a snare at its root, aligns *scandal* with irony. Two important theorists of irony, Henri Bergson (in his study of the comic) and Paul de Man (expanding upon Charles Baudelaire's essay on the comic), use the image of a person stumbling to illustrate the workings of irony. The moment of stumbling splits the subject in two. At once there is an empirical subject who trips, and a second consciousness that laughs at the one who trips. This splitting of the self, and doubling of consciousness, is the birth of irony. The scandal of irony is its unintegrated, simultaneous doubleness–which makes it an apt figure for the paradoxes of self-fictionalization in the work of Haywood, Sterne, Smith, and Byron. And, of course, for all of them scandal was also literal. Haywood scandalized with her amatory fictions, political satires, and seductive self-representation, as well as by the combination of her gender and her professional plurality as actress, author, and

bookseller. She served as the object of scandal most notably in *The Dunciad* and *The Authors of the Town*, by Alexander Pope and Richard Savage, respectively, and in the posthumous legends that stood in place of a well-researched biography. Laurence Sterne scandalized his readers first with his bawdy, naughty witticisms, and next by his acknowledgment that he was both the author of *Tristram Shandy* and a clergyman. When he made this dual identity into a joke, by publishing his own sermons under the name of his fictional creation, Parson Yorick, critics were beside themselves. Soon, too, as his celebrity grew, so did the knowledge of his infidelities. Charlotte Smith presents a different case, because she was so careful to protect her reputation as a proper mother and to avoid any eroticization of her authorial image. However, as Eliza Haywood had done, she scandalized some readers with her politically forceful texts. After she had earned enough money to support herself and her children for a time, by publishing two translations (one of which was the scandalous novel *Manon L'Escaut*), she separated from her husband, the faults of whom she satirized openly in her novels. Over the years, her references in published works to the abusive patriarchal system of estate and marriage law became more personal and explicit, and her frankness turned some readers away. Lord Byron's name will forever be associated with scandal and sexual transgression, the forms of which form a jumble of marital infidelities, affairs with older women and younger men, and Carnevale orgies, to name a few. He was known for his debts and wealth, his wild parties and unaccountable wall-flower behavior, his Eastern costumes and travels, his burly servants and massive menagerie, his misbehaving mistresses. In many of these cases, rhetorical play with the fact-evading nature of scandal enabled these authors to assert some kind of authority over or ironic distance from these facts by casting then in terms of the emergent category of this period: fiction.

In her study of scandal's synonym, gossip, in eighteenth-century novels, Patricia Meyer Spacks says that "novelistic narrators often arouse in readers the kind of intense interest in personal detail that gossip generates, and they may attempt to establish with their readers a kind of relationship approximating that of gossip."[20] I am interested in the way these authors do this and more by provocatively blurring narratorial, fictional, and authorial personae. I hope to add to Spacks's theoretical model of gossip/scandal by describing and theorizing the different ways my authors use scandal as a model of discourse and identification in their works. The authors here are also explicitly interested in how readers are brought into the dynamics of scandal; in *Licensing Entertainment*, William Warner discusses "the scandal of the reading body," whose alibi for real sensation and arousal is the fictionality of the scenes it responds to.[21] Their imagining of the author finds a kinship in these arousing acts of reading, a fact these authors play into by inviting their readers to visualize their bodies (although, in the case of Smith, not erotically).

More particularly, I explore the ways in which Haywood, Sterne, Smith, and Byron incorporate figures of scandal into their works and self-representations as a conscious strategy for capitalizing on the contradictory celebrity culture of eighteenth-century Britain, in which authors were commodified and constructed by their readers even as they were expected to embody the authenticity of and authority over their meanings. Scandal, at Haywood's time as at Byron's, stood at the intersection of several

areas of cultural fascination in eighteenth-century Britain (celebrity, sensibility, theater, the philosophy of personal identity, and the evolving autonomy of readers) which respond and contribute to the pervasive instability of identity. Infused with intersubjectivity and theatricality, scandal registers the problematic way in which "publishing" or "making public" can blur the distinctions between categories the boundaries between which were sites of intense cultural energy focused on definition: fact and fiction, life and literature, private and public.

The authors in my study play up the ironic possibilities of this blurring, as when they use scandal as a figure for their own literary production while also disavowing it, as Haywood does in the Female Spectator's condemnation of scandal-mongers, or as Byron does in the guise of *Don Juan's* narrator, who says with characteristic bravado-irony, "Scandal's my aversion" (I, 51) while satirizing his wife. These authors, I argue, exploit the energies of scandal not only in their practices of self-promotion, but, more broadly, when they establish a working practice of self based on the recognition of the authorial self's groundlessness. For Haywood, the authorial self was a shape shifter whose identity depended upon the genre and market in which she appeared; she was chameleon, prostitute, masquerader, and corporate conglomerate of the normative phases in a woman's life. She took advantage of both anonymity and of her physical and vocal identity as a well-known actress, both of which forms of identity were practical and groundless. For Sterne this groundlessness took the form of the theatrical and fictional selves of his characters; he brought his characters to life when he performed at dinner parties as Tristram, and this performativity in turn made Laurence Sterne into just another role. Above all, this self was a written, textual self. For Smith and Byron, the authorial self's groundlessness was also in the writtenness of fictionality and autobiography. Smith's authorial self inhabited the form of a novelistic heroine of sensibility who claimed authenticity even as she exposed the conventional lineaments of this character and the limitations of this conventionality. Byron's written self was his own Byronic hero, a figure who was then eroded by his embrace of his own fictionality and "mobility" whereby the self is contingent upon the cultural forms in which it appears; Byron's response to his recognition of the pervasiveness of fictionality in literature and life was laughter. For all of these authors, however, this groundlessness is not simply a deconstructive negation of the author; instead it is a strategy to incorporate into a practice of self the fact that authorial self is constructed socially, through the forms and discourses that guide the social imagination, and through the desires and anxieties that fire the market. In other words, while their self-representations undermine the idea of an authentic self, they do not go as far as a deManian dissolution of self in its ironic refractions. Through their ironic use of paratexts, self-fictionalization, and intertextual self-reference, these writers construct scandalized figures of authorial self which incorporate the feedback loop of representations between author and readers, which own their lack of ownership over their works and selves, which critique the very culture of celebrity upon which they depend for their identity as authors, and which reveal the model of proprietary, integral, original authorship to be a myth even as they depend on its lineaments to strike an authoritative pose.

Because these four authors span a century and yet employ similar strategies, my readings propose a persistent ironic alternative to the history of authorship implicit in the narratives of the rise of the novel or of the development of the Romantic self. Their authorship was made possible by the development of British commercial society's public sphere, against which some of their canonical contemporaries defined their subject-centered version of original authorship. A recent critic has described the "audience-oriented privacy," in Jurgen Habermas's phrase, of the literary celebrity as a phenomenon of the Romantic era, and as a new performative intimacy.[22] However, while I agree that this era's "highly-developed capitalist relations of production and consumption and a fully industrialized form of print capitalism" made the scale of Byron's celebrity possible, for example, I think his ambivalent performance of the private self has much in common with that of earlier famous authors who recognized the scandal of their self-commodification and who cultivated the fiction of "audience-oriented privacy."[23] Byron confronts the same questions that animated some of the ironies of Haywood, Sterne, and Smith: can scandal, public privacy, or impropriety be authored or owned? Or does impropriety divest the author of his proper self and property? Who owns works, who defines an authorial self? For all of the authors in this study, the scandalized self, the lack of ownership of the authorial self, becomes associated in the imagination of the reading public with impropriety or indecency. The proprietary author was also the proper author.

Fictional and Theatrical Identity

The commodification of the author—a novel problem in Haywood's time and a well-known aspect of authorship in Byron's—coincided with a cultural shift in the concept of identity from soul to personality—a concept which involves the possibilities of both self-fashioning freedom and cultural determination. The self-representations of these authors embrace the contingency and instability of personality and differ significantly from enlightenment or Romantic concepts of the self which emphasize, on the one hand, a tenuous unity based in consciousness, and on the other, an authentic uniqueness that is self-made and yet essential.

Dror Wahrman describes the early and middle decades of the century as the "*ancien régime* of identity," which was manifest in discourses of gender, race, and class as well as of personal identity. This regime, during which masquerade was a favorite evening event, was characterized by:

> the relatively commonplace capacity of many to contemplate… that identity, or specific categories of identity, could prove to be mutable, malleable, unreliable, divisible, replaceable, transferable, manipulable, escapable, or otherwise fuzzy around the edges. Conversely, it was a regime of identity *not* characterized by an axiomatic presupposition of a deep inner core of selfhood.[24]

In the words of two recent historians, "in the eighteenth century in Britain, there was a revolution in personal identity theory."[25] They explain:

> the self as immaterial soul was replaced with the self as mind. This replacement involved movement away from substance accounts of personal identity, according to which the self is a simple, persisting thing, toward relational accounts of

> personal identity, according to which the self consists essentially of physical and/or psychological relations among different temporal stages of an organism or person. (2)

For Locke, personal identity inhered in consciousness rather than in the identiticality of bodies over time or of an "immaterial substance" like the soul: "For it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, *personal identity* depends on that only, whether it be annexed only to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances."[26] These philosophical shifts and their cultural manifestations form part of the scene in which proprietary and scandalous authorship takes shape.

Another factor was the rise of fiction. It was David Hume who famously took this Lockean self based on consciousness to its logical next level: fictionality. Hume argued that "the identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one."[27] Ian Duncan has observed that: "Hume's philosophical legitimation of the fictive as an 'authentic' representation of common life, since common life is a consensually reproduced fiction, coincides chronologically with the affirmation of fictionality in a cluster of major English novels."[28] The rise of novelistic fictionality has been linked, notably by Duncan and Catherine Gallagher, to the evolving commercial culture of eighteenth-century Britain and to the public's increasing comfort with credit and speculation. Gallagher argues: "Novels promoted a disposition of ironic credulity enabled by optimistic incredulity; one is dissuaded from believing the literal truth of a representation so that one can instead admire its likelihood and extend enough credit to buy into the game. Such flexible mental states were the sine qua non of modern subjectivity."[29] It is just this readerly ironic credulity, this playful willingness to extend credit, that the authors in this study exploited not only in their works but also in their performances and fictionalizations of self. And the flip-side of this comfort with credit was a cultural anxiety about the groundlessness of identity, which manifests in different forms in the conflicted reception of these authors.

The cultural permeation of fictionality manifested in the theater and acting theory as well. The centrality of the theater in eighteenth-century British culture makes it highly plausible that shifts in theater would influence concepts of personal and authorial identity, and vice versa. Paul Friedland relates this shifting cultural terrain to the French Revolution, which, he argues, "is fundamentally related to a revolution in the theory and practice of theater, and that both revolutions are manifestations of an underlying revolution in the conception of representation itself."[30] One of the aspects of this revolution in representation was a new orientation toward the audience (rather than toward the authority of God, king, or—in the case of plays—character). Friedland points out that "In the decades after 1750… theatrical actors were prevailed upon to represent their characters abstractly, in a manner that *seemed realistic* to the audience, rather than a manner that the actors experienced *as real*," a description that, of course, derives from Denis Diderot's *Paradoxe sur le Comédien* (6). Diderot, (a close friend of Laurence Sterne) claimed, in contrast to the predominant theories of acting, that the best actors were the ones with the least sensibility, the least sense of self, and the most attention to

their effects upon the audience. Diderot's actor "is not the person he represents"; nor is he himself.[31] The best actor has a facility for "self-abnegation" (23).

This underlying revolution has much to do with the development of novelistic fictionality, and with the fictional identity of authenticity, cultural categories whose flux was troubling to many. The appeal of a self-less self manifests as well in the evolution of fictional characters who, while becoming more interiorized also became less particularly referential to actual people. As Gallagher puts it, "The fact that 'le personage… n'est personne' was thought to be precisely what made him or her magnetic."[32] This magnetic emptiness is precisely what the authors in this study exploited in their self-representations, which, in the same paradoxical manner as with fictional characters, were both intimate and authentic *and* imaginative constructions. By making themselves *like* fictional characters, they took advantage of the fact that "fictional characters… were thought to be easier to sympathize or identify with than most real people" (351). By the late eighteenth century, fictional characters had come to seem "at once self-made, self-expressive, *and* a product of conventions."[33] The writers in this study would demonstrate the same thing about authorial self.

Textual Permeability

These authors constructed versions of the author which embraced the contingency and instability of personality. They posited a self which was both groundless and practical. An early and long obsolete meaning of *practical* was "crafty, artful." These authors were consummately crafty artists of an authorial self which was, like the subject of scandal, both self-made and constructed by forces out of its control. Not an essence or localized aspect of consciousness, this was a self in the process of its own making. I focus not only on primary texts but also on accompanying paratexts—which Genette calls "thresholds of interpretation"—as well as reviews and unpublished texts such as letters, to investigate the shaping forces of different generic conventions and expectations. The dichotomy suggested by these different registers of self-narrative, *public and private*, is one which these writers deliberately collapsed in their self-representations—a fact with implications for my interpretive approach.

Two misconceptions, which I'll note here, suggest the way these authors both evaded and played into the appeal of these emergent categories: John O. Lyons, in *The Invention of the Self* says that the difference between Sterne and Tristram, or Byron and Childe Harold, "is at times razor thin, and the names are changed only to maintain the domain of fiction and to protect the creator's innermost privacy of self."[34] In *Byron and the Victorians,* Andrew Elfenbein points to the way Byron's publications "offer[ed] readers a simulacrum of intimacy."[35] Readers wanted to believe "that they had made immediate contact with the poet's soul and that this intimacy proved *them* special."[36] These readers bought into a fiction. Byron and the others blurred into their characters precisely in order to perforate the supposed boundary between fact and fiction, to destabilize the concept of "privacy of self," and to give their readers access to something which was not quite authentic, but not quite fake. This collapse of categories has ramifications for the way we study the figures they cut and the forms they chose—both personally and textually. Even as I make that distinction, I have to emphasize that these

categories are always mutually implicating for these writers; this mutual implication calls for a certain kind of critical or interpretive methodology, one that responds in kind by focusing on the overlap of categories. My interpretation focuses both on textual dynamics and on the contexts of production and reception. I employ, in other words, an "historically informed formalist criticism," in Susan Wolfson's phrase.[37]

Four Scandalous Figures

I begin by looking at the contradictory postures Eliza Haywood's authorship takes over the course of her career. In her early novella, *Fantomina*, Haywood constructs a chameleon figure of the female author in her protagonist—a woman who enjoys freedom from social and sexual constraint because of her plotting—and makes an implicit critique of readers who would simplify that figure into an object for purchase, and who are duped by her shape-shifting. The mid-career *Anti-Pamela* aligns the author-figure with her satirical prostitute-heroine to criticize the commodification of authorship, to expose Richardson's propriety as imposture, and to offer a look behind the scenes at the labor involved in surviving by the fruit of one's "prolific brain."[38] Haywood claims, in the character of the Female Spectator, to have reformed and turned away from her scandalous past, but my readings of these periodical essays find her instead winking ironically through the mask of propriety and figuring her shape-shifting authorial identity as both empty and as a plural corporate body which is determined by her readers, who are also her dupes. During the early decades of the eighteenth-century, those of Haywood's career, Gallagher writes, "that discursive category we now call fiction was a 'wild space,' unmapped and unarticulated."[39] I look, in particular, at works that employ the new verisimilitude of novelistic fictionality, but which also exploit the readers' desire for scandal by making the borderlines between real life and the fictive permeable. In her writings, as in her self-representation, Haywood took advantage of unmapped categories of identity even as she began to map them.

In his fictional *life* as in his performative life as an author, Laurence Sterne constructs a self that is both radically original and contingently determined by readers, by his reading, and by literary conventions. In this chapter, I explore the ways in which Sterne's construction of authorial self is mediated by the Lockean theory of personal identity, which posited a self based in consciousness, by contemporary theories of acting, which were split over the question of the authenticity of an actor's feeling, and by his awareness of the imaginative power of autonomous readers. I use readings of *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey* as well as of the paratexts of his sermons. While Sterne seemed to some readers to be imbued with true sensibility, to others he appeared to play the role of the actor who only puts on sensibility, the actor described by Diderot in his iconoclastic *Paradoxe sur le comédien* (1758). The theater provides Sterne with a model of authorial self that is performative and is constructed in a dynamic relation with the audience, who may, like a theater audience, consent to being deceived by the author in which they think they believe. The coinciding activity of the author's performance and the readers' autonomous imagining mimics the operations of scandal and renders an author-self that is plural, theatrical, contingent and madly associative like the Lockean self, and always suspended over "the dangers that lurk under" a jest. These

characteristics present problems for the sentimental self of Yorick who is authenticated by his feeling even as he aligns himself with the actor whose performance is convincing because he has no sensibility. I read Sterne's contradictory performances as a critique of the related ideas of the author as an integral, moral and unifying identity, of feeling as a guarantee of self, and of sympathy as an act of mutual legibility.

My readings of Charlotte Smith's early translation *The Romance of Real Life*, the prefaces, notes, and several poems in *Elegiac Sonnets*, and her post-French Revolution novel, *The Banished Man*, describe her complex self-representation as a strategy for negotiating the demands of the market while expanding the possibilities of these genres in the face of their increasing rigidification. Smith relies on the practices of reading fictional characters that have evolved over the eighteenth century to construct a sympathetic version of author-self—the melancholy heroine of sensibility—that represents authentic feeling and yet is no less of a performance than that of, in the words of Hannah More, "perverted Sterne."[40] While Sterne found a mediating mode of self-construction in the theater, Smith, (who also enjoyed and excelled at acting) employs the emerging genre of autobiography in her representations of an authorial self that is at once factual, textual, and fictional. In particular, Smith's use of paratexts—such as prefaces and footnotes—and textual interpenetrations—such as quotations or interpolations—hint at or announce disjunctions between one version of the author and other, ironic or subversive versions intent on exposing the scandal in "the romance of real life." I investigate the possibility that her generic experimentation was criticized as transgressive because the identity categories of genre, gender, and nation, were sites of particular cultural anxiety at the time. Her works open new interpretive possibilities in all of these areas by, for example, infusing poetry with science and the novel with autobiography and the current events of the French Revolution, and by rendering a self-portrait that demystifies authorship, motherhood, and femininity.

In his construction of an authorial self, Byron, like Smith, exploited the habits of reading in which the attractiveness of fictional characters depends on their status as fictional. In readings of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage IV*, *Manfred*, *Beppo*, the first cantos of *Don Juan*, and many of their paratexts, I focus on Byron's shifting attitudes toward and representations of *fiction* and argue that his insistence on displaying how blurred the division between authentic and performative self really is was one of the main sources of his mid-career mixed reception. In spite of his claim to "hate things *all* fiction," his ambivalent but eventual embrace of fictionality and novelization allows him to criticize and parody the dominant versions of proper self and proper genre and to represent a new, demystified version of authorship.[41] My analysis of his attitudes toward fiction and toward the novel reframes his "turn against Romanticism" as an ironic exposure of Romantic subjectivity and poetics as a denial of the commodification and novelization of literature. In *Don Juan*, the romanticism of organic originality and the transcendent state of poetic, moral, spiritual achievement are shown to be myths for sale in the mart where "there's a sure market for imposture" (I, 128).

Scandalous Figures contributes to revisions of the narrative of the rise of proprietary authorship and of the Romantic self. I offer a history not so much of a

development but of a condition with which authors had to grapple from the invention of copyright through the ironic demystification of the heroic author by Byron: the commercialization of literature and of authorship. During this period, authors and readers invented and evaded new identifications and representations: literature was a commodity, literature was property, literature was an expression of a personality, and the author became an ideological figure of organic originality and authenticity. The authors in this study accepted their fictionality, inauthenticity, and commodification, and accused their proper contemporaries of denial and imposture. With Rose, I agree that:

> The attempt to anchor the notion of literary property in personality suggests the need to find a transcendent signifier, a category beyond the economic to warrant and ground the circulation of literary commodities.[42]

Some readers and authors chose to believe in—or be—the original, proprietary expressive personality. The scandalized figures in this study chose to ironize this version of authorship, and implicitly to expose it as a social and discursive construct by themselves constructing versions of authorship informed and shaped by other discourses. Bakhtin describes novelistic discourse as "always criticizing itself" and as a site in which "the author, in all his various masks and faces, [moves] freely onto the field of his represented world."[43] The authors in this study suggest through their performances of self that these masks and faces, these fictional identities, *are* what we mean by "real."

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[1] Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 114.

[2] Quoted in Stephanie Fysh, *The Work(s) of Samuel Richardson* (Cranbury, N. J., Associated University Presses, 1997), 109.

[3] Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition in a Letter to the Author of Sir Charles Grandison*, in Edmund D. Joness, ed., *English Critical Essays. Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 289.

[4] Rose, *Authors and Owners*, 119.

[5] Lord Byron, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life*, ed. Thomas Moore (New York: Harper, 1831), 103. In a letter to Murray of Oct. 12, 1817.

[6] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Major Works*, ed. H. J. Jackson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 157. Here is another sample of the defensive impetus behind the work:

> To anonymous critics in reviews, magazines, and news-journals of various name and rank, and to satirists with or without a name, in verse or prose, or in verse-text aided by prose-comment, I do seriously believe and profess, that I owe full two-thirds of whatever reputation and publicity I happen to possess. For when the

> name of an individual has occurred so frequently, in so many works, for so great a length of time, the readers of these works—(which with a shelf or two of Beauties, elegant Extracts, and Anas, form nine-tenths of the reading of the reading Public)—cannot but be familiar with the name. (182)

[7] Margaret Russett, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.

[8] Coleridge, *Major Works*, 297.

[9] Coleridge leaves room for something beyond self-consciousness, as Hume and Locke do not explicitly:

> The transcendental philosopher does not inquire, what ultimate ground of our knowledge there may lie out of our knowing, but what is the last in our knowing itself, beyond which *we* cannot pass. The principle of our knowing is sought within the sphere of our knowing. It must be something, therefore, which can itself be known. It is asserted only, that the act of self-consciousness is for *us* the source and principle of all *our* possible knowledge. Whether abstracted from us there exists anything higher and beyond this primary self-knowing, which is for us the form of all our knowing, must be decided by the result.
>
> That the self-consciousness is the fixed point, to which for *us* all is mortised and annexed, needs no further proof. But that the self-consciousness may be the modification of a higher form of being, perhaps of a higher consciousness, and this again of a yet higher, and so on in an infinite *regressus*; in short, that self-consciousness may be itself something explicable into something, which must lie beyond the possibility of our knowledge, because the whole *synthesis* of our intelligence is first formed in and through the self-consciousness, does not at all concern us as transcendental philosophers. (300)

[10] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Vintage, 1984), 111.

[11] Martha Woodmansee, Introduction, *The Construction of Authorship: Textual Appropriation in Law and Literature*, ed. Woodmansee and Peter Jaszi (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 3.

[12] Jody Greene, *The Trouble With Ownership: Literary Property and Authorial Liability in England, 1660-1730* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 7.

[13] See Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1683-1730* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), which investigates the diverse roles of women in the early book trade, including those of "publishing authors… printers, publishers, hawkers, and ballad-singers" which together formed "a series of heterogeneous collectivities, rather than a homogeneous 'subculture'" (5).

[14] Martha Woodmansee, Introduction to *The Construction of Authorship*, 3.

[15] As Jody Greene points out, Foucault's convincing chronology, in which a system of ownership for texts contributes to the development of the author-function, is not the same as a theory of causality (11).

[16] Foucault, "What is an Author?" 119.
[17] David Saunders, "Copyright, Obscenity and Literary History," *ELH*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer, 1990), [431-444] 442.
[18] Russett, *Fictions and Fakes*, 191.
[19] Susan Stewart, *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3.
20 Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip*, (New York: Knopf, 1985), 10.
21 William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: the Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 119.
[22] Claire Tuite, "Tainted Love and Romantic Literary Celebrity," *ELH* 74.1 (2007): 62. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 51.
[23] Tuite, "Tainted Love," 62.
[24] Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 198.
[25] Raymond Martin and John Barresi, *Naturalization of the Soul: Self and Personal Identity in the Eighteenth Century*, 2.
[26] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, (New York: Penguin, 1997), 303.
[27] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 167.
[28] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 69.
[29] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality" in *The Novel: Volume 1: History, Geography, and Culture*, ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 346.
[30] Paul Friedland, *Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 3.
[31] Denis Diderot, *The Paradox of Acting*, trans. Walter Herries Pollock (London: Chatto and Windus, 1883), 17.
[32] Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," 351.
[33] Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 251.
[34] John O. Lyons, *The Invention of the Self: The Hinge of Consciousness in the Eighteenth Century* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978), 15.
[35] Andrew Elfenbein, *Byron and the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 53.
[36] Russett, Fictions and Fakes, 138.
[37] Susan Wolfson, *Formal Charges: The Shaping of Poetry in British Romanticism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 1.
[38] Eliza Haywood and Henry Fielding, *Anti-Pamela and Shamela*, ed. Catherine Ingrassia (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2004), 141.

[39] Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women in the Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), xvi.
[40] Hannah More, "Sensibility," in *The Works of Hannah More, in four volumes*, Vol. 1 (Dublin: D. Graisberry, 1803), 93.
[41] Lord Byron, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron with Notices of his Life*, ed. Thomas Moore, Vol. II (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1855), 67.
[42] Rose, *Authors and Owners*, 128.
[43] M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Vadim Liapunov and Kenneth Brostrom, ed. Michael Holquist (Austen: University of Texas Press, 1982), 49 and 27.

Scandal: Eliza Haywood's Chameleon Self

While this chapter will explore Eliza Haywood's practice of authorial self in her navigation of the early- and mid-eighteenth-century literary marketplace, I would like to begin with some of her contemporaries' representations of her. First, Richard Savage's puff piece for the author:

> The sciences in thy sweet genius charm,
> And, with their strength, thy sex's softness arm.
> In thy full figures, painting's force we find,
> As music fires, thy language lifts the mind.
> Thy pow'r gives form, and touches into life
> The passions imag'd in their bleeding strife.
> ("To Mrs. Eliza Haywood, on Her Novel, called The Rash Resolve," 1724)

The following year, his sympathies have shifted:

> A cast-off dame, who of intrigues can judge,
> Writes scandal in romance—a printer's drudge!
> Flushed with success, for stage-renown she pants,
> And melts, and swells, and pens luxurious rants.
> ("The Authors of the Town; A Satire," 1725)

Next, Alexander Pope's inclusion of Haywood in the kingdom of Dullness, where she stands as the prize in a pissing contest between Grub Street booksellers:

> See in the circle next, Eliza placed,
> Two babes of love close clinging to her waist;
> Fair as before her works she stands confessed,
> In flowers and pearls by bounteous Kirkall dressed.
> The Goddess then: 'Who best can send on high
> The salient spout, far-streaming to the sky;
> His be yon Juno of majestic size,
> With cow-like udders, and with ox-like eyes.
> ("The Dunciad" II, 157-64, 1728)

Another puff follows:

> Great arbitress of Passion!...
> We glow with zeal, we melt in soft desires!
> … when Haywood writ,
> She closed the fair triumvirate of wit.
> (James Sterling, "To Mrs. Eliza Haywood on Her Writings, 1732)

The final example in my list of publicly circulating representations of Eliza Haywood comes from a posthumous narration of her career:

> … whatever liberty she might at first give to her pen, to the offence either of morality or delicacy, she seemed to be soon convinced of her error, and determined not only to reform, but even atone for it; since, in the latter part of her life, no author has appeared more the votary of virtue.
> (David Erskine Baker, *Biographia Dramatica; or, A Companion to the Playhouse*, 1764).

These contemporary accounts of Eliza Haywood—from puffs, satires, portraits, and posthumous blurbs—suggest the strong feelings she inspired as well as the contradictory nature of her public image, which is summed up in the final example's polarization of her "liberty" and "virtue." What the descriptions share is the confused boundary between writing and writer, sexy texts and sexualized author, a phenomenon she both played into and fought against, sometimes at the same time.

Many of the later critical and biographical accounts of her have been no less contradictory and confused, in part because she left almost no record of herself beyond her published fictions, in which her rhetorical posturing teeters on its ironies. In the *Biographia Dramatica,* Baker notes that, "from a supposition of some improper liberties being taken" with her history, before she died, "she laid a solemn injunction on a person who was well acquainted with all the particulars of it, not to communicate to any one the least circumstance relating to her."[1] As in the other descriptions of her, textual and actual bodies are confused by a play of language, in that phrase "improper liberties." In her book *Fictions and Fakes*, Margaret Russett writes that in the eighteenth century, it was assumed that "an authentic *personal* character will observe the same formal logic as the authorial *corpus*."[2] Haywood both exemplifies the conflation Russett describes and reverses its terms: formal variety and illogic define her authorial corpus, which has the gaps and blurry spots of anonymous publishing; and her "personal character" flaunts its *in*authenticity.

One meaning of the word *personal*—"of or pertaining to one's person, body, or figure; bodily"—would have been more dominant then than now.[3] Baker's probably unintentional glance toward Haywood's "person"—his phrase "improper liberties"—in his representation of her attempt to have the final word—by leaving no words—ironically suggests the scandal she sought to avoid. This irony continues a theme which recurs in her novels and periodicals: that of scandal's shifty existence in the plasticity of words. Without verbalization or publication, there can be no scandal. Scandal is made in the dynamic between an act and its interpretation in words. Like her fictional heroines, formed by the interplay of narratorial representation and readerly imagination, the figure of her author-self was one of these indeterminate characters, the contours of which she manipulated while also playfully accepting the ways in which it was constructed by her readers and audiences. This kind of active, playful engagement with reader response and the dialogic authorial attitude—which we associate with Henry Fielding and, especially, Laurence Sterne—was practiced earlier by Haywood in her perspicacious self-invention as an author.

I began this introduction by quoting several verbal representations of Haywood by her contemporaries. Let us conclude our introduction, then, by turning to two visual representations of her, each printed as a frontispiece portrait of the author. The frontispiece portrait was a technique of advertisement not unlike the verse preface. The fifth edition of Haywood's popular first novel, *Love In Excess* (1723), and the second edition of her collection *Secret Histories, Novels and Poems* (in which *Fantomina* appeared, in 1725), contained portraits of the author, including the one by Elisha Kirkall Pope refers to in the *Dunciad*. In her recent study, *Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Janine Barchas says that a frontispiece portrait functioned

as a status-claim in part because it added to the expense of the book; a copper-plate engraving would have been found only in handsome editions of collected works of classical or well-respected and established (usually male) eighteenth-century authors. Haywood's use of a frontispiece portrait for a collection of amatory writings in the "novel" mode, therefore, was unprecedented to say the least. Barchas writes, "it comes as no great surprise that […] such a premature attempt to garner this caste label for the nascent novel is received with unbridled derision."[4] She quotes the well-known lines from *The Dunciad* to illustrate this derision. But there are some intriguing contradictions in Barchas's assertion that Haywood's use of the portrait "illustrates the dangers of such a premature gesture" at literary status, and was a misguided marketing move (27). First of all, Haywood's gestures can rarely be read as entirely sincere. What makes Barchas so certain Haywood's use of the frontispiece portrait was an "attempt to garner [a] caste label," and not a mockery of that authorial caste? Secondly, Pope's derisive description of the portrait occurred almost four years later. And it is very much up for debate whether his attack on her had any great negative impact on her career.[5] Finally, I think Haywood's portrait, as a self-representing gesture, deserves more interpretive sympathy and attention. Unlike the frontispiece portraits of Pope or Samuel Richardson, for example, the Haywood portrait does not imitate the portraits of classical—male—authors framed by masonry-work and crowned with laurels. Instead, it is depicted as a private portrait-miniature adorned with ribbon. It is not a gesture of authority and status but of intimacy and playfulness. Haywood looks directly at the viewer/reader; a flower is tucked above her ear in her hair, which flows negligently over her shoulders, bared by the loose, low-cut, ruffled dressing gown she wears. In one version, "Haywood also sports, like Hogarth's harlot, a prominent beauty spot under one eye…. In coarse language, it is a pin-up of the 'Great Arbitress of Passion,' promising another sensational bodice-ripper to the potential customer" (Barchas, 24). The depiction of Haywood, as Patrick Spedding suggests, is "indebted more to the dishabille portraits of the lovers of swaggering Restoration rakes" (784). The portrait thus gives us one of the facets of Eliza Haywood's authorial self, paradoxical for its representation of her actual image in a way that overtly fictionalizes and intentionally scandalizes by mimicking the assumptions about female authors of exaggerated sexuality. Why would she intentionally play into the caricature of high-class whore, or at least coquette? There is a strong dose of irony in this self-representation, which she develops in the themes of *Fantomina* and *Anti-Pamela*, in which a woman has to disguise herself as or become a whore to get the experience, recognition, money, love, or power that she desires.

This early pictorial self-representation is later revised by another portrait with ironies of its own—that which appears on a 1745 volume of the *Female Spectator*, which, though published anonymously, was probably widely known to be the work of Haywood. If her readers had not yet figured out the author's identity, they may have recognized her image in the picture of the periodical's four "authors," which depicts the three fictional assistants sitting at a table with Haywood, who holds a quill pen in her hand, appears poised and intelligent, and, as in the earlier portrait, gazes directly at the viewer.[6] The front-matter of this edition of the *Female Spectator*, then, offers a contradictory suggestion about the author's identity. Her anonymity is held up by the absence of her

name, while her identity is more than hinted at by the portrait, a duplicity which may be interpreted as a wish both to hide and to reveal and also as a statement about the nature of the authorial self who both *is* the actual writer and also is a construct of the intersubjective imaginary space between writer, text, and reader. I see it as an indication that Haywood intuited the readerly mistake Foucault points to: "it would be just as wrong to equate the author with the real writer as to equate him with the fictitious speaker; the author-function is carried out and operates in the scission itself, in this division and this distance."[7] In the portraits, she points out this division and distance while she seems to bridge it; they represent the face of "the real writer" as they dramatize the authorial persona by dressing her up as a loose or a literary lady, thus seeming to reveal the identity (as in *identicality*) of the "real writer" and the "fictitious speaker." In fact this is just a trick of representation.

* * *

Haywood's career spans the decades during which we see, retrospectively, the consolidation of the new literary category of novelistic fiction, and, along with it, the development of the author-function. During these decades, literacy rates boomed, and "the common reader" became a powerful figure in the literary marketplace. In his study of eighteenth-century fiction, *Licensing Entertainment*, a critique and re-focusing of the "rise of the novel" narrative, William B. Warner writes that "Richardson responds to this evidence of the dangerous autonomy of readers [exemplified by *Pamela*'s parodies, piracies, critiques, and fraudulent sequels] by beginning to position himself as an author."[8] This phrasing conjures a combative image of the relationship between writer and readers: a man plants his feet, to better fight off the fluttering swarm. He continues in the next paragraph: "the difficulty of controlling how readers read and use texts within the open system of media culture in the 1740s encourages Richardson and Fielding to develop the concept of the novel author as proprietor of the book" (180). The author stands firm to protect his property, an abstraction embodied in the book that may circulate through many hands and minds but remain fixed conceptually. He also says that the positive reception of Richardson's and Fielding's novels "functioned as a contingent decision in favor of their novels and against the novels of Behn, Manley, and Haywood" (180). But while their soon-to-be canonical projects eventually displaced Haywood's in literary history, it is worth considering her works and authorial self-representation as alternatives to the familiar actors in the "rise of the novel" narrative which inevitably places her in the position of failure. I will be arguing here, in part, that Eliza Haywood provided a version of novelistic fiction, and a version of the author with a complex relation to those of Richardson and Fielding (whose own versions differed from each other), to whom she responded ironically and who defined their now-normative authorial figures in part as a response to hers.[9] What Tiffany Potter writes about a Haywood heroine could just as well be applied to Haywood:

> [She] demonstrates her mastery not only of the linguistic codes of seduction and power in realms public and private, but also of the broader cultural signifiers of identity and power. She proves her skill at linguistic and perceptual manipulation and deceit in a competitive game with the man perceived to be the best.[10]

Throughout her career, which spanned the decades of the 1720s through 1750s, she addresses the question, "what is an author?" and comes up with a figure very much unlike the authoritative, high-aesthetic-oriented, integral and proprietary figures of Richardson and Fielding. In this chapter, I will consider three of her works to demonstrate the ways in which she borrows, imitates, mocks, and critiques forms of authorial self associated with masculine authority and prestige to make not an opposing version of feminine authorial self, but to ironize and demystify this authority in general, and to construct a version of the author that incorporates individual agency as well as readerly power much in the way that Sterne will do.

The works that I consider, *Fantomina* (1725), *Anti-Pamela* (1742), and *The Female Spectator* (1744-6), present a dis-integrated, plural, chameleon author-self which insistently questions the possibility of a unitary author-proprietor in a market in which the famous—or infamous—author is commodified along with her works. Rather than see her shape-shifting figure as an inverse and failed example of "the author" as it came to be defined between the mid-eighteenth century and the Romantic era, I will argue that we may see Haywood's author-self as one in an alternative line of authors whose practices of the self incorporated and played with their own scandal and commodification, whose formal *looseness* was a vital innovative force in literary history, and who winked through masks of propriety, ironically owning their lack of ownership rather than cultivating a myth of authority and proprietorship.

Jürgen Habermas points to the early eighteenth century as the moment when "culture" became a commodity, when a "reading public" arose and altered the orientation of authors toward their audiences, made up of individuals who all felt entitled to judge.[11] He names the 1740s as the moment when, with the print-culture explosion evidenced by the number of libraries, book clubs, reading circles, and weekly and monthly journals, "the public" was constituted as a reading, critical, discussing entity held together by the press (54). While Habermas points to Richardson as the exemplary author, I would argue that Haywood played a large part in the shift he describes because she inhabited the negative space out of which Richardson rendered his figure of the author. And in fact, the new "reading public" would not have known how to read his novels if they hadn't first loved and been scandalized by hers. Habermas writes that in the mid-eighteenth century, "the relations between author, work, and public changed. They became intimate mutual relationships between privatized individuals who were psychologically interested in what was 'human,' in self-knowledge, in empathy" (50). This shift in novelistic and authorial-self practices was in part a reaction to the celebrity-commodity figure of Eliza Haywood. Henry Fielding's satire of Haywood, in the character of "Mrs. Novel" in his 1730 play, "The Author's Farce," in effect embodies the genre in her. His positioning of himself as a novel author, a little over a decade later, may be seen in part as a critical and revisionary move, to elevate the novel and the author culturally.[12] Foucault's concept of the author-function seems aptly to describe the strategy of Richardson and Fielding, to unify and regulate the fictive in the face of the proliferation of meaning. Haywood's representations of authorial self, on the other hand, emphasize the slipperiness of meaning and identity, which are constructed in imaginary interstices between writer, text, and reader, all of which exist in this culture of "commodification, capital, credit, crime,

and contracts."[13] The practice of the self which marks her career, suggests that the authentic and authoritative (proper) proprietor-author-self is a fiction, a myth of control over the scandal of authorship.

Haywood repeatedly addresses the fact that in her world "to make Publick," to publish, is to invite scandal. Through the use of gossip and letters, she explores the ways in which identity and gender are constructed through generic expectations. As Sharon Harrow writes:

> [Haywood] capitalized on the gendering of genres. Letters were associated with spontaneity of feeling, with the 'thematics of love,' and were labeled as 'sentimental, nonliterary.' Therein lies a contradiction: the genre is sanctioned (women could write certain kinds of letters) but transgressive as well because it makes public private thoughts.[14]

Throughout her career, Haywood employed the tropes of author-as-text and author-as-character, playing up the scandalous non-identity of the celebrity author. Her anonymity was often just a mask through which many of her readers could see her features, which excited more interest in her as a half-hidden private but public persona. Haywood was also a well-known playwright and actress; some of her readers knew not only the features of her writerly style, but also those of her actual voice and body.[15] Dror Wahrman observes that in the theater during this period a blurring of fictional and actual identities was conventional for actors and playwrights. Moreover, play with double identities was the dominant feature of early-eighteenth-century society's favorite form of evening entertainment: masquerade.[16] Haywood extended the cultural expectations of the theater and masquerade into her literary self-representations. Never entirely hidden or revealed, her author-self wore a vizor—the half-mask many of her heroines wore to masquerade balls.

Like her stage roles, her role as popular author was a mode of playful performance, of rendering a character that perforates the boundary between actual and fictional worlds. Her innovative hybrid forms suggest a synthesizing intelligence as much as they do a disappearing, contradictory author-figure. Foucault writes that any discourse with an author-function creates a "plurality of self," and I will be arguing that Haywood recognized this condition of authorship and emphasized it. One reason Haywood was interested in scandal-narratives was because of their ambiguous crossing of fiction and reality. Scandal's power depends on the rhetorical trope of chiasmus: the actual becomes fiction which then has real effects in the world; when the writer makes scandal her subject, she subjects herself to the scandal of writing scandal; the writer forms her readers by teaching them how to read her texts, and readers in turn shape the writer through their reception of her texts. This last chiastic mechanism is general to any work with an author and readers, but for Haywood it is part of the scandalized self of the author, who is always in part constructed by her audience. She saw that the chiasmus of scandal offered possibilities for literary representation beyond the pointedly referential scandal-narrative exemplified by Delarivier Manley's *New Atalantis* (1709) or her own *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1725). Indeed, in her

experiments with overtly fictional works, and works which ambiguously straddle the line between fiction and first-person account or journalistic essay, scandal served as a model for a more complex posing of questions of identity: of authorial self, of female self, and of literary genre, in particular the new category of popular literature, the novel. Haywood's author-self and her texts were mutually identifying because of the way she suggested versions of herself in them and because her readers read her into her texts; they saw her narrators and heroines, and her modes of narration—such as scandal-monger—as guises of the author. The image of the author in the reader's imagination and the one intentionally created by the author work in a dynamic of mutual creation.[17] Haywood was writing at a time when the relation between author and readers was inchoate, when the author-celebrity as a figure in the public imagination was just being formed. Indeed, her popularity was a part of the formation of a "public imagination." An important if counter-intuitive part of this process was her contradictory self-representation. She constructed a self which both disappeared into a disguise or rhetorical guise and appealed to readers in a personal invitation to converse with "Eliza Haywood."

Another aspect of my argument about Haywood's self-construction as an author will be the contemporaenous cultural climate of debate about the nature of personal identity. It is specifically the relational conception of personal identity, and the idea of self as mind, that I see Haywood exploring in her self-constructions and in her creation of psychologically complex fictional characters. She explored the consequences of the malleable sense of identity that Wahrman points to as characteristic of identity-conceptions at this time. Wahrman describes the early and middle decades of the century as characterized by "the relatively commonplace capacity of many to contemplate… that identity, or specific categories of identity, could prove to be mutable, malleable, unreliable, divisible, replaceable, transferable, manipulable, escapable, or otherwise fuzzy around the edges."[18] He repeatedly describes this regime of identity as "playful," and I think we may see Haywood as the avatar of this cultural moment of playfulness. John Locke, on the other hand, whose work on the nature of the self should be seen neither as the cause nor entirely as the symptom of this *ancien régime* of identity, articulated its philosophical questions—a more anxious than playful project. Locke's concept of the self is defined by the continuity of consciousness, and it begins with perceptions through the senses, rather than with innate ideas or with an immaterial soul. Because his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* did not adequately explain how the idea of a self arises from experience, according to Raymond and Barresi, Locke opened the way for the possibility that the self is a fiction.[19] The broad influence of Locke's ideas is well known. While it is difficult to draw definite lines of contact between his influence and its manifestations in other cultural products, Eliza Haywood almost certainly read and discussed Locke and was deeply interested in questions of the nature of the self. Haywood is not usually thought of as an Enlightenment intellectual, but recent critics have begun to describe more distinctly the cultural scenes in which she moved, one of which was the literary circle around the wealthy gentleman and playwright Aaron Hill, where the ideas of Locke were likely much discussed.[20] While Haywood's literary experiments were modes of playful self-representation, they may also be seen as venues for exploring the alternative models of self: a Lockean, non-essential and cognitive

model, or a self through sociability and interactions with social institutions. Her representation of a scandalized authorial self draws together several areas of cultural contestation: the debate about personal identity, the new problematic of the commercialization of literature and authorship, and the sexual politics of urban English society.

Although she doesn't treat Eliza Haywood in her groundbreaking work, *Nobody's Story*, Catherine Gallagher's analysis of contemporaneous female authors creates a compelling context for interpretation of Haywood's authorial personae. Gallagher traces the "reciprocal shaping" of the concepts of "woman," "author," "marketplace," and "fiction" in the careers of five eighteenth-century female novelists, and writes a history in which the earlier authors, Aphra Behn and Delarivier Manley, constructed authorial personae which were "often disguised, disreputable scandalmongers" and the later authors, such as Charlotte Lennox and Frances Burney, represented themselves as "genuine, proper purveyors of original tales."[21] Eliza Haywood's self-representation, during a career which straddles the mid-century, employs the terms of Gallagher's historical trajectory, but in a non-linear and even contradictory fashion. While she constructed a scandalized authorial persona like Behn and Manley, she also represented herself as genuine and proper, often at the same time. Haywood also playfully straddles the terms of a historical shift in the concept of woman which Gallagher refers to in her comments on the work of Nancy Armstrong and Jane Spencer:

> These critics stress that the new cultural power of woman, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, was part of the consolidation of middle-class hegemony. Although women writers gained acceptance and prestige, becoming the spokeswomen for cultural change, these critics argue that they did so only by constructing a discourse that 'reformed' women by locking them into a disciplinary domestic sphere. Armstrong and Spencer identify a discursive break prior to the 1740s: on the 'before' side is the aristocratic model of woman, political, embodied, superficial, and amoral; on the 'after' side is the middle-class model, domestic, disembodied, equipped with a deep interiority and an ethical subjectivity. (xx)

This description seems to map Haywood's modes of authorial-self-representation over her career, if we forget her contradictions. Critics have long pointed to the late 1730s as the rupture in her career, the moment of "reform" from superficial writer of erotic tales to moralistic author of domestic fiction. Even her most recent biographer, in 1985, says that Haywood was "forced" by Pope's masculinist satire into a kind of self-suppression—in a rape-like account of literary history.[22] While this account has been contested, it has tenacity in part because Haywood herself retrospectively narrated her career in terms of reform. However, while she did strike this discursive pose, we can see more of a continuity than a rupture when we consider the continued irony and complexity of her authorial persona, a disintegrated stance which gestured at the possibility of the self as a fiction, a character limned by slippery words and images. Haywood's "reformed" self is just as much of a performance as the scandal-monger author self had been.

Many of Haywood's recent critics have been particularly interested in her feminism—her realistic depiction of women's work, or her indictment of the social forms

and conventions which constrain women, for example.[23] My interest is in Haywood's representation of a particular kind of woman: the female author. The general trend in Haywood criticism presents her as a conservative proto-feminist with the desire to instruct her less emancipated female readers. This view tends to generalize Haywood's multiple narratorial poses into one voice, usually that of the Female Spectator, her most famous work.[24] While many critics have noted the parallels between her heroines and her authorial self, I will go further, and argue that she figured her authorship in certain characters in an ironic manner that intentionally destabilizes her authoritative pose.

Unlike the other authors in my study, Eliza Haywood left no written record of her life: a few letters, some scattered receipts, certainly no memoirs, not even a burned one like Byron's. For the others, these traces have helped fans and scholars construct biographies. In Haywood's oeuvre, we have few traces, and less direct statement from "the real Eliza Haywood," but we can still reconstruct the chameleon figure of her author-self. When Haywood entered the scene as an actress and then novel-writer, the conflation of female actress or writer and prostitute was a commonplace in the social imagination, like the conflation of women and gossips, and like that of novelist—a new category—and scandal-monger.[25] Haywood playfully unfolded the ramifications and ironies of this triad of associations in her self-representations as popular author, emancipated woman, and cultural-moral authority. Rather than see this as a purely feminist project, I want to widen the scope to suggest that she was articulating a modern problem of authorship in a literary marketplace, and that the author-prostitute pose was just one disguise, though her most elaborated self-figuration. This was a relatively new situation, during the transition from a patronage economy of authorship to a marketplace. Later authors such as Sterne and Byron recognized the inevitability of the problem of the scandalized self of the celebrity author which Haywood articulated decades earlier. Haywood's variety of productions, her prolific writing, and the changes in tone and style over her career, have been seen as everything from the economic opportunism of an unserious celebrity to the cruel coercion of a victimized woman who was only trying to make a living. While there may be some truth to these characterizations, her chameleonizing may also be seen as a conscious practice of the self as a performance—a way of playing with the freedoms and constraints of being a commodity, a name, an object of fame.

Haywood's evasion of the regulating, anchoring, and unifying author functions may be one of the reasons for her elision in the traditional canon of early novelists. Her authorship has been difficult to categorize, and has therefore been discounted. The confusion of her professional identities as actress, bookseller, and author contributes to this problem. As Wahrman has observed, in the eighteenth century, the identities of actors while acting was one area of confusion in the culture-wide problematic of personal identity. It was generally said that an actor actually *became* the character he played while still retaining consciousness of his usual identity. Thus, while on stage, he was believed to have a dual identity.[26] Rather than unifying and regulating the fictive, an actor actually opened up its polysemous possibilities. Haywood's multiple professional roles made a mutable identity a reality for her. More than economic opportunity, these roles offered her the opportunity to create a larger-than-life character, the celebrity-commodity "Eliza

Haywood." Her innovative and ironic cast of mind gave her a practical agency that enabled her to keep circulating, evading the categories in which her detractors tried to ensnare her. The writer of scandal is suspended between her high moralizing disdain and her low propagation of scandal. This ironic suspension is Haywood's favored position. But rather than providing a haven for the "real self" of the author, her suspension between categories enacts her insight that there is no identity separate from its public, performed manifestations. As an author/actor, she performed both against and within her readers' projections of roles, such as that of licentious writer.

This characterization in particular is a node of significance for her author-function, because unification and the containment of proliferation are gestures diametrically opposed to those of the author/whore who wrote prolifically, constantly generating new plots with their climaxes and deferrals, always putting out to feed the public appetite for titillation, fictional scandals, and the punishment of those who transgressed the limits of the socially acceptable. The often pat and anticlimactic punishment of fallen women in Haywood's novels speaks ironically to the dynamic between the prolific author and the demands of the public for more. The author is a transgressive figure who is excused, on some level, because she fills a need. In his study of early eighteenth-century popular literature, John Richetti says that highwaymen and whores who are punished at the end of their narratives are in effect scapegoats:

> [They] are heroes, in that their stories are gratifying fantasies of freedom—moral, economic, and erotic. But this freedom is necessarily desperate, for the social myth includes the fear that divine surveillance and mysterious retribution are inescapable. The criminal's end, whether stressed in the narrative or not, provides further gratification and completes the myth, as he suffers for the guilty power and independence which he and his readers have desired and enjoyed.[27]

The last clause here is interesting for its pronoun ambiguity, where "his" could apply to the criminal or the writer, and suggests the way Haywood was conflated with her erotically excitable heroines and risqué plots, becoming herself a heroine and scapegoat for her reading public. She of course encouraged this, in several ways.

In this chapter, I will consider texts from several moments in Haywood's career in an attempt to describe and account for the ruptures and continuities of her author-self. The author is a paradoxical figure who aims to please her audience while also critiquing them for the blindness she herself has imposed. Her early persona was defined by scandal, and I will argue that rather than reforming, she made this model of self more implicit, and like her 1725 character Fantomina, succeeded, to a certain point, in controlling the terms which defined her and in implicating her readers in scandal. Her figure of authorial self also contained self-critique, which I will analyze in the main character of the 1742 *Anti-Pamela*. Experimentation with hybrid forms was inseparable from her construction of an author-self who was complex, shape-shifting, ironic, scandalous, decentered, and inauthentic, the culmination of which is in her periodical of the late 1740s, *The Female Spectator*.

The Chameleon Author-Character of *Fantomina*

Fantomina is a story about a woman who finds freedom in disguise—specifically, sexual freedom in a series of disguises which make her something of a chameleon. The protagonist, whose name we never learn, serially seduces the same man, Beauplaisir. She adopts various guises, which signify different stations in women's lives and social classes, and dupes him, implausibly, four times. First she plays the high-class prostitute, Fantomina, who seduces him at the theater; next she is Celia the chambermaid at Bath; Mrs. Bloomer, the widow, earns his pity and attraction on the road; finally, the aristocratic, masked Lady lures him to her house. While he never suspects she is the same person, his imagination conflates the versions of his lover in a palimpsestic sexual fantasy which only makes him desire her more. The implausibility of his blindness makes this novella less of a foray into realism than some of Haywood's later fictions, but it is really no less plausible than the pratfalls and coincidences that contrive the storylines of *Roderick Random* or *Joseph Andrews*, which appeared on the scene two decades later. Still, there is an element of parable beneath the drive of the plot of *Fantomina* which invites interpretation as one of her statements of feminism. It also seems to tell a parable about authorship.

Fantomina, a relatively early work, contains many of the themes, rhetorical strategies, and figures of the author which will interest Haywood throughout her career. Here, we have the scandal of female desire and sexual aggressiveness; the confusion of fiction and reality; the blurred intersubjectivity in the act of sexual consent[28]; a woman playing with anonymity and disguise; free indirect discourse, or, another way to blur subjectivities; an exposé of the social conventions which can determine behavior, in particular gendered behavior; the figure of the chameleon heroine, an artist who plots her own scandal and can be seen as anticipating the shape-shifting of the author. The novella has been read, most notably by Catherine Ingrassia, as an exploration of the economics of femininity. In a recent article Tiffany Potter argues that Haywood demonstrates, "through her most sexually disruptive female character, women's capacity to manipulate and control the signs by which her social, economic and sexual position as woman is perceived and constructed by the public majority."[29] My reading will focus the lens down from women in general to the woman author. In this novella, through a kind of rhetorical suggestiveness, Haywood constructs a figure of the female author in her protagonist—a woman who enjoys freedom from social constraint because of her plotting—and makes an implicit critique of readers who would simplify that figure into an object for purchase.

Haywood wrote *Fantomina* in 1725, at the height of her early popularity. The manner of its publication gives us some sense of the demand for her work. *Fantomina* appeared in a volume entitled *Secret Histories, Novels and Poems*, a collection of twelve works of which seven had already appeared in a collection, the 1724 *The Works of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*. She was known for her fast-selling amatory fiction and scandal narratives. During the year intervening between these two publications, she also published eight works anonymously. However, several of these works pointed obliquely to Haywood through their title-page attributions, "by the Author of The Masqueraders," or through the semi-transparency of the scandalous content to readers in-the-know. In his enormously valuable *Bibliography of Eliza Haywood*, Patrick Spedding speculates that

Haywood published under her own name when she was trying to increase or capitalize on her reputation, and that there may have been several reasons for choosing anonymity at other times: "to protect herself in the case of libelous or seditious works, to engender interest by concealing her authorship, or to dissociate herself from her works, either because there was a danger the public would tire of so prolific an author or because her name had become a liability," especially after Pope attacked her in *The Dunciad*.[30] In the year previous to the publication of *Secret Histories*, Haywood anonymously published two scandal-narratives—*Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* and *Bath Intrigues*—and *A Spy Upon a Conjurer*, a book about the seer Duncan Campbell in which she satirized one of her literary rivals, Martha Fowke Sansom. Curiosity about the disguised author of these popular works was high.[31] *Fantomina* responds obliquely to the experience of anonymous authorship by suggesting the activities of its author in its protagonist's play with disguises.

Haywood found an apt figure for these activities in the chameleon. When the protagonist (whom I will call "Fantomina") seeks to hire some "squires of low repute," she goes to the Mall to find men who "take a *Camelion* treat, and fill their stomachs with Air instead of Meat."[32] This strange near-couplet's meanings are layered; it refers to the popular supposition that chameleons ate air as well as to the way another man, Beauplaisir, takes a chameleon–Fantomina–for a treat without knowing he is the one eating air, feeding his desire for several women with the emptied identity of one woman whose material body, whose meat, though it attracts him, is as unrecognizable and empty of significance as air. The figure may also refer to the reader, nourishing his appetite for easy entertainment with a novel that lacks real meat. Implicit in this possibility is the undercurrent of self-criticism and criticism of her readers, which occurs in many of Haywood's works. Like the author, the masquerading character of *Fantomina*, whose real name we never learn, evades categorization and creates her own practical agency by taking on different disguises, or rhetorical guises. Her slippery identity, posturing, and control over scandal enable her self-determination. She writes her own story and manipulates her reader/lover—at least until she is impregnated, trapped by an embodiment she can't take off like a disguise. Beauplaisir discovers her identity, no longer invisible as air, just as the scandal-novel readers discovered Haywood's identity before too long. The plot driven by her plotting ends with her ambiguous punishment: she is sent to a monastery "in *France*," a setting which for contemporary readers might have brought to mind the recently published pornographic novel *Venus in the Cloister; or, The Nun in Her Smock*.[33]

In addition to linking their experience thematically, Haywood invites us to see a parallel between Fantomina and the author through her use of the emergent narratorial technique of free indirect discourse, which creates an ambiguous authorial stance. The narrator's shiftiness may be seen as inextricably tied to the social dynamic between the reading public Haywood's popularity helped to create and the celebrity author figure which was mutually imagined by readers and the author herself. Rather than looking for a linear track of causation, we have to see feedback loops in which the larger-than-life "Eliza Haywood" created herself and her reading public and was created by them, and in which her rhetorical innovations projected new possibilities for the representation of the

subjectivities of fictional characters, readers, and the author just as these innovations came out of new possibilities—economic, cultural, social—for author and reader. The shifting perspective and polyvocality of free indirect discourse enable Haywood to provide in narratorial direct discourse the requisite moral commentary on her character's questionable motives and actions, and to distance herself from these commonplaces to suggest a more sympathetic and psychological view, thus meeting at once different social expectations and desires.

In the first sentences of the novella, Haywood presents the protagonist from the outside, as she might be described by "the World" ("of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit, and Spirit"), and from the inside, as a perceiving, reflective person. The unnamed "young Lady" reads and interprets a scene in the audience at the playhouse: "she perceived several Gentlemen extremely pleased themselves with entertaining a Woman who…by her Air and Manner of receiving them might easily be known" as a prostitute (41). The narrator then reinforces the sense of the protagonist as a contemplative, psychologically complex person by contrasting her with "some Ladies that sat by her" who are "not of a Disposition to consider any Thing very deeply." We have here an implicitly created coterie of those who *do* consider things deeply: the protagonist, the author, and the reader. In addition, this presentation of the young Lady's character emphasizes the author's implicit point that the ensuing story, though driven by sexual desire, begins in acts of the mind like those of reading (observation, reflection, interpretation): "She still thought of it, however; and the longer she reflected on it, the greater was her Wonder, that Men, some of whom she knew were accounted to have Wit, should have Tastes so very depraved.—This excited a Curiosity in her to know in what Manner these Creatures were address'd" (41). Haywood may have emphasized this cerebral origin for the story, and the psychological depth of her heroine, as a way of intellectualizing the erotic content of the story by presenting it as a social experiment. (Recall Savage's praise: "The sciences in thy sweet genius charm, / And, with their strength, thy sex's softness arm.") For Fantomina, sexual play is a means to knowledge. However, science here has to be chastened, and sexual experimentation results in other ends too: maternity, which doubly subjects her when her mother returns and she gets pregnant; the end of her series of plots; and the end of the author's plot.

A cerebral heroine also provides the possibility for a psychological study of a woman who perceives the sexual double standard of her society and discovers a way to enjoy freedom from its constraints for a while—a description that could also serve the figure of the female author, especially one who employs the mask of anonymity. Like an author bent on seducing the same readers again, the heroine "provided herself of another Disguise to carry on a third Plot, which her inventing Brain had furnished her with, once more to renew his twice-decay'd Ardours" (53). This description aligns Beauplaisir with Haywood's readers, who may tire of the many manifestations of "Eliza Haywood" unless they come masked or anonymous. Interchangeably, author and character offer multiple and contradictory satisfactions to the reader: they shed light on social inequities (of both gender and class), they offer a fantasy of escape from these constraints, and, through moralizing and punishment, they restore the status quo after these dangerous transgressions. These mutually exclusive attitudes coexist because of Haywood's use of

free indirect discourse, which allows her to distance the narrator from a woman so audacious with her desire, and to create a more complex authorial viewpoint which does not necessarily undercut the narrator's moralistic statements. She is able to appeal to two opposite desires in her readers: the desire for didactic and moralistic commentary, and for erotic fantasy.

Richetti says that the strong appeal of moral didacticism for early eighteenth-century readers came from "the fear of divine surveillance and mysterious retribution" (35), but, in the case of *Fantomina*, the surveillance Haywood is keenly aware of is social rather than divine. Fantomina and the narrator frequently consider the relation and difference between virtue and reputation; for Fantomina, the fear of social humiliation is much stronger than any kind of religious guilt. The narrator explicitly disapproves of the moral degradation of Fantomina, but her moralistic statements are often followed by a gradual blurring into Fantomina's point of view. After Fantomina's initial "undoing" and her first lie to her aunt (in whose house she stays while visiting London), the narrator states:

> Thus did the Lady's Wit and Vivacity assist her in all, but where it was most needful.—She had Discernment to foresee, and avoid all those Ills which might attend the Loss of her *Reputation*, but was wholly blind to those of the Ruin of her *Virtue*; and having managed her Affairs so as to secure the *one*, grew perfectly easy with the Remembrance, she had forfeited the *other*.
>
> (49)

In these sentences, we already have a slight shift in narratorial attitude. The first sentence is clearly disapproving. The second is more circumspect and interior, though still judgmental. The force of the judgment, however, weakens in the suggestion that the relative values of virtue and reputation may be interchangeable, insubstantial as air.

The equivocal sentence is followed in the text immediately by another dash, which both divides and joins the points of view contained in the sentences it links. After this ambiguous punctuation mark, the narrative voice clearly inhabits the character's consciousness:

> The more she reflected on the Merits of Beauplaisir, the more she excused herself for what she had done: and the Prospect of that continued Bliss she expected to share with him, took from her all Remorse for having engaged in an Affair which promised her so much Satisfaction, and in which she found not the least Danger of Misfortune. (49)

This reflection also promises the reader a certain satisfaction: the prospect of continuing to read of her Bliss. The shift in narratorial perspective continues, and the reader overhears Fantomina's thoughts, following another dash:

> If he is really (*said she, to herself*) the faithful, the constant Lover he has sworn to be, how charming will be our Amour?—And if he should be false, grow satiated, like other Men, I shall but, at the worst, have the private Vexation of knowing I have lost him;—the Intreague being a Secret, my Disgrace will be so too:—I shall hear no Whispers as I pass… nor will my Wrongs excite the Mirth or Pity of the talking World:—It will not be even in the Power of my Undoer himself to triumph over me; and while he laughs at, and perhaps despises the fond, the yielding

Fantomina, he will revere and esteem the virtuous, the reserv'd Lady.
(49)

Just as the narrative viewpoint, and sympathies, shade like a chameleon into Fantomina's consciousness, the reader may find herself feeling something like sympathy or identification simply because of the author's subtle shifting of perspective. And just as Fantomina keeps her scandal secret and personal—hidden even from Beauplaisir—this scandal of readerly identification remains a private experience, which doubles the sympathetic experience of the scandalized self. We might recall here William Warner's discussion of the "scandal of the reading body," which experiences sensations aroused by erotic scenes in novels like Fantomina.[34] There is also a scandal of the reading mind aroused to identification by the articulation of the psychological workings of desire. Haywood suggests more here than the possibility for private experiences of sympathy in the act of reading. She also implies that a potential scandal, one that doesn't exist in the form of the words of "the talking World," may be morally neutral. In other words, if her "Disgrace is a secret," and the only surveillance she fears is social and not divine, then it is not really a disgrace—a line of reasoning that serves to critique the social ideology of sexual chastity-as-virtue.

Implicit in this ideology is the conflation of a woman's sexual integrity with her self. *Fantomina* attacks this assumption as well in its representation of a woman who moves with a plurality of selves which depend on social context for their identity. When this woman puts on a disguise she acquires a new identity. But rather than displacing her proper—her chaste, and her own—identity, or being simply a disguise, this new identity coexists with and penetrates the other. She moves with a split consciousness, which is not simply a disjunction between outward appearance and inward reflections. As "reflections" suggests, the dynamic between these parts of her consciousness is more complicated. Haywood was interested in representing the complex dynamic between behavior and motivations, actions and their sources in plans or urges. Fantomina's outward appearance includes behavior, which comes from internal motivations and which in turn alters her psyche, or emotional life, or self, in its effects. Her disguise alters her identity as well as her self; not only does she wear the clothes of a prostitute, but she acquires some of her experience as well.

When we read Fantomina as a figure of the author, we see that her disguise, the persona she puts on for the world, is not a protective measure for the privacy of the self. It is continuous with the self, a modification of the self, a site of play for the question of personal identity. Gallagher writes, in her analysis of Aphra Behn's self-representation, "The professional woman author as prostitute is internally divided: what can be seen of her is never what she is, but the theatrical inauthenticity of what can be seen implies the existence of some hidden woman directing the drama of her self-sale."[35] This kind of internal division seems to provide an accurate description of what Haywood was up to with her frontispiece portrait, but the implied representation of authorial self in *Fantomina* suggests a complicated consequence of this hiddenness. The female author as self-fashioner and self-seller may not have a hidden self; perhaps her only essence is her desire, which leads her to inhabit new selves—a possibility that contains an implicit attack on the cultural conflation of women's selves with their desire or chastity. Or there

may only be the socially constructed manifestations, the self that is made of its own representations and the representations reflected back upon it by the reading, watching world. Fantomina's hidden identity is finally revealed to her reader, Beauplaisir, but when it is known it has been altered by the experiences of the fictive identity; all he ever comes to know is the collection of names that designate the many identities she had, but not the self she has. What about the reader of the novel? We may see a glimpse of her hidden self because the rhetorical mode of the narrative represents her interiority. But this self constantly blurs into the consciousness of the narrator and has its most vivid existence when it is disguised or reflecting upon its disguises.

In a way parallel to her split consciousness, Fantomina's identity is split between the realm of fiction and the experience of reading, or between the points of view of her two kinds of readers: Beauplaisir, and the novel reader. Haywood mirrors a posited naïve reader in Beauplaisir; tricked by her surface style, he never discovers her true identity. When he reads her external appearance—as prostitute, chambermaid, or widow—each disguise signifies a certain identity because she is an object social norms have taught him how to interpret. As the reader knows, he interprets wrongly. We read, instead of the heroine's representation of an identity, Haywood's representation of her act of representation and the thoughts and feelings which accompany it. We read Fantomina as an object—a fictional literary character—whom we're expected to interpret as a subject who is, like her author, a self-authoring, self-fictionalizing subject. Fantomina plots scenarios for her different identities, and Beauplaisir never suspects their fictive nature in part because they are based on such common storylines. It is as if Fantomina appeals to him as a reader of social situations who will respond in the expected way to expected commonplaces. About halfway through the story, the narrator addresses the reader's probable disbelief:

> I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility [but] she was so admirably skill'd in the Art of feigning, that she had the Power of putting on almost what Face she pleas'd, and knew so exactly how to form her Behavior to the Character she represented, that all the Comedians at both Playhouses are infinitely short of her Performances: She could vary her very Glances, tune her Voice to Accents the most different imaginable from those in which she spoke when she appear'd herself. (57)

She is like the best of actresses, a title Eliza Haywood probably strove for at certain points in her career. Suggestively, Haywood contrasts acting not with speaking in her own voice but with "appear[ing] herself." How is this appearance to be differentiated from her other appearances? The concept of self implicit here shades into appearance. Which is the meat, which the air?

The proper name presents similar problems in *Fantomina*. By 1725, Haywood has become a well-known figure in the public imagination, and in this novel she playfully explores the ramifications of "being a name." The text asks, what's in a name? What is identity, if the connection between body and name can become attenuated or even unperceived. We never learn the protagonist's true name, but instead know her through her self-designations of Fantomina, Celia, Mrs. Bloomer, and Incognita. Like her disguises, and related to them metonymically, her names are empty and inauthentic, and

yet they have real effects in the world. In a kind of inverse of the masquerade, in which class distinctions are suspended, Fantomina's disguises reveal the ways in which social position determines behavior.[36] The protagonist modifies her performance according to the class of her persona; and Beauplaisir behaves differently to each, taking them more or less seriously as a lover. For example, his seduction of the widow Mrs. Bloomer is polite, hesitant, and decorous, while his fling with Celia, the lowest in social class of the four, is the briefest and most rambunctious. His blindness and class-prejudice aid his arousal when his interest flags and he resorts to fantasy, imagining the body of the Lady while having sex with Fantomina—actually, of course, *the* body he imagines: "her Resemblance to this celebrated Lady, might keep his Inclination alive something longer than otherwise…. It was to the Thoughts of this (as he supposed) unenjoy'd Charmer, she ow'd in great measure the Vigour of his latter Caresses" (50). Different names, behavior, and costumes, as they play into his social prejudices, blind him to the real person —in the sense of personality and of body. The way her "resemblance" to her real identity incites more desire in Beauplaisir suggests a reason for Haywood to drop hints about the author's identity in her anonymous works. For example, the placement of an advertisement for works "by Eliza Haywood" within the anonymously authored scandal novel *Secret History of the Private Intrigues of the Court of Caramania* may be seen as a partial unmasking with an eye on profit.

The author's identification with her protagonist, her ability to articulate and describe the psychological workings of desire and her implied experience, along with her readers' knowledge of her as an actress, combined in the public imagination with Haywood's self-representation as scandalized author/whore. She employs this common figure of the female author in part to play up aspects of her relationship with her readers. Through the use of parallels with her protagonist, she suggests her readers' complicity in her prostitution; they are mirrored in Beauplaisir, with his insatiable appetite for sexual (textual) novelty, his class biases, and his blind spots. And she invites her readers to identify with her/her character in fantasy: their prostitution has its freedoms and rewards, and was chosen. The author's representation in her upper class heroine elides the prostitute's goal—profit—and substitutes for it sexual and intellectual stimulation. The reader may identify with the protagonist safely, because she is not a real prostitute—not mercenary, ruined or depraved—but a "young Lady of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit, and Spirit." The identification will have its exciting risks, however, because when she takes on the disguise, she also takes on the behavior and experience of the prostitute, even though her series of affairs are all with one man. Her simultaneous promiscuity and monogamy allow the female reader to identify with her in two modes: through improper fantasy and through empathy with proper feelings (love and constancy).

Fantomina is less of a prostitute than Syrena Tricksy, of *Anti-Pamela*, but Richetti's description of the stock character of "whore biography" could apply to Fantomina and Syrena, as much as to the figure of the female author Haywood suggests. The whore is:

> the opportunist *par excellence*, the entrepreneur who exploits her fallen condition to rise in the world of men…. She achieves power, pleasure (she takes great personal pleasure in her work; there are no suffering whores with hearts of gold

> and tender sensibilities), and independence impossible to eighteenth-century un-emancipated woman. Her success is an absolute denial of the theoretical definitions of society and social worthiness, for her activities are really a form of radical social aggression.[37]

The popular literature Richetti refers to here circulated simultaneously with Haywood's novels, which were generally directed at more affluent readers. While Haywood sometimes presents herself as a serious, well-educated, morally upright author catering to the delight and instruction of upper class readers, (a description that would have been suggested by the expensive edition of *Secret Histories* in which *Fantomina* appeared), her rhetorical self-representation as author-whore invokes the popular fantasy of freedom Richetti sketches. Like Fantomina, she satisfies contradictory readerly desires by playing up different possibilities of identification.

With *Fantomina*, Haywood scandalizes her readers by representing social assumptions as blinders, and class as something as flimsy as a costume; by representing the utility of sexual fantasy, and, more generally, the pleasure of fantasy, of which novel-reading is a type. And she scandalizes by mimicking her character, playing into the blind spots of readers as she chameleonizes and goes "incognita" as an anonymous author. Haywood suggests that identity may be a performance, and that the self who wears the disguise is modified or even constituted by its performance. This play must be acted by persons—bodies with names—but bodies are no more reliable as signifiers than names. Haywood defines her authorial self, too, with the trope of masquerade, "a scene of bacchanalian experimentation with the protean mutability of identity."[38] While masqueraders go back to their usual identities after the party, Haywood suggests that for someone who designates herself, on some title pages, "The Author of *The Masqueraders*," the mutability of identity has no limit. Because she is a celebrity author, every time she writes, or appears as a name, a text, or a person, she plays a role defined in part by her audience. While her practice of the self participates in the culture-wide "*ancien régime* of identity," it focuses the problematic in the specific domain of commercial authorship.

Sixteen Years Later: The Duplicitous, Disguised, Plotting Character/Author of *Anti-Pamela*

Anti-Pamela sits at the center of a matrix of contradictory authorial guises. In 1741 Haywood opened a bookselling and printing shop at the Sign of Fame in Covent Garden, where *Anti-Pamela* was published, though not under her name[39]; her shop—or stall—would have been surrounded by brothels and coffee houses, and it is highly likely that she sold all kinds of erotica, pornographic prints, contraceptives, and libelous pamphlets along with more reputable writings. Spedding has discovered six works published under her imprint, including a pornographic poem by her long-time companion William Hatchett. Many of her potential customers would have been those in the neighborhood for reasons other than book buying.[40] When she writes and sells *Anti-Pamela* in this setting, she performs a layered act of identity-play.

Working both sides of the trade, in 1742 Haywood also wrote two "virtuous" texts: an anonymously published conduct book for servant maids (which exploited the

success of *Pamela*) and a translation of a French novel of the 1730s by Chevalier de Mouhy, *La Paysanne Parvenue*, titled by Haywood *The Virtuous Villager* and advertised as translated by "the author of *La Belle Assemblée*," one of Haywood's popular works from the 1720s. Several months later, in 1743, she translated with William Hatchett Claude-Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon's very popular 1742 erotic novel *La Sopha*.[41] The main character and narrator is a fop who, with an exotic orientalizing twist, has been reincarnated. He relates his adventures from a previous life in which he existed in the form of a succession of sofas, where many scandalous scenes took place. Like the earlier scandal-narratives of Delarivier Manley or Haywood, the novel employed exotic settings, double-entendres and fictive names to caricature and satirize well-known public figures. It enjoyed enormous success in England both in French and in the Haywood-Hatchett translation. Several months previously to writing *Anti-Pamela*, Haywood republished *The Unfortunate Princess,* an extended satirical attack on Sir Robert Walpole which had originally been published, anonymously, as *The Adventures of Eovaai,* in 1736. And in 1749, years after she criticized scandal-mongering in *The Female Spectator* (about which more later), she wrote *Dalinda*, a scandal-narrative exposing the adulterous affair of two well-known contemporaries. I point out all of these writing and publishing activities to highlight that fact that, contrary to common assumptions about Haywood's mid-career reform, the 1740s were not a time of transition from immoral to moral writings. No narrative of authorial integrity will neaten up the scandalously irreconcilable forms taken by Haywood's authorship. While she encouraged the story of a reform, especially in *The Female Spectator*, behind the partial mask of anonymity she continued to play the chameleon.

Anti-Pamela contains these contradictions in its figuration of the author in its prostitute-character, by which she ironically criticizes her former self as serial-seductress-author and her former and present prostitute-author-self who must sell herself to get by. But while it contains self-criticism, *Anti-Pamela* also defends the economic savvy of its heroine who puts out what sells, and who gets by with her own ability at constructing plots.[42] As in *Fantomina*, Haywood aligns the main character with a figure of the author as successful schemer always able to come up with new plots, and as a sometimes successful economic opportunist able to identify and cater to particular market niches. And, significantly, it is when Syrena writes that she gets in trouble.

Like Fantomina, Syrena is a serial seductress. But commerce, rather than science, defines the practices of this later chameleon/prostitute heroine. Sexual play and the textual play of plotting, in *Anti-Pamela*, are means to the two ends of pleasure and profit. Syrena ensnares many men, always aiming for more wealth, position, or freedom, and always caught in her conniving duplicity. Trained by her mother in the art seducing men through the appearance of innocence and virtue, by her teens Syrena Tricksy is launched on her life of trickery. Her given project is to acquire wealth and status by becoming the wife or mistress with legally-drawn-up financial support of a well-to-do gentleman. In the beginning, she is naïve if not innocent, and falls for the gallantries of a lieutenant who has nothing to offer her; she terminates her only pregnancy, and decides to aim higher. This first plot also aborts her more proper apprenticeship, which thus leaves her with no skills that might lead to her making an honest living. In each of her subsequent

seductions, she manages to extract money from men until they discover her duplicity. The discovery often comes in the form of written proof—letters from her mother to her detailing the plots they concocted together. Over time, her life of all-but-in-name prostitution becomes more debased and she grows less careful in her plotting. Her final punishment is poverty and ignominy in Wales.

As is clear from its title, the novel is an explicit critique of Richardson's *Pamela*, even while it parasitically exploits the success of that work. In the character of Syrena Tricksy, Haywood takes the negative characteristics of Pamela that she and other "anti-Pamelists" such as Henry Fielding see, such as her social ambition, materialism, and manipulativeness, and exaggerates them; Syrena is selfish, acquisitive, duplicitous and conniving in the extreme. *Anti-Pamela* makes a general critique of Richardson's novel: the character of Pamela, ostensibly a paragon of virtue, writes words which may be interpreted as those of a conniving woman; Richardson represents the work of servants unrealistically: (what servant girl would have found the leisure or time to write so many letters?); the authorial stance of moral authority can be seen as hypocritical; and Richardson overwrites the novelistic form Haywood helped to invent and popularize, with a new form that may be just as unrealistic and no less voyeuristic than those novels of amorous intrigue. The general parody in *Anti-Pamela*, however, concentrates its energies in its critical exposure of the problems in competing representations of authorship. While Haywood figures the author as prostitute critically, she is just as critical of Richardson's alternative author figure, whose proprietorship and implied erasure by the epistolary form she sees as a mystification of the author's scandalized existence as a commercial subject and object.

Haywood makes this implicit argument in part through the parodic use of letters. While Pamela's letters reveal her sincerity to their reader, Mr. B, Syrena's reveal her insincerity and duplicity to her lovers/dupes. Letters in *Anti-Pamela* are linked with the exposure of artifice aimed at profit, which points critically at Pamela for using (in)sincerity as a ploy and at her author, Richardson, whose use of the epistolary form is a rhetorical sign for the author's sincerity, for the absence of his plotting mind. In other words, Richardson's authorial pose is an imposture of artlessness. Haywood's critique of Richardson, however, serves a larger purpose. *Anti-Pamela* may be read as an expression of frustration about the commercial situation of the author: she is prostituted, pimped out by her publishers, and the profits are not all her own; her identity is parceled according to her intended market, which determines how she will appear and behave; she must constantly exercise "her prolific Brain" with inventing a new plot and not seem mercenary but instead eager to please.[43] As an allegory of authorship, the text is at one self-critical and self-vindicating—a typically Haywoodian contradiction. For there is also pleasure for Syrena in her sexual economics. Like other Haywood novels, *Anti-Pamela* "does more than demonstrate that romantic heterosexual relationships are fundamentally ones of obligation, debt, and credit. [Haywood] places her characters in financial situations specifically defined by speculative investment."[44] On this topic, the novel is multi-layered; the author, like the character, engages in speculative investment by producing the plots and style she thinks her readers will buy; and readers, too, engage in speculative emotional investment every time they become absorbed in a novel. The

reader's pleasure derives directly from this speculation, in which, as Gallagher argues, "there were no apparent stakes…; one did not risk one's own heart or fortune in sympathizing with the adventures of purely imaginary beings."[45]

Let us first consider *Anti-Pamela*'s representation of the pleasures of plotting. Often, Syrena and her mothers' letters advance the plot of the novel by scheming about how to advance their plot. When Syrena is living "like a nun" with an old gentleman who employs her as a housekeeper-companion and who, she knows, loves her, she writes to her mother to discuss ways to incite him to action:

> I very plainly see he loves me, but for what End I know not, and fancy that he has also a kind of struggle within himself what he shall do concerning me—I wish therefore that there could be something contrived to put him in fear of losing me.[46]

This representation of thinking of a plot creates novelistic suspense as it mimics the novelist's task of thinking of a plot. The subsequent letters between Syrena and her mother suggest the novelist's further task of contriving a plot which will be plausible and which will create certain psychological and emotional responses in her reader/dupe:

> I think this looks as if he had kind of Inclination to make me his Wife, only the Fear of the World's Censure, and the Dissatisfaction it would be to his Children, hinders him from coming to any Resolution about it.---I am almost sure, if he could be made to believe I refused some good Offer for the sake of living with him, Jealousy and Gratitude would spur him up to a Determination in my Favour. (180)

When Syrena's plots fail, as this one does, it is not often because they lack an essential quality but because the greater novelistic plot takes its prerogative to advance itself at the expense of Syrena's success.

These failures point to the unpredictable end of plots circulating in an open market and underline the way plots can turn into scandals. Often, it is Syrena's own writing which gets her in trouble, as when an incriminating letter is lost when the mail-carrier is robbed and then is delivered to her master and dupe Sir Thomas. Sometimes Syrena loses control of her own scandal and is scandalized by the writings of others, as when the jilted Mr. D--- takes revenge by "making Publick," in other words, publishing, her wrongs. This episode also points to the satisfactions of scandal-writing. Mr. D--- writes to his "Base Monster": "your Character shall be made Publick, to warn all Mankind from falling into those Snares, so fatal to the Reputation and Peace of Mind of D---" (140). He subsequently writes "all the Particulars of this fatal Adventure [so that] it might be made publick, as a Warning to Gentlemen, how they inadvertently are drawn into Acquaintance with Women of *Syrena's* Character" (144). This representation of his act of revenge almost quotes the title-page description of this novel as a cautionary tale for men, thus suggesting the close relation between fiction- and scandal-writing as well as the power of published words.

Publishing as revenge is an implicit theme in *Anti-Pamela* with ramifications for Haywood's alignment of character and author. Economic terminology and gambling metaphors occur throughout the novel, to emphasize the fact that, unlike many of the heroines of earlier amatory fiction, Syrena has erotic adventures which are business

ventures involving risk and real work. This rhetorical layer of the novel critiques the publishing system in which Haywood participated. Very few writers owned their own copyrights or managed the publications of their works.[47] Patrick Spedding writes in the *Bibliography* that *Anti-Pamela* was probably "the first work that Haywood wrote with the intention of publishing by herself"—though not with her name on it as author (356). It was first published under the name of J. Huggonson, probably in partnership with Haywood, and then reissued four months later by Francis Cogan, to whom she and Huggonson had probably sold the copyright because they couldn't afford a very large printing or needed to raise some capital for other publishing ventures, since it was at this time when Haywood was trying to break into the publishing and book-selling business at her shop in Covent Garden. Spedding says that copyrights were regularly carved up and auctioned off.[48] Haywood may have been feeling some frustration with the publishing business at this time, and it is not a stretch to suggest that Syrena's mother/pimp could be a figure for the publishers and book-sellers who in a sense owned their authors. When Syrena's "cunning Mother" arranges an affair for her with "a rich Portuguese Merchant" (126) it is understood as an exchange not unlike a case of Grub Street patronage, in which the patron will "contribute to the Relief of the Necessities she complained of" in exchange for a *corpus*: "he gave his Gold, and *Syrena* her Person" (127). Syrena is just as cunning as her mother/publisher, though, and seeks multiple patrons who occupy different places in the market. The amount she earns depends on the market niche she is able to appeal to and how much she is able to "put out." Syrena, like Fantomina, is a self-marketer who gauges the needs of the market, and tries to provide what would be most welcome. This, of course, is not unlike what Haywood does in the wake of *Pamela*'s success when she supposes that a translation of *La Sopha* would be welcomed by readers in spite of the demand for more didactic and morally upstanding reading. The element of risk, in this case, was probably the main reason for her anonymity.

The risk in any gamble is a source of fun, but also of anger, a mixture which contributes to the difficulty of gauging the moral stance of the author. She ostensibly condemns the behavior of "these vile Creatures" whom she calls, in the same paragraph, with more ambiguous tone, "our female Plotters" (121) and ultimately punishes them. But the cruelty which accompanies the single-minded self-interest of the Tricksys is like a vast revenge fantasy against the society which created the monsters that they are. Everyone is culpable in this story (except for two innocent women—the fiancée of Mr. D--- whose misery kills her, and the mercer's wife whose generosity to her false husband is on the order of the angelic). This general culpability is a point of Haywood's deepest criticism of *Pamela*. Mr. B--- is a sexual predator because his place in society allows him to be, and Pamela is an insincere social-climber who uses her "virtue"—a socially-defined idea, which *Anti-Pamela* suggests may be as superficial as dress—to manipulate him into marriage no less artfully than Syrena would. She implicitly criticizes the readers of *Pamela* too, for buying into the social ideology in which virtue is the best women have to offer.

With *Anti-Pamela* Haywood mounts a critique not only of the ideological content and form of *Pamela*, but also of its attempt at controlling its own reception. In his

analysis of "the *Pamela* media event" (176), Warner points out an irony in Richardson's attempt to redefine the subject matter and reading experience of the novel:

> Richardson's use of the familiar letter engages a rhetoric of radical sincerity…. By looping the reader into a familiar, intimate form of reading and writing, he offers a counterthrust to the masked and rhetorical use of language by the novels of amorous intrigue…. Ironically, however… his letter-novels instead draw a space represented as domestic, familiar, and private into the public sphere of print.[49]

Haywood's rebuttal to *Pamela*'s claims to sincerity and transparency picks up on this irony not only by placing Syrena in a hyper-public sphere but also by implying through her figuration of the author that insincerity, rhetorical masks, and disingenuousness, which the author of *Pamela* himself participates in, is inherent in authorship. In addition, when Haywood uses letters in *Anti-Pamela*, it is strategic; they either parody Pamela's letters or advance the plot through a device like interception. Her combination of Richardson's innovation of an epistolary narrative with the more conventional third-person narration enables her to have more narrative freedom while she implicitly critiques the truth-claims of *Pamela*'s form. Haywood's hybrid narrative form also serves the rendering of a character defined by duplicity. It is only with the narrator's help that we can see through the half-truths Syrena writes to her mother, her only correspondent. These half-truths, and the tiffs between mother and daughter, also point to the improbable nature of Pamela's transparent, truthful communications with her parents.

Anti-Pamela responds to the problem of what Warner calls "the duplicitous plasticity of print," or, what could be called the scandal of writing: "that there is nothing within a text to distinguish a true narrative from its false simulation" (210). The sincerity Richardson may have intended is susceptible to interpretations of duplicity, and scandal is latent in Pamela's words, a characteristic of narrative Haywood focused on in many of her texts. Rather than implying that Haywood was a proto-deconstructionist, I mean to suggest that she saw the latent scandal inherent in narrative as a source of novelistic pleasure to be exploited and as a limiting factor on the authority of an author over his or her texts or author-self. *Anti-Pamela*'s focus on exposure may be read as something of a warning to readers not to forget this plasticity, and not to trust the proper author, who is always masked.

Winking Through a Proper, Anonymous Mask: *The Female Spectator*

Who would define "the Nature and Happiness of a virtuous Love" with a quotation from John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester? Though masked by anonymity, wouldn't her sympathetic alignment of her narratorial self with this master of scandal, whom she calls "this illustrious author," have suggested to her readers the face beneath, the famously scandalous Eliza Haywood?[50] This wink is just one of many Haywood makes in the persona of the ostensibly reformed and morally upright Female Spectator.

Based on the successful formula of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *Tatler* and *Spectator*, each volume of *The Female Spectator* consisted of a single long essay written in a conversational style. And like those earlier periodicals, the "author" of the

Female Spectator was an amalgam of fictional and semi-fictional personae. The topics she dealt with focus on the theme of the limitations of women's lives and how to pursue happiness, experience, and security within these limits. The essays range among diverse topics of interest to middle-class women, from the habit of tea-drinking to the study of botany to that most pressing issue of how best to conduct oneself in courtship and marriage. The periodical was issued in twenty-four monthly books of about sixty-four pages each between April 1744 and May 1746. While Eliza Haywood's name did not appear on the title pages, it is likely that her anonymity did not last long and that many readers knew the author's real identity.[51] My discussion will focus on the authorial persona of the Female Spectator, who, I argue, is not the reformed anti-scandal-monger she claims to be and has been mistaken for almost to this day. Instead, she is the chameleon we've met before, a duplicitous and ironic social critic and a fictive corporation.[52]

To provide some context for my revisionary reading of Haywood's author figure in *The Female Spectator*, I will briefly comment on the feminist account of Haywood's reform, which has tenacity in part because it seems to fit so well. Jane Spencer writes that because of the changing ideology of woman in the eighteenth century "chastity in life and a corresponding morality in writing became the necessary basis for a woman writer's reputation."[53] For Spencer, Haywood's mid-career reform demonstrates the cultural force of these new expectations for women writers. She quotes Clara Reeve, from whose 1785 history of the novel, *The Progress of Romance*, Haywood's posthumous reputation in part originates:

> '[Haywood] repented of her faults, and employed the latter part of her life in expiating the offences of the former.—There is reason to believe that the examples of [Behn and Manley] seduced Mrs. *Heywood* [sic] into the same track… [but she] had the singular good fortune to recover a lost reputation, and the yet greater honour to atone for her errors.' Here, the change of tone in Haywood's work after the 1730s—a change no doubt made in response to a change in the literary market—is treated as a personal conversion, and the terms used are sexual ones. Haywood's later moral writing is taken to indicate recovery from a sexual fall. (76)

What is of interest to me is that the Reeve quote and Spencer's commentary both miss the irony, play, and complexity of Haywood's authorial persona. In addition, Spencer does not extricate her own view of Haywood from the ideology she uses the Reeve quote to illustrate. Both see Haywood's career on a pattern laid down by the changing ideology of woman (from seduced to reformed, or from amorous to moral), and both, by imposing this scheme, strip Haywood of some agency: Reeve makes her seduced and then atoning—in both cases submissive; Spencer makes her submissive to the demands of the market. But Haywood was too savvy to be so submissive. Janet Todd, another among many to fall for Haywood's ironic self-fictionalization, characterizes the author of *The Female Spectator* as:

> a much reformed Eliza Haywood, who, [with this text] provided a refined version of the scandalous novels of her youth, stressing the moral and social messages of her anecdotes. …There was a need for a writing persona. …Eliza Haywood in *The Female Spectator* constructed a wise older woman reformed after a youth of 'vanity and Folly'.[54]

I will argue that Haywood's corporate author-figure in *The Female Spectator* is critical of, while submitting with irony to, shifting ideologies and market demands. As she does in her oeuvre at large, in the essays of *The Female Spectator*, Haywood represents—in her heroines and in herself—women who seize control of their well-being in arenas where men are usually in control: the sexual and the financial. (Or she portrays the negative consequences for those who fail to do so.) As Ingrassia argues, Haywood "reconfigures socio-sexual relations but possibly economic ones as well, as women challenge male control of financial resources. Haywood represents her fictional subjects dealing with the economic forces that characterize her own market existence."[55] In so doing, she creates new models of female characters, new possible identities, and a new identity for the female author which rearranges the hierarchy and meaning of authorship.

In the first book of *The Female Spectator*, the author presents her plurality of selves. The nameless narrator describes the "club" of four women who generate the content of the essays and who serve to extend the authority of the narrator into areas of experience she would not have known personally. These women have been assumed by Haywood scholars to represent Haywood and three fictional characters who personify the three acceptable estates of women, defined by marital status: a young attractive virgin named Euphrosine, the happily married Mira, and an honorable "Widow of Quality." As Patrick Spedding writes in his introductory comments on *The Female Spectator*:

> There is little doubt that Haywood was the sole author of *The Female Spectator* despite the references to 'Authors' that appeared in contemporary advertisements…. The three other characters seem to have been created solely for their symbolic and narrative appeal. The fact that Haywood reused the name Mira for *Epistles for the Ladies* and for *The Wife* and Euphrosine for *The Young Lady* indicates a level of proprietorship over these names and characters.[56]

What Spedding's summation of the current critical assumptions misses is the play and irony in such ideas as "sole author" and "proprietorship" in *The Female Spectator* and in Haywood's work in general.

But before the narrator presents this club, she introduces herself to her readers, in the first sentences of *The Female Spectator*:

> In order to be as little deceived as possible, I, for my own part, love to get as well acquainted as I can with an Author, before I run the risque of losing my Time in perusing his Work; and as I doubt not but most People are of this way of thinking, I shall… give some Account of what I am….[57]

The ironies here hint at and obfuscate authorial identity. Since she published the periodical anonymously, how could her readers be acquainted with her, since

acquaintance with "an Author" could only come through previous reading? She suggests that an author can deceive her readers, which the mask of anonymity may certainly be said to do. She offers a self-representation, an "Account of what I am,"—not *who*, which would indicate personality or personhood. And the truth of "what I am" may be taken on faith, or may be the kind of "truth" claimed of novelistic fictions. And even if her authorial identity is known, her readers will still have only the self-representations of "Author Eliza Haywood," which may have elements of deception in it. As she goes on, she hints at her actual identity:

> I never was a Beauty, and am now very far from being young… I shall also acknowledge, that I have run through as many Scenes of Vanity and Folly as the greatest Coquet of them all.—Dress, Equipage, and Flattery, were the Idols of my Heart.—I should have thought that Day lost which did not present me with some new Opportunity of shewing myself.—My Life, for some Years, was a continued Round of what I then called Pleasure, and my whole Time engrossed by a Hurry of promiscuous Diversions.—But whatever Inconveniences such a manner of Conduct has brought upon myself, I have this Consolation, to think that the Public may reap some Benefit from it:—The Company I kept was not, indeed, always so well chosen as it ought to have been, for the sake of my own Interest or Reputation; but then it was general, and by Consequence furnished me, not only with the Knowledge of many Occurrences, which otherwise I had been ignorant of, but also enabled me, when the too great Vivacity of my Nature became tempered with Reflection, to see into the secret Springs which gave rise to the Actions I had either heard, or been Witness of…. With this Experience, added to a Genius tolerably extensive, and an Education more liberal than is ordinarily allowed to Persons of my Sex, I flattered myself that it might be in my Power to be in some measure both useful and entertaining to the Public.
>
> (8)

Like many of her other personae, the character of the narrator created here is defined by scandal, but it is scandal which is neatly cordoned off in the past. She has already been ensnared by her own vanity and folly, has presumably already witnessed the ensnaring of her ill-chosen company in scandals of their own, and now has all of these plotlines stored up, to be unfolded in the "lucubrations" of the Female Spectator. One important feature of this persona is the balance between the poles of her character and of her experience. She was a coquette, but never a beauty; she was vivacious—in other words, socially and sexually energetic and experienced—but is now reflective; she is unconventionally single, but also unconventionally well-educated—in both ways unlike her middle-class female target audience. All of these aspects of her character, and the balance they create, lend the narrator a vantage point and authority not available to her readers. She can provide scandal, masked by anonymity, in her pages, the potential lowness of which will be tempered by her moral reflections and knowledge of subjects such as poetry and natural history.

And then there are moments when the narrator lets this balanced façade crack a bit, when self-criticism and self-contradiction wink through the mask of authority. Is she winking when, in this introductory essay, she says, "and how many Contributors soever

there may happen to be to the Work, they are to be considered only as several Members of one Body, of which I am the Mouth" (10)? In other words, she may be acknowledging the fictionality of the editorial board and positing instead a corporate version of the author. If the Female Spectator is the mouth of this corporate body, other "members" are eyes and ears:

> Spies are placed not only in all the Places of Resort in and about this great Metropolis, but at *Bath*, *Tunbridge*, and the *Spaw*, and Means found to extend my Speculations even as far as *France*, *Rome*, *Germany*, and other foreign Parts, so that nothing curious or worthy of Remark can escape me.
>
> (10)

She says having spies is more effectual "than if I had the Power of Invisibility," a comment which anticipates her later scandal-sheet, *The Invisible Spy*. On the one hand, we have here a fictional author-editor with a fleet of spy-reporters. Considered as part of Haywood's ongoing representation of authorship, on the other hand, we have a vast body containing an echo chamber and storage closet for gossip from all of the most important places, which organizes, fictionalizes, and speaks it. It is a body that must be everywhere at once for the mouth to have authority.

> But lest she be taken just for loose lips, she immediately assures her readers that she: would, by no means, however, have what I say be construed into a Design of gratifying a vicious Propensity of propagating Scandal… for tho' I shall bring real Facts on the Stage, I shall conceal the Actors Names under such as will be conformable to their Characters; my Intention being only to expose the Vice, and not the Person. (11)

This method of "avoiding" scandal was, of course, the very method she and others used in the scandal-narratives for which keys were purchased and passed around, including Haywood's 1725 *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*. Although Haywood presents herself as a reformed scandal-monger in *The Female Spectator,* several years later she writes (and publishes anonymously) *Dalinda* (1749), a scandal-narrative about an affair between two well-known contemporaries, Thomas Cresswell and Elizabeth Scrope, and *The Invisible Spy* (1755), a scandal-sheet resembling those of the 1720s, and about which Mary Wortley Montagu wrote to her daughter asking for the key.[58] However, in *The Female Spectator*, she will not be taken for the scandalous Eliza Haywood; she even threatens her readers with punishment: "Whoever, therefore, shall pretend to fix on any particular Person the Blame of Actions they may happen to find recorded here, or make what they call a Key to these Lucubrations, must expect to see themselves treated in the next Publication with all the Severity so unfair a Proceeding merits"—a scandal-writer's revenge on the scandal-mongers.[59] The assumption here of intimate knowledge of the Proceedings of her readers—which has an unknown degree of fictionality to it—suggests a milieu in which author and readers move together socially, while also extending the metaphor of her author self as giant surveillance system. I think it likely that she did write for some readers who constituted an intimate circle in which her identity was known. Ironically, if this were so, any scandalous stories taken from their milieu would have been known to all of those in this intimate circle, making the author the scandal-monger she claimed herself not to be.

After this critique of scandal-mongers like her former (and future) self, the narrator goes on to criticize writers of "Romances, Novels, and Plays," i.e., herself in other guises. She criticizes them for portraying Love in all of its forms except that in which it is aligned with virtue. The ensuing paragraph is a stock argument about the ill effects of novel-reading on the minds of young, inexperienced women.[60] This moralizing provides the catalyst for several novelistically detailed narratives about young women misled by their eager imaginations into too-hasty entanglements with men who take advantage of their innocence and ruin them in one way or another. The Female Spectator's reasoned and moralistic commentary, which introduces and follows all of her narratives, differentiates her from those writers of romances, novels, and plays she criticizes. The negative trajectories of many of her stories also underline her purpose, which is to warn her readers of all of the dangers and hidden snares in the realm of love, and to advise them to make decisions which will result in stable marriages which, if they do not generate romantic bliss may at least create mutual respect. And yet, the novelist in her goes into such detail in describing the circumstances and states of mind of her young female characters, that the narrative segments of the essays skirt the dangers of absorption critics of novels descried. In Book I she says that when girls who have not experienced love or courtship, or even any flirtation, read romance novels, "the Beauty of Expression steals upon the Senses, and every Mischief, every Woe that Love occasions, appears a Charm" (12). This effect of the novel-writer's "Pomp of Words" is "fatal [and] pernicious to a young and unexperienced Mind" (12). The effects of novel reading contribute to the

> Humour [that] has been strangely prevalent among our young Ladies, some of whom are scarce entered into their Teens before they grow impatient for Admiration, and to be distinguished in Love-Songs and Verses, expect to have a great Bustle made about them, and he that first attempts to perswade them he is a Lover, bids very fair for carrying his Point.
>
> (13-14)

The subtle erection image with which this little narrative ends gives Haywood's stock diagnosis of the social ills of too-eager novel-reading virgins a touch of playful irony, which hints at her masked identity and points to the ambiguous status of the narrative which follows these anti-novel comments. For the next six pages, the Female Spectator tells the story of fourteen-year-old Martesia, who, flattered by the flirtations of the first man who courts her, elopes with him, only to fall in love with another man, "the young Clitander," who is "naturally of an amorous Disposition," and with whom she has an affair that ensnares them both in scandal and ruins her marriage and happiness forever (16). Although the narrative ends with punishment, and is ostensibly recounted for its instructive theme, its detail is reminiscent of Haywood's novels of amorous intrigue and skirts the titillation it is supposed to critique. Diction and double entendre lifted from that genre act as apertures for the imagination of the reader. Just as those earlier heroines did, Martesia feels "an Inclination which seemed to her fraught only with Delights" (16). The lovers meet at a house where the "Mistress was too great a Friend of Gallantry… to be any Interruption to the Happiness they enjoyed in entertaining each other without Witnesses" (16-17). Martesia's "refined and delicate Notions" are "ineffectual against

the Sollicitations of her adored Clitander" (17). As in those earlier novels, Haywood creates narrative excitement through pacing: the seduction halts and hesitates as we read what goes on in the heroine's mind, and then "One fatal Moment destroy[s] at once all her own exalted Ideas of Honour and Reputation," and the plot turns. A narrative tool in her earlier fictions, the "moment" operates here as one of those apertures for the reader's imagination to enter and provide the pornographic detail of penetration left out of the text. Other crux "moments" in this narrative indicate sex, or its effects, as well: "Martesia became pregnant," the event of a moment which leads to "the so much dreaded Moment" of her first contraction, which registers the birth that marks the end of her marriage and her loss of reputation (19). With much more narrative excitement and expansion than might be necessary to exemplify her points, then, the Female Spectator offers a story with as much potential for readerly pleasure as instruction. My quick analysis of the condensed novel technique Haywood employs here suggests that her critique of novels is at the very least partly ironic.

Perhaps rather than see this practice as self-contradictory, we may see it as didactic: the Female Spectator is teaching her readers how to find instruction in what they read for delight by performing the instructive analysis. When Haywood incorporates the mid-century anti-novel discourse into her own writings, she performs an ironic version of the "overwriting" Warner terms Richardson's novelistic practice in *Pamela*. Like Richardson, the Female Spectator ostensibly writes "above and beyond [the novels of amorous intrigue], toward higher cultural purposes."[61] But as the novelistic interferences in the Female Spectator's "lucubrations" indicate, overwriting must incorporate what it would escape. Warner continues his definition of "overwriting" by pointing out that the process "involves a paradoxical double relation: the earlier novel becomes both an intertextual support and that which is to be superseded, that which is repeated as well as revised, invoked as it is effaced" (193). While this paradox is problematic for Richardson's project, for Haywood it is just another shade in the manifestations of her chameleon author-self. Rather than eschewing the pleasures of scandal, as she claims to do in the persona of the Female Spectator, she makes those pleasures a more complex aspect of her polymorphous practice of the self. The Female Spectator has a playful duplicity about her that allows her to quote at length the scandal she supposedly heard from one of those "buzzing, fluttering kind[s] of Animal… who will tell you all their own Secrets in two Hours Acquaintance [and] come galloping to repeat every thing they see or hear of."[62] This description comes at the beginning of Book II, in which, just as in the introduction to Book I, she simultaneously distances herself from and aligns herself with the scandal-monger. In this case, while criticizing the scandal-monger, she goes into some detail to repeat her story of some ladies' catty calls to a newly married couple who differ widely in age. The Female Spectator then rises above this petty repetition of scandal by using it as a catalyst for her commentary about the right and wrong reasons to marry.[63]

She contextualizes her duplicity in the vein of social criticism that runs through the work, and which includes some self-criticism. For example, when discussing the war with France, and therefore the impossibility of allowing young ladies to travel there, she contrasts the two countries in terms of their interest in scandal. She accuses the English

of stooping to scandal because of a lack of social grace in which gallantry exists for its own sake. In France:

> The innocent Freedoms allowed in our Sex give no Encouragement to those of the other… it being, without all Question, a Place of the greatest Gaiety, least Scandal, and least room for it, of any in the World:—The Gentlemen there address, present, and treat, with no other View than to shew their own Gallantry; and the Ladies receive all the Marks of Respect that can be paid them, as the Privilege of their Sex, and not as Proofs of any particular Attachment.
>
> (64)

We might remember here that the author of this statement also translated the erotic scandal-novel *La Sopha* only three years earlier. Masked by anonymity in both works, however, she keeps this scandal under wraps. In contrast to the version of France she has just offered as the Female Spectator, England is a meat-market: "I am sorry to say that in England, Ladies even of the first Quality are treated with very great Indifference, except by those Men who have a Design upon them" (64). In Haywood's ongoing argument about the problems of sex-relations in English society, this gracelessness in men, combined with women's vanity and lack of anything more interesting to think about, induces them to "purchase Distinction at too dear a Rate"—to forfeit their happiness, reputations, even selves for the imaginary gratifications of their desires. The novels and scandal-narratives she used to write only fed off of and into this cultural quagmire she criticizes. Continuing the market metaphor a few pages later, she writes: "Men are so censorious, that they look on all those of our Sex, who appear too much at these public Places, as setting themselves up for Sale, and, therefore, taking the Privilege of Buyers, measure us with their Eyes from Head to Foot" (68). While she is warning single young ladies not to attend the assemblies too much or too freely, this market metaphor repeats Haywood's career-long theme of the ways women are prostituted. The persona of the Female Spectator acknowledges herself as one of those who, when young, "appeared too much." Could these words also point to the author who, as a name, is very much in "public Places" and who in a sense "set[s] herself up for Sale"? This reading points to the trouble-spot Haywood has highlighted before: the way an author's works are conflated with his or her (but especially her) body and self, and commodified. It also suggests that the public may tire of purchasing the commodity Eliza Haywood, and look for something more novel.

One way to provide novelty is to take on an entirely new persona who will take a critical stance toward her other authorial personae. When the Female Spectator criticizes scandal-mongers, she duplicitously masks her former author-self, while, as in her critique of novels, winking through this mask by exploiting the public appetite for scandal and by aligning herself with the scandal-monger through rhetorical allusions. I have touched on the Female Spectator's explicit distancing of herself from scandal-writers in the first two Books. We can find many other places where she undercuts her critique by inciting the reader's curiosity, as in Book XVI when she discusses a packet of letters from readers. Most of the letters, she says, will be acknowledged next month, except for "*Pisistrata*'s Invective," because: "as it is a Rule with us never to enter into private Scandal, we are surprised she could expect to see a Story of that Kind propagated by the *Female*

Spectator" (212). Whether the reference is fictional or not, her readers' curiosity would have been piqued and then disappointed. The Female Spectator stays mum about the Story, and readers can only speculate. As a rule, Haywood italicized all proper names, but her italicization here makes "Female Spectator" ambiguously refer both to the text and to the author-persona, conflating and differentiating them at once. Is it that neither text nor author will propagate scandal, or that while the text will not, the author may in another guise? It is as if she says to her readers here, "You may think I am Eliza Haywood, but I'm not. Or am I?"

The Female Spectator's greatest disavowal of scandal (and her previous authorial identity) comes in Book XIII, which consists of a long essay attacking the "Tale-Bearer!—Gossip!—Lover of raking into Filth!—Shameful Character" (139) of the scandal-monger. With a mixture of recrimination and moralistic good sense, the essay advises women against spreading scandal because it is cruel, because it justifies men's severity "upon our Sex on Account of this Weakness" (142) and because it wastes one's potential for "Thought and Reflection, which are, indeed, the Essence of the Soul" (144). But, as we may expect by now, her criticism of scandal-mongers contain ironies that twist the neat narrative of Eliza Haywood's reform and demonstrate the "plurality of self" at work in her representations of authorship.[64]

The essay begins on the attack: "Nothing more plainly shews a weak and degenerate Mind, than taking a Delight in whispering about every idle Story we are told, to the Prejudice of our Neighbours" (139). She anatomizes scandal, considering first the motive: "the Vanity some People have of being thought to be the first in hearing any Piece of News" (139). She then refers to scandal's ambiguous relation to truth when she says that it is "cruel… to insult the Weaknesses of Human Nature, but most base and unjust to accuse where there is no real Matter for Accusation, as is very often the Case" (140). And she points out the complicit role of the audience: "Many a fair Reputation has been blasted merely by the Folly I have mentioned, of having something new to say, or through a mean Design in the Reporters, of ingratiating themselves with some Person, who, to his or her Shame, was known to delight in Scandal" (140). When Haywood points to the cause of scandal's power—its novelty, and the complicit weakness of its audience—she implicitly aligns herself with the scandal-monger: she too is a provider of narrative novelty to an audience weak enough to pay her for their pleasure. And in another guise, she has been the novelist, playwright and actress Eliza Haywood, which was an open secret about the Female Spectator's identity. Elements of self-criticism have been seen as retrospective—the reformed Haywood turning on her former self. But the ironies suggest a more complex picture.

Her ironic self-criticism may be seen in the use of metaphors of the body: she castigates those who have a "Wantonness of the Tongue" or who "give [an] Ear to Informations of this Nature" (141). If we read with an eye to Haywood's self-representation, the images of tongue and ear bring to mind the Female Spectator's description of her own corporate authorship: the "Contributors… are to be considered only as several Members of one Body, of which I am the Mouth" (10). And when she says that "Curiosity is the Parent of this Vice" (142), and criticizes those who wish to "attain the Reputation of being one whom nothing can escape" (143), we may recall that

the Female Spectator's "spies" will make sure nothing "curious or worthy of Remark can escape [her]" (10). As if this confusion of signifying body parts is making her duplicity too apparent, at this point in the essay she distinguishes between the morally low act of gossiping—"whispering"—and the supposedly more refined act of writing about potentially scandalous matters:

> Will the knowledge of what other People do make us wiser or happier?—"Yes," some will answer, "we may profit by taking Example by the good OEconomy of some, and take Warning by the Mistakes of others, not to fall into the same." This Argument might be of some Weight, indeed were there no written Examples of both for our Direction; but, thank Heaven, they are numerous.
>
> (142)

She here provides the familiar justification for writing about scandal, especially if it is fictionalized and anonymous: instruction. However, she goes on, "if the Monitor within our own Bosom fails to admonish us we are doing wrong, no Examples from without will have sufficient Efficacy to prevent us from falling into the very Errors we condemn in others" (142). This final sentence seems to undercut the Female Spectator's entire project of teaching by narrative examples, and contradicts her impulse for ending the essay with a narrative about the negative consequences of giving an ear to scandal. Though scandal-mongering results from a "Passion, not sufficiently restrain'd," she introduces the narrative with a suggestion of her own lack of restraint when it comes to "Tale-bearing": "The Mischiefs occasion'd by a Tongue delighting in Scandal, are too well known to stand in need of my repeating any Examples; yet I cannot forbear giving my Readers a very recent one, which has something in it more than ordinary particular" (146). This representation of authorial knowledge, curiosity, and eagerness to tell, is perfectly tuned to the contradictory appetites of her readers for scandal and for its condemnation.

Meeting contradictory appetites with morally dubious self-contradiction was one of Haywood's solutions to the problem of authorial commodification. Her other approach to the fickleness of the market was a version of the author as corporate body. The final installment of *The Female Spectator* adds to this representation of authorship the aspects of temporary stage roles:

> But now it is Time to quit the *Spectatorial* Function, and thank the Public for the extraordinary Encouragement these Lucubrations have received; to those who have favoured us with their Correspondence… our Gratitude is particularly due: Though on a Consultation of our Members, it is judged more for the Advantage of our Reputation, to break off while we are in the good Graces of the Town, than become tedious to any Part of it.
>
> (312)

This statement points to the way in which authorship is made of temporary and changing roles, and to the influence of "the Public" in determining these roles, how much they are valued, and how long they may last. Emptying out identity, this representation seems far from a proprietary figure—a "sole self" or sole author—and closer to the concept of commodity. Yet while it empties, it also multiplies identity. The first clause seems to be spoken in the first person singular, which has been the Female Spectator's usual manner.

The use of the first-person plural then reminds us that this identity is a "Body" with "several Members," the rhetorical nature of which is suggested by the oddness of the plural/singular "our Reputation." Finally, the word "tedious," which is more likely to be applied to a text than to an author, suggests the familiar conflation of text and author, by which the author becomes a product like her works. The Female Spectator goes on: "But though we think convenient to drop the Shape we have worn these two Years, we have a kind of hankering Inclination to assume another in a short Time" (313). She hopes that "those who have testified their Approbation of the *Female Spectator*… will not withdraw their Favour from the Authors, in whatever Character we shall next appear" (313). The mixing of singular and plural references continues in these phrases, which figure authorship as shape, disguise or costume, and character, blurring the boundary between internal and external identity. The ambiguity of "Character" adds the moral dimension to this representation of authorship, since the word was associated with judgment; and it adds the possibility of fictionality. Most strikingly, the Female Spectator's figure of speech recalls the shape-shifting character from two decades earlier, Fantomina, whose chameleonizing represented Haywood's practice of authorial self.

Haywood's willingness to play the chameleon, to empty or multiply her identity—her practice of a scandalized self—gave her a freedom and agency which, though subject to contingencies, could just as easily have been the limitation of a double-bind of contradiction. Gallagher writes of one of Aphra Behn's characters that it is "through her nullity, her nothingness, that Julia achieves a new level of self-possession along with the promise of continual sexual exchange."[65] For Haywood, it is through her scandal—that blurring of lines between fictional and real, nameless and named, masked and revealed, between private act and public/published text—that she achieves a paradoxical self-possession and continual self-exchange as author-commodity without entirely relinquishing control. I have been arguing that the scandalized self was a career-long representation of authorship for Haywood. Her unaccountability has been taken for unworthiness, her lack of integrity for failure. The confusion of rhetorical stances may suggest a dubious morality, but it also conveys a keen awareness of those contradictory appetites that move the market. As prostitute, chameleon, or corporate body, her authorial identity will be shaped by the surrounding environment of the market, marked by conflicting and shifting desires. Instead of viewing her contradictory self-representations as a failure of authorial self-fashioning, as immoral hypocrisy or as mercenary opportunism, I have argued that Haywood developed a strategy to maintain agency while also owning the scandalous impossibility of self-determination as an author. Rather than "position" herself as authoritative author-proprietor, a stable position in the shifting field, rather than stand in the confines of a defining caricature, "Mrs. Novel" played into the possibilities of this name by novelizing and innovating in her hybrid literary forms and by representing her authorship as the scandalized self of a chameleon.

[1] David Erskine Baker, *Biographia Dramatica, or, a companion to the playhouse*, Vol. 1 (London, 1782), 216.
[2] Margaret Russett, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.
[3] Oxford English Dictionary Online, http://dictionary.oed.com.spot.lib.auburn.edu/entrance.dtl.
[4] Janine Barchas, *Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22.
[5] In fact, it is likely that Pope and Haywood shared a portraitist, if not a pictorial style. Both writers published works embellished with engravings by George Vertue, but Pope's was done in the style of frontispiece portraits of Homer, Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare and John Milton. Two of the most thorough recent critics who have argued against the conventional assumption that Pope's satire sent Haywood into literary exile are Christine Blouch, in "Eliza Haywood and the Romance of Obscurity," (published in *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 1991 Summer; 31 (3): 535-51) and Patrick Spedding, editor of *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood*; both support their claim with a packed bibliography of Haywood's 1730s publications and literary activities.
[6] Spedding describes the portrait in *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Patrick Spedding (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004), 785.
[7] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage, 1984), 111.
[8] William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684-1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 180.
[9] Other critics have argued for a reconfiguration of the conventional structuring of the relationship between the works of Richardson and Haywood. Paula Backscheider writes:

> critics reading literary history 'back' see *Miss Betsy Thoughtless* more as Richardson's 'new species of novel' than as the amalgamation and development of characteristic features of Haywood's own fiction that it is…. While Richardson may have been creating the novel of morality, Haywood was inventing the novel of fashion. The London setting, the pastimes of the characters, the immersion in economic and legal London, the language, even characters' shopping habits identify it as something new and something quite different from what Richardson was doing.

Backsheider, "The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels: Caveats and Questions," in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood*, Kirsten Saxton and Rebecca Bocchicchio, eds. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 23-4. My study differs from others in its focus on the figure of the author.
[10] Tiffany Potter, "The Language of Feminised Sexuality: Gendered Voice in Eliza Haywood's Love in Excess and Fantomina," Women's Writing, Vol. 10, No. 1, (March 2003): 179.
[11] Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 40.

[12] See Warner, especially Chapter 5, for an argument about Richardson's and Fielding's project of "elevating" the novel. Haywood's significant place in the history of the novel in terms of the development of realism is well-described by Backscheider:

> It is hard for us to realize what a revolutionary move the use of specific, contemporary London settings was when Haywood, Defoe, Ward, and a very few others did it, and even harder to understand why Defoe, not Defoe and Haywood, is credited with originating the realist novel. Associated with 'low,' 'city' (also a pejorative) comedies, the use of identifiable London places and topical allusions to people, events, fashions, and pastimes was a deliberate political move.
>
> ("Story," 24)

[13] Backsheider, "Story," 24.

[14] Sharon Harrow, "Having Text: Desire and Language in Haywood's *Love in Excess* and *The Distressed Orphan*," *Eighteenth Century Fiction*, Vol. 22, No. 2, (Winter 2009), 285.

[15] Ingrassia makes an important observation when she points out that Haywood attempted:

> not only to establish new positions for herself (for example dramatist or bookseller), but also to distinguish among the various subject positions she already occupied (novelist, actress, woman). To do so altered her relationship to sources of literary and cultural power, and her ability to circulate within the multiple economies that shaped her existence. Haywood defined her dominant authorial construction by actively mediating the diverse roles of author, playwright, actress, bookseller, and woman. Her experience suggests how simultaneously fluid and absolute those cultural positions were and how profoundly they were informed by the overarching construction of gender.

Catherine Ingrassia, Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 105.

[16] Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). See pages 48-58 and the chapter on masquerade.

[17] Sometimes problematically. In her article, "Savage Love," Kathryn King demonstrates the improbability of the broadly accepted story of Haywood, Richard Savage, and Martha Fowke Sansom's love triangle, and argues that:

> [the] hypothesis is based upon an overly narrow and grossly decontextualized selection of the available sources and, what is worse, reads them in crude, sensationalizing and reductive ways. That the stormy sex triangle constructed in otherwise sober scholarly accounts resembles nothing so much as the storyline of a Haywood amatory novel should give pause…. It is almost as if Haywood scholars, in their desire to retrieve their subject from the uncertainties of an indistinct past, have unintentionally turned her into a Haywood heroine.

Kathryn R.King, "Eliza Haywood, Savage Love, and Biographical Uncertainty," *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Vol. 59., No. 242, (2007): 722-739, (738).

[18] Wahrman, *Modern Self*, 198.

[19] They summarize the formation of the Lockean self thus: "selves are created implicitly by human mentality via processes of appropriation and the application of self-concepts that are ingredients of reflexive consciousness." Raymond Martin and John Barresi, *The Rise and Fall of Soul and Self: an Intellectual History of Personal Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 145.

[20] Hill was a sometime dramatist, friend and supporter of other writers, including Richard Savage and Samuel Richardson. Haywood was a central figure in this circle in the early 1720s. An excellent description of the social tensions in this circle can be found in Kathryn R. King, "Eliza Haywood, Savage Love, and Biographical Uncertainty," *The Review of English Studies*, New Series, Vol. 59, No. 242, (2007): 722-739. As I have said above, King debunks the theory that Haywood and Savage were lovers, and argues that there is no evidence for a love triangle among Savage, Haywood, and Martha Fouke Sansom, as has been assumed by many scholars and biographers; instead, King argues, Savage was being used, and Hill was the love interest; Haywood's involvement had mostly to do with her literary, not sexual, ambitions. (In *The Tea Table*, Haywood evokes the salon-style intellectual and social atmosphere of this circle.) In his *Dr. Johnson and Mr. Savage*, Richard Holmes points to Savage's use of Locke's ideas about the origins of humane behavior. Jonathan Kramnick compares the two writers' ideas about tacit consent and subjectivity in "Locke, Haywood, and Consent," *ELH*, 72 (2005): 453-470.

[21] Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), xvii. Gallagher links this shift to the historical changes in the value of fiction and the novel as a genre. Gallagher also describes her authors' strategy of "capitalizing on… femaleness" (xxiv) by making use of the female trait of "dispossession" (xx), something Haywood also emphasizes.

[22] Mary Anne Schofield, *Eliza Haywood* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985). Until recently, many scholars accepted the story of Eliza Haywood's mid-career reform from scandalous to morally didactic. One of the most recent revisions of this story, with some similarities to my argument is in Kristin M. Girten's article, "Unsexed Souls: Natural Philosophy as Transformation in Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator*," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 43:1 (Fall 2009): 55-74. Girten provides a revisionary reading of *The Female Spectator* which sees it as just as "audacious" as her early works, but in a different way

[23] In the Introduction to *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood*, editor Kirsten Saxton describes Haywood as "a slightly vexed feminist foremother" (3). Other essays in this volume, including those by Toni Bowers, Margaret Case Croskery, Rebecca Bocchicchio, Saxton, Ros Ballaster, and Andrea Austin provide an overview of this critical interest in Haywood's feminism.

[24] For example, Ingrassia writes that in her fictions, Haywood "provides information about specific social, sexual, and economic dilemmas of women in a manner she hopes will be instructive…. She locates herself centrally in the social network and speaks as a seeming equal to a wider social group." (Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 84-5.) Girten argues that: "Through the practice of natural philosophy, Haywood

suggests, women may turn their ostensibly trivial lives into lives of public significance, thus challenging the gendered separation of spheres that enables their confinement." (Girten, "Unsexed Souls," 57.) Other examples are: Eve Tavor Bannet, "Haywood's Spectator and the Female World," in Wright and Newman, *Fair Philosopher*, 82–103; Nicola Graves, "'Injury for Injury'; or, 'The Lady's Revenge': Female Vengeance in Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator*" in ibid., 157–75. See also Rachel Carnell, "It's Not Easy Being Green: Gender and Friendship in Eliza Haywood's Political Periodicals," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 2 (1998–99): 199–214; Margo Collins, "Eliza Haywood's Cross-Gendered Amatory Audience," *Eighteenth-Century Women* 2, no. 1 (2002): 43–60. Kathleen Lubey argues that "Far from being a degraded form of sensationalist writing, amatory fiction contains the most instructive potential for eliciting readers' affect *and* calling their attention to the implications of that affect." (Lubey, Kathleen, "Eliza Haywood's Amatory Aesthetic," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 39, no. 3 (2006): 312.) Sharon Harrow suggests that "Resistance to the disciplining of desire took place on the physical and textual levels. Just like Haywood herself, Haywood's heroines often refused to be docile writers." (Harrow, "Having Text", 285.) Tiffany Potter argues: "The feminisation of language and passion are communicated subtextually through a multiclimactic structure that not only allows, but speaks through the female orgasm" (176) and that "it is not until one of Haywood's most explicit sexualisations of the feminine voice in *Fantomina, or Love in a Maze* that the culture of libertinism is almost fully appropriated by a female character, providing a critical device for the examination of the public female voice." (Potter, "The Language of Feminised Sexuality," 176.) Catherine Ingrassia argues that:

> While some of her texts reinscribe familiar cultural narratives and affirm certain types of gendered relationships, she more profoundly interrogates the existing sexual economy and reconceives of sexuality in terms that position her subject not simply as women within a larger male system of heterosexual exchange and homosocial relationships. Instead she provides alternative sexual and economic practices for women that typically envisaged potentially empowering behavior.

Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 87.

[25] See Gallagher for a detailed account of how Aphra Behn and Delarivier Manley utilized these constructions.

[26] See Wahrman, *Modern Self*, 170-4.

[27] Richetti, John J., *Popular Fiction Before Richardson: Narrative Patterns 1700-1739* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 35.

[28] See Kramnick, "Locke, Haywood, and Consent."

[29] Potter, "The Language of Feminised Sexuality," 176-77. See also Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*.

[30] Spedding, *Bibliography*, 65. See also 140-237 for details.

[31] Spedding, *Bibliography*, 215. Spedding notes that "three of Haywood's most expensive books (all published in the 1720s) were also her most controversial" (207). These were the two parts of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* and *The Secret History of the Present Intrigues of the Court of Caramania*.

[32] Eliza Haywood, *Fantomina*, ed. Alexander Pettit, Margaret Case Croskery, and Anna C. Patchias (Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press Ltd., 2004), 61.
[33] Written by Jean Barrin, and published in translation in 1724 by Edmund Curll, who was jailed for almost three years because of it. Incidentally, Curll wins the *Dunciad* pissing contest, for which "the fair Eliza" is the prize. The editors of the Broadview *Fantomina* point out that Barrin's book exploits themes common to erotica of the period: "the sexual enthusiasm of young women in European nunneries, the tendency of nunneries and monasteries to be havens of transgressive sexuality, and the eagerness of the Catholic clergy to debauch their charges" (258).
[34] Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 97.
[35] Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 17.
[36] Wahrman says that the masquerade incited excitement as well as anxiety for its "undermining of actual social distinctions" (159).
[37] Richetti, *Popular Fiction*, 36.
[38] Wahrman, *Modern Self*, 160.
[39] While it was published without her name on the title page, it was listed in the July 10, 1746 catalogue of publisher Francis Cogan, who had bought the copyright, as "by Mrs. Eliza Haywood," and it was likely that the work had been associated with her from the beginning. See Spedding, *Bibliography*, 355-358. *Anti-Pamela* was translated into Dutch, French, and German.
[40] Adjacent to her shop under the Great Piazza was Covent Garden Theater. Because of low wages and uncertain work "all but the best actors were in hopeless serfdom to the managers." Many actresses resorted to part-time prostitution to support themselves, and they stayed in the neighborhood to advertise themselves. Next to the Theater were bagnios and taverns: The Bedford Head, King's Head, and Shakespeare's Head, the head-waiter of which was known as "the Pimpmaster-General." Burford, E. J., *Wits, Wenches and Wantons, London Low Life: Covent Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Robert Hale, 1986), 172 and 98. Spedding writes:

> at all times of the day there were actors, in and out of work, demi-reps, drunken revelers, desperate gamblers, prostitutes, pimps, thieves, as well as popular writers, would-be poets, playwrights, and down-at-heel aristocrats. This was Haywood's passing trade at the Sign of Fame, and their tastes would have determined the success or failure of her business.

Patrick Spedding, "Shameless Scribbler or Votary of Virtue? Eliza Haywood, (Writing) and Pornography in 1742," in *Women Writing: 1550-1750*, Jo Wallwork and Paul Salzman, eds. (Bundoora, Australia: Meridian, 2001), 243.
[41] The novel was called "one of the most obscene works that have seen the light of day" by nineteenth-century critic Frédéric Godefroi. Quoted in Spedding, *Bibliography*, 372.
[42] In her Introduction to *Anti-Pamela*, Catherine Ingrassia writes that this novel's narrative "deflates the appeal of the heterosexual union and sexuality [her former amatory fiction] depicts. *Anti-Pamela* is, instead, a story of sexual commerce." (Catherine Ingrassia, Introduction to *Anti-Pamela and Shamela* by Eliza Haywood and Henry Fielding (London: Broadview Press, 2004), 43.) Furthermore, Ingrassia argues:

> the professional situation Haywood found herself in [as bookseller in Covent Garden] informs *Anti-Pamela*…. Culturally—as a writer in a commercial marketplace and as a woman forced to support herself—she had a keen awareness of the simultaneous need and difficulty for women to find meaningful work beyond trading on their sexuality (as marriage and prostitution forced them to do). (35)

While I do not dispute the claim that there is a strong feminist bent to the project of *Anti-Pamela*, it may be complicated by more irony than Ingrassia allows in this formulation. Haywood is indeed intent on realistically depicting lower- and middle-class women's work, and the labor of authorship, but she also depicts the pleasures of a life of plotting and the pleasures of self-determination a woman in Syrena's (Haywood-as-shop-owner's) position may enjoy.

[43] Haywood, *Anti-Pamela*, 141.

[44] Ingrassia, Introduction to *Anti-Pamela*, 87.

[45] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," in *The Novel: Volume I: History, Geography, and Culture*, ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 347.

[46] Haywood, *Anti-Pamela*, 178.

[47] After the Act of Anne of 1710 establishing copyright, in Mark Rose's account, the author became "a legally empowered figure in the marketplace" (4). This fact was undercut in the personal experience of many authors by the fact that one needed quite a lot of money to retain proprietorship over one's works. Haywood's critique of the proprietor-figure of the author stems in part from this discrepancy between ideology and reality. (Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners: The Invention of Copyright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).)

[48] See Spedding, *Bibliography*, 353-359.

[49] Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 207.

[50] Eliza Haywood, *Selections from The Female Spectator*, ed. Patricia Meyer Spacks (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 104. Haywood quotes Rochester twice. In Book X, where she refers to him as "this illustrious author," she quotes "A Letter from Artemezia in the Town to Chloe in the Country," and in Book XXI she quotes "Nothing," which she refers to as the "masterpiece" of "as wise and great a man as the late Earl of *Rochester*" (264).

[51] Spedding discusses the likelihood that it was widely known to be Haywood's work in *Bibliography*, 431-432. There is also the evidence of the frontispiece portrait which appeared on the January 1745 edition (Spedding, *Bibliography*, 785).

[52] See Girten, "Unsexed Souls." I agree that Haywood:

> distances herself from rather than conforms to the contemporary conduct literature that scholars have regularly assumed to provide the most proximate context for Haywood's periodical. … Thus, what has come to be known as the first periodical written by a woman for women might be understood, at least in its portrayal of female philosophic education, better as part of a countermovement of women's

writing than as a mouthpiece for dominant gender ideology of the time. (57)

[53] Jane Spencer, The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 75.

[54] Janet Todd, *The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1800* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 133. Both Spencer and Todd couple the term "reform" with "Eliza Haywood" in their tables of contents: Todd writes "Re-formers: Eliza Haywood and Charlotte Lennox" and Spencer follows "Seduced Heroines" by "Reformed Heroines."

[55] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 87.

[56] Spedding, *Bibliography*, 431-2.

[57] Haywood, *Female Spectator*, 7.

[58] Spedding, *Bibliography*, 516-18 and 579.

[59] Haywood, *Female Spectator*, 11.

[60] While she focuses her criticism here on novels, she later lambasts the theater: "The Stage, which was designed the School of Morality, and by mingling Pleasure with Improvement, to harmonize the Mind, and inspire Amity among Men, has, in some Theatrical Representations, been most shamefully prostituted to Ends, the very reverse" (265). This passage, which follows her reference to Rochester as "wise and great," is heavy with irony.

[61] Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 193.

[62] Haywood, *Female Spectator*, 23. Months later, in Book VIII, she would describe "the heart" in similar terms: "a busy, fluttering, impudent Thing: It will not lye still when one bids it, nor are its Dictates to be silenced by Reason, or guided by the Head" (96). The heart, like the scandal-monger, is inherently opportunistic, excitable, and heedless.

[63] A great part of the success of *The Female Spectator* was, of course, Haywood's interpretation of the Horatian injunction to delight and instruct. This intention did span a broad subject matter, but for the purpose of this essay, I am interested in those moments when the narrator skirts the territory she ostensibly shuns.

[64] Other critics have pointed out subtexts in *The Female Spectator*, but most contrast the seeming conservatism of the text with its sometimes subversive feminist conclusions. For example, Toni Bowers sees an example of radical motherhood which is "virtuous and scandalous at once" in a narrative in Book XXII. She says that the later Haywood demonstrates that:

> didacticism itself can function as a technique of subversion…. Haywood did not suddenly abandon decades of resistance to the social and domestic systems that empower fathers at the expense of mothers; instead, she devised new, more subtle, and arguably more successful strategies for resistance.

Bowers, Toni, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 144, 142. Bowers' reading of this text is compelling, but Haywood may just as easily be called an anti-feminist. In her Introduction to *Selections from The Female Spectator*, Patricia Meyer Spacks offers the following guidance:

> Haywood's argument for a woman's right to know may lure twentieth-century readers into believing her a protofeminist. Indeed, her precise awareness of the limits on female power and scope suggest the kind of consciousness now associated with feminism. But all of Haywood's explicit recommendations to women urge them to work within the existing system, which she takes for granted almost as though it constituted part of the natural order. The pages of the *Female Spectator* reveal that she wants the greatest possible autonomy for individual women, the greatest possible personal fulfillment. But she is severely realistic in her assessment of likelihoods and possibilities. She understands that female freedom exists within externally established limits. (xix)

My reading widens the scope beyond the question of Haywood's feminism and attempts to understand her contradictions rather than reconcile them.

[65] Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 47.

The Dangers in a Jest: Laurence Sterne's Performance of Self

When Laurence Sterne published his sermons, many had already read one of them, "Abuses of Conscience," which had appeared in *Tristram Shandy* as a sample of writing by the fictional Parson Yorick. Exploiting the popularity of the novel, Sterne titled his collection *The Sermons of Mr. Yorick*. The Preface to these volumes, in anticipation of the possible negative responses to this method of self-marketing, begins with some comments which take us right to the contradictory core of Laurence Sterne's play with authorial personae. He writes:

> The Sermon which gave rise to the publication of these, having been offer'd to the world as a sermon of *Yorick's*, I hope the most serious reader will find nothing to offend him, in my continuing these two volumes under the same title: lest it should be otherwise, I have added a second title page with the real name of the author:—the first will serve the bookseller's purpose, as *Yorick's* name is possibly of the two the more known;—and the second will ease the minds of those who see a jest, and the danger which lurks under it, where no jest was meant.[1]

This introductory passage presents Sterne at his most ironic—suggesting a jest while disclaiming it. Or is it Sterne at his most ingenuous, simply trying to sell books? These two possible interpretations represent the contradictions in Sterne's reception from the beginning. Is the author a "true feeler" or a cunning rake only playing that role?[2] As a way to begin answering that far from simple question, let's look closely at this passage introducing the volumes of Laurence Sterne's *Sermons of Mr. Yorick*.

Who is the author? What is his name? This passage, while seeming to answer these questions, instead presents a nexus of questions raised by Sterne's playful performance of authorial self. The sermon referred to, as it first appeared, was authored by a fictional parson in the fictional reality of the novel, transcribed by the fictional author of his *Life and Opinions*, Tristram Shandy, and was created (written, authored?) by Laurence Sterne. This passage from the preface to the sermons, while purporting to clarify the relation between fictional and real author, delineating them and marking their difference by separating them with a page, actually collapses these categories. The name of the fictional author, or the fictional name of the author, serves as a marketing technique because it is "more known" than the real name of the author, or the name of the real author. These names do not designate different authors, because there can be only one author. But they carry different significations and designate different identities and author-selves, because Laurence Sterne the man is not the same person as Parson Yorick.[3] And yet Yorick is the invention of Sterne, derives from Sterne's imagination, and serves as a persona for Sterne to perform.[4] So the passage claims to separate the names by giving them different functions and thus different values even while they designate the same writer (if not author). But the doubling-with-a-difference of the title page also has the effect of equalizing the names, which suggests that the name "Laurence Sterne" may designate a figure of the imagination just as "Mr. Yorick" does. The equalizing effect in addition invites the reader into a Shandean textual moment of imaginative freedom. Depending on his inclination to "seriousness," the reader can choose one or the other title page to satisfy his expectations of an author. The "serious"

reader could even repress his knowledge of the first title page if he took offense at it. This possibility may be seen as a jest at the expense of those readers who can't take a joke. Sterne's readers—even the "serious" ones—would have been familiar with his play with the physicality of print, and might have seen this doubling of the title page as a Shandean, and therefore ironic, maneuver. In effect, this passage projects three possible readers: those who would take it literally, and kindly forgive the use of the name "Yorick" as a marketing technique; those who would see its Shandean nature and take offense; and those who would laugh.

Sterne's ability to write to several types of projected reader at once is part of his genius, and part of the reason for and effect of his performing different versions of authorial self. The de Manian figure of the blinded writer might be helpful for describing what Sterne was up to. For the blinded writer:

> The insight seems to have been gained from a negative movement that animates [his] thought, an unstated principle that leads his language away from its asserted stand, perverting and dissolving his stated commitment to the point where it becomes emptied of substance….[5]

By posing as a blinded writer who is clarifying the author's identity for the reader, Sterne seeks to elude blame for offenses suggested by his text. But it is only a pose, and as he seems to walk through the passage as the ingenuous clergyman eager only to please his pious readers, he is of course unblinded to jests and the dangers that lurk under them, and writes also to please those readers who will see the mockery in his bow to their "serious" counterparts. One irony of the pose is that when Sterne plays the sincere parson, he plays Yorick, the fictive author whose name his own is supposed to repress (for the readers who believe in the blinded writer but who cannot see his or their own blindness).

What exactly was the cause for offense Sterne gestures (jesters) toward here? And what is "the danger that lurks under" the jest? If no jest is meant, but one is seen, is it still a jest? Does intention or reception make a jest a jest, an innuendo an innuendo, or an offense an offense? Sterne juggles these questions throughout his oeuvre, and answers them through the indirection and ambiguity of irony. Sterne said of *A Sentimental Journey* that if it was not seen as a chaste book, the readers must have "warm imaginations indeed"—a rhetorical move he makes many times, of deflecting the content of, and blame for, suggestiveness to the reader's imagination.[6] But what is the jest, whether it is read as meant or not, in titling his sermons those of "Mr. Yorick"? Most of Sterne's critics attacked not the quality of his writing but the fact that the author was a clergyman who wrote a bawdy novel. Blurring the distinction between the rhetorical modes of sermon and novelistic fiction was one cause of offense, among others. In each case, the upset stems from Sterne's erosion of identity categories. This willful blurring was seen as an act of moral impropriety. One reviewer of the sermons, Owen Ruffhead, writes in the *Monthly Review* that the "manner of publication," meaning the title, is "the greatest outrage against Sense and Decency, that has been offered since the first establishment of Christianity—an outrage which would scarce have been tolerated even in the days of paganism."[7] In similar hyperbolic fashion, he goes on:

> Had these Discourses been sent into the world, as the Sermons of Mr. *Yorick*, pursuant to the *first* title-page, every serious and sober Reader must have been

> offended at the indecency of such an assumed character. For who is this *Yorick*? We have heard of one of that name who was a *Jester*—we have read of a *Yorick* likewise, in an obscene Romance.—But are the solemn dictates of religion fit to be conveyed from the mouths of Buffoons and ludicrous Romancers? Would any man believe that a Preacher was in earnest, who should mount the pulpit in a *Harlequin's coat*? (77)

In Ruffhead's view, the offense is in the imaginative—specifically, literary—associations with the name "Yorick" and the way this name transgresses proper boundaries. A preacher who associates himself with a jester and with a character in a fiction containing many bawdy jests is a scandal, in the earliest sense of that word—an offense against religion. But it is not only the preacher who is a scandal because of association; his speech acts—his sermons—are associated with the speech acts of the jester—jokes, innuendos—which bring scandal to the sermons. The problem, thus, is that not only is the identity of the preacher in play, but so are the tenets he preaches.

Two further rhetorical aspects of Ruffhead's invective are of interest here and suggest the dangers Sterne was playing with. They are related: the images of the body of the preacher (mouths, and mounting the pulpit in a Harlequin's coat); and the absence of the name "Laurence Sterne" in the review. Ruffhead goes on to align the real names of sermon authors with the fictional names of this author: "…must the exordium to a sermon, be a smutty tale? Tillotson, Clarke, and Foster found other means of raising attention to divine truths; and their names will be respected, when those of YORICK and TRISTRAM SHANDY will be forgotten or despised" (77). Both rhetorical gestures conflate the identities of Sterne and his fictional characters, in which Ruffhead only follows Sterne's lead. The bodily images call up a picture of Sterne playing the roles of Shakespeare's Yorick or of Harlequin. Ruffhead's ambiguous grammar—the plural "mouths" and the singular "preacher" introduced by an indefinite article—seems to register his fear that the category confusion Sterne introduces might spread, becoming a general erosion. Sterne was not adhering to the expectations of the author-function, wherein the author is "the ideological figure by which one marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning."[8] One aspect of this scandal was the blurring of the fictional or literary into the real, and Ruffhead responds to this threat by trying to reinstate the difference, when he uses Sterne's fictional names alongside the real names of preachers. Although the problematic associations called up by the name "Yorick" are literary and fictional, they have real effects in the world. Ruffhead's rage may be explained by Sterne's playful refusal to be the author, the "functional principle by which, in our culture… one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction" (119). Sterne's games with his authorial names scandalously break down the boundaries between fictional and reality, between the professional identities of clergyman and novel author, and between the discourses of religion and of entertainment, thereby bringing into question their relative status in a cultural hierarchy of value.

Ruffhead, in short, has done a good job of describing the "dangers that lurk under" Sterne's jest. The implications of Ruffhead's vituperation are that Sterne's act of publishing his sermons under his fictional authorial name, which invokes the power of

scandal, has the potential to erode not only the integrity of "the author" of the sermons but also the content of the sermons and even religion itself. However, as is the case in much Sterne criticism, this contradictory author inspires contradictory responses. Several paragraphs later, Ruffhead's associate William Rose (who wrote the final sentences of the review) compliments the "ease, purity, and elegance" of the sermons, which "abound with moral and religious precepts, clearly and forcibly expressed," and in which "there are many fine and delicate touches of the human heart and passions, which, abstractedly considered, shew marks of great benevolence and sensibility of mind."[9] The corporate reviewer transforms from the offended to the forgiving or overlooking reader, containing seemingly incompatible interpretations of Sterne's title-page act. Rose has only had to consider the sermons "abstractedly"—rather than in the embodied, as-if-spoken form Ruffhead imagines. However, this abstraction of content from embodied performance is precisely what Sterne will not allow to stand.

What is the significance of this contradictory reception, and of Sterne's contradictory act of conflating his identities while separating them, of jesting while meaning no jest? Why, besides the potentially irreligious effects of playing Yorick, was his authorship such a scandal? One problem was which reader to believe, or which version of the author in which to believe. Gérard Genette points out that when contradictions are introduced among or within paratexts the questions of fiction and of belief come into play:

> What one paratextual element [e.g. the title page to the *Sermons*] gives, another paratextual element, later or simultaneous, [the preface] may always take away; and here as elsewhere, the reader must put it all together and try (it's not always so simple) to figure out what the whole adds up to. And the very way in which a paratextual element gives what it gives may always imply that none of it is to be believed.[10]

At the beginning of Sterne's authorial career, many readers were delighted with what it all added up to.

Let us go back a few months before the publication of the sermons, to Sterne's first appearance on the London literary scene. When *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* was published anonymously in 1760, it met an immediate enthusiastic response from a broad reading public, and quickly sold out. The unknown author was a country parson with no previous popular publications or experience in the literary marketplace, and no eminent literary friends. The first self-marketing move he made, aside from the negotiations with publisher Robert Dodsley, who had recently printed Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*, was to write a letter praising his own book to the famous actor David Garrick, which Sterne's mistress, the singer Catherine Fourmantel, copied and signed with her own name. The letter aimed to intrigue Garrick with the description of the "witty, smart book" which "had a prodigious Run; for in 2 Days after they came out, the Bookseller sold two hundred—& continues selling them very fast" and with the suggestion that the fashionable Garrick had perhaps "already seen it."[11] Sterne wanted his name to be known, as well as his status as a man of professional position; the letter states that the author is a "good friend" and that "his name is Sterne, a gentleman of great Preferment & a Prebendary of the Church of York, & has a great Character in these Parts as a man of

Learning & wit" (85). Whether or not this ruse helped book sales hardly matters. The book sold well, Sterne had advertised himself along with his book, and he and Garrick became immediate and close friends. Sterne first came to London shortly after the publication of his novel, and was welcomed into the highest social circles, in which he played the roles of his characters, Tristram and Yorick. However, his professional identity as a clergyman became problematic.

From the beginning of "turning author" Sterne represented himself in contradictory ways: he was both the sentimental retired parson Yorick and the urbane, witty Tristram. These contradictions in his character found their reflection in the contradictory reception of his works, which escalated into a scandal when it became generally known that the author was a clergyman. The words of one anonymous critic capture the gist of this line of criticism:

> Far be it from me to detract from the credit of an author, who has discovered such original and uncommon abilities in that manner of writing. I shall only beg leave to observe, that it were greatly to be wished, he had been more sparing in the use of indecent expressions. Indecent! did I say? Nay, even downright gross and obscene…. But how far it is excusable in any author, especially one who wears the gown, to gratify and promote a prevailing corrupted taste… let himself and the world judge. I again repeat that it is really a great pity he has not shewn more delicacy in this particular, for otherwise the book is truly excellent in its kind.[12]

The scandal stemmed from the fact that Sterne's identity games impinged upon the cultural certitude about categories of professional and social identity. In this chapter, I will be investigating Sterne's self-performance as an author within the context of this historical moment of flux in concepts of identity. Sterne's self-fictionalization played into cultural anxieties about the blurring of identity categories, including the categories of fiction and what would come to be called autobiography. Fiction, the novel, and the novel-author were associated with the dangerous energies of scandal, while self-writing—like sermon writing—and its sincere author were associated with truth. My first chapter provides one description of the ways in which novels were associated with scandal. Like Haywood, Sterne compounded interest in his narrators by associating them with his author self and deliberately blurring the line between fictional and real personalities. Felicity Nussbaum writes, in *The Autobiographical Subject*: "Eighteenth-century autobiography… may be regarded as a technology of the self which rests on the assumption that its truth can be told."[13] Sterne at once invokes this assumption and mocks it by pursuing the impossible goal of telling *all* and thus constructing a complete self. Nussbaum refers to Foucault's concept of a technology of self, which, in its many manifestations, may be seen as a way of regulating interiority. Sterne walked the tightrope between these zones, and over "the danger that lurks under" a jest, maintaining a tenuous balance. As with Eliza Haywood and Charlotte Smith, Sterne's self-fictionalizing has been criticized as pure economic opportunism. And as for those authors, this criticism is in part certainly true: even though he claimed he wrote "not to be *fed* but to be *famous*," he was a determined and cunning self-marketer who wanted to sell as many books as possible.[14] I will take for granted this aspect of Sterne's public performance and will focus instead on the way his self-fictionalization participates in a

cultural mapping of new territory: that of the modern self, and in particular the scandalized self of the modern author.

As with the other authors in my study, I find it useful to see Sterne's practices of authorial self in relation to the dominant concept of the author which was developing at the same time. I see Sterne as intentionally crossing the ideological figure of the author-function with figures of theatrical, Lockean, and sympathetic selves which disperse the integrity of "the author" in ways both thrilling and troubling to his readers. According to Foucault "the author also serves to neutralize the contradictions that may emerge in a series of texts."[15] He goes on:

> there must be—at a certain level of his thought or desire, of his consciousness or unconscious—a point where contradictions are resolved, where incompatible elements are at last tied together or organized around a fundamental or originating contradiction. (111)

I hope to show that by refusing to be a sole self, and being instead several distinct selves, Sterne intuits this role for authors and treats it as just that—a theatrical role. Sterne undoes the author function as it is being formed by exposing its contingency and fabrication. We can understand Sterne's practice of the self not only as a self-marketing move or a desire to please all, but also as an insight about the self of an author as a market object and about the modern self as a socially constructed, performative figure.

Sterne's "fundamental or originating contradiction," like Eliza Haywood's, plays out as an insight about the paradox and scandal of his authorial self: while he constructs and performs a self, his self is also a projection of his readers' imaginations; it is both an agent and an effect, a singular authority and a collective fiction. As in Haywood's self-representations, a feedback loop of mutual imaginings constructs the figure of the author: he renders an author-self, the readers imagine an author figure, and the author-self responds to and is modified by how he is received and imagined, when that reception comes back to his consciousness. William Warner provides a good description of this feedback loop:

> Because of the larger field of market exchanges that bear up and sustain them in reciprocal embodiments that may be transgressive, irresponsible, or merely whimsical, consumers reach back along the loop of products to influence producers. It is not merely through what they buy, it is also through how they read that readers, through a certain deferred action, write their writers, retroactively. In doing so, readers confound any simple opposition or hierarchy of writing and reading.[16]

Sterne responds to and helps to create the active role of the audience of his fame, in part through his theatricalization of the relation between author and audience. Leo Braudy writes, in his history of fame, *The Frenzy of Renown*:

> The most unprecedented element in the crucial changes the eighteenth century makes in the concept of fame is the appearance of an audience that, instead of passively responding to its idols, takes an active role in defining them.[17]

This participation on the part of readers in constructing the image of the author would create a tension we can see playing out constantly in Sterne's self-representation: that between the writer as author, authorizer, and authority, and the writer as public figure

dependent upon the audience who creates his fame through their enthusiasm. Sterne's contradictory authorial self, like Haywood's, may be seen as a paradoxical strategy for both asserting authority over and owning his lack of ownership of his texts or of his author self.

Several models of selfhood which were in flux at this historical moment will serve as contexts for understanding Sterne's strategy. These are the constructions of self implied in Locke's theory of personal identity, and in contemporary British acting theory, which I will discuss in relation to *Tristram Shandy*; and the constructions of self in Adam Smith's description of the dynamic of sympathy, and in Denis Diderot's theory of acting, which I will discuss in relation to *A Sentimental Journey*. These models will help us understand what was at stake in Sterne's putting into play a plural authorial self—or rather, multiple selves whose contradictions could not be resolved around an original sole self.

The Author as Shandean Performance

Rather than make himself known by one name, which would denote the integrity of selfhood and the authority of a professional identity—something like "Dr. Johnson"—when Sterne first arrived in London, shortly after his first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy* made a big splash, he introduced himself as Tristram Shandy, as Laurence Sterne, and as Yorick, depending on the occasion. Each identity may be seen as a theatrical performance: one of a fictional author, one of an author with another professional identity, and the other of a fictional character who goes by the name of another fictional character known through the theater.[18] Beyond self-marketing, what is the significance of this performance of a plural self? And why did he seek out David Garrick, the actor, when he first introduced himself to the London famous? In his essay "Laurence Sterne and Literary Celebrity," Peter M. Briggs argues that Sterne "deliberately chose to present himself upon the great stage of London society not as a literary candidate for slow fame [like Pope, Johnson, or Fielding] but as a theatrical candidate for sudden fame," like Garrick.[19] In other words, his authorial self-representation was modeled on the figure of an actor rather than that of an author, such as Garrick's friend Samuel Johnson. Briggs suggests that Sterne chose this "sudden fame" model because of his age (forty-six), ill health (he had tuberculosis), and relative obscurity. Performance, Briggs argues, "allowed [him] brash self-assertion and shameless self-promotion and simultaneously a self-protective retreat into irony, evasion, or special pleading" (266). This account of Sterne's strategy of authorial self-figuration makes a convincing argument if utility is seen as the most important aspect of Sterne's practice. But certainly the utility of the performance of fictional identities for Sterne was not that of "retreat." Sterne's preoccupation was with the audience and the self created through a performative interplay with that audience. This was not simply because of his appetite for fame. Briggs's formulation—"a self-protective retreat"—seems doubly wrong for Sterne, because it suggests two distinct realms in which a self could manifest—public and private—and because it implies one integral self who goes back and forth between these realms. Sterne's practice of the self, I argue, is very different. His performance, which includes its interplay with the audience, rather than protecting an inner self, penetrates

and shapes the self or selves as it erodes the distinction between inner and outer, private and public. He puts into practice a plural and performative authorial self which translates the Lockean dis-integrated self to the stage, where the actor has a degree of control over this self-lessness.

In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, which Sterne mocked but also read and bought copies of for his friends[20], Locke offers the possibility that a body might contain multiple selves, and that a self could inhabit different bodies. For Locke, personal identity inheres in consciousness rather than in the identiticality of bodies over time or of an "immaterial substance" like the soul: "For it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, *personal identity* depends on that only, whether it be annexed only to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances."[21] The Lockean self, then, like the self of an actor, was characterized by possible plurality. Because personal identity consists of consciousness, sleeping and forgetting are examples of "interruptions" of consciousness which may be said to allow this mutability of self: "Make these intervals of memory and forgetfulness to take their turns regularly by day and night, and you have two persons with the same immaterial spirit, as much as in the former instance, two persons with the same body, [the *day* and the *night-man*]" (310). Sterne seems to have incorporated the Lockean concept of self into his performative concept of self, thereby adding a degree of control to a condition Locke describes as inescapable. As Sterne spins out his reflections on the nature of authorial personal identity, the question of control is complicated even more by the fact that the author's self includes what he has written, how it is read, and what he writes in response to its reception or potential reception. His is a textual, fictional, performance of a self which is strategic and yet not entirely under his control.

Let's consider the first sentences of *Tristram Shandy*, which introduced the author to the world:

> I wish either my father or my mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly consider'd how much depended upon what they were then doing… I am verily persuaded I should have made a quite different figure in the world, from that, in which the reader is likely to see me.[22]

Aside from the comedy in the idea that his parents ought to have "minded what they were about," and the irony in Tristram's mimicking his father's outlandish explanations of cause and effect, we can see in this passage a Lockean and a theatrical concept of self. In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Locke described the infant's mind in terms which would have appealed to Sterne as his textual/Tristram self: it is "like white paper; or wax, to be moulded and fashioned," to be shaped, formed, written upon and written.[23] Tristram literalizes Locke's metaphor by making his self and his life the written *Life*. In these first sentences, Sterne also brings in Locke's concept of the association of ideas to mock Tristram's parents, and to locate his conception in a jest—since it is Tristram's mother's mental association between sex and winding the clock which causes his father not to mind what he is about. Locke contrasts ideas connected by reason with those connected by "chance or custom." The latter are:

> not at all of kin, [but] come to be [so] united in some men's minds, that 'tis very hard to separate them, they always keep in company, and the one no sooner at any time comes into the understanding, but its associate appears with it; and if they are more than two, which are thus united, the whole gang, always inseparable, show themselves together.[24]

Locke calls this type of association of ideas "madness," and explains: "I shall be pardoned for calling it by so harsh a name… when it is considered, that opposition to reason deserves that name, and is really madness" (354). This kind of madness appropriately becomes the basis of Sterne's idea of the hobby horse. Tristram's conception is presented as "the sport of contingencies" of his mother's Lockean madness.[25]

The version of self in these first sentences of *Tristram Shandy* is theatrical in that it is oriented toward its audience. Rather than a selfhood defined by its interiority, it is his "figure in the world" which is conceived. And not only by his parents. The concept of self represented here is one which from the very beginning—of the book and of the "author"—was oriented toward its audience, its readers, the minds who would observe and interpret and thereby help to construct the figure. Already in the first paragraph of his novel, then, Sterne projects an embodiment of the tension between the author's and the reader's creative authority. He constructs a fictional author who is a self-inventor, an invention of his own text, and who is not so much a self as a "figure in the world" whose origins are outside of himself (in the bodies and mental conceptions of others) and whose nature is contingent upon how his readers are "likely to see [him]." I have been arguing that the self-representations of the authors in my study, and their different strategies for negotiating their own celebrity or commodification, offer a complex instance of the cultural transition in ideas of personal identity and in ideas of that important cultural figure, the author. While contemporaneous famous literary men, such as Samuel Johnson or Samuel Richardson—as opposed to the famous theater men—might be said to have consolidated a unified, stable identity through their celebrity and literary authority, Sterne fragmented his. In what Dror Wahrman calls the late seventeenth-/early eighteenth-century "ancién regime of identity," Locke's philosophy is just one of the more "articulate… soundings" in the culture-wide inquiry into personal identity.[26] Wahrman observes a collective notion of self which was not a core of interiority but instead what might be called a "pre-self"—more like an absence of self— which was malleable, "double… sheddable, replaceable, or moldable" (168). That Foucault's concept of the author-function arises out of a cultural anxiety about the proliferation of meaning or of fiction, at just this time, is not surprising. Other celebrity authors, such as Richardson or Johnson, who represented themselves as stable, integral proprietor-selves and moral authorities, embraced this cultural role offered to authors, while Sterne's practices of the self, on the other hand, appear all at once to play and to throw off the role, and more importantly, to expose the role as a performance.

If we consider mid-eighteenth-century theories of acting, we can see how a theatrical model of authorial self allows him to perform all three functions at once. The identity of an actor was more like the "socially turned self" of the early eighteenth century, in Wahrman's phrase, than like the deep self beginning to emerge at mid-century

and finding its height of expression in the early nineteenth century (168). English acting theory from the mid-century asserted that the best actor not only must truly feel the passion he represents, but he also must "imagine himself to be, nay that he for the first time really is, the person he represents."[27] The actor who embodied this ideal was David Garrick, who, Wahrman argues, "made an established name for himself by conspicuously placing the knowability of his identity in question. [His] claim to fame was precisely his ability to lose himself in his roles."[28] Garrick described this talent of a great actor as "be[ing] transported beyond himself." A contemporary, Thomas Wilkes, wrote that the actor must "make a temporary renunciation of himself" and feel the feelings of the character he plays; the actor consigns is own identity to "oblivion" so that he is "not so much acting as being an original."[29] Denis Diderot, to whose theory of acting I will return in my discussion of *A Sentimental Journey*, however, argued that a complete lack of sensibility and even of self were essential to great acting; rather than making the character's feelings his own, as Garrick, Hill, and Wilkes recommended, Diderot's actor must perfect only the outward display of feeling. Despite their differences, these descriptions of the actor's practices of self-forgetting and performing of other selves suggest a kind of Lockean self-fashioning over which the actor has control; the self of an actor is both groundless and practical.

Also appealing to Sterne about the actor-self was the way in which performance spilled over from the stage to life. In addition to putting their daily lives on display in public, many popular actors and actresses wrote memoirs. John Brewer writes that the culture of theater in the eighteenth century "was dominated by the extraordinary public attention paid to every aspect of the lives of its most famous players."[30] In an analogous way, Laurence Sterne let his fictional, textual performance of a character spill over into real life, thereby garnering some of the popular gossipy attention associated with actors to himself as an author/performer. His success had everything to do with the conflation of himself with his book. As an example of the excitement produced by Sterne's layers of identity perplexity, consider Thomas Gray's comment: "Tristram Shandy is still a greater object of admiration, the Man as well as the Book. One is invited to dinner, where he dines, a fortnight beforehand."[31] But this kind of attention was also associated with scandal. According to Brewer, "the public's appetite for news, gossip and scandal about the stage was insatiable, its sense of intimate acquaintance with actors unique. A successful player could only have a public private life."[32] For an author aspiring to literary fame, intentionally attracting this kind of attention was morally questionable to say the least. And Sterne did invite scandal when it became general knowledge that he was also a clergyman, but he was willing to trade some censure for the intense interest he was generating by his performances.

In addition to publicity, however, Sterne was interested in an actor's model of identity because of its mutability and transferability, and because of the actor's implicit authority over the texts he performed. John Hill represents the actor as the authoritative interpreter of the text of a play: "The great thing in which [excellent] players distinguish themselves is the expressing to the audience such sentiments as are *not* deliver'd in the play, yet are not only agreeable but necessary to be understood of the character they represent."[33] Sterne in effect played the roles of both author and actor/interpreter of his

texts, "shandying it" for his readers/audience. However, even while the actor was seen as the best interpreter of a text, the audience was an active creative force in shaping the performances of actors. Until 1762, when Garrick rearranged Drury Lane Theater, some audience members sat on the stage, and often interjected comments or interfered in the performance.[34] Garrick took away the conditions for this kind of involvement, and elicited a different kind: sympathy. According to Leigh Woods, one of Garrick's innovations was to "draw the audience into sympathy with an obviously troubled character"; he "reinterpreted [Macbeth, Richard III, and King John] through the prism of sympathy."[35] Even with this more high-minded possibility, however, the involvement of the audience remained a trouble spot for anti-theatrical moralists, for whom "'the theatre' was more than a play or even a performance by a group of actors; it was the place in which players and spectators colluded in a pleasurable deception."[36]

Sterne exploits a similar blurry line between spectator and spectacle by inviting readers to participate imaginatively, and sympathetically, in his texts. In *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne presents the link between the author's act of writing and the reader's act of reading as a symbiotic one:

> Was every day of my life to be as busy a day as this,—and to take up,—truce—
>
> I will not finish that sentence till I have made an observation upon the strange state of affairs between the reader and myself, just as things stand at present—an observation never applicable before to any one biographical writer since the creation of the world, but to myself—and I believe will never hold good to any other, until its final destruction—and therefore, for the very novelty of it alone, it must be worth your worships attending to [...] the more I write, the more I shall have to write—and consequently, the more your worships read, the more your worships will have to read.
>
> Will this be good for your worships' eyes?
>
> It will do well for mine; and, was it not that my Opinions will be the death of me, I perceive I shall lead a fine life of it out of this self-same life of mine; or, in other words, shall lead a couple of fine lives together.[37]

In this passage, from Volume IV, Sterne punningly posits an author whose originality and novelty are so extreme as to be literal: he authors his own life. But this originality is undercut by the need for an audience—another consciousness to perceive the originality. He authors himself, but he is also authored by his readers—one reason his self-authoring is also "the death of me." Through the pun on "life"—the actual/fictional and textual—Sterne implies the necessity of a reader, who serves to prolong the Life by consuming it. The life is what is written and what is written must be read, so, if his life is unread then it is nothing. Inversely, if the life continues to be read, it will continue to be written and simply to be. This passage, then, claims originality and authority even as it implies a mutual bodily dependency, manifesting in the reciprocal work of the writer's and readers' eyes.

The inherent problem with a theatrical model of reading is that of dependency between author and audience, which implicitly undercuts the author/actor's authority. The issue of how much authority Sterne claimed or imagined himself to have has interested recent critics. David Brewer describes the way Sterne's "Shandean gambits"—

the addresses, invitations, and directives to readers as other "true feelers"—"forever transform[ed] the balance of power between authors and readers."[38] He argues that the crazes around Sterne's novels "helped to transform the authorial centrality which Richardson had sought into a real authority, one which ensured readers would increasingly feel their strongest virtual attachments to authors, rather than to their fellow readers" (155):

> If Richardson's readers positioned him at the center of a coterie public, they did so in ways which largely preserved their own readerly autonomy and thus implicitly thwarted his efforts to promote his own authority as final or even controlling. Two decades later, Laurence Sterne was not about to make the same mistake. …Unlike his predecessor, though, Sterne saw that the best way through which to write "not [to] be *fed*, but *famous*" was to cajole and flatter his readers into acceding to his authority over them, rather than attempting to make them superfluous. (154)

While I agree with the description Brewer offers of the dynamic between readers and author Sterne's fictions and their reception created, I'd like to complicate it by pointing out that not only were the attachments "virtual," but so was the author to whom readers were attached. Was he Sterne, Tristram, or Yorick? Part of his appeal was that he could perform whatever figure his readers most wished to see. But this situation would have presented problems for his authority over his own figure.[39]

Another recent view in Sterne criticism has Sterne cunningly, if anxiously, asserting his authority in a proprietary way over his texts. Andrew Hazucha argues that Sterne's hands-on approach to the publication of *Tristram Shandy* reflects an attempt to control the book's reception and therefore its projection of his authority:

> Sterne's attempts to wrest control over the production and distribution of his literary property indicate his belief that an author's right of ownership does not stop at publication, but extends beyond it, as far as the reading rooms and parlors where such works reach their audiences. For Sterne, controlling the technological production and the commercial exchange of a text meant controlling its reception among the public.[40]

On the contrary, I think Sterne's minute directions to his printers express not a belief in ownership but rather the anxious recognition that a book is *not* owned by its author, and neither is the writer's author-self—that the book and the figure of the author become commodities, circulating through different significations as they circulate through readers' hands and minds. Whereas Haywood registered her recognition of and frustration with this phenomenon by satirizing the relationship of publisher to author as pimp to prostitute, in *Anti-Pamela*, and by playing into the prostitute figure, Sterne registers his recognition of and frustration with it by both striving for and undercutting his authority with his fictional and scandalized authorial self, and by playing up a simultaneously authoritative and amicable pose towards his club of readers.[41] The two essays I've cited claim that Sterne strove for, asserted, and achieved authorial authority. Yet while Sterne seems to acquire and assert authority as an author, he often forfeits it or acknowledges his lack of it at the same time. His authoritative gestures are accompanied by undermining and vexed admissions of his lack of authority, and of the power of

readers. Paradoxically, however, it is by ceding some of his authority that he succeeds as an author: by opening himself up to his audience's influence, he has an even greater influence on his audience.

Consider, for example, why Sterne personally signed every copy of Volumes V, VII, and IX.[42] Was this an attempt to clarify and to emphasize the line between his real and fictional authorial selves, as the double title page in the sermons was purported to do? His act of signing has been seen as an attempt to hedge against imitators and pirates, which implies an assertion of authority and authenticity.[43] Conversely, I think it can be read as an attempt to capitalize upon the possibility of imitations and piracies, and to underscore the conflated nature of his "real" and fictional identities, to make the name Laurence Sterne as commodifiable as the name "Tristram Shandy"—again, in an indirect reference to the function of that double title page. Rather than asserting ownership, his signature owns the fact of his loss of ownership when his text/self was made public—an eighteenth-century phrase synonymous with "published."

The act of signing might also be a response to the anxiety and "fear of human opacity" Patricia Meyer Spacks sees manifesting itself in the eighteenth-century popularity of published "private" writings, such as letters or diaries: "Recognition that human beings remain finally unknowable could create anxiety in itself, but the possibility that people might consciously *make themselves* unknowable threatened the social value of every ritual of manners and morals."[44] Sterne's self-fictionalization as Tristram or Yorick effectively masked the "real" author named Laurence Sterne. His employment of his own name, as strategic an act as his use of those fictional names, may be seen as addressing this fear of opacity by seeming to acknowledge the mixing of names as a true conflation of characters. The proprietary nature of the name "Laurence Sterne" over "Tristram" and "Yorick" might be taken as analogous to the relation between the selves or interiorities of these characters, thus supposedly making Laurence Sterne's interiority as legible as that of his characters. This possibility of legibility was of course one of Sterne's greatest jests: all of that writing would not necessarily accumulate into a true self to be seen and interpreted by the reader.

The act of signing the "real" name of the author may be seen as another instance of Sterne's confrontation with the cultural anxieties about the role and being of the author. While the signature seems to distinguish between author and character, it only blurs them, highlighting the illusory nature of the author as a real identity or originating subject. Sterne in effect plays out the "complex operation which constructs a certain rational being that we call 'author.'"[45] When Sterne went about in public as Tristram, he embodied this complex operation of reading, and constructed a physical and social being who could represent the originating consciousness of the book. Sterne created a strategy that allowed him both to play the role of the unifying, embodied consciousness and to present the scandalous illusion of this embodiment. This dual action may have been so exciting because it tapped into two conflicting cultural energies: the anxiety Foucault points to as a catalyst of the author function, and the thrill associated with the identity play of the theater and masquerade.

In the illusion of real authorial selfhood, the author had a distinct voice and a physical body traceable through that voice, or through references to it. In a way that both

satisfies and mocks this readerly desire, Sterne comically exaggerates the illusion of real presence, the reference to the writer's body, with bawdy insinuations that hint at the rhetorical nature of the illusion:

> And this moment that I last dipp'd my pen into my ink, I could not help taking notice what a cautious air of sad composure and solemnity there appear'd in my manner of doing it.---Lord! how different from the rash jerks, and hare-brain'd squirts thou art wont, *Tristram*! to transact it with in other humours,---dropping thy pen,---spurting thy ink about thy table and thy books,---as if thy pen and thy ink, thy books and thy furniture cost thee nothing.[46]

Here, as in many places in the novel, the reader is invited by the physicality of the description to imagine the real presence of the writer, at his writing desk. And yet, while he evokes the body of the author, Sterne also splits the narrative consciousness. As a self-observer, and self-addressor, the imagined author takes up a position like that of a reader. Like the reader of the novel, he is reading himself. Since the beginning—of the book and of the fictional "author"—his self has been a "figure in the world" oriented toward and in part defined by his audience. The passage also makes a textual, sexual jest, in which "the author" is a rhetorical effect. If Tristram the author is writing his life, his writing is an act of self-generation, with his pen the inseminating organ and its dribbles and squibs the outline of his person/a.

Part of the novel pleasure for the readers of the first two volumes of *Tristram Shandy* would have been the author's direct addresses to them—one of many rhetorical maneuvers which bridged the distance between solitary reader and imaginary writing subject. Whether he was scolding or cajoling the reader, Sterne was playing into the readerly appetites for intimacy with and approbation from an authoritative author. In one of his moments of reader-flattery, Tristram posits an active, creative and social, even theatrical, model of novel reading:

> Writing, when properly managed, (as you may be sure I think mine is) is but a different name for conversation: As no one, who knows what he is about in good company, would venture to talk all;—so no author, who understands the just boundaries of decorum and good breeding, would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding, is to halve this matter amicably, and leave him something to imagine, in his turn, as well as yourself. (96)

Sterne/Tristram seems to offer a version of reading which is creative and intersubjective, and which is clubby. Conversation is created mutually, is dynamic and improvisatory. But it also follows rules or conventions. (And was also a euphemism for sexual intercourse at the time.) And, though seemingly democratic, it may serve to play out contentions of a class-based power dynamic, a competition for the display of cultural capital and assertion of authority of one of the parties. These problems arise when we take the metaphor unironically. But part of the trouble with this model for writing, for this text, is that because the text poses as a transmutation of the author's subject, because the text's subject is the author's subjectivity, conversation with the reader implies an open and unintegral authorial self. Sterne invitingly performs the possibility that the reader may be helping to write the author's "life and opinions"—his self—while also

nodding toward the concept of the author as originating subject. Sterne/Tristram implies that the author *could* "think all" if he were impolite or antisocial, or if he took an authoritarian stance toward his readers. Not thinking all is an intentional act, by which an imaginary social contract between author and readers is maintained.[47] This contract is imaginary in the sense that it is unreal, too, because while Sterne claims to be in conversation with his readers, he is really acting for an audience—not exchanging utterances, but performing verbal acts for them. In terms of his writing as a theatrical performance, the difference between the realms of writing and reading which separate actor from audience is like the conventional boundary marked by the stage. But of course one reason Sterne liked the theatrical model of writing/reading was that the boundary separating the actor from the audience was fictional, a convention, and therefore was vulnerable to penetration. So, while he implies a model of writing which is intersubjective, he at the same time points to this model as a myth. Sterne complicates this game further by conflating his real and fictional author selves: the "author" of this self-reference is Tristram, fictional author of this fictional autobiography. The reader is invited to imagine something which might correlate to what is in the imaginary author's mind, and, by extension, to imagine the imaginary author—in the way playhouse audiences were invited to see the actor as having really become the character, even if they'd seen him play a very different character a month before. In this contradictory gesture, Sterne performs at once the naïve idea of the author as a real presence and the idea of the author as a function of discourse, as a concept arising from writing and reading.

The playful contradictions in Sterne/Tristram's invitation to active creativity in the reader become more explicitly about the author's authority as the passage continues. The author may appear to be playing a trick when he offers detailed directions to the reader of what exactly to imagine about Obadiah and Dr. Slop's recovery from their collision. Little is left for the reader to create. Several chapters later, at the end of Volume II, a more explicit bar is put on the flattered reader's presumptuous imagination:

> You may conjecture upon it, if you please,---and whilst your imagination is in motion, you may encourage it to go on… but I tell you before-hand, it will be in vain…. The reader will be content to wait for a full explanation of these matters till the next year,—when a series of things will be laid open which he little expects. (137)

Sterne here figures the author as the ultimate authority (and self-promoter), as he delineates the ideal reader who will pursue the potentialities of the narrative in his imagination, but who will also recognize and laugh at his own impotence in the creation of the text he reads. Repeatedly in *Tristram Shandy*, the reader is flattered into the illusion of membership in the author's exclusive club, but his membership depends on his being in on the joke of the author's authority over his text and over the reader. The reader, then, is as impotent as the men in the Shandy household. Walter's potency is greatly circumscribed by the rigidity of his sexual habits; Uncle Toby has his mysterious wound; Corporal Trim's infantile flirtation is unconsummated; Tristram writes of one of the "disasters of life":

> Do, my dear Jenny, tell the world for me, how I behaved under one, the most oppressive of its kind which could befall me as a man, proud, as he ought to be, of his manhood----
>
> 'Tis enough, said'st thou, coming close up to me, as I stood with my garters in my hand, reflecting upon what had *not* pass'd---- 'Tis enough, Tristram, and I am satisfied, said'st thou, whispering these words in my ear, **** ** **** *** ******;-- **** ** ****----any other man would have sunk down to the center---- (466)

This disaster seems to take away even the potency of his pen, as he asks Jenny to "tell the world for me." The reader knew Laurence Sterne to be, in contrast, scandalously not impotent.[48]

When he opens his text to the creative power of interpretation, Sterne employs the technique of the suggestive writer, which Haywood used as well, to invite while seeming to prohibit scandalous thoughts. Sterne describes his narrative as "all quite innocent provided one takes it so."[49] But the combination of his invitations to the reader to be imaginatively involved, and the flickering conflations of fictional and actual authorial selves employ the basic ingredients of scandal. Sterne's critics were scandalized by precisely this rhetorical cocktail. Lady Dorothy Bradshaigh wrote, in a representative sample of the contemporary criticism: "It is a pity a man of so much humour, cou'd not contain himself within the bounds of decency. Upon the whole, I think the performance, mean, *dirty Wit*. I may add *scandalous*, considering the *Man*."[50] There is so much of interest here: the first clause contains a phrase strikingly similar to Sterne's own, in his advice to authors to stay within the "boundaries of decorum" by not writing or speaking "all." She accuses him of violating this self-imposed rule, which was of course a rule made to be broken. She refers to Sterne's writing and publication as a "performance," a metaphor from a common idiom which nonetheless resonates with significance. Finally, the "performance"—his authorship, his text—is scandalous "considering the *Man*," by which she means the man as defined by his profession as a clergyman. But her repetition of the word "man" also glances at the man as a body, and not only as a professional identity, implying that Sterne's straying beyond the marital bounds might have been in her mind as well. Sterne's scandal was in breaking down identity boundaries. Even when he pretends to mark boundaries, as with that double title page, he marks them only to transgress them.[51]

The smaller games of insinuation, then, resonate as part of a larger game of violating "the bounds" of culturally important identity categories. Tristram says, in beginning of the chapter on noses (Vol. III, xxxi), after he has insisted in hyperbolic fashion that all he means when he says "nose" is "nose," that he depends "upon the cleanliness of my reader's imaginations" (196). This is of course the transparently ironic excuse for insinuation, but it is interesting when compared to a similar defense Richardson made of his intentions in *Pamela*. Richardson's claim that scenes which might border on titillation in the reader's imagination served the larger purpose of moral instruction about the strength of virtue. He declared in the Preface to *Pamela* his intention of "not raising a single Idea throughout the Whole, that shall shock the exactest Purity, even in those tender Instances where the exactest Purity would be most

apprehensive," which would place responsibility for any indecent image on the reader.[52] He expected these comments to be seen as sincere, whereas when Sterne declares the purity of his words, his declaration is both sincere and ironic, depending on the "seriousness" of the reader. For Richardson, sincerity, didacticism, and moral integrity define his authorial figure, and he attempted anxiously to control the terms by which his work was received and interpreted. Richardson took on the role of regulator of the fictive, and attempted to contain the proliferation of meaning. Sterne, in contrast, pretended to play that role while also opening up the possibilities for insinuation's intersubjective proliferation of meaning.[53]

Actor or True Feeler?

What are the implications of Sterne's other mode as an author—the sentimental—when he seemed to be playing at Richardson's game? As we have seen, the theatrical model of identity posited a mutable or plural self, and Sterne adopted this mode of self-representation in spite of the scandal inherent in the conflicts among his identities. How can we reconcile this practice of the self with another one of Sterne's performances of authorial self: Yorick, a "true feeler"? For many different reasons, Sterne seemed to turn his attention and his literary and personal performances, in the late 1760s, from witty, urbane and bawdy Tristram to sympathetic, deeply feeling Yorick, from the comic to the sentimental. This shift was in large part most likely a response to the flagging popularity of the later volumes of *Tristram Shandy*, and to the generally positive reception of *Tristram's* sentimental scenes. A review of Volumes VII and VIII began with this observation:

> whether the real merit of [*Tristram Shandy*] or the novelty of its manner, produced this universal ardor in its favour, we cannot tell; however, the public seems now to be awakened from its delirium, and Tristram tells his tale, as the playhouse phrase is, *to empty benches*. In fact, we are ever ready to encourage merit, but must be excused, if we cannot be brought to regard ribaldry and incoherent stupidity as the genuine characteristics of humour.[54]

Another review uses similar terms:

> [The first two volumes of *Tristram*] were *supposed* to contain a pleasant and delicate satire, in which a *sage* put on a *fool's cap* to disguise his views. This same sage published soon after four volumes more, which were read with the greatest avidity; their readers, nevertheless, awaked out of their dream, and, to their great surprize, began to perceive, that they did not understand the joke. Their patience, however, was not exhausted; they still expected to be led into the secret; they fondly imagined that there *really was a secret*; and that if they did not perceive the design of the author and the cream of the jest, it was their own fault. Some imagined that they had discovered a *profound meaning* in a scene of buffoonery, where there was no meaning at all. At length the publick began to see clearly that Mr. STERNE had amused himself at their cost, and that his work was a *riddle*, without an *object*.[55]

One of the dangers that lurk under a jest is clearly that someone in the audience might feel duped, deluded, or made the butt of the joke. Both of these reviewers use theatrical

figures to describe what they see as the problem with Sterne: his performance has relied too much on deceiving the audience; he has made himself a spectacle, but the spectators have grown tired of it and peeved at their role. The second reviewer, in addition, begins to perceive something like the illusory operations of the author function, the way in which an author's "aspects of an individual… are only a projection." Sterne's author self is an empty center upon which are projected the readers' meanings; his exposure of this operation enrages this particular reader.

At the same time as they were tiring of his Shandean shenanigans, readers were prodding the author of *Tristram Shandy* to "stop where you are [and] give us nothing but amiable or worthy, or exemplary characters" because "your excellence lay in the PATHETIC."[56] From the beginning, critics had been dividing Sterne's work into the categories of comic and sentimental (or variations of these). By the end of his career, it became clear that most readers preferred the "pathetic"; a selection of excerpts published soon after his death implied the common critical opinion that his sentimental writings were superior. This was *The Beauties of Sterne: Including all his pathetic tales, and most distinguished observations on life: Selected for the heart of sensibility*, which by 1789 had gone through ten editions. With *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy*, Sterne decided to ride the wave of popularity of literature of sensibility, and to alter his authorial performance accordingly.

Before moving into a discussion of that novel, I'd like to look at three letters he wrote about it. To a potential reader, Sir William Stanhope, he writes:

> [M]y *Sentimental Journey* will, I dare say, convince you that my feelings are from the heart, and that that heart is not of the worst of molds—praised be God for my sensibility! Though it has often made me wretched, yet I would not exchange it for all the pleasures the grossest sensualist ever felt.[57]

With these statements "from the heart"—which could also be from a printer's set of stereotype phrases—Sterne seemed to be casting off comical theatrics. In a 1767 letter in which he attempts to pique a nobleman's interest in his new novel, he plays Yorick:

> [Yorick] has worn out both his spirits and body with the *Sentimental Journey*—'tis true that an author must feel himself, or his reader will not—but I have torn my whole frame into pieces by my feelings—I believe the brain stands as much in need of recruiting as the body—therefore I shall set out for town the twentieth of next month… but in fact I have long been a sentimental being—whatever your Lordship may think to the contrary.—The world has imagined, because I wrote *Tristram Shandy*, that I was myself more Shandean than I really ever was—'tis a good-natured world we live in, and we are often painted in divers colours according to the ideas each one frames in his head…. I hope my book will please you, my Lord, and then my labour will not be totally in vain. If it is not thought a chaste book, mercy on them that read it, for they must have warm imaginations indeed![58] (402-3)

It seems clear that part of the method of marketing the new novel is to disavow the old, at least in terms of the authorial self the two texts project to particular readers. But each authorial self contains that fundamental contradiction, and while he seems to revise his author self here, inconsistencies in the use of pronouns hint at a duplicity which won't be

disavowed. First "*his* spirits and body" turns into "*I* have torn my whole frame into pieces by my feelings" by which the subject of Yorick slides into that of Sterne. Then we have the inclusive pronoun "*we* are painted in diverse colours according to the ideas each one frames in his head." This sentence, like the last one, might be read as exemplifying Sterne's model of readers as active creators of their author. The pronouns are ambiguous, so that it is unclear whether one paints oneself differently depending on the ideas in one's head at the moment, or whether one is painted by others according to how they wish to see one. Both readings would be consistent with Sterne's practice of authorial self. Consistent too is the wink in the last sentence, which may be another ironic "jest where no jest is meant."

Sterne also revised his representation of reading, along the lines of a sympathetic exchange. In a letter to an American fan, Sterne writes something like an advertisement for the new authorial role he is taking on in Yorick. He describes an intersubjective model of reading: "a true feeler always brings half the entertainment along with him. His own ideas are only call'd forth by what he reads, and the vibrations within, so entirely correspond with those excited, 'tis like reading *himself* and not the *book*" (411). Before commenting directly on this passage, I'd like to juxtapose it with a passage from the beginning of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, of 1759, on the operations of sympathy. Smith writes: "By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations."[59] Both passages use terms from Lockean sensational psychology to conjure a translation of consciousness to different bodies: in the first case, to the reader's body through the book, and in the second, to the body of the sufferer. Sterne's version of reading may be compared to Smith's conception of sympathy in that both operations involve a mobility of consciousness. However, as in the identity-play of masquerade or of acting as it was conceived in the early and mid-eighteenth century, the transmutation is an operation of the imagination, and exists in an ambiguous rhetorical space between figure of speech and literal fact. The sympathetic spectator, or reader, involves himself in the scene through his imagination and feelings, which have such power that it seems to be a transmutation of consciousness to another body. There is little room left for the *self*-consciousness of the spectator, whose ideas and sensations have been given over to those of another. The imaginative space left for any sense of self may be found in the gap between figure and fact, where Smith's phrases hesitate and qualify: "by the imagination"; "we conceive ourselves"; "as it were"; "in some measure"; "some idea."

The reader, like the sympathizing spectator, does not have a total transmutation of consciousness, but meets the book halfway, which is emphasized by the rhetorical technique of simile: it is "*like* reading *himself* and not the *book*." In this passage, Sterne employs some of the most familiar concepts and words of the "culture of sensibility." The notion of "vibrations" "transmit[ing] sense impressions" along the nerves derives originally from Lockean psychology and Newtonian physics and was part of the concept of sensibility popularized in part by Samuel Richardson's novelistic interpretation, and which eventually permeated eighteenth-century British culture.[60] But Sterne's phrasing is ambiguous. The reader's "vibrations within" "entirely correspond" with "those

excited" by the book. The experience of reading as "a true feeler," seems to be more total than the experience of sympathy Smith describes. But the "correspondence" is complicated by the fact that the reader sympathizes with the book, or with the characters or narratorial or authorial consciousness conveyed by the book and therefore at an interpretive remove. And aren't "those [vibrations] excited" by the book "within" the reader? Where do they originate, and whose are they? While Sterne taps into the desire for "emotional extravagance" which characterizes the contemporaneous culture of sensibility, he raises questions specifically about the experience of reading and the ownership of feelings "excited" by books. Adela Pinch has observed that "feelings in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century writing appear most excessive when that writing raises questions about whom those feelings belong to, about whether those feelings come from without or from within a person."[61] The question of the provenance of feelings or "vibrations" raised by the passage in Sterne's letter recalls the passage I discussed above, in which Tristram proposes disingenuously to "halve the matter" with the reader. Like the suggestive, the sentimental could incite the reader's mind to active response through sympathy. However, in this mode, the author's posture of authority is likewise ambiguous. Imaginative agency is asked of the reader, with the author more or less of a director. In the *Tristram Shandy* passage, the author is the subject in charge of halving the matter of writing; and the idea of reading as akin to conversation is quickly seen to be an ironic assertion of authorial authority. In the letter passage, Sterne defines his ideal reader as a "true feeler," who will be susceptible to the experience of sympathy and identification with the fictional characters, and who will respond like a well-tuned piano to the fork struck by the author. But the author's agency is almost erased or superceded by the reader's intensity of experience. Grammatically, it is the reader who is the active subject. He not only "brings half the entertainment" but also experiences a kind of transmutation of consciousness. The ideal reader has such a strong sympathetic presence that his "ideas" or "vibrations" subsume not only the "book" but the author too, who is barely even implied as an originating consciousness, much less an authority over or owner of the book. For such a truly feeling reader, the author would seem to be a projection of his own consciousness.

And yet, the reader's ideas are still "only call'd forth by what he reads." The book is the original trigger of his feelings; and the sentence emphasizes the book's primacy by subjecting the reader's ideas to a passive construction. With Sterne, there is always the question of how much irony or even disingenuousness to read into what he writes. The passage from the letter could be read as a theory of reading as a sympathetic act, in which the author's agency is bounded by the reader's receptivity. Or it could be seen as a form of familiar Sternean flattery of his readers, giving them credit for something they had no hand in. In the context of the ideas I've been presenting, we can read it as an expression of tension among all of the contradictions Sterne puts into practice: he claims authority as an author and invites the reader's imaginative involvement; he performs multiple and conflicting identities; and in the persona of Yorick, he attempts to construct a genuine self defined by feeling even as he undermines that project with irony and the persistence of Lockean and theatrical models of self.

* * *

Let us now turn to how Yorick represents himself in his *Sentimental Journey*. Like Tristram, Yorick describes himself in Lockean terms: his feelings are formed by associations and contingencies, which both define and disintegrate his self. For example, when Yorick and the lady in Calais are left alone together a second time, Yorick points to the power of "a parcel of nonsensical contingencies" to define his experience.[62] As in *Tristram Shandy*, Sterne gives his readers many explicit prods to conflate the characters of Laurence Sterne and Yorick.[63] I will consider at length a scene in which Yorick appears to be attempting an act of self-definition, but in which the figure of theater is thrust on him by his interlocutor and his author, who keeps pointing to the fact that Yorick is just another identity-role of his own. The bars to self-definition are those contingencies which come in the form of Lockean associations imposed from without—by the reader or spectator. As Tristram and Sterne both claim to be governed by their pens, Yorick claims to be "governed by circumstances—I cannot govern them" (66). This admission occurs in a scene during which Yorick decides to go to the Count de B****, to "tell him my story" (66) and request his assistance in getting a passport. The two themes here—being governed by circumstances, and telling his story—look forward to a scene which will contain a thematic crux: the relations between Yorick's name and identity and his reader/listener's associations with his name.

This important scene in authorial self-construction begins when Yorick meets the Count, who has been reading Shakespeare. To get around the impoliteness of introducing himself, a stranger, to this nobleman, Yorick points to the books as an embodiment of his countryman (just as the book *Tristram Shandy* stands in for its author), and says that they may serve as the "friend" to present him.[64] Continuing in this playful literary vein, the Count says:

> how much he stood obliged to Shakespeare for making me known to him—but, *a propos*, said he—Shakespeare is full of great things—He forgot a small punctilio of announcing your name—it puts you under a necessity of doing it yourself. (71)

Yorick's clever manner of avoiding this necessity gathers our thematic threads together. The next chapter begins with the statement: "There is not a more perplexing affair in life to me, than to set about telling any one who I am" (71). In discussing the way Smith's theory of sympathy internally divides both people involved into spectator and spectacle, David Marshall says:

> Ironically, after founding his *Theory of Moral Sentiments* on a supposedly universal principle of sympathy, and then structuring the act of sympathy around the epistemological void that prevents people from sharing each other's feelings, Smith seems to separate the self from the one self it could reasonably claim to know: itself. In order to sympathize with ourselves, we must imagine ourselves as an other who looks upon us as an other and tries to imagine us.[65]

Sterne plays out this dynamic in the act of reading, which the Yorick scene mimics. The problem, Yorick says is that "there is scarce any body I cannot give a better account of than of myself; and I have often wish'd I could do it in a single word—and have an end of it"—a wish that, incidentally, is entirely contrary to that of Tristram (71).[66] Yorick finds a way in this scene to give an account of himself in a single word—his name:

> It was the only time and occasion in my life, I could accomplish this to any purpose—for Shakespeare lying upon the table, and recollecting I was in his books, I took up Hamlet, and turning immediately to the grave-diggers scene in the fifth act, I lay'd my finger upon YORICK, and advancing the book to the Count, with my finger all the way over the name—*Me Voici!* said I.
>
> (71)

This dramatic transtextual—and pointedly textual—act of naming, rather than funneling the significance of "who I am" into one word, opens out onto other realms—that of literary names and the ways they signify, and that of the theater. And it is not only literary names that are important in this scene, which occurs in the larger narrative of Yorick's forgotten passport, the document that would bestow certainty upon his identity. The passage speaks directly to the power of text both to clarify and to misconstrue identity. Before moving across texts, which Sterne/Yorick does next, let us notice the odd shifts through embodiment in this passage. First of all, he recollects not that "my name" but that "*I* was in his books"—as if the name is the self, identity, or person. Then, instead of speaking his name, Yorick points to the graphical sign of his name, embodying, personifying himself in this piece of text. Not only does he point, but he lays his finger "all the way over the name" and says, "Here I am!"—gestures which seem to channel all of the textual powers of association and interpretation into the body and self of the man Yorick.[67]

If this display of the signifying power of a name hasn't recalled to the reader's mind the parallel display, and skirting of a jest, in the double title page of *Sermons of Mr. Yorick*, Sterne/Yorick makes the allusion explicit in the next paragraph.[68] The Count, like "one of the first of our own church, for whose candour and paternal sentiments I have the highest veneration, fell into the same mistake" (72) of confounding two identities—the jester and the parson—within one name. This mistaken clergyman might be a figure for the general critical response to Sterne's pseudonymous publication of his sermons. Yorick quotes him as saying "He could not bear to look into sermons wrote by the king of Denmark's jester" (72), which is one way of interpreting the "jest" Sterne refers to in the Preface to the sermons. The Count, instead of rejecting Yorick, however, embraces him for being the jester whose name he shares. Even though his response is positive, and he immediately flies off to procure a passport for "Yorick, the king's jester," he might be a figure for the "serious"—in other words too literal-minded, blockheaded—reader who takes offense at Sterne's blurring of professional identities and rhetorical modes, and the erosion of morality this blurring implies. This is the reader who feels he has been tricked into seeing meaning in a "scene of buffoonery."

The concept of self implied in this scene might be called social-Lockean, because the associations which determine identity are imposed by others, in this case the man who *reads* and reads into Yorick's name. If the self is a fictional construct, Sterne's figuration specifies the construct as a product of reading. He suggests that the self, like a work of literature, is irreducible to its single words: name does not correlate with identity; identity cannot be summed up in a name or title. Identity is always caught up in a process of interpretation, and its meanings go on proliferating. However, identity is also limited by the associations imposed upon it. Just as a text—like Shakespeare's Yorick scene, or the

double title-page of Sterne's sermons—is made in part through its interpretation, the author of the text is also made in part by the reader's imaginative activity. Yorick the character and simulacrum of the author is, in this scene, made and defined through an act of reading, by a reader whose literary illogic recalls the association of ideas Locke calls "madness," as well as that "parcel of nonsensical contingencies" which Yorick sees as the determinant of his experience.

At this point, we may revise Tristram's lament that he might have cut "a quite different figure in the world, from that, in which the reader is likely to see me" to something along these lines: Sterne cut a figure in the world depending upon how his reader wished to read him. But through the rhetorical possibilities of fictional autobiography, he is an author who is constantly reading and interpreting himself—at least himself in character. This dynamic recalls Smith's "principle of self-approbation and of self-disapprobation," in which one becomes one's own spectator:

> We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them, unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavor to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavoring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them.[69]

In his discussion of Smith, David Marshall suggests that this "*dedoublement* that structures any act of sympathy is internalized and doubled within the self" and that for Smith "the self is theatricalized in its relation to others and in its self-conscious relation to itself."[70] For Smith, the theatricalization of the self served the purpose of internal discipline and self-monitoring, and "this theatrical situation… becomes not only explicit but problematic for Smith" (169). One problem was the distance between actor and spectator, even within the self, a distance which had to be mediated by a story. For Sterne, this distance and narrative necessesity open ludic possibilities. The performative self was still problematic, though, as Sterne shifted from a comic theatrical mode to a sentimental one. In Sterne's self-representations as an author, he reproduces the theatrical nature of the self as Adam Smith describes it, with an emphasis on the complications that arise from all of the refracted readings of his "sentiments and motives."

Can a theatrical or a sentimental self claim any stability or integrity, or is it only a constant flux of figures and feelings to be read by others, and by the self as other? As the passport scene in *A Sentimental Journey* continues, Sterne raises these questions even as he defines Yorick as a soulful man of feeling. When Yorick's nonsensical "reader," the Count, leaves the room, Sterne stages another scene of Shakespeare-reading, in which Yorick is the reader. Just as he is a sentimental traveler, he is a truly feeling reader who reads for "transport," "surrender," and a loss of "the feelings for myself." The play he takes up is *Much Ado About Nothing*, in which disguise, mistaken identity, and mistakes about character play an important role. Significantly, this is also the Shakespearean play in which Sterne's friend David Garrick starred most often, in the role of Benedict. Yorick's description of reading, in fact, echoes Garrick's and John Hill's descriptions of acting quoted above, bringing reader, writer, and actor together in an act of self-loss. As Yorick becomes "busy with Don Pedro and Benedick and Beatrice," he forgets his own

circumstances, and praises the "sweet pliability of man's spirit, that can at once surrender itself to illusions, which cheat expectation and sorrow of their weary moments!" (70). The self-loss involved in reading seems paradoxically to shore up a feeling of self, through identification. But is it a real self, or just a projection? Yorick's paean to reading continues:

> long—long since had ye number'd out my days, had I not trod so great a part of them upon this enchanted ground; when my way is too rough for my feet, or too steep for my strength, I get off it, to some smooth velvet path which fancy has scattered over with rose-buds of delights; and having taken a few turns in it, come back strengthen'd and refresh'd—When evils press sore upon me, and there is no retreat from them in this world, then I take a new course—I leave it—and as I have a clearer idea of the elysian fields than I have of heaven, I force myself, like Eneas, into them—I see him meet the pensive shade of his forsaken Dido—and wish to recognize it—I see the injured spirit wave her head, and turn off silent from the author of her miseries and dishonours—I lose the feelings for myself in hers. (72-3)[71]

In a scene that involves waiting for a passport, a certification of identity, Sterne invokes the theme of passage between categories and blurring of identity: author into reader, comedy into tragedy, fiction into reality, self into other. The passage constructs Yorick as a man and reader of sensibility, just as it constructs a version of the ideal reader—one who would lose himself in identifying with the characters. But if the reader loses himself, and the author has no self, who reads? Who writes? And is feeling a guarantee of self or not? Adam Smith's formulation of sympathy "involves a loss of self, a transfer and metamorphosis."[72] Sterne/Yorick seems to want to assert that feeling does guarantee a self, in spite of the novel's constant back-current, undermining this idea and proving it to be an illusion. The negative answer may be seen in the gap between Yorick's idealized and his practical self, a gap paralleling the one between the narrator and author, which becomes more distinct as the passage goes on.

When the Count de B**** returns with a passport, he says that Mons. Le Duc de C**** gave it to him promptly, with the aphorism: "*Un homme qui rit… ne sera jamais dangereuz.*"[73] Since he alluded to it not two pages earlier, these words might recall to the reader's mind Sterne's preface to his sermons, and "the danger that lurks under" a jest. The passage makes this allusion, and the difference between Sterne and Yorick, more explicit as it goes on:

> Had it been for any one but the king's jester, added the Count, I could not have got it these two hours.—*Pardonnez moi*, Mons. Le Compte, said I—I am not the king's jester.—But you are Yorick?—Yes.—*Et vous plaisantez?*—I answered, Indeed I did jest—but was not paid for it—'twas entirely at my own expence. We have no jester at court, Mons. Le Compte, said I, the last we had was in the licentious reign of Charles the IId—since which time our manners have been so gradually refining, that our court at present it so full of patriots, who wish for *nothing* but the honours and wealth of their country—and our ladies are all so chaste, so spotless, so good, so devout—there is nothing for a jester to make a jest of—

Voila un persiflage! cried the Count. (73)

And the chapter ends, as with a punchline. Like Laurence Sterne in his Preface to the sermons, Yorick seems to have made a jest where no jest was meant. But the Count sees a jest because of his silly syllogism, by which Yorick's name and the fact that he jests make him the king's jester. When Yorick presents his view of the goodness of the English it may be earnest and uncynical because Yorick is that way, or it may be meant to be seen that way by the Count because he is a Frenchman and Yorick wishes to present the best face of the English. Either way, the Count sees it as a joke and thereby registers Sterne's, if not Yorick's, irony. Yorick's characteristic mode of thinking and speaking is sentimental and romantic, and sometimes pragmatic, but rarely cuttingly ironic. That edge comes from Sterne. This long scene has been establishing the sensibility and tolerance of Yorick in order to set his character off from the satirical side of the author.

But the separation is not so neat. For even while the characters of Yorick and Sterne are distinguished in this scene, they have been blurred together by the references to Yorick's/Sterne's sermons, by the fictional fact that Yorick is the author of his *Sentimental Journey*, and by Yorick's idealization of reading as a sympathetic exchange of feelings, as a sentimental escape, which would have appealed to the readers who saw Sterne as most himself when writing in the vein of sensibility, but which Sterne reveals to be just as theatrical as Tristram's dynamic with his readers.

* * *

By mixing figures of theater with sensibility, Sterne raised the question of the truth of feeling for Yorick, and even for those readers who were "true feelers." What does it mean for feeling to be represented, or conjured up by a sympathetic act of reading? Where do the feelings originate? What if the author of sensibility is just another role imposed by the interpretations of readers? Before concluding, I'd like to consider the implications of Sterne's insight into the ironic incompatibility of his performative approach to different authorial roles and being a "true feeler." In the novel, Yorick's extreme sensibility is at times an overcompensation for skepticism. He attempts to assert a self whose genuineness is guaranteed by his feeling. For example, after he listens to the tragic story of Maria, Yorick says: "I felt such undescribable emotions within me, as I am sure could not be accounted for from any combinations of matter and motion. I am positive I have a soul" (95). Here, he argues with Locke's nerve theory, (and probably with David Hartley's interpretation of Locke's "association of ideas," in his 1749 *Observations on Man*). Locke's argument about personal identity in the *Essay* makes the soul dispensable. Locke writes:

> 'tis evident the *personal identity* would equally be determined by the consciousness, whether that consciousness were annexed to some individual immaterial substance, or no. …So that *self* is not determined by identity or diversity of substance [immaterial or material], which it cannot be sure of, but only by identity of consciousness.[74]

Yorick instead locates a soul-version of self in feeling. But feeling has been shown by Yorick himself to be an unreliable marker of selfhood. The question of ownership and genuineness arises about those feelings and transsubjective vibrations. And even in a seeming transference of feelings, it is only the imagination that makes it "seem" as

though the reader reads himself instead of the book. Might the feelings be all in the imagination of the reader or spectator?

Sterne presents a dilemma that arises in contemporary acting theory: how to turn ideas into feelings, whether those feelings are true, and what this implies about the actor's self. English theories, including Garrick's, presented the transmutation of true feeling as possible and as something the actor should strive for, beyond representation. Aaron Hill, for example, writes: "To act a passion well, the actor never must attempt its imitation, until his fancy has conceived so strong an image, or idea, of it, as to move the same impressive springs within his mind, which form that passion, when it is undesigned, and natural."[75] The performance of a passion is a mechanistic two-step process: the representation (idea) of a passion generates its truly felt outward manifestation—an authentic copy. The role of the audience is to sympathize. In stark contrast to this theory, another contemporary—and a friend of Sterne's—Denis Diderot, suggests that an actor's performance is best when his feeling is not true, and that the spectator's role is to be duped. Diderot describes the practice of acting as a cool-headed representation of feelings the actor does not actually feel. In his *Paradoxe sur le Comédien*, Diderot writes: "At the very moment when he touches your heart he is listening to his own voice; his talent depends not, as you think, upon feeling, but upon rendering so exactly the outward signs of feeling, that you fall into the trap."[76] He elaborates on the idea of the trap of belief: "[The actor] is not the person he represents; he plays it, and plays it so well that you think he is the person; the deception is all on your side; he knows well enough that he is not the person" (17). Diderot asserted a strong opposition between the actor and the man of sensibility:

> Extreme sensibility makes middling actors; middling sensibility makes the ruck of bad actors; in complete absence of sensibility is the possibility of a sublime actor. The player's tears come from his brain, the sensitive being's from his heart; the sensitive being's soul gives unmeasured trouble to his brain; the player's brain gives sometimes a touch of trouble to his soul; he weeps… like a courtesan who has no heart, and who abandons herself in your arms. (17)

For Diderot, the best actor not only has no sensibility, but also has no singular, proper or private self: "the player in private and the player on the boards are two different personages, so different that one can scarce recognize the player in private" (22). Rather than protecting a private self by setting it apart, the actor must have a facility for "self-abnegation" (23), which results in a kind of permanent self-loss: "it is far better for the ease and success of his study, for the catholicity of his talent and the perfection of his playing, that there should be no need of this strange parting of self from self" (24).

Diderot was most likely responding to John Hill's 1750 adaptation of Pierre Rémond de Sainte-Albine's *Le Comédien*, (which Hill titled *The Actor: a Treatise on the Art of Playing*, and which was then translated back into French by Antonio Fabio Sticotti), in which he states that "sensibility" "is one of the greatest requisites to every player."[77] In complete contrast to Diderot, Hill writes:

> All the art in the world can never supply the want of sensibility in the player; if he is defective in this essential quality, all the advantages of nature, all the accomplishments he may have acquired by study, are thrown away upon him; he

> will never make others feel what he does not feel himself, and will always be as different from the thing he is to represent as a mask from a face. (16)

David Garrick's anonymously published *Essay on Acting* (1744) does not mention the actor's sensibility or feeling, but focuses on the mechanics of reproducing the outward signs of a particular passion. But in a letter of 1769, he says that an actor who is a great genius has "those instantaneous feelings, that life-blood, that keen sensibility, that bursts at once… and like electrical fire, shoots through the veins, marrow, bones and all, of every spectator."[78] This description sounds a lot like Sterne's description of the reading act of a true feeler, in which the vibrations move freely between reader/spectator and book/author/actor. Sterne seems to have been posing—in Yorick—as a Garrick when he was really a Diderot on this subject. And might Diderot's deceived spectator be somewhat like the "serious reader" Sterne refers to in the preface to the sermons? The idea of a trap also recalls those negative reviews of the later volumes of *Tristram Shandy*. Diderot's theory of acting distinguishes between real feeling and its outward signs and between feeling and idea. It also makes acting like a demystified act of sympathy or reading, where the supposed intersubjectivity or transference of feelings is shown to be broken by a gap—the difference between real and imagined feeling. For Sterne's actor-model of authorial self, this theory presents the possibility of duplicity in an author of sensibility, (in which the reader "falls into the trap"). Sterne's experience casts a skeptical light on the Garrick/Hill version of author-actor self; he finds the consequences of a performative self to be much more like the self-lessness Diderot describes.

To see Sterne's and Diderot's insight about the selves of public performers more clearly by contrast, consider also David Marshall's description of Shaftesbury's experience of theatricality—which might be similar to Garrick's. According to Marshall, for Shaftesbury there was:

> the problem that the multiplication and division of the self into different characters and persons must be the method through which a stable and consistent self is maintained. Theater is thus necessary and doubly dangerous to the real and genuine self. If the notion of acting is itself threatening, so much more so is the notion of dividing the self into a variety of roles or characters to be played successively or played off against one another.[79]

For Sterne, the dilemma presented by the theatrical authorial self was not about finding or defining a genuine self among the layers of characters. Sterne was always more concerned with the figure(s) presented to the world. Theater was dangerous not "to the real and genuine self" but to the implicit contract with his readers/spectators, and to their belief in the truth of his feeling. The dilemma for Sterne was how to perform contradictory versions of self and not seem to want to "trap" his readers in a "deception" or a jest. He also had to continue to appeal both to the readers who got the joke, and to those who did not.

One problem was that the implicit contract between spectators and actors, to partake of "mutual deception" differed from that between readers and authors. More truth, or at least the containment of fiction, was expected of authors. Just as Tristram's readers had, many readers turned against Yorick, the sentimental Sterne, too. They came to see him as a scandalous actor, like Diderot's courtesan, prostituting himself to please

his reader/buyers/consumers while only "counterfeiting" his sensibility.[80] The word comes from Hannah More's (retrospective) attack on Sterne, and on his reputation as a writer of sensibility, in the revised version of her 1782 poem, "Sensibility."[81] The reference to Sterne follows her description of the problematic difference between true sensibility and its affected, literary posturing, in which words are only the inauthentic outward signs of feeling:

> As words are but th' external marks to tell
> The fair ideas in the mind that dwell
> And only are of things the outward sign,
> And not the things themselves they but define;
> So exclamations, tender tones, fond tears,
> And all the graceful drap'ry FEELING wears;
> These are her garb, not her, they but express
> Her form, her semblance, her appropriate dress;
> And these fair marks, reluctant I relate,
> These lovely symbols may be counterfeit.[82]

Sterne makes just a small appearance in the poem, but in the different versions his name embodies two problems with sensibility literature: the difficulty of discerning true feeling from imposture, and the possibility of faking (and mocking) it. More's 1784 version mingles some praise in its criticism:

> Oh, bless'd Compassion! Angel Charity!
> More dear one genuine deed perform'd for thee,
> Than all the periods Feeling e'er can turn,
> Than all thy soothing pages, polish'd Sterne! (285)

His writing has enough sensibility to be "soothing." "Polish'd," however, is a more ambiguous adjective: it conveys the beauty of his writing but also suggests superficiality, a preoccupation with the surface. The collection in which this poem appeared went into at least eleven editions between 1782 and 1799, and the adjective did not change. However, by the time she published a collected works in 1803, she revised the lines so that there is no ambiguity in her criticism:

> O LOVE DIVINE! sole source of Charity!
> More dear one genuine deed perform'd for thee,
> Than all the periods FEELING e'er could turn,
> Than all thy touching page, perverted STERNE.[83]

The critique of affected sensibility now builds up to an attack on Sterne. Now his pages only "touch" rather than soothe, and he is not "polish'd" but "perverted." One target here is what she and his other critics came to see as his disingenuousness, and even duplicity, in writing works of sensibility which could also be read as satires on the true feelers he seduced into being his readers and fans. But her criticism goes further, and recalls that of Ruffhead, for whom the scandal of Sterne was his mixing religion with obscenity (and morally superior sensibility with depraved theatrical performance). For More, false sensibility is just as bad as obscenity, because misdirected, "perverted" feeling tends to vice:

> As FEELING tends to good or leans to ill,

It gives fresh force to vice or principle;…
If, ill directed, it pursue the wrong,
It adds new strength to what before was strong;
Breaks out in wild irregular desires,
Disorder'd passions, and illicit fires;
Without deforms the man, depraves within,
And makes the work of GOD the slave of sin.
But if RELIGION's bias rule the soul,
Then SENSIBILITY exalts the whole. (94-5)

More articulates the criticism Sterne provoked with his ironized and eroticized sensibility, the "illicit fires" of his extramarital affairs, and the scandal he brought to religion by his morally dubious identity play.

But when we widen the scope and remove moral judgment, we may see his contradictory performances as a critique of the related ideas of the author as an integral, moral and unifying identity, of feeling as a guarantee of self, and of sympathy as an act of mutual legibility. We might recall here Margaret Russet's observation that in the eighteenth century it was assumed that "an authentic *personal* character will observe the same formal logic as the authorial *corpus*."[84] If readers wanted to believe in the author as an authentic, potentially present subject, it would be a risk to suggest that "the author" is just a specter of rhetoric formed to dupe them into "buying it." Sterne does precisely this, and yet he also performs the embodiment of his authorial corpus—a corpus that has a form far from logical and is more like Locke's associative "madness." The idea that the author's personal character would follow the same formal logic as the corpus implies that "the author" is an effect of his work, an implication Sterne delivers in many different ways. Whether he was playing up its possibilities or attempting to escape its limitations, Sterne's version of the authorial self was inherently, if problematically, theatrical. This model of self, which implies a mutual dependency with one's audience turns out to be crucial for Sterne because it prevents the erasure of the author in the experience of reading: this author always reminds the reader to look to the spectacle—himself, or at least his performative projections of self. The theatrical model is problematic, however, because of that dependency, which restricts authorial agency and reveals his ownership and authority to be illusive. The theatrical model of self also requires that permanent "self-abnegation" or self-loss Diderot described. Sterne's recognition that the mid-eighteenth-century state of the literary market upset the traditional hierarchy of writing and reading, making readers agents as much as writers, found its expression in ironic self-undermining assertions of authority, and in the representations of a theatrical, scandalized self who, while pretending to shun them, was always intent on raising the dangers that lurk under a jest.

[1] Laurence Sterne, *The Sermons of Mr. Yorick* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1760), 7-8.
[2] The phrase "true feeler" comes from a famous letter from Sterne to an American admirer, Dr. John Eustace. Sterne writes: "a true feeler always brings half the entertainment along with him. His own ideas are only call'd forth by what he reads, and the vibration within, so entirely correspond with those excited, 'tis like reading *himself* and the the *book*." I will com back to these important sentences. Laurence Sterne, *Letters of Laurence Sterne*, ed. Lewis Perry Curtis (Oxford: Clarendon, 1935), 411.
[3] In "What is an Author?" Foucault discusses the complexities in an author's name:

> The proper name and the author's name are situated between the two poles of description and designation: they must have a certain link with what they name, but one that is neither entirely in the mode of designation nor in that of description; it must be a *specific* link. However—and it is here that the particular difficulties of the author's name arise—the links between the proper name and the individual named and between the author's name and what it names are not isomorphic and do not function in the same way. …These differences may result from the fact that an author's name is not simply an element in a discourse (capable of being either subject or object, of being replaced by a pronoun, and the like); it performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse, assuring a classificatory function. …It would seem that the author's name, unlike other proper names, does not pass from the interior of a discourse to the real and exterior individual who produced it; instead, the name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being. The author's name manifests the appearance of a certain discursive set and indicates the status of this discourse within a society and a culture.

Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage, 1984), 106-7. The danger Sterne alludes to, and the scandal of his play with authorial names and selves, relates to the way this play threatened certainties about the status of his discourse—in this case, the discourse of sermons—and the assumptions about the author which stemmed from these certainties.
[4] Even in the privacy of letters to his mistress Catherine Fourmantel, where there was no need for a publicity or marketing technique, Sterne played the role, signing them "Yorick."
[5] Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 103. De Man discusses a pattern in a group of deconstructionist essays, including Derrida's work on Rousseau's *Confessions*, in which:

> It is necessary, in each case, to read beyond some of the more categorical assertions and balance them against other much more tentative utterances that seem to come close, at times, to being contradictory to these assertions. The contradictions, however, never cancel each other out, nor do they enter into the synthesizing dynamics of a dialectic. No contradiction or dialectical movement could develop because a fundamental difference in the level of explicitness prevented both statements from meeting on a common level of discourse; the one

> always lay hidden within the other as the sun lies hidden within a shadow, or truth within error. (102-3)

[6] Letter to an unidentified nobleman, 28 Nov. 1767, *Sterne: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Alan Howes (Boston: Routledge, 1971), 188. Sterne's statement may be seen as a jest, because *A Sentimental Journey* suggests that the imagination is by nature "warm"—grounded in the body and felt in the pulse, in "vibrations" of feeling.

[7] Quoted in *Critical Heritage*, 77. From *Monthly Review*, xxii (May 1760), 422-5.

[8] Foucault, "What is an Author?", 119.

[9] Howes, *Critical Heritage*, 78.

[10] Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Sterne plays with just this conundrum when he has Yorick compose the preface to *A Sentimental Journey* within the text itself, and when Tristram inserts a preface in the third volume of *Tristram Shandy*.

[11] Sterne, *Letters*, 85-6.

[12] Howes, *Critical Heritage*, 63. Peter Briggs writes, "To some observers he seemed a hero of social sympathy, personal sensibility, and good humor, while to others he was a scandal, running into the ground his various professions as minister, author, husband, and gentleman." "Laurence Sterne and Literary Celebrity," *The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly Annual* 4 (1991), 272.

[13] Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), xv.

[14] Sterne, *Letters*, 90. This famous quote comes from a letter of Jan. 1760.

[15] Foucault, *The Foucault Reader*, 111.

[16] William Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in England, 1684-1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 145. Warner leads into this idea with a discussion of de Certeau's *Practice of Everyday Life*, in which he sees "a counterimage of reading" that:

> overcome[s] the stark polarities—production/consumption, active/passive, empowered/disempowered—that have conducted cultural hierarchies from the eighteenth century to the present. He does so by using the opposition writing/reading as the 'general equivalent and indicator' of the opposition production/consumption. This has the effect of putting in question the controlling authority of writing as active production. (142)

De Certeau's account makes reading "nomadic, eccentric, and active"—properties to which Sterne's shandean games attempt to respond.

[17] Braudy, Leo, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 381.

[18] This amalgamation of authorial self is something like Haywood's corporate author self of the Female Spectator, and it may also be compared to the version of authorship David Saunders and Ian Hunter describe, wherein the different identities of one author may have different professions and roles in his own authorial self. Different and shifting "personalities" of one author are "made available by these institutions [cultural, legal,

technological, economic, and ethical].” “Lessons from the ‘Literatory’: How to Historicise Authorship” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Spring, 1991), 480.

[19] Briggs, “Laurence Sterne,” 263. Colley Cibber might have been another such model of a famous public figure, and actor, for Sterne. Comparing Sterne to the earlier Cibber, who played his Lord Foppington role on and off the stage, Briggs writes: “Sterne was not the first to invent a comic character and then adopt it as his persona to carry him through that long series of theatrical engagements which make up the public life of a celebrity” (265).

[20] Sterne bought a copy for his friend Denis Diderot in 1763, and sent it along with “all Lock’s works” (sic) and “All the works of Pope… The Dramatick Works of Cibber—& Cibber’s Life—Chaucer, Tillotson’s Sermons—the small edition—” and “The 6 Vols. Of Shandy.” Sterne, *Letters*, 166.

[21] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Roger Woodhouse (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 303.

[22] Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, ed. Melvyn New (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 5.

[23] John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, (London, A. & J. Churchill, 1705), 390. The book was first published in 1692.

[24] Locke, *Essay*, 355.

[25] Sterne may be said to use this definition of madness as an endorsement of his comic use of association in creating his characters. For example—just one of many—Uncle Toby thinks of fortifications when he hears almost any word or homonym that might be remotely related. Toby’s hobby-horse determines his association of ideas. Sterne’s description of how the hobby-horse comes about sounds pseudo-Lockean:

> A man and his Hobby-Horse, tho’ I cannot say that they act and re-act exactly after the same manner in which the soul and body do upon each other: Yet doubtless there is a communication between them of some kind, and my opinion rather is, that there is something in it more of the manner of electrified bodies,—and that by means of the heated parts of the rider, which come immediately into contact with the back of the Hobby-Horse.—By long journies and much friction, it so happens that the body of the rider is at length fill’d as full of Hobby-Horsical matter as it can hold;—so that if you are able to give but a clear description of the nature of the one, you may form a pretty exact notion of the genius and character of the other. (67)

In *A Sentimental Journey*, Yorick says “no man cares to have his virtues to be the sport of contingencies.” Laurence Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey and Other Writings*, eds. Ian Jack and Tim Parnell (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 4.

[26] Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 184.

[27] John Hill, *The Actor: A Treatise on the Art of Playing* (London: R. Griffiths, 1750), 106.

[28] Wahrman, *Modern Self*, 171.

[29] From a letter from Garrick, Aug. 1769, in *Actors on Acting: The Theories, Techniques, and Practices of the Great Actors of All Times as Told in Their Own Words*, Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy, eds. (New York: Crown Publishers, 1965), 137. Thomas Wilkes, *A General View of the Stage*, (London: J. Coote, 1759), 92.
[30] Brewer, John, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 334.
[31] Quoted in Ian Campbell Ross, *Laurence Sterne: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 247.
[32] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 340.
[33] Hill, *The Actor*, 249. Garrick often reiterated "this message [that] claimed the stage rather than the page as the place where drama was interpreted." (Brewer, *Pleasures*, 338.)
[34] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 327.
[35] Leigh Woods, *Garrick Claims the Stage: Acting as Social Emblem in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Greenwood Press, 1984), 35.
[36] Brewer, *Pleasures*, 350.
[37] Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 256-7.
[38] David A. Brewer, *The Afterlife of Character: 1726-1825* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 155.
[39] Shaftesbury writes that an "author who writes in his own person has the advantage of being who or what he pleases. He is no certain man, nor has any certain or genuine character." These lines are quoted by David Marshall, who sees in Shaftesbury's writings a "determination to discover a real or genuine self… [and] a recurrent anxiety about identifying the self" (*Figure of Theater*, 41-2). For Sterne, the condition Shaftesbury describes was a source of freedom and play.
[40] Hazucha, Andrew, *Typography as Text: Revisions of Meaning in the works of Laurence Sterne*, (Dissertation Abstracts International-A 54/10, p. 3756, Apr. 1994).
[41] Warner cites Shaftesbury's comparison of authors to pimps, because of the way they "gratify the reader's lazy compulsion to read." Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 144-5.
[42] He signed the first and second editions of Volume V, about 4,000 copies.
[43] Ian Campbell Ross argues that Sterne did this to "protect himself against imitation and forgery." Ross, *Laurence Sterne*, 269. David Brewer sees Sterne's act of signing as "an assertion of his lingering presence":
Like the marbled page and Tristram's other bibliographic games, the autographs serve as reminders of just who has furnished the first half of the entertainment: not merely Tristram the disembodied character but also "L. Sterne," whose hand has touched the very page now in your possession and left its mark in the place traditionally reserved for ownership inscriptions.
Brewer, *Afterlife*, 180.
[44] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 55.
[45] Foucault, "What is an Author?", 111. We may recall here how the author-function comes about as an effect of reading:

> Critics doubtless try to give this intelligible being a realistic status, by discerning, in the individual, a 'deep' motive, a 'creative' power, or a 'design,' the milieu in which writing originates. Nevertheless, these aspects of an individual which we designate as making him an author are only a projection, in more or less psychologizing terms, of the operations that we force texts to undergo, the connections that we make, the traits that we establish as pertinent, the continuities that we recognize, or the exclusions that we practice. (111)

Sterne plays with how an effect—the idea of the author—is confused with a cause—the originating consciousness. Sterne's practice was to play up this confusion, letting his knowing readers in on the paradoxical joke of his author-self as an effect of its own writing, even while he catered to the readerly desire to believe in an embodied originating consciousness.

[46] Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 194.

[47] This supposed contract asserts the author's authority even as it limits its scope. It is precisely by setting the limits that he takes charge. But by allowing for the reader's agency in the reading of this contract-making, Sterne undermines his assertion of authority. The implicit contract of the double title page to the sermons performs a similar action of asserting and undermining the author's authority. His pretended attempt to set the terms of the reading is an admission of his lack of authority over the reader's imagination.

[48] Leo Braudy comments that Rousseau "associated the urge to be famous with the need to be properly recognized and therefore loved and desired by women." (Braudy, *Frenzy of Renown*, 385.) More generally, he says that at the time (as at all times?), for men, "fame and the love of women were often interchangeable" (385). Perhaps for Sterne, surrounding himself with impotent (fictional) men was part of this equation.

[49] Sterne, *Letters*, 403. From a letter of Nov. 1767.

[50] Quoted in Ross, *Tristram Shandy*, 222.

[51] Again, Foucault's essay describes an impulse we see manifest here:

> Once a system of ownership for texts came into being… the possibility of transgression attached to the act of writing took on, more and more, the form of an imperative peculiar to literature. It is as if the author, beginning with the moment at which he was placed in the system of property that characterizes our society, compensated for the status that he thus acquired by rediscovering the old bipolar field of discourse, systematically practicing transgression and thereby restoring danger to a writing which was now guaranteed the benefits of ownership.

Foucault, "What is an Author?", 108-9. Transgression seems to be one of Sterne's main impulses, and the danger he was particularly interested in was that which "lurked under" a jest.

Sterne makes a great show of rejecting the rules which govern other writers (as well as his own), and applies this rejection of rules to his authorial character by exploiting the conflation of man and book under the name "Tristram Shandy." Commenting on Uncle Toby & Walter being left on the stairs for two chapters, the narrator says:

> there may be as many chapters as steps;--let that be as it will, Sir, I can no more help it than my destiny…. The deuce of any other rule have I to govern myself by in this affair—and if I had one—as I do all things out of all rule—I would twist it and tear it to pieces, and throw it into the fire when I had done—Am I warm? I am, and the cause demands it—a pretty story! is a man to follow rules—or rules to follow him?

Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 253. This passage presents the idea that the author cannot control what he writes because what he writes is his life, his "destiny." But of course "the life" is what is written. The passage also playfully criticizes fellow writers for following rules instead of being original, or a self-originator like Tristram, an implication of which is to align originality with transgression. And it exploits that readerly desire for the illusion of presence and embodiment by physicalizing the "rule"—making it a piece of paper the hands of the author throw into the fire.

A similar rejection of rules helps to render the imaginary self of the author: "But this is neither here nor there—why do I mention it?---Ask my pen,---it governs me,---I govern not it" (375). This play upon the idea of the novel writing the author, the life writing the life, is echoed in a later letter of Sterne's (from sometime in 1767): "Now, I take heav'n to witness, after all this *badinage* my heart is innocent—and the sporting of my pen is equal, just equal, to what I did in my boyish days, when I got astride of a stick, and gallop'd away—The truth is this—that my pen governs me—not me my pen" (Sterne, *Letters*, 692-3, n. 2). This could be read as a self-exculpation from scandal, which it most likely was on one level. But it also renders an author who sports with the conflicting desires of his readers to experience something like scandal vicariously and to locate a stabilizing moral integrity in the embodied self of their author.

[52] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*, Thomas Keymer and Alice Wakely, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press), 3.

[53] In this sense of how much control they claim, Richardson may be seen as a proponent of the anti-novel discourse of the mid-eighteenth century, which characterized readers as dangerously passive—becoming absorbed and losing their moral bearings. Sterne, on the other hand, would seem to see readers as, if anything, too-active, quite the reverse of automata.

[54] Howes, *Critical Heritage*, 159. From an unsigned notice in the *Universal Museum and Complete Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, I (January, 1765).

[55] Howes, *Critical Heritage*, 168. From Jean Baptiste Suard's unsigned notice of volumes VII and VIII, as translated for the *London Chronicle*, xvii, no. 1299 (10 April-18 April 1765).

[56] Howes, *Critical Heritage*, 167. From Ralph Griffith's unsigned review in the *Monthly Review*, xxxii (Feb. 1765).

[57] Sterne, *Letters*, 396.

[58] From a letter to an unidentified nobleman, 28 Nov. 1767. A few months earlier, when Sterne began writing *A Sentimental Journey*, he put out a second edition of the fifth and sixth volumes of *Tristram Shandy*. The title pages included three mottoes in Latin. The first is from Horace's *Satires*, and may be translated: "if in my words I am too free,

perchance too light, this bit of liberty you will indulgently grant me." The second is from Erasmus's introductory letter to *Praise of Folly*: [If some object that I have been] too light and comical for a divine, too satirical for one of my profession—'Tis not I, but Democritus who said it." Sterne took the third motto from the Second Council of Carthage: "If any priest or monk uses jesting words, exciting laughter, let him be denounced." Together, the mottoes represent some of the authorial faces of Laurence Sterne. The first reiterates the request he makes of the reader, in the Preface to the sermons, to indulge him. The second displaces responsibility for what he writes onto another—Tristram, the fictional author. And the third offers a way for Sterne to own his scandal by taking an ironic and rebellious stance.

[59] Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. Ryan Patrick Hanley (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 1-2.

[60] J. G. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 4. Sterne employs another term from Newton's *Opticks*—Sensorium (the nerve center, to which all sense impressions are transmitted)—to characterize Yorick as a man of sensibility:

> Dear sensibility! source inexhausted of all that's precious in our joys, or costly in our sorrows!.... I feel some generous joys and generous cares beyond myself—all comes from thee, great—great SENSORIUM of the world! which vibrates, if a hair of our heads but falls upon the ground, in the remotest desert of thy creation.

Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 98. Sterne adopts Newton's incorporation of physics into a concept of divine omnipresence. In Barker-Benfield's summary, "Newton's view of the body's constitution corresponded to his presentation of the nature of space, wherein 'every particle is *always*, and every indivisible moment of duration is everywhere,' that is, manifesting God's omnipresence. Our 'little sensoriums' were merely parts, vibrations, within God's 'boundless uniform Sensorium.'" Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility*, 5.

[61] Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 4.

[62] Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 22.

[63] For example, in an early episode in Calais, Yorick paraphrases some biblical passages about which Sterne wrote sermons:

> What a large volume of adventures may be grasped within this little span of life by him who interests his heart in every thing, and who, having eyes to see, what time and chance are perpetually holding out to him as he journeyeth on his way, misses nothing he can *fairly* lay his hands on. (23-4)

In the same chapter, Yorick refers to his encounters with Smellfungus, ie., Tobias Smollett, whom Sterne met on his travels in France, though not in the same places where Yorick meets Smellfungus. One of the most explicit conflations of Sterne and Yorick occurs when the Sterne family's actual arms is presented as Yorick's, with a fictionalized account of the origin of the starling crest.

[64] Yorick then tells the story of his forgotten passport and the threat of being thrown in the Bastille, and they engage in some suggestive small talk about French women. Yorick

claims, in Shandean style, that he "cannot bear the shock of the least indecent insinuation: in the sportability of chit-chat I have often endeavoured to conquer it" (70) even while the text proliferates with innuendo.

[65] David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 176.

[66] When Tristram travels in France, a similar conundrum of identity is catalyzed by a similarly official logistical contingency. A commissary from the post-office arrives:

> with a rescript in his hand for the payment of some six livres odd sous. Upon what account? said I.----'Tis upon the part of the king, replied the commissary, heaving up both his shoulders----
>
> ----My good friend, quoth I----as sure as I am I—and you are you—
>
> ----And who are you? said he.----Don't puzzle me; said I.

Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 473.

[67] For a similar reading of Sterne's reflections on the power and chanciness of a name, consider John Mullan's essay "Feelings and Novels." He writes:

> For Defoe's and Richardson's protagonists, this self-explanation is also a religious exercise. The self is not yet distinct from the soul. For the eighteenth-century novelist (albeit also a clergyman) who takes most literally the lessons of empiricism, Laurence Sterne, the present tense of telling accidents and chance associations gives a shape to the self without any recourse to a Protestant creed of introspection[….] Tristram calls himself 'sport of small accidents.' If there were to be a novel of the Enlightenment, this should be it. Its very first page reaches for Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* to explain the odd associations that govern understanding, given shape by experiences without necessary connection. A good deal of the novel is taken up by the narrator's story of the mischances by which he came to be called 'Tristram'… for this is the oddest association of all. The merest accident makes the narrator what he is. Inherently, a name may be nothing, yet, once given, it *is* that person. And all the ruminations on the accidents that form an individual are happening, as we read, in the moment-by-moment inventions and self-interruptions and flights of wry fantasy of Tristram's narration.

In *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (Boston: Routledge, 1997), 130. [119-31]

[68] We find another fold in this intertextual act of naming in a letter Sterne wrote to Garrick in January 1762, in which he said that when he was introduced to the Count de Bissie, he "found him reading Tristram"—another textual embodiment of the author. (Quoted in Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 268.)

[69] Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, 111.

[70] David Marshall, *The Figure of Theater: Shaftesbury, Defoe, Adam Smith, and George Eliot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 175 and 176.

[71] In a letter to his friend John Hall-Stevenson in 1761, Sterne offers an alternative way of dealing with the "evils" of the world:

> I have not managed my miseries like a wise man—and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandeism into me, which will not suffer me to think two moments upon any grave subject, I would else, just now lay down and die—die—and yet, in half an hour's time, I'll lay a guinea, I shall be as merry as a monkey—and as mischievous too.

Sterne, *Letters*, 139.

[72] Marshall, *Figure of Theater*, 179.

[73] Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 73.

[74] Locke, *Essay*, 310-11.

[75] From "An Essay on the Art of Acting" (1746). Quoted in Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting*, 117.

[76] Diderot, Denis, *The Paradox of Acting*, trans. Walter H. Pollock (London: Chatto & Windus, 1883), 16.

[77] Hill, *The Actor*, 14.

[78] Quoted in Cole and Chinoy, *Actors on Acting*, 137.

[79] Marshall, *The Figure of Theater*, 44-5.

[80] This negative response to *A Sentimental Journey* was not generally immediate, in part because Sterne died soon after its publication; reviews were mixed with eulogies.

[81] Interestingly, she wrote the poem as a response to the 1779 death of her friend David Garrick, who had also been a good friend of Sterne's.

[82] More, Hannah, "Sensibility," *Sacred Dramas; chiefly intended for young persons: To which is added Sensibility, a poem* (London: Thomas Cadell, 1782), 263. The next lines may allude to episodes from Sterne's fiction, in which the character's feeling seems disproportionate to the event (Yorick's for a dead ass, Uncle Toby's for a fly):

> There are, who fill with brilliant plaints the page,
> If a poor linnet meet the gunner's rage;
> There are, who for a dying fawn deplore,
> As if friend, parent, country, were no more'
> Who boast, quick rapture trembling in their eye,
> If from the spider's snare they snatch a fly.

[83] Hannah More, "Sensibility," in *The Works of Hannah More, in four volumes*, Vol. 1 (Dublin: D. Graisberry, 1803), 93.

[84] Russett, *Fictions and Fakes*, 21.

Charlotte Smith's "Written Troubles" of the Written Self

> "Though some of the adventures are real, the characters are for the most part merely imaginary." Preface, *The Banished Man*

This was not a neutral or purely conventional statement for Charlotte Smith. Smith's works, from the beginning, consistently call into question both the meanings of all of the important terms here—"real," "characters," "imaginary"—and the rhetorical weight of the qualifying phrase, "for the most part merely." Smith's career-long challenge was to construct an authorial self who could both represent the proper feminine sensibility readers expected and be politically and socially audacious. She had to provide what consumers wanted even as she wrote "in her own way," a way that was sometimes seen as inappropriate, and even transgressive.

The first encounter readers had with Charlotte Smith would have been the Preface to the first edition of *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784), which she had compiled and sent to the publisher James Dodsley while living with her husband in King's Bench prison, where he was being held for debt.[1] With the aid of a dedication to William Hayley she published a collection of sonnets that sold out almost immediately. Smith's first preface legitimates her as an author in a genre traditionally defined by male voices, renders her interesting as a character, and indicates that her "simple effusions" should be read as spontaneous translations of her own (proper) feelings.[2] In this first self-marketing gesture she took advantage of a literary historical moment in which readers were learning to take pleasure in identifying with fictional characters that had psychological depth, and in which "poetry had come… to have a special relationship to the cultural prestige of feminine feeling."[3]

Within months, Richard Dodsley published a second edition and Smith was able to negotiate contracts for her first prose works—translations from the French—with the well-respected publishing house of Cadell and Davies. The first of these translations, the risqué early-eighteenth-century novel *Manon L'Escaut*, which she published anonymously, met a negative reception and was seen as dubiously moral. The second translation, from a collection of actual court cases, was a huge success even though some of the stories were even more scandalous than that of *Manon*. She called this book *The Romance of Real Life*; because of the stories' basis in fact, she met no accusations of immorality. These two experiences in translation, along with her success in cultivating an authorial self-image associated with the lyric voice of sensibility in her sonnets, encouraged her, throughout her career, to press against and perforate the hardening boundaries of lyric, fictional, and autobiographical genres. Smith's generic experiments reveal how these boundaries had by the late-eighteenth-century become volatile sites of cultural anxiety.

> By the late eighteenth century, Adela Pinch argues, women poets:
> were conscious of the extent to which they could both take advantage of and be limited by the culture's association of women with sensibility. In a period that placed poetic value on 'natural genius,' on the inspired and authentic rather than on the learned and the cultivated, women's natural sensibility gave them an equal, if not greater, qualification for writing poetry. (57)

Smith's performance of the personal, her tone of sensibility and intimacy, and her "rhetoric of actuality" would become one of the most important aspects of her authorial fame.[4] However, as has often been observed, the literature of sensibility depends upon a paradox whereby seemingly sincere and original feelings are expressed in highly stylized and conventionalized form. Pinch points out that "though the *Elegiac Sonnets* seem to proclaim the literary origins of their feelings, contemporary discussions surrounding them tended to focus on the specifically personal nature of Charlotte Smith's feelings."[5] One anonymous fan expressed in sonnet form his or her admiration for and sympathy with Smith as a poet and as a woman of sensibility and suffering: her poems "rouse the soul to sympathetic love;/ And yet—sad source! they spring from REAL WOE."[6] Other readers, however, like her poetic rival Anna Seward, insisted on reading her poems not as personal expressions but as distant copies of other poems; Seward described Smith's "hedge-flowers"—she wouldn't deign to call them poems—as quite the opposite of authentic: "pretty tuneful centos from our various poets, without anything original. All the lines that are not the lines of others are weak and unimpressive." (Of the praise Smith had earned from *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Seward says in the same letter, "It makes one sick," an unintentional expression, perhaps, of her envy.)[7] Ironically, another of Smith's detractors, the Reverend Richard Polewhele, calls her poems "original."[8] Anna Laetitia Barbauld says Smith's sonnets "were universally admired. …Mrs. Smith's success [in this form] fixed at once her reputation as a poet of no mean class."[9] Smith was regularly praised for being an excellent "copyist" of the beauties of nature, and charged with plagiarism for her habit of quoting—a denigrated form of copying. In short, Smith's poetry from the beginning has been called sincere, original, and authentic, as well as merely copied, conventional, stylized, and plagiarized. What is the meaning of this confusion of terms and of evaluations in the critical reception of Smith's works? Does it point to the protean, undefined, or simply confused state of these designations in the period? What did originality or authenticity mean in this age when novelistic fiction was becoming more realistic and more narrowly defined, and when "self-writing"—what would become autobiography—was a newly recognized and already "ossifying"—in Felicity Nussbaum's phrase—genre that included both high (Hume/male/literary) and low (Mary Hays/female/scandalous) examples?

I will argue, in part, that Smith's career reveals the friction between the expectations of authorial authenticity and the commodification and conventionalization of both genres and authors, a friction that is still apparent today in the assessment of Smith's work. One recent critic describes Smith's letters as "disquietingly literary," as if their literariness—their conventionality—were a form of concealment, suppression, self-censorship, or inauthenticity.[10] This assumption expresses the same wish her contemporary readers had, to know and sympathize with a legible, true, authentic self that existed apart from the self that was written. Throughout her career, Smith exploited this readerly expectation and tested its limits; how much "real life" did readers really want to see? Her practice of self-representation, I will argue, reflects her resentment of late-eighteenth-century society's contract with authors—especially female authors—which required that they display and uphold the moral standards of their society, in part because she felt personally cheated by these (double) standards and also because of the way that

contract forced authors into certain kinds of performance. Smith took that given performative state and used it to reveal its own nature as performance, but not without taking advantage of what living up to the performance gave her: income and cultural status. My chapter explores how she attempts to strike this balance.

Smith's literary historical moment presented new opportunities as well as new constraints. She relied on the evolving practices of reading character when she created an author self who seemed as accessible and legible as a novelistic character, and who, at times, became a fictional character (for example, as Mrs. Stafford, the writer and mother in *Emmeline* and as Charlotte Denzil, another writer and mother, in *The Banished Man*). Catherine Gallagher describes this evolution:

> as the eighteenth century wore on and fictionality became commonly understood, writers no longer thought that sentimental readers were confused about the ontological status of characters, as early naïve readers might have been. Instead, they tended to notice that the characters' very fictiveness had a strong emotional appeal.[11]

Gallagher explains that "the fictional framework established a protected affective enclosure that encouraged risk-free emotional investment. Fictional characters, moreover, were thought to be easier to sympathize or identify with than most real people" (351). Throughout her career, Smith rendered herself as a character resembling, and made familiar by, those fictional characters in the popular domestic novels of the time. In other words, Smith continually exploited what Gallagher calls the "apparent paradox—that readers attach themselves to characters because of, not despite, their fictionality." Deidre Lynch argues further that in the latter half of the eighteenth century:

> People's transactions with books came to be connected in new ways, first, to their endeavors to find themselves as 'individuals' and to escape from their social context, and, second, to their endeavors to position themselves within an economy of prestige in which cultural capital was distributed asymmetrically and in which not all who read were accredited to 'really read' literature. The agoraphobic inflection to the characterization within English novels of manners—which regularly send their heroines into marriage markets where they are misrecognized and objectified and which then go on to reanimate and redeem them from this commodification—is no accident. It is a token of how the character with an inner life has been a useful resource for readers who have to negotiate the irony that sees the circulation en masse of elite culture threaten to turn that culture into its opposite. It suggests too the rich ironies that attend those pursuits of self-fulfillment that unfold in the impersonal space of the market.[12]

Smith plays into these ironies and cultural occurrences with her double role of author/character, which makes her both a self with distinction and an object to be worked upon by the reader's identifications, sympathies, and acts of self-definition. She gives herself to her readers as a commodity, but is redeemed from this state by also being an authentic self and an example. This doubleness is reflected—especially in the novels—in her author self's expressions of irritation with her role as a vehicle for the "prestige" of literature. She regrets the "circulation en masse of elite culture" even as she encourages it with the popularization of her literary-character-self.

Smith also takes advantage of the commodification of autobiography during this literary historical moment. Felicity Nussbaum describes some expectations that went along with the increasing codification of this genre:

> Unity in "self-biography" was also perceived to derive from a narrator and author who were the same, who existed in history, and who expressed an interior reality. The point of these late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century texts is that an infinitely varied but unified self exists, and that writing and reading autobiography is morally and aesthetically rewarding.[13]

Smith's invitation to read her poems and fictional self-portraits autobiographically plays with this assumption, showing instead of a unified self a composite of selves whose identities depend on the genre in which they are constructed. This blurring of romance and real life brought some harsh criticism, however, because the lines between fiction and "life-writing" were hardening even as they became generically more like each other. Patricia Meyer Spacks illustrates the deep relation of these modes of writing. She describes the contract of autobiography, as it came about in step with the contract of novelistic fiction in the eighteenth century:

> Autobiographies affirm identity. The autobiographer, attesting his existence by the fact of his writing, lives through his explanations, tacit or explicit, of how he came to be the person he is. He claims by his announcement of genre that he presents to the reader some version of a real human being…. Yet he exists on the page by virtue of his story, his shaping of the events of his experience; he exists as a literary phenomenon for essentially the same reasons that Tom Jones appears to exist. [Autobiographers'] stories create them and create the reader's answering faith and pleasure.[14]

Smith constructs a narrative version of self by piecing together a composite of non-narrative and fictional narrative texts, a practice which was answered by many readers' faith and pleasure—and by other readers' sneers or anger. The reception of Smith's works reveals anxiety about the way authentic written selves are also literary selves. In particular, the association of the proper self with fictionality was read as impropriety.

Smith's daring perforation of the boundaries between the categories of fiction and "real life," I argue, is an important aspect of what Sarah Zimmerman has called Smith's "precarious position."[15] Zimmerman observes that "Smith's writings deliberately confuse conventional distinctions between autobiography and fiction in order to add the interest of 'real life' to the appeal of familiar literary forms" (65). I will argue, further, that Smith cuts chinks in the façade of literary performance with her irony and invites the reader (or readers "among the few" anyway) to see that it *is* a façade. I will even go so far as to suggest that Laurence Sterne was a model for her as a performative, ironic authorial self and as an innovator of novelistic forms. Smith identifies with—and copies, one might say—his simultaneous frustration with and exploitation of the phenomenon of a newly booming print culture wherein authors must be originals and yet also "make books as apothecaries make new mixtures, by pouring only out of one vessel into another"—a line she quotes in her formally experimental novel *The Banished Man*.[16]

Smith's position, however was more "precarious" than Sterne's because she was a female author who had a family to support and who chose to politicize the personal in her

fictions, while upholding her respected reputation; this forced her to into a balancing act between her own abilities in literary innovation and her politics, and the expectations and desires of her reading public that she be a well-behaved heroine of sensibility, and a morally unwavering mother—between what was proper to her and what her reading public considered propriety. Judith Davis Miller argues that this conflicting set of demands drove Smith to create a strategy of "open concealment," which can be seen most clearly in the way Smith uses the prefaces of her later political novels to disavow the radical opinions of her characters even as she sympathetically aligns herself with them in the text proper.[17] I see this kind of textual activity not as an isolated practice Smith develops for her political novels but as a part of her more general play with the boundaries and politics and proprieties of genre, of gender, and of authorial self. Smith's career of self-narration, her self-construction, is more complex than a simple act of self-marketing or of "open concealment." Her discomfiting shifts in discourse emphasize that the self that she *is* is the written self, constructed through a negotiation of the forces of her readers' desires and expectations and her own desire to use literature as a technology of the self and of social criticism. She constructs a complex figure—one not easily swallowed by all readers. Some, like the Reverend Richard Polewhele, author of the scathing poem, "The Unsex'd Females," grouped Smith with Mary Wollstonecraft, and argued that when she let politics "infect" her mind, she "resign'd her power to please, / Poetic feeling and poetic ease."[18] This was a risk for her that was not hypothetical; her readers' pleasure translated to her own and her children's support.

Eliza Haywood's practice of the self courted and evaded the danger of scandal, Sterne's the dangers of scandal and those that lurked under the jest of his authorial identity. Smith, who is not often seen as a scandalous or jesting author, courted and evaded the danger of scandal too, with her conflicting self-representations. I agree with Adela Pinch's verdict (in her discussion of Smith's practice of poetic quotation, which made her sonnets "echo chambers") that "we must insist not on the scandal of Smith's 'plagiarisms' but on the lack of scandal, the sense that her sonnets announce a relationship to poetic language and literary tradition that seemed appropriate."[19] Smith's other forms of copying—translation of fiction, self-representation within fiction—however, in other, *fictional* genres *did* generate scandal. I would like to investigate why.

First Performances: Sympathetic and Scandalous

Genette says that original authorial prefaces historically have had two functions: "*to get the book read* and *to get the book read properly*."[20] Let us take a moment to consider how Charlotte Smith's first statement as an author got her *Elegiac Sonnets* read, and read properly. The preface to *Elegiac Sonnets* opens by introducing the issue of legitimacy and propriety: "The little Poems which are here called Sonnets, have, I believe, no very just claim to that title: but they consist of fourteen lines, and appear to me no improper vehicle for a single Sentiment."[21] While she says they may not be worthy sonnets, she also confers upon herself the authority of defining them and perhaps hints at her own originality as a writer and innovator of the sonnet form, which had not been popular for many decades. And she knows that when the reader turns the page, he or she will learn that not only do the poems consist of fourteen lines, but they also employ a

variety of traditional rhyme schemes with originality and skill. She reveals her self-assurance and her authorial agenda of self-legitimization (and legitimization by her readers) by aligning herself implicitly with William Hayley, to whom the book is dedicated. She states, deferentially, "I read it as the opinion of very good judges, that the legitimate Sonnet is ill calculated for our language. The specimen Mr. Hayley has given, though they form a strong exception, prove no more, than that the difficulties of the attempt vanish before uncommon powers" (2). Her readers, she knew, would see in the next few pages that the difficulties vanished before her uncommon powers too, and, perhaps, that she was offering a modest lie when she said, in the dedication, that she would only ever be "a distant copyist" to Hayley.

After she has claimed legitimacy by disclaiming it, she proceeds to "get the book read properly" by characterizing her poems as self-expression and herself as a recognizable figure, a heroine of sensibility: "Some very melancholy moments have been beguiled by expressing in verse the sensations those moments brought" (3). She also characterizes the poems as private, and unintentionally made public: "Some of my friends, with partial indiscretion, have multiplied the copies they procured of several of these attempts" (3). She decides to publish them herself, the narrative suggests, to correct their "mutilated state" and because of "other circumstances," which, her readers would soon learn, were those financial straits stemming from her husband's profligacy and the "chicanery" of the lawyers managing her father-in-law's estate. The final sentence of this brief preface makes a conventional gesture of self-deprecation even as it confers on herself and her readers a special distinction: "I can hope for readers only among the few, who, to sensibility of heart, join simplicity of taste" (3). This statement accomplishes several things: it projects an image of her readers as a small group of individuals of taste and sensibility—a coterie to which many at the time would have wanted to belong; this projection then reflects back on the genteel author, who, the title page announces, is from the country estate of Bignor Park, Sussex. The statement also confers distinction and cultural capital upon the poems, by making them the objects to which only an elite group, "the few," may have true access, even as these readers come to constitute together a mass audience for a soon-to-be celebrity author.

Smith had been known as the best actress at her girls' school.[22] Later, as a professional writer, she performs an authorial self that manages to combine the external signs of passion with calculating self-consciousness, like Diderot's serious and talented actor. Her poems were read as authentic expressions of feeling; the fact that all of the feelings were not hers may have been understood in terms similar to those in dramatic theory at a time when the profession of actor had more respectability attached to it than it had previously, due to the distinguished careers of David Garrick and Sarah Siddons. David Marshall describes Diderot's actor as a counterfeiter, but one who is seen as an expresser rather than as a deceiver:

> With such a knowledge of the exterior symptoms of feeling, rather than any special depth of feeling itself, this actor can "s'adresser à la sensation de ceux qui entendent, qui [le] voient" ("address himself to the sensations of those who are watching and listening to him"). This cool, detached, and manipulative

> counterfeiter of feelings is not supposed to forget anything, least of all his effect on the audience.[23]

My comparison of Smith with Diderot's "cold and calculating actor" is not meant to diminish the fact of her real-life melancholy or significant hardships, the reality of which she often refers to in prefaces and notes.[24] But she uses these references as performative gestures: they legitimate her literary feelings and give her fictions the stamp of sincerity, and most of her readers believed in them.

Alternatively, her performance of self as a heroine of sensibility might be understood in terms of translation. Sonnet III suggests that she is the poet whose "musing fancy would translate / What mean the sounds that swell [the nightingale's] little breast." Some of the poems in this first edition were translations of Petrarch's sonnets, the theme of which is unrequited love. Smith's ventriloquy of a male voice, and her translation of this content through the media of her own sensibility and style, were, significantly, not seen as scandalous. At least, they did not interfere with a very positive reception and with her readers' desire to understand her poems as expressions of her own sensibility. This fact must be seen in the context of the cultural capital of different genres—in which poetry, and increasingly the lyric, held the most—as well as in the context of Smith's skill in self-representation. She wants her translations of Petrarch to be understood in terms of the highly valued ability of copying or imitating nature. In other words, as a translator—of lyrics, of the nightingale's song, or of her own "sensations"—she adheres to the traditional and respected trope of the poet as a copyist.

Why, then, was her first prose translation very nearly suppressed and, in any case, unsuccessful? Just over a year after she had so cleverly and successfully legitimated herself as a poet and female author, and convinced most of her readers to believe in her performance of sincerity, she published a translation of the scandalous mid-century French novel, Abbé Antoine-Francois Prévost's *Manon L'Escaut*. Was her choice of text—in which the sexually experienced, unmarried, mendacious, seductive, and economically upwardly mobile heroine has the sympathy of the narrator the whole way through—an act of audacity or naïveté? First, we must attempt to sort out the conflicting stories about the production of this book. Until Michael Gamer's detective work for the 2005 edition of this work, the book's history had been based on the posthumous account given by Smith's sister, Catherine Anne Dorset. According to Dorset, and Smith's two twentieth-century biographers, Florence Hilbish and Loraine Fletcher, *Manon L'Escaut* was published by Thomas Cadell, in the autumn of 1785 with Smith's name on the cover, soon after her return from Dieppe, France, where she had been living with her husband in hiding from his creditors.[25] She asked Cadell to send a presentation copy to the Shakespeare scholar, George Steevens, who returned the book because he "already had a copy," or at least a version of the novel.[26] However, he also strongly disapproved of the book's moral tone *and* of the fact that it had been translated at all, much less by a woman. According to Dorset, he wrote a letter to the *Public Advertiser* under the pseudonym "Scourge," in which he called the book a "literary fraud" because another translation had already been published in English.[27] Judith Phillips Stanton includes in the *Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith* a letter to an unknown recipient (probably a friend, judging by the style) in which Smith defends herself against this charge, arguing that the term

"fraud" was "rather harsh:" "I really see no fraud in a person endeavouring to make a better translation of a work already translated."[28] Smith and Cadell apparently withdrew the book, and republished it several months later, in May of 1786, without Smith's or Prévost's names on the cover and with her own title, *The Fatal Attachment*.

This story of the book's production is compelling for its portrayal of the power of Steevens' sexism to suppress the work, as well as of the power of Smith's self-assured response, which calls into doubt her sister's representation of her as a naïve participant in the new sphere of print culture, and as a translator of a scandalous novel merely by chance. In her account of Dorset's perspective, Fletcher suggests Dorset may have presented a biased history because of her own disapproval of her sister's first foray into prose. Fletcher says Dorset was "concerned that her sister 'was severely censured for her choice as immoral.' [Dorset] claims Charlotte had no choice, confined as she had been in France, 'which induced her to employ a mind qualified for worthier purposes on such a work.'"[29] Clearly, Dorset disapproved of the novel. But did she also make up a story to excuse her sister's behavior, or at least put words into her mouth? In the letter quoted in Dorset's memoir, Smith claims her ignorance of any other translations: "they are not to be found in any catalogue of the circulating libraries; and perhaps are only known to those who would take the pains to seek after such trumpery" (83). Fletcher comments, "By that designation she colludes, sadly, with Steevens' and Catherine's view of Prévost's novel" (83). While the letter does sound like Smith, in its confidence and ironic wit, this "collusion" does not seem like the Charlotte Smith I know. I think it is possible that Dorset altered the letter, if she did not fabricate parts of the story.

Smith had already published two editions of *Elegiac Sonnets*, and was working on the third and fourth editions. Her prefaces to those works show her to have been a savvy self-marketer. In addition, Smith's later work demonstrates her serious engagement with the themes and character-types of *Manon L'Escaut*: obsessive love, the social and legal injustice faced by women; heroines who are at once self-possessed and dispossessed, emotionally uncontrolled heroes. Another sign of Smith's attachment to her translation is her use of the subtitle, "the fatal attachment," as a significant phrase in many of her subsequent works.[30] In short, I do not think Smith would have "colluded" with the assessment of the novel as "trumpery." There are other reasons to doubt Dorset's version of the publication history of this book. In his Introduction to the Pickering and Chatto edition, Michael Gamer points to some gaps in the historical record that call Dorset's account into question. While he does not explicitly dispute Dorset's history, he does say that he found no evidence of a 1785 edition, and did not find the letter from "Scourge" in the *Public Advertiser*. The first references to the book that he could find were advertisements "in London newspapers and in the June 1786 *Gentleman's Magazine* as 'The Fatal Attachment.'"[31] The most suggestive piece of Gamer's history of this book, in which there may not have been a 1785 edition, is that "if Smith and Cadell did withdraw the book until May 1786, they apparently neither cancelled leaves nor inserted new material. Smith's prefatory essay appears in all aspects to have been printed at the same time as the novel's text" (xxxi). Smith and Cadell clearly did not consider the book, or the translation, to be scandalous in itself, and did not censor or soften anything in it; Cadell, a prosperous publisher, took the book on as his first publication by Charlotte

Smith, and continued to publish most of her works from that point on. Their decision to publish the novel anonymously, however, implies that they knew that the public, or the critics, might bristle at the fact that a woman had translated the potentially scandalous story in a genre that had not yet achieved very high cultural status. Perhaps Smith originally published the book anonymously because she was aware of these risks. Perhaps she also thought an anonymous translation would sell better than one with her name on it, because its anonymity might announce its "interesting" content. Did Dorset interfere with the history of this book to make posthumous excuses for what she saw as her sister's overly audacious early decision to translate "trumpery" and publish it anonymously, thereby announcing its questionable content? If so, her disapproval must have been inordinately strong, because this publishing venture did not offer Smith much remuneration. Although it received three reviews in prominent journals, these were lukewarm and sales were slow.[32]

The following year, after publishing the third edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, which included ten translations, and which continued to sell well, Smith made another prose translation, which was a great success critically and financially.[33] There were two significant differences from *Manon*: this work was non-fiction, and was published with her name on the cover. How much difference did these differences make? Smith's *The Romance of Real Life* was her adaptation of some of the sensational seventeenth-century French court cases collected by M. de Pitaval under the title *Causes Célèbres*. She had selected the cases most interesting to her, cut out a good deal of legal analysis and pious moralizing, rearranged the plot materials, infused the text with novelistic style, and gave the work a title which resonated strongly in the late eighteenth-century, when the romance and "real life" had been neatly divided by the evolution of novelistic fiction. This collection "has been generally dismissed as hack work" and was, according the Stuart Curran, "undertaken sheerly for profit."[34] However, it is not insignificant that many of the stories Smith selected depict women who, like herself, are the victims of their husbands or of "the chicanery of law"—a phrase, and theme, that she returns to many times in her writing career. Also significant is the fact that she probably became familiar with the text during a period in her life when she felt particularly victimized by both husband and law (though she felt this most of her life): the winter of her exile in Normandy, where she spent seven months in a "dilapidated chateau" with her creditor-fleeing husband and eight young children, and where she gave birth, during one of the coldest winters on record, to her twelfth child.[35] These factors of context surely influenced her in her selection and translation. The stories include one about a woman who tries repeatedly and surreptitiously to kill her husband, one about a woman whose husband's brothers attempt repeatedly and brutally to kill her, one about a woman who escapes from her husband and lives disguised as a young chevalier with another woman, one—"The Pretended Martin Guerre"—about a woman who lives with an impostor of her husband and who may prefer the impostor because he pleases her sexually. These are just a few of the stories with the theme of the unhappiness of women in marriages which were in some manner forced upon them, unhappiness which sometimes has catastrophic results. And yet, despite the scandalous content of many of these stories, the gender of the translator, and the possibility of radically feminist interpretations of some of the

themes, the book met a positive and long-lived reception. The reviews were positive from the beginning because the stories' basis in fact and Smith's prefatorial instruction in how to read them "inoculated her work against the kinds of criticism received by *Manon L'Escaut.*"[36]

In his Introduction to the work, Michael Gamer suggests that the collection as a whole:

> mount[s] a coherent critique of marriage as unable to protect women from personal, social and economic privation. As a work of free adaptation and selection, *The Romance of Real Life* thematically coincides with Smith's lifelong concerns with legal reform and with the injustices of the legal system and its victimization of women. (xxxv)

In addition to seeing the work as thematically coherent with Smith's original works, I think we may view it as an instance of her strategy of ventriloquistic self-representation, which she uses both to claim and to disown the content or attitudes in the text.

Smith's preface to *The Romance of Real Life* uses a tactic familiar to us from Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator*, in which she writes about scandalous but factual events in a style that has novelistic excitement, and frames the stories in a statement of moralistic and didactic intent. For Smith, even though reviewers "harbour[ed] increasingly conservative views about the threat posed to social morality by sentimental [or in Haywood's case, amatory] fiction—and especially by works that betrayed Continental roots—[the] recourse to 'real life' proved a potent, neutralizing force" (xxxvi). (This may explain *some* of the disparity in sales between *Manon* and *The Romance of Real Life*.) In her preface, Smith also uses a tactic she has used before and will use again, in the prefaces to every edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*: that of referring the decision to publish to the recommendation and approbation of a male literary friend, as a gesture of legitimization. The preface to *The Romance of Real Life* introduces this "Literary friend," whom Gamer says is "most likely William Hayley," but who is important in this context purely as—and who may purely be—a rhetorical device. As a device, the "Literary friend" is a prophylactic against criticism for choosing the scandalous material that she did, and for writing the stories in an "interesting" style, i.e. with novelistic excitement. She writes:

> A Literary friend, whose opinion I greatly value, suggested to me the possibility of producing a few little volumes, that might prove as attractive as the most romantic fiction, and yet convey all the solid instruction of genuine history. He affirmed, that the voluminous and ill-written French work, entitled *Les Causes Célébres*, might furnish me with very ample materials for so desirable a purpose. He advised me to select such stories from this collection, as, though disfigured by the affectation and bad taste of the compiler, Guyot de Pitaval, might lead us to form awful ideas of the force and danger of the human passions. He wished me to consider myself as under no restriction, but that of adhering to authenticated facts; and, by telling each story in my own way, to render it as much as possible an interesting lesson of morality.[37]

The Literary friend is the subject of each of these declarative sentences which form the first paragraph of Smith's preface: "[He] suggested to me…. He affirmed…. He advised

me…. He wished me….” The effect of this is almost to remove her authorial responsibility completely, or at least to provide some cover for her act of making the stories “interesting” by telling them “in [her] own way” and being “under no restriction.” She is distanced further by the fact that she is not the author, but only the translator of these stories which are not even authored, but are transcriptions of events of “genuine history.” The levels of remove between the content of the stories and Charlotte Smith as author, then, are so many as to make her blameless for anything in them at all potentially scandalous. She adds to the distance by claiming that she translated them not for “fame” but for “humbler motives,” and that the writing was not a pleasure but was “irksome labour,” and that her ambition was only to produce some “matter… both interesting and instructive” (130). These comments convey the requisite and conventional posture of modesty and small expectations, and they remove the possibility of any idea of her personal investment or pleasure in the text.

However, in the translated text, Smith makes significant changes in the presentation of events and of characters.[38] She consistently adds a psychological dimension, which guides the reader in understanding the characters’ motives; and in several places she adds details that effectually defend the character of the wronged woman; and, throughout, she adds novelistic style, to “interest” and draw the reader in to the story sympathetically even as the task of reading is to detach a moral lesson. For example, in “The Marchioness de Gange,” the first story, the Marchioness is accused of having a lover. Smith adds contextual and psychological details which imply that these accusations come purely from the jealously of her husband: “in fact, Madame de Gange was fond of [the other man’s] society, and frequently conversed with him, but was always in company with people of rank and reputation, and with that purity of heart, which, feeling itself incapable of ill, never imagines it can be suspected of it” (137).

Smith’s presentation of the plot also suggests authorial sympathy with the woman. Let’s consider—at some length—the climax of this story, a horrific murder-attempt scene that Smith renders in graphic detail.[39] The Marchioness’s brothers-in-law attack her in her bedroom because she has refused them, on separate occasions, as lovers, and has refused to change her will to benefit them. After they force her to drink poison that burns her mouth and lips, she jumps desperately out of a second-story window and lands safely, makes herself vomit by sticking a long tress of her hair down her throat, runs wildly to the nearest cottage where a group of women try to protect her, and then is attacked by one brother, the sadistic chevalier, who, after dashing a cup of water out of her hand, stabs her multiple times:

> [Her] supplication, enforced with all the touching energy of despair, all the persuasive eloquence of beauty, only irritated the cruelty of the monster to whom it was addressed: he took a short sword which he wore, and, using it as a dagger, stabbed the Marchioness twice with it in her breast. She flew from him, and called for help: he pursued her, gave her five other blows on the back; and having snapped his sword, left the broken end in her shoulder. (144)

At this point in the text Smith cuts out Pitaval’s exculpatory comments on the Chevalier, whom he describes as “destroyed by passion”; she thus effectively avoids anything smacking of sympathy with the sadist. The scene goes on:

> As he now thought he had concluded this bloody scene, he quitted the room, and going hastily to the door, he said to the Abbé [his brother], who was waiting there, 'Come Abbé, we must be gone, the business is done.'—By this time the ladies were returned to the room where Madame de Gange lay weltering in blood, and, to all appearance, breathing her last. Her blood ran from her in streams; her respiration was short and laborious; but, as she was not actually dead, they thought it possible yet to assist her; and one of them went to the window, and called out for a surgeon to be immediately sent for.—On hearing which, the Abbé found their work was yet incomplete: whereupon, he rushed like a demoniac into the room, and, approaching the dying victim on the floor, snapped his pistol close to her breast; but it missed fire; and at the same instant Madame de Brunel, one of the ladies present, seized his arm and turned the pistol aside. The enraged Abbé, seeing this blow which he thought so effectual defeated, gave Madame Brunel a violent stroke with his fist, and then attempted to stun the Marchioness with the end of his pistol; but the women now all pressed round him, overwhelmed him with blows, and driving him in spite of all his efforts to the door, they thrust him out and shut it upon him. They then returned to the unhappy lady; and one of them, who knew something of surgery, staunched the blood, and took from her shoulder the end of the sword, encouraged by Madame de Gange herself, who, weak and fainting as she was, besought her to put her knee against her shoulder to force out the broken weapon. (144-5)

This is an extraordinary scene of feminine strength, rationality, resourcefulness, solidarity, goodness, and fortitude, and of masculine lust, sadism, and desperate violence. To add to the condemnation of the men's behavior, after this scene, the Marchioness survives for several weeks, during which time she forgives her assassins, who have fled. At this point, I hope it is an understatement to say that Smith's liberties in translation, and her choice of cases, suggest that there was indeed a degree of personal investment in the writing—done "in her own way"—and that she intentionally employed the ambiguous status of scandal, hovering as it does between fiction and reality, as a technique of social criticism and as well as of marketing.

Like Eliza Haywood in the role of the Female Spectator, Smith makes the credible claim that the stories are all based in fact, and that her purpose in relating them is mainly instructive and highly moral. Her claim that that the stories warn of the "danger of the human passions" implies that they are told in order to recommend more moderate and virtuous behavior; the conventionality and normativity of this claim conceals the possibility that their purpose is also to dramatize the social injustice and inequity that harms women in a variety of ways. The overtly stated purpose, however, is probably what many readers believed about the source of their enjoyment when they read the stories. A reviewer in the *Monthly Review* illustrates how he has followed the instructions her preface provides in how to read the stories:

> On looking into the original work, which consists of upwards of twenty volumes, we find that these 'stories,' as the translator calls them, are *trials*, and *Cases in law*, and consequently they are not the objects of criticism…. Some of the circumstances recorded in them are really shocking and disgraceful to our nature;

> and as the passions of men, in every age and in every country, are nearly the same, it is to be hoped that the volumes now before us may serve as beacons to warn the reader of his danger; and to hinder him from striking on the rocks which others have been unable to shun.[40]

The fact that critics didn't bristle at an inferred "coherent critique of marriage" speaks in part of Smith's skill in framing the texts as morally instructive, and in part of how readers' beliefs about what literature should be and do shaped their experience of reading. More important, though, is the distinction drawn here between fiction and factual reality. The reality of these "trials" and "cases"—and not "stories"—gives them immunity from criticism. They are entirely different "objects."

Smith's emotional and stylistic investment paid off in another sense, too: the translation earned her an astonishing £330—the most she would earn for any single edition—enabling her to support herself and her children for eighteen months, during which time she left her husband. The work went into multiple editions in England and America, and was produced in pirate copies in Dublin, and a translation into German sold in Leipzig as well, indicating that it brought in even more money for somebody.[41] These facts beg the question: if this was such a profitable genre, why did Smith not pursue it more? Was its proximity to the phenomena of piracy and scandal, or the association of translation with mercenary hack work too close for the comfort of this woman who felt debased socially and economically and would always remind her readers of her genteel and affluent childhood? Part of the reputation she had to uphold was her gentility, debased by fraudulent lawyers and redeemed by her own worth, talent, and legitimacy. Another answer may simply be that she began immediately to have great success selling novels which were received as properly domestic, sentimental and moral. Once she had her respectable reputation in place from the success of *Elegiac Sonnets* and her first few novels, she may not have wanted to associate her authorial name and image with mere mercenary writing. Even though she made her need for income clear to her readers, she used her own "effusions" and imagination to earn this. Perhaps, too, she saw her own permeation of "proper" fiction with autobiography as a more redeemed form of this collapse of the categories of romance and real life. Additionally, her new status as an independent professional woman may have made her more vulnerable to public opinion, leading her to steer clear of potentially scandalous material. Because she had to keep selling herself as a sympathetic figure in order to keep selling books, setting up a shield against culpability for any scandalous or political implications in the content of her works became a habitual tactic in her authorial performance. The role she plays is one of modest, unpresumptuous, and eventually victimized woman and didactic writer. These are the claims of many of her prefaces. But the texts themselves belie this self-representation and may even be said to point out the artifice of her prefatorial performance. *The Romance of Real Life* is just one of the earliest examples of this plural authorial self which must inhabit its contradictions in order to sell books. The "open concealment" Miller refers to, then, is not isolated to the politics of Smith's French Revolutionary novels, and is much more complex.

The Sonnets' Plurality of Self

After her successes in publishing three original novels, all of which contain some autobiographical elements, and one of which, *Emmeline*, even includes a character-self-portrait, Smith continued to cultivate a romance of real life in her editions of *Elegiac Sonnets*. I write about Charlotte Smith with the assumption that she, among others, was an important innovator and hinge figure in the literary historical narrative which sees poetic expression turning inward and becoming more personal and self-expressive. Through her use of self-representation in the *Elegiac Sonnets* and in their paratextual matter, Smith made herself one of the instructors in how to read what would come to be called Romantic poetry. In his discussion of the Romantic sonnet, Stuart Curran argues that Smith's sonnets and prefaces announced a new use for this poetic form: the sonnet came to be read as a vehicle for "revealing the author's sensibility."[42] In a line of influence that begins with Smith and goes through William Lisle Bowles, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and William Wordsworth, the sonnet became associated with a "wholesome spontaneity" of emotion, as readers learned to accept "on faith the immediacy and directness" of the feelings expressed in the personal sonnets (31). According to Curran, during the decade and a half between the publication of Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* and the entry of Coleridge and Wordsworth on the scene in 1798, the sonnet represented sincerity.[43] Smith persuaded readers to accept this association; she writes in the preface to the sixth edition (1792): "when in the Beech Woods of Hampshire, I first struck the chords of the melancholy lyre, its notes were never intended for the public ear! It was unaffected sorrow drew them forth: I wrote mournfully because I was unhappy—."[44] Picking up on her description of the sonnets as "effusions," in the original dedication, she implies here that poems, like tears or sighs, are "drawn forth" by the force of emotion. She directs the reader to read them as symptoms of strong feeling the truth of which is authenticated by the way their expression bridges interior and exterior realms of self. With this claim, she also aligns herself with the fictional heroines of sensibility of her novels, who are often propelled by emotion into poetic expression.

As a gesture asserting the permeability of romance to real life, however, this paragraph continues with some autobiographical details about her children's inheritance being held up, and the anger and sadness this brings her. She has ostensibly included these details, her dwelling on which some readers viewed as self-indulgent and in poor taste, "as an apology for that apparent despondence, which, when it is observed for a long series of years, may look like affectation" (6). In stating this purpose for repeating in the preface "the short dialogue between my friend and me," Smith excuses herself from the accusation of self-indulgent complaining, and makes an inclusive gesture to readers who might wish to be as much in-the-know as her friends. The autobiographical details about her father-in-law's estate also bring the preface down to a mundane level, which has the effect of contextualizing the romantic allusions to her lyre in "real life." Together, the autobiographical and conventionally poetic motifs balance each other and promote Smith's implicit instructions to read her as a real-life figure who may be known and understood through literary techniques and figurations. Perhaps her infusion of lyric poetry with "real life" was accepted as appropriate because the genre did not have its roots in fiction, romance, scandal, or lies.

Smith's poems, however, do point to their own literariness. Adela Pinch argues that "Smith's sonnets contend not simply that literature authorizes the way feelings are expressed, but that literature may be responsible for, may be writing in, the very feelings she expresses."[45] The sonnets bring the balance between literature—or romance—and real life into a quivering tension that often breaks into irony. One way Smith created this tension was through dual publication; a sonnet would appear in a novel as the creation of a character, and then it would appear in the semi-autobiographical context of the *Elegiac Sonnets*, in the subsequent edition, as if the author-as-character were quoting her character. An early example of this kind of dual publication, in which the contextual significance in each publication creates complex interpretive results is the sonnet that had appeared in Smith's first novel, *Emmeline*, (1788) and was then included as Sonnet XL in the fifth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, published in 1789. Here is the poem:

Far on the sands, the low, retiring tide,
In distant murmurs hardly seems to flow;
And o'er the world of waters, blue and wide,
The sighing summer-wind forgets to blow.
As sinks the day-star in the rosy West,
The silent wave, with rich reflection glows:
Alas! can tranquil nature give *me* rest,
Or scenes of beauty soothe me to repose?
Can the soft lustre of the sleeping main,
Yon radiant heaven, or all creation's charms,
"Erase the written troubles of the brain,"
Which Memory tortures, and which Guilt alarms?
Or bid a bosom transient quiet prove,
That bleeds with vain remorse and unextinguish'd love![46]

In the novel, this expression of guilt and despair is penned by the unhappily married, unfaithful "fallen woman" Adelina Trelawny—the only one of Smith's *female* characters who suffers, in Smith's phrase, a "fatal attachment." Some readers, including Mary Wollstonecraft in a review, criticized Smith's failure to punish Adelina for her forfeiture of virtue, as this character type regularly was in other eighteenth-century novels. Smith's treatment of Adelina could be seen as sympathetic; one could even say that the allotment of an extra metrical foot, in the last, hexameter, line, allows her "unextinguish'd love" to have more weight than her "vain remorse." At the least, her love, in its unextinguished excess, is allowed to expand beyond its allotted form, while still, subversively, obeying formal convention.

Smith's inclusion of this poem in a group of sonnets she invited her readers to interpret as autobiographical reiterates this sympathy and even identification with a woman who followed her passion rather than her sense of duty. Her sympathy could even be read as a desire to copy the character, who found more sexual, emotional, and social freedom than her author did. The poem repeats the themes—such as the unresponsiveness of nature and a corresponding inward turning of the speaker—tones, and images of many of Smith's "original" sonnets. This sonnet, with its motifs of reflection, silence, and writing, invites interpretations of self-reflexiveness, to which the

dual publication only adds strength. The word *reflection*, in particular, gathers together many meanings that resonate in the poem. The image of the wave captures the action of turning in on itself, and of tossing off the light of the sun. And *reflection* certainly had the sense of "contemplation, deep or serious thought or consideration," the significance of which is clear for this introverted poem. *Reflection* also carried the sense of image, embodiment, or representation in art; as the wave turns in its act of reflection, it embodies a metaphorical inward turning and (paradoxical) impenetrability.[47] Add to this cathexis the references to nature's silence and to writing and quotation, and the poem becomes something of a metonym for Smith's sonnets in general. Indeed, the poem in its context of dual publication, may be read as a meditation on originality and copying, or on originality as reflection. Adelina writes the poem in a moment of strong feeling; it is an authentic and original product of her sensibility. But Adelina is a fictional character, and the original authenticity of the poem is a fiction, like, Smith seems to suggest, that of the poems by another character known to the readers as Charlotte Smith.

The sonnets' paratexts, especially the prefaces, have presented the author's desire to "erase the written troubles of the brain"—in the sense of those persistent, engraved troubles—precisely by writing them. She claimed that writing the sonnets beguiled melancholy moments. And, self-reflexively, these metaphorically written troubles become written, published, and therefore public, open for others to peruse and to sympathize with. When her sonnet-writing character quotes Macbeth's line, "Erase the written troubles of the brain," Smith makes several contradictory suggestions. One, for those readers who are easily scandalized and who choose to read her quotations thematically, is the suggestion that Adelina's act of infidelity is as wrong as Macbeth's act of homicide, and that her remorse is as complicated (although it is also in competition with her "unextinguish'd love"). The quotation, in its context, also highlights the way textually rendered subjectivity invites a kind of interpenetration of subjectivities, either between writer and speaker/character or between reader and writer. This interpenetration, which Smith represents as the action of sympathy or identification, disintegrates the authorial self as it defines it. Here, the author who has invited her readers to read autobiographically—directly in the paratexts and implicitly through the use of the first person and the language of sensibility—invites her readers both to read sympathy or identification between herself and her fallen character, and to identify with her in her sympathetic focus on "the written troubles of the brain." Between the lines in her representations of the highly valued concept of sympathy, then, is the suggestion that the emotion thought to solidify a sense of self might actually draw out its contingent, interpretable nature. Sympathy may also be seen as the highest justification for copying. Her desire to "erase" the written troubles speaks to the way in which her expressions of melancholy so inhabit conventional expressions of melancholy; she "translates better what has already been translated," but wishes to erase the words which are coexistent with the troubles. Smith seems to emphasize in this poem the writtenness, (the "disquieting literariness"?) not only of her troubles but also of her authorial self. This was a risky suggestion for a writer who capitalized on the sympathy her readers had for the authorial self she so deliberately *realized*. Like the stories in *The Romance of Real Life*, these "effusions" were supposed to be based on the "authenticated facts" of an

essential authorial self.

The Banished Man's Shandean Transgressions

The Banished Man, of 1794, shows Smith at her most confident as a novelist. Written under extraordinary financial and personal pressure, the novel represents the most complex example of Smith's play with generic expectations and boundaries, with the fictionalization and "real life" representation of authorial self, and with the representation of politics. The novel also mounts her most explicit critique of the contemporary novel's form, themes, and scenes in the context of the post-Terror French Revolution. Toby Benis has described the novel as a direct response to the way the French Revolution challenged the validity of conventional narrative:

> Recounting complex experiences and ambivalent political views, Smith's characters are forced to abandon the linear, cause-and-effect sequencing of narrative expression that poststructural theory has identified with established political order. In this way, Smith demonstrates how revolutionary instability has necessitated far-reaching changes in how individuals express private as well as public histories.[48]

My reading of the novel, while in agreement with Benis on this point, will take a wider scope in considering the influences upon and reactions to Smith's narratological experimentation. I will spend less time discussing the politics of the different characters—who represent the spectrum from liberal Girondism to bigoted conservatism—and more time considering Smith's blurring of "real life" and fiction, in her self-portrait and direct authorial speech. In her fictionalized self-portrait as the writer Mrs. Denzil, Smith deromanticizes the real life of a professional author by exposing the labor behind the sentimental scenes sold to readers in a competitive market. And in her "Avis au Lecteur," Smith directly challenges her readers not to accept the easy pleasures of frivolous love scenes but to expect intellectual stimulation from their novels. I will argue that while the novel is "revolutionary" in its form and feminism, it also looks back to a time in recent literary history when novelistic form had not ossified into the formulae Smith began to shake off with her epistolary, revolutionary *Desmond*. Throughout *The Banished Man*, in fact, Smith invokes *Tristram Shandy* as a model, in its experimentation with fictionalized "real life," in its unstable form, and in its social satire, as well as in its criticism of current literary fashion.

There is no doubt that Sterne was a favorite writer of Smith's. Consider her practice of quotation. Most of her quotes come from Shakespeare's plays, Milton's poems, and poems and plays by recent or contemporary British male poets including Gray, Goldsmith, Otway, and Cowper.[49] Occasionally, she quotes from or refers to a novel: the list includes all of Richardson's novels, *Tom Jones*, *The Romance of the Forest*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *Humphry Clinker*, and Smollett's translation of *Don Quixote*. She might quote or refer to each of these once over the course of a novel, while the same novel—*Desmond*, for example—might contain twenty Cowper or Shakespeare quotations. But the novels she quotes from most often and most copiously are *A Sentimental Journey* and *Tristram Shandy*. In *Desmond*, almost all of the letter-writing characters quote Sterne at some point, totaling eight quotations in the novel. *The*

Banished Man contains at least six Sterne quotations, with only (I think) one other quotation from a novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield*. She uses turns of phrase from the sentimental as well as the satirical Sterne, and, in the playfully ironic "Avis Au Lecteur," in *The Banished Man*, she praises his "light and forcible pen."[50] While I agree with Adela Pinch (in regard to Smith's poetry) that "it usually does not make sense to try to interpret Smith's echoes of other texts thematically," in some cases it absolutely does—a point I will come back to in my analysis of several quotations of Sterne.[51]

As Sterne's had done, Smith's novelistic "improprieties" scandalized some readers. However, the criticism she faced for her experimentation with literary form, much less "loose" than Sterne's, must be seen in the context of gender and the radical politics she had sympathized with in her previous novel. Her stretching and perforating of the boundaries of genres, here, is also a part of Smith's critique of the culture of sensibility, in which she aligns herself with Mary Wollstonecraft, as a defender of the rights of women—especially the rights to education and to free choice in marriage—and as a proponent of a deromanticized notion of femininity.[52]

Before moving into my analysis, I would like to consider the novel's scene of production, and its reception. When Smith began this novel, her daughter Augusta had recently married a French emigrant, Alexandre de Foville. The couple, who had no fortune of their own, lived with Smith and several of her younger children, and finances were particularly tight. Over the course of the eight months in which Smith composed the 480-page novel, Augusta became dangerously ill from consumption near the term of her pregnancy; the baby died soon after birth. Smith's anxiety for her daughter and over the pressing need for money, along with complaints about the rheumatism in her hands which sometimes kept her from writing, dominate her letters at the time. The necessity of writing and selling a four-volume novel quickly must have been a considerable pressure. At the time, Smith was also having disagreements with her publishers: Thomas Cadell, Jr. had recently replaced his father at the firm which had long been Smith's publisher, and he was both less politic and less generous; and Joseph Bell, with whom she had published her most recent work, *The Wanderings of Warwick*, had her arrested for failing to fulfill her contract for that novel. According to Loraine Fletcher, two acquaintances immediately posted bail, and she did not go to prison. But this must have been an extremely humiliating experience, and accounts for some of the pointed satire, and for the representation of authorship as forced drudgery, in her next novel. Smith's insertion of herself, or of autobiographical material, into *The Banished Man* takes two forms: paratext, in the form of a preface, notes, and an Avis au Lecteur; and self-fictionalization, in the form of a self-portrait that is not even thinly veiled. The other main characters, the French emigrant hero, Armand D'Alonville, and the English heroine, Angelina, are based on Smith's son-in-law and daughter. The combined use of self-fictionalization and of authorial intrusions constantly draws the reader's attention to the conditions of the novel's creation and of Smith's authorship. It highlights the artifice of the novel and asks the reader to recognize the pressure of the literary market—made of readerly desires and fashionable feelings—on the shaping of the novel's plot, scenes, and characters; and it substantiates the figure of the author as a sympathetic character in herself, which paradoxically aligns her with the fictive even as it argues for her actuality.

It may be tempting to read Smith's self-fictionalization in *The Banished Man* as uncontrolled complaining, an emotional reaction to her straits—as some contemporary critics did, and as her most recent biographer does. Fletcher writes: "Charlotte lived so completely in her fictional character she lost at times all sense of boundary between text and life. The result is painfully immediate, as if she is breaking through the type to emerge scratched and disheveled on the page."[53] I hope to demonstrate, in this section, why this interpretation is so insulting to Charlotte Smith, whose intelligence, confidence, and perspicacity were not to be reduced by her victimization by the law, the literary market, or by the culture in which women (writers and readers) were expected to become confused by that "boundary between text and life" and whose self-writing was seen as a form of public dishevelment. Smith's sense of her own agency and even power as an author, a woman, and a reformer of literary culture is much more formidable than many of her contemporary and recent critics credit. We might recall Nichola Deane's description of Smith's letters as "disquietingly literary." Both representations present a version of Smith as a conventionally feminine self that is either poured out uncontrollably or is controlled to the point of self-censorship or even erasure under the imposition of other (male) writers' phrases and literary convention. These representations are only variations of reactions her contemporaries had to her writing, much of which is quietly revolutionary in its innovation. While recent critics might mistake Smith's savvy and ironic play with literary conventions for victimization at the hands of patriarchal culture, her contemporary critics called it "impropriety."

The reviews of *The Banished Man* which appeared in the major journals praised Smith's powers of description, and focused on two main thematic matters: the representation of contemporary politics and Smith's self-representation. Most reviewers agreed with *The British Critic* that Smith had toned down and even turned her back on the republicanism of *Desmond*:

> Convinced by observation that the changes in France have only produced rapine and murder, and that the most worthy among the French have been forced to quit their country to avoid inevitable slaughter, she makes full atonement by the virtues of the Banished Man, for the errors of Desmond. Such a convert, gained by fair conviction, is a valuable prize to the commonwealth.[54]

The author was assumed to have an anti-revolutionary stance because of her sympathetic portrait of the hero and other exiles; the novel was seen as "atonement," and as an "*amende honorable* for her past political transgressions" and for "embracing the wrong side of the question" in *Desmond*, published two years earlier.[55] In the novel, Smith depicts the republicans as brutal, hypocritical, cynical to the point of malice, and tyrannical. But her politics are spread more ambiguously through sympathies with other characters. She renders the Polish father of Alexina, D'Alonville's close friend Edward Ellesmere's beloved, as an honorable, intelligent, sympathetic man who is dedicated to the cause of reform—and even revolution—in his homeland; Edward Ellesmere and his favorite uncle are decidedly Girondist, as Smith was, in their politics. The narrator's moderate view is that the French Revolution has fallen "into the hands of pirates." But lest this be taken as British complacency, she makes her position clear by contrast:

> A coarser Briton, a plain John Bull, would say—'Those French fellows have not sense enough to be as free as we are;' and both [the moderate and "John Bull"] would unquestionably agree in deprecating, in regard to his own country, any attempt at change, if the most complete reform was to be purchased by one week, or even one day, of such scenes as have been exhibited in France. They would, most undoubtedly, unite in declaring that even if the constitution of England had not proved itself to be the most calculated for general happiness, as it undoubtedly has*, if its dilapidations from time were greater, and its defects more visible, yet, that since there must be faults and errors in every human institution, it is far wiser
>
> 'To bear the ills we have
> 'Than trust to others that we know not of.'[56]

The note at the bottom of the page reads: "The same sentiment is better expressed in a former work of the author" which would have reminded the reader of *Desmond*, in which the author clearly sympathizes with the republican cause. (That novel had no narrator, however, and in *The Banished Man* the narrator is probably self-consciously more moderate than the author, who might be pressing her readers to recognize the "dilapidations," "defects," "faults," and "errors" in their British institutions.) Some readers seemed to understand the complexity of the novel's politics. The first review, which appeared in the *London Review*, is different from the rest in that it is for the most part positive and sympathetic, both politically and personally. Rather than describing the politics in the novel as a simple about-face, the reviewer sees them more clearly:

> Though on a slight reading Mrs. Smith will be generally accused of having changed her political opinions, yet, on strict examination, she will be found as much the friend of real liberty as when she wrote her novel of Desmond: but she, like all other thinking people, is aware that even liberty may be bought too dear; and losing all interest for the maniacs of the day, she is at once conscious that they do not deserve liberty, and that, in the way they are going, they never can arrive at it.[57]

While the reception of her supposed political reform (to a non-reformist position) was generally positive and not very penetrating, the reception in the major reviews of her self-fictionalization was vehemently negative. Just as the criticism of her politics is cast in terms of boundaries, excess, and transgression, so is the criticism of her "self-writing."[58] These comments appeared in the usually liberal *Analytical Review*:

> But we think it a matter to be seriously lamented, that even the lighter productions of the press, which are intended for amusement, and ought to promote gaiety and good humour, must now so often be deeply shaded with the gloom of political controversy. We must add, that we cannot think it any recommendation of this novel, that the authoress has so frequently introduced allusions to her own affairs. One of the characters, that of Mrs. Denzel, seems to be brought in for no other purpose than to give her an opportunity of representing her own misfortunes. Mrs. S.'s fate may have been hard; her story may be proper to be laid before the public; but the case would certainly appear with more propriety, and with better effect, in a distinct publication, than as an episode to a novel.[59]

The main points here are that novels should be light, gay, and amusing; that Smith's self-

representation is improper and uncontrolled; and that "real life" should not enter the bounds of novelistic fiction. Several weeks later, in December of 1794, these more derogatory comments appeared in *The British Critic*:

> The only reprehensible part of the work before us, is the extreme eagerness with which our irritated and perhaps injured novelist introduces her own story, and paints, with pencils dipped in corrosive sublimate, those persons (respectable ones, and her own relations) who have been concerned in her affairs. Private history should not be introduced for public perusal, and it is only her singular talent of producing entertainment from subjects the most unpromising, which can at all mollify this general censure.[60]

This reviewer, too, represents Smith's self-representation as emotionally reactive, prompted by her "eagerness" and "irritation." He even calls into doubt the substantiality of her "injury," and suggests that she has stooped so low as to libel "respectable" persons who are (through marriage) "her own relations." "Private history" has transgressed within the bounds of public fiction—and is perhaps embarrassing to this representative of "the public." The *Critical Review* likewise called the inclusion of autobiography in the novel "unwise" and "unjustifiable" and focused on the improper mixing of genres:

> It is unjustifiable to make a novel the vehicle of accusations which ought only to be made in a court of justice, or to enter upon the merits of a cause *pendent lite*; and it is unwise to pour *herself* upon the public, instead of those fictitious distresses and diversified characters she so well knows how to describe. It is vain to think of preserving the notice of the world by any other means than those by which it was at first gained. The public, careless of the future, and little grateful for the past, reads a novel only to be amused, and if amusement is wanting, quickly abandons the most favourite author.[61]

We see in these reviews concerns with taste and propriety, framed as issues of genre, gender, and class boundaries. The reviewers appear to be defending a definition of the novel against the transgressive energies of an emotionally (if not sexually) loose woman who would "pour *herself*" into the wrong places, including that space that has been demarcated as proper novelistic fictionality. These reviews implicitly argue that the novel has been defined as a genre, and that new examples should uniformly abide by the rules: novels should not mix fact with fiction; novels should be light and entertaining, not political or autobiographical (and if they *are* autobiographical, they should be properly labeled as such). One reviewer suggests a separate autobiography, perhaps unconsciously realizing that Smith's story gains power by being told within another, fictional, genre. Generic *propriety* is the guiding conceit.

More than simply including autobiography, though, Smith's violation seems to be in making the boundary between fact and fiction permeable or blurry, by letting "real life" enter a novel, and by letting it masquerade as fiction. Here we are again at the heart of scandal: the volatility and power of scandal comes from its blurring of the real with the fictional, the private with the public—and from the relative historical newness of these now (by the 1790s) important dichotomies. I think that we have to see the reception of Smith's mixed-genre French Revolutionary-era works in the context of the hardening of generic categories. Ian Duncan observes that "the scientific and disciplinary hardening of

history… assists the dialectical clarification of the rejected term, fiction, which thus comes to characterize the 'literary' itself." And Catherine Gallagher has argued that "because the novel defined itself against the scandalous libel, it used fiction as the diacritical mark of its differentiation, requiring that the concept of fiction take on greater clarity and definition."[62] Evidently, the novel still had to be defended against the encroachment of a particularly feminine kind of writing: those semi-fictional novel/autobiographies by, for example, Smith's friends Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Hays, in which history was personal and brazenly about the romance of real life.[63] Smith's writing was, on the one hand, too feminine—too close to scandal, too uncontrolled—and on the other hand, too masculine—too political, too audacious.

Like the other authors in this study, Smith was interested in playing games with precisely this concept of *propriety*, in all of its meanings (fitness, appropriateness, ownership; *proper*: one's own, particular to oneself; conformity to rules or manners), *and* with maintaining her reputation and the high cultural capital of her literary productions. Increasingly during this period, generic instability (a form of ambiguous identity) is associated with social instability. As G. J. Barker-Benfield argues, maintaining the lines of definition in categories of identity like gender and novelistic fiction had great ramifications:

> Because in Britain the definition of gender was seen to be fundamental both to the Jacobin prospects for reform and to the Anti-Jacobin attempt to maintain the natural order, the debate over sensibility became a key issue in British politics. Women writers—novelists in particular—came under still more severe attack for subverting the natural order of the sexes.[64]

Smith's self-representation in writing always pointed to her marriage—the source of her personal unhappiness, and of all of her legal and financial troubles. She separated from her husband when she had earned enough money, through writing, to do so. While she always steered clear of any sexually subversive self-representation, her own lifestyle could have been seen as subversive of this "natural order of the sexes." Barker-Benfield adds: "There is some suggestion in eighteenth-century fiction that the educated woman threatened to subvert the class system as well as male authority in marriage" (323). While Smith had continually to balance her self-representation between what was considered proper and what she really wanted to say, she was willing to take the risk in *The Banished Man* in order to expand the possibilities for the novel genre and for female authorship, and—to use a twentieth-century phrase—to show her readers that the personal is political.

Some readers responded positively to this challenge. Not all reviews of the novel were negative, and the sales figures suggest that the book was moderately successful. In fact, based on the evidence of Smith's letters to Cadell and Davies at the time, it appears that the book would have been more successful if the first edition had not been printed with so many errors. She expected the book to go into a second edition, as all of her others had, and she expresses her frustration to Thomas Cadell, Jr.:

> I am sorry that you were too sanguine as to a 2nd Edition of the Banish'd Man. But I am not at all surpris'd at it, for it is really so mangled not merely in regard to mistakes, but as to faintness of impression, all the copies that I have being in

> many places not legible (especially in the mottos) that persons among my friends who know my works go usually into a second Edition have declined purchasing this set of books till that appears—<u>because</u> this is so imperfect. I have a Letter to day out of Essex exactly to this purpose & have heard the same from other quarters.[65]

The publication history (which included new editions in 1795 and 1797) suggests that general readers had a more positive reaction to the novel than the three critics I have quoted; the strength of their positive reception is perhaps not well represented because of the initially problematic production of the book.[66] The first review of the book, in fact, was notably sympathetic to Smith's use of autobiography:

> Apprised of the numerous perplexities and vexations to which the unfortunate circumstances of this lady must expose her, the apology she makes for her frequent recurrence to family distresses will have its full weight with us, and with all whose similarity of situation enables them to judge feelingly. They know that the mind, racked by its own grievances, feels an additional pang when obliged to withdraw itself from its wretched home to hunt the world of fiction for incidents, to weave fables, and trick out sentiments. We certainly will not restrict her on the score of complaint, provided she will not call harsh names: we would have her [unclear in the text] like a gentlewoman always. The epithets "rogues, fools, knaves," may perhaps be very justly applied to the characters she speaks of, but we are as much disconcerted by those epithets when used by the elegant poetess, as she herself could be by the sanguinary expressions of a Paris Enragée. The English tongue, it is true, abounds with terms of abuse, but the male sex have long since appropriated them all, and will not suffer their rights to be invaded with impunity; except by those resistless nymphs who deal out the scaly treasures of the ocean from a certain part of this metropolis: they indeed have a privilege, of which, much as we respect Mrs. Smith, we cannot suffer her to avail herself.[67]

In this review the criticism is still about boundaries, but here the boundaries are those of gender and class, and the recommendation that Smith uphold them is ironic. It is improper for the "elegant" "gentlewoman" poetess to speak as the men or fishwives do. To do so is to break the rules of etiquette which stand in this culture of sensibility as markers of taste, class, propriety, and femininity, and even to "invade" the rights of men by speaking like them.

If some readers responded sympathetically, what was so upsetting to the critics who considered her experiment improper? Their focus on generic boundaries, I think, must be read metonymically as a statement of the anxiety in Britain over the transgression of many kinds of identity boundaries at this time. The novel's action takes place during 1793, when the British Parliament passed the Alien Act, an attempt to control the flow of French emigrants and other war refugees into the country. Smith blurs the lines between political opinions in the novel as well, and has her hero undergo a change of viewpoint—from conservative and royalist to liberal. Her self-portrait in the novel self-consciously erodes the image of the author of sensibility as an original "true feeler," in Sterne's phrase. And she puts forth an explicit critique of contemporary novels, at a time when their acceptable form and content was becoming more defined—as

can be seen in the reviews of this novel. Let us look, now, at how she tests the limits of some of these identity categories.

Volume II of *The Banished Man* begins Shandaically, with an interruption. (And the character representing Smith, Charlotte Denzil, has not yet been introduced.) Volume I has left the hero and his companions traveling by foot through Bohemia, and Volume II begins with an "Avis au Lecteur"—a displaced preface—that begins, associatively, with a quote from *Tristram Shandy*: "'There was, an please your Honour,' said Corporal Trim; 'there was a certain king of Bohemia, who had seven castles.'"[68] Smith uses this quote to initiate a discussion of the pressures on novelists to write Gothic romance plots that lack variety, and of accusations made against her of plagiarism.[69] It is not insignificant that she launches this discussion, complete with a critique of novelists and novel readers, with references to *Tristram Shandy*. She continues in an ironic vein:

> A modern Novelist, who, to write 'in the immediate taste,' has so great a demand for these structures, cannot but regret, that not one of the seven castles was sketched by the light and forcible pencil of Sterne: for if it be true that books are made, as he asserts, only as apothecaries make medicines, how much might have been obtained from the King of Bohemia's seven castles, towards the castles which frown in almost every modern novel![70]
>
> For my part, who can no longer build chateaux even en Espangne, I find that Mowbray Castle, Grasmere Abbey, the castle of Roche Mort, the castle of Hauteville, and Rayland Hall, [buildings from her previous novels] have taken so many of my materials to construct, that I have hardly a watch tower, a Gothic arch, a cedar parlour, or a long gallery, an illuminated window, or a ruined chapel, left to help myself. Yet some of these are indispensably necessary; and I have already built and burnt down one of these venerable edifices in this work, yet must seek wherewithal to raise another. (193)

There are many little jokes, here, not least upon herself. The Sterne quotations may be read as Smith's disparagement of contemporary novel-writing and reading, which has become too formulaic, trivial, and escapist.[71] The first quotation, from Corporal Trim, refers to a story that never gets told because it is interrupted constantly by his listener, Uncle Toby, who turns Trim's authorial attempt to his own interests, whims, and desires. Two other stories, which are told over the course of nine chapters, and which are about falling in love, eventually displace Trim's truncated story. Finally, Uncle Toby asks Corporal Trim, "What became of that story, Trim?" and Trim answers, "We lost it, 'an please your honour, somehow betwixt us—."[72] As Smith's Avis au Lecteur goes on, she directly addresses the lack of a romance plot in the first volume of *The Banished Man* and the pressure she feels to provide one to please her readers. The quotation from Corporal Trim suggests that she has a story to tell in this novel, but that there is a chance it may not be told, and may be displaced by a love story because that is what her audience wants. (The Preface to *The Banished Man* calls novels "trifling composition[s].") The quotations of Toby and Trim also speak to the ways in which writers and readers work together in a gracious but often vexed relationship, to make stories. Like Sterne and Haywood before her, Smith is cognizant and ironically tolerant of the power of readers to shape both what an author writes and who an author is.

Smith also addresses in the Avis au Lecteur the pressure upon authors to be original and authentic. But the literary culture in which she wrote sent mixed signals to its authors. On the one hand, we have a context in which originality, with its implications for the nature of authorial self, has become the highest aim, as John Brewer argues:

> The emphasis on originality and novelty, introducing as it did a new hierarchy of literary endeavor, underscored the special relationship that the author bore to his text. If a work was original it was also unique, the distinctive consequence of a writer's imagination. Each text bore the distinctive impress of its author's mind.[73]

On the other hand, as the reviews of this novel and Smith's comments in the Avis suggest, novels were also expected to stay within certain boundaries and even to adhere loosely to a formula. Perhaps only a certain kind of "distinctive impress of the author's mind" was acceptable in a novel by a woman. In the Avis, Smith highlights these contradictory assumptions about authorship and literary works and exposes the ironies in the expectations of authorial originality by pointing out how much novel writing is like copying, translating, or pouring from one vessel into another (but not "pouring oneself"). She complains about the scenes and themes that are "indispensably necessary."[74] Her quotation of Sterne's ironic criticism of unoriginal authors who rely on borrowing and quotation—of which he did plenty—is ironic itself because of its exaggeration (no self-respecting novelist would just lift a description of a castle—or would they, as Sterne lifted passages from Robert Burton and others?) and its context (in a defense against the charge of plagiarism). With these quotations, then, she half-ironically aligns herself with the innovative and original novelist Sterne, himself a heavy ironist and borrower, against the unoriginal writers and the readers who accuse her of plagiarism and unoriginality.

The Avis goes on in Shandean fashion with a fictive conversation between the novelist and a friend about how the novel so far seems to lack a "plan"—which, in this context, means a love plot. The only potential love plot in Volume I would be scandalous if pursued: a romance between the hero and the only young woman yet to appear, who is married, and whose husband is away fighting in the war. Smith clearly enjoyed tantalizing her readers with this possibility (which mimics the potential plot in her previous novel, *Desmond*), but displaces it with the less titillating scandal of her family's treatment by lawyers and by her husband. The next part of the conversation makes explicit her critique of the cultural constraints put upon women, and upon women novelists. The author says that she means to experiment by writing a novel in which romance does not dominate:

> I thought, in the present instance, the situation of my hero [being an aristocratic exile of France, where his father has just died in the war, and his brother is fighting on the opposite side, with the rebels] was of itself interesting enough to enable me to carry him on for sometime, without making him violently in love.
>
> …*Friend*. I am afraid it is an experiment you must not carry too far. I do not believe that the generality of novel readers (and it is to those you must look) will agree with your sage advisors, who were, I suppose, ladies far advanced in life.
>
> *Author*. They were indeed. One was an authoress; one who is herself

above all the weaknesses of humanity, and whose talents give to her character a peculiar hardness; which is all placed to the account of her understanding.

Friend. And the others?

Author. Were women no longer young; and who now assume a sort of stoicism quite opposite to their former sentiments and habits of life.

Friend. To such I should listen without any great deference.[75]

The Friend, who is presumably male, like all of the other literary friend figures who appear in Smith's paratexts, goes on to praise the Author for the moralistic slant of her love stories. These paragraphs satirize current assumptions about femininity: that when young, women are interested only in love, but must be protected from excessive sensibility by reading only moralistic accounts of romance; and that older women lose their softness—of sensibility and body—and become hard—of character and of intellect—and yet have ideas and opinions of little worth. One implication here is that the character called Charlotte Smith is a woman "no longer young," who yet joins intellect and sensibility in a very desirable way. This character is much like the women Wollstonecraft encourages her readers to become, in her *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, where she urges young women to cultivate their intellects so that they may have relationships of mutual respect with their husbands, after they have lost their youth and beauty.

The recorded conversation between author and literary friend, like several of the reviews of the novel, also points to the power of readers to determine a novel's content. If she wants to continue to sell books, she must deliver the content readers enjoy, just as she must continue to perform the authorial self readers will admire or sympathize with. While Smith grudgingly acknowledges this power that readers have, she also suggests defensively that this author, a woman no longer young, has worthwhile ideas that she wishes to convey even if they are not "the fashion." However, she tells the Friend, she intends to stop writing novels, because "in this, as in every other species of composition, there is a sort of fashion of the day. *Le vrai*, which you so properly recommend, or even *le vrai semblence*, seems not to be the present fashion" (196).[76] There are many possibilities for the significance of *le vrai*, here. It could refer to the opposite of fiction, a possibility she plays into when she writes autobiography into the novel. It could refer to the truth of her French Revolutionary politics, which remained Girondist. It could refer to the truth of her criticism of sentimental literature and the culture of sensibility, which in her works she both exploited and criticized. And it could refer more generally to all of these elements. In the Preface, she defines her idea of novelistic truth against Gothic improbabilities: "I have… aimed less at the wonderful and extraordinary, than at connecting, by a chain of possible circumstances, events, some of which *have* happened, and all of which *might* have happened to an individual, under the exigencies of banishment and proscription" (109). This "individual" might be the hero or the character of the author. Smith expresses her frustration with the "fashion" by making her novel autobiographical and as permeable to *le vrai* as possible.

The significance of "*le vrai semblance*," which is also not "in fashion," has different nuances. Smith is critical of the sensationalism of gothic fiction, and wishes to write a kind a fiction that incorporates a more realistic portrayal of life, that is more

believable and more educative if not necessarily historically true. In Classical French literary theory *vraisemblance* secured the emotional investment of the audience, while *le merveilleux* merely caught their attention. *Le vraisemblence* "can apply both to the realistic and relative values of the audience and, more philosophically, to ideal or universal norms."[77] In this second sense, "*vraisemblance* is opposed to *le vrai* as representing an alternative or superior order of being" (293). Smith's bristling at the need to include a romantic plot that culminates with a happy marriage suggests that her version of *le vrai semblence* would revise the accepted norms not only of novelistic plots but also of the narratives available in the lives of women. Indeed, the novel offers an alternative and superior version of domesticity in its ending; while the young characters do marry for love, they also live together with the older women (who are widowed or happily separated from their husbands) in a nationally and economically diverse expatriate community of like-minded friends.

Feminist Satirist

One of the truths Smith wishes to address is that of the limitations women face in British culture. Smith's moments of direct narratorial and authorial speech are by and large satirical. She particularly targets English women who accept their uneducated state, or accept the view that they read only for the vicarious pleasures of love plots. Just as Sterne helped her in her criticism of fashionable taste in novels, he helps her in her satire of unenlightened, uneducated, or politically uninvolved women. Lady Ellesmere is the aristocratic mother of the hero's friend Ned, a man of feeling and political engagement who represents Smith's Girondist position. His mother, though, represents everything Smith laments about English women who thoughtlessly accept their limitations:

> She was one of those women who, content with an home prospect, never risk the sobriety of their understanding by attempting the giddy heights of science. Kings and politicians occupied her attention no otherwise than when she read of the places they had to give. She wished her son Ellesmere, the great object of her ambition, had one of them; but of despotic government, of limited monarchy, or republicanism, she had not a single idea; and never knew from whence originated the revolution in France, of which, without ever attending to it, she had been hearing for four years. Sir Maynard had told her several times, *but she always forgot*; and was indeed as much a *poco curante* as Mrs. Shandy herself, in a thousand things about which half the world was running mad. (235)

Like many of the butts of satire in eighteenth-century literature, Lady Ellesmere is overly concerned with "place," an old-world ambition that exists in a vacuum of knowledge about the revolution "next door." In a significant pairing, Lady Ellesmere is ignorant of both politics and science—two arenas of knowledge that too many women ignore. The passages from *Tristram Shandy* that Smith echoes present a woman of limited scientific views, one not aware of another revolution—the Copernican—whom Tristram calls the "truest of all the *Poco-curante*'s of her sex!"[78]:

> —That she is not a woman of science, my father would say—is her misfortune—but she might ask a question.—

> My mother never did.—In short, she went out of the world at last without knowing whether it turned *round*, or stood *still*.—My father had officiously told her above a thousand times which way it was,—but she always forgot.[79]

Smith implies that Lady Ellesmere is as lacking in character as Mrs. Shandy, and is as irrelevant, mindless, and uninterested in *le vrai* of science or politics. The two women share ignorance and prejudice: while Mrs. Shandy is indifferent to the things about which the men in her household are "running mad"—their respective hobby-horses—Lady Ellesmere is indifferent to "the things about which half the world was running mad." Just as Mrs. Shandy treats the rotation of the earth as a forgettable, minor matter, Lady Ellesmere treats the regicide in France as a tidbit of scandal only a bit less interesting than her usual topics, which are characterized by pettiness, prejudice, and a willingness to be scandalized by the minor sexual transgressions of others:

> while she could never give more than 'poor man,' or 'very astonishing indeed!' to the monarch whose melancholy fate she heard every body deprecating; or the kingdom of France so strongly convulsed, could enter with the liveliest interest into the history of 'Mr, Samuel Harrison, an attorney, who had been discarded by Miss Fanny Pinkrey, an apothecary's daughter'; and wonder for an hour, that 'Mrs. Grisby, or the doctor, should suffer the Miss Grisbys to dance with those two officers, both of whom were strangers, and one of them an Irishman.'
>
> (242-3)

Mrs. Shandy's ignorance of the earth's rotation and revolution around the sun is bad, but Mrs. Ellesmere's ignorant belittling of the revolution next door is damning in this satirical attack upon upper-class English women. Smith bridled at the prescription that novels be light, romantic, and apolitical because these are the qualities that serve the Lady Ellesmeres of the world, and because that prescription reductively genders the novel. From her first translations, Smith viewed the novel as an eligible forum for working through political and intellectual issues, and resisted the romancing of real life she had to provide in order to keep selling books.[80]

Fictional Autobiography

Why was the criticism of *The Banished Man*'s autobiographical elements so harsh? Some readers, perhaps, did not want to accept the demystification of her sentimentalized authorial self-image because it entailed a revolutionary upsetting of the natural order of the sexes, in Barker-Benfield's phrase. It also resulted from the rigidification of the categories both of novelistic fiction and of female authorship. By way of contrast, Claudia Johnson observes that the "precondition" of Jane Austen's "admittance into the canon was an apparent contentment to work artfully within carefully restricted boundaries which have been termed 'feminine.'"[81] She adds that "for those of Austen's female contemporaries who were eminent in the 1790s, this distinction was under construction" (xiv). Catherine Gallagher describes this "construction" as it proceeds over the century:

> In analyzing the transition from Behn's and Manley's authorial personae, who were often disguised, disreputable scandalmongers, to Lennox's and Burney's, who were genuine, proper purveyors of original tales, I noticed that the later

> authors stressed their renunciation of personal satire and slander. That is, the explicit fictionality of their works initially recommended them as wholesome goods.[82]

Smith's self-representation in *The Banished Man* continued to uphold her reputation for being "wholesome goods" but also injected personal satire and slander and pseudo-fictionality, which appeared to have a corrosive effect for some readers. Others, however, sympathized with her self-portrait, in part because of the lengths she went to in balancing her satirical with her sentimental sides. As Sterne realized, one must become a character—either acted or written—in the reader's imagination in order to gain her sympathy. The invitation to sympathy in self-fictionalization clearly gives some ownership of the authorial self to the reader, and undermines any proprietary claim the author might make. However, Smith was savvy about this giving. She knew that by making her authorial self available as an object to be owned by the reader—as she had done in the *Elegiac Sonnets*—she could sell more books. She tapped into the market for "self-writing" which had become a publishable, recognized genre in the mid-eighteenth century and had become "a desirable commodity by the end of the century."[83] The question I would like to address is why autobiography would in some cases be a desirable commodity and in others an instance of self-indulgence and poor taste?

We first meet Charlotte Denzil, Smith's fictional self-portrait, in Volume II of *The Banished Man*. The hero, Armand D'Alonville, meets Mrs. Denzil and her grown daughter, Angelina, accidentally, when he wanders off of the hunting path his friends have followed, wandering too, it seems, off of the track in which the plot seemed to be going. The two women are, at first, characters who have no place in the plot, introduced as they are so late, and situated as outsiders in the society of the novel. This position of peripheral involvement allows the lines of the self-portrait to be drawn more strongly, as Mrs. Denzil sits on the blurred border between character and author, romance and real life. The introduction of Angelina does bring the novel to the plot it seemed to have been lacking, however: that of romance. D'Alonville almost immediately falls in love with Miss Denzil. The lovers wordlessly communicate their feelings, following the conventions of the literature of sensibility: "He fancied that the soft and expressive eyes of Angelina understood the language of his; and when he spoke of his ruined fortune, of his being a wanderer and a fugitive, those charming eyes were filled with tears."[84] His self-characterization, as a "wanderer" of "ruined fortune," echoes the phrases with which Charlotte Smith's lyric speakers, in *Elegiac Sonnets*, have characterized themselves. His role as a man of feeling, in association with the Denzil women, has the effect of doubling the dose of sympathy called forth from the reader for the young couple and, by extension, for Angelina's mother.

When Charlotte Denzil hears of D'Alonville's losses from her tearful daughter, she responds "with a pensive smile" and a self-description that announces to the reader her identity as a portrait of the author, who had just published *The Emigrants* (1793), a poem that draws similar parallels:

> 'Don't you know, Chevalier, that we always listen with patience, and even with sympathy, to the relation of sorrows, of which we have ourselves tasted? Alas! Sir, my children and I have also been wanderers and exiles. I know not whether

> we may not still be called so; for the victims of injustice, oppression, and fraud, we are now banished from the rank of life where fortune originally placed us; and England, with all its advantages, is not the country where such a change of fortune is much softened to the sufferer.' (269)

As a fictional character, Smith applies the strong terms of "injustice, oppression, and fraud" and banishment to her legal and economic situation, thereby broadening the possibilities for her alignment with other sufferers in general: the French emigrants, exiles, and unjustly treated men. These alignments support one of her main claims about her own unjust treatment by the law: that her oppression as a woman is no different from other forms of political, legal, or economic oppression. Mrs. Denzil's character contrasts with the xenophobic and narrow-minded upper-class English ladies D'Alonville has met so far, when she accepts him as an individual: "far from appearing to consider him as an adventurer, whom she ought to fear, or an alien, whom she should for that reason despise, [she] treated him with particular kindness" (269).

The next chapter, which takes the form of a letter from Mrs. Denzil to a friend, fills out the self-portrait—almost all of which is rendered in the direct speech of the character. In typical ironic fashion, just when the self-representation seems too direct, Smith interjects "real" direct authorial speech—a footnote. Mrs. Denzil refers to their living in a house owned by a distant uncle, and an asterisk interrupts this sentence and leads the reader to a footnote which purports to clarify the non-autobiographical nature of the character:

> Lest any part of the sketches given of Mrs. Denzil's history should be supposed too strongly to resemble my own, I beg this circumstance, so totally different, may be adverted to: Not one of my children's relations ever lent them an house; though some of them have contributed all in their power to take from them the house we possest of our own. (271)

Smith could have chosen any minor detail to distinguish between her character self and her author self, who implicitly has suffered more. The detail hardly matters in itself, because she uses it ironically to emphasize the fact that she is putting her own story in her novel. The footnote provides an opportunity for the author to wink at the reader, and to make a characteristic public jab at the men controlling her children's inheritance. The letter this note accompanies may be described as a sarcastic rant that expresses, with less politeness and circumlocution, the same complaints about lawyers, politics, and power that Charlotte Smith makes in her many prefaces and notes.

The letter becomes, in G. Gabrielle Starr's phrase, a chiastic site, where the boundary between the fictive and the real becomes permeable. Drawing on Catherine Gallagher's account of how readers came to understand novelistic fictionality through reminders of the theater, in which boundaries between audience and stage are crossed, as in the dramatic prologue, Starr describes novelistic chiasmus as a site of collaboration between author and reader:

> Novelists constantly call attention to the permeable divide between readers and characters/authors through evocations of developing systematic knowledge and through genre-specific machinery like the editor-narrator-correspondent who is the figure of permeability, of the capacity to cross back and forth between the

> imaginary and the real, private and public, and self and other. Such chiasmus draws readers into the processes that enable representation, giving the points of contact through which fiction emerges into the world of experience.
>
> With these chiastic sites, readers may cross the boundaries that "enclose" the inner lives of fictional characters. In creating the *outlines* of fictional beings in our imaginations, readers create their *content* as well.[85]

This description of the processes involved in the mutual creation of a fictional representation is useful for thinking about Smith's practices in particular, because she uses so many, and so many different kinds of chiasmus in her novels.[86] More than the footnotes do, the character of Mrs. Denzil enables readers to imagine they have a front-row seat (to continue the allusion to theater) on novel writing, character construction, and on the author as a private self. The self-portrait within the fictional realm of the novel is perhaps more complex, in terms of its chiastic functions, than the pseudo-autobiographical sonnets. Not only are readers invited to create the outlines and content of a fictional character, they are explicitly invited to create the outlines and content of the character of the author, an author who resists readerly creativity even as she invites it.[87] With her self-portrait in the direct speech of a letter, Smith invites her readers to construct a version of herself as a sympathetic character and to recognize that they are imaginative participants in constructing her identity. At the same time, she wants her readers to recognize that she has her own agency, with which she can resist readerly manipulation. This agency seems to be what made those negative critics bristle.

But lest the reader start to romanticize the life of an author, in this letter, the reader's full introduction to Charlotte Denzil, Smith represents the writing life as one of arduous labor, indignity, and even prostitution of the mind. Mrs. Denzil writes to her friend about wishing to leave England, because, "I have lost in it every thing *but my head*… my sole remaining possession; with which, *grace a Dieu*, I have been enabled to supply the want of those, which the very worthy and honest relations of my children have taken from me."[88] Emphasizing the fact that her "head" earns her the money to support her family, and that her head is not entirely her own, she continues by calling it "this commodity." In the representation of the writing life, and her own self-defense against critics, which follows, Mrs. Denzil claims she has been abandoned by fair-weather friends who think that for a woman author "to have any opinion of politics is so extremely wrong!" as is "attacking the people of consequence, who really wished her well!" (273). She complains of the relentlessness of her work: she "leaves her bed in a morning, when her health permits, to go to her desk; from whence she rises only to sit down to a dinner she cannot eat," and is served by country bumpkins who are dumbstruck by the fact that she writes books (274). Her labor is sometimes interrupted by a creditor's thug:

> an honest gentleman, in a brown rough great coat, corderoy breeches, boots, and green boot-garters, his hair curling naturally in his poll, to the great advantage of his shining face; who, with that sort of half bow which a substantial tradesman sometimes makes, as much as to say, 'Humph! for all you are a lady, I know you are poor and in debt;' who delivers a letter from the pompous, boorish creditor, "Humphry Hotgoose." (275)

After this interruption, she "must write a tender dialogue" between the clichéd characters of sentimental fiction, but her necessary work is interrupted again by her own melancholy and memories of "the comforts and pleasures of affluence [which] recur forcibly to her mind," (and remind the reader of her gentility) and by the report from her servant that the neighbor's children all have scarlet fever, "the small beer is almost out," and that "the pigs of a rich farmer, her next neighbour, have broke into the garden, rooted up the whole crop of pease, and not left her a single hyacinth or jonquil" (276). The final indignity comes with the arrival of two letters, one from an agent of the trustees of her children's estate denying her money for their support, and one from Josepth Clapper, (Joseph Bell, the bookseller who had her arrested), whose semi-literacy and small-mindedness are evident in his comment that he will "change the tittle of that [the poem Ode to Liberty], having promiss'd the trade that there shall be no liberty at all in the present work" (277). Here is a clear, sardonic representation of the way "the trade" attempts to control and suppress subversive literary content.

In case the derisive satire and anger expressed in this ironically distanced third-person account has turned off some readers—which it did—Denzil switches back to the familiar first-person elegiac, melancholy tones, with which she manipulates the reader into giving her sympathy out of the desire not to be seen as prejudiced or weak:

> Do not add your censure, if I find it always impossible to submit, without murmuring, to so dreary a fate; and let others, if they can a moment divest themselves of selfish prejudice, ask their own hearts Whether *they* could acquit themselves better in circumstances like mine than I have done? (278)

This switch to the first person may also be read as something of a Shandean jest about the confusion of speaking subjects. It is Smith writing about herself under another name in the third person who will now speak in the first person—not as herself but as her fictive self Charlotte Denzil. This confusion of personae occurs in a letter with many direct addresses to "*you*, my friend" that the reader may read as if she is the addressee. Through Charlotte Denzil's address to her fictional friend, then, Charlotte Smith addresses her real friends and her readers and attempts to preempt criticism of her employment of the novel for exposing her personal distress and anger and for attempting to gain "liberty"—which was what the critics perhaps unconsciously resisted, and called impropriety.

Another aspect of the performance of authorial self which must be noted here is its mimicry of other performances. From this nine-page letter, it becomes clear that Mrs. Denzil's family and financial situations, her politics, writing style, and habit of quoting (there are eleven quotations) make this a transparent self-portrait. The paragraphs which follow use many of the same turns of phrase as, and translate into fictionality the sentiments of the Prefaces to this novel and to the sixth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, published in 1792. Charlotte Denzil writes: "All, however, I could have borne, because I *must*; because I endured it for my children, and perhaps because I felt a degree of self-approbation in stemming a tide of adversity under which the generality of women would have sunk…" (278). At this point, the personae literally merge as Mrs. Denzil quotes an elegy she/Smith wrote on the occasion of her friend, Henrietta O'Neill's, death. After the poem, she goes on:

> But what amends can be made me by the men who, under pretence of serving, have undone us? …In the mean time, notwithstanding your exhortations to moderation, I shall endeavor to shew what they are to a world who is already but little disposed to think well of them: And *you* will see it really may happen in this very happy land, that men who are rich may commit, with impunity, crimes infinitely more unpardonable, because they are committed with less temptation, than those for which 'little villains' suffer every day; crimes which involve in their consequences the most fatal events. (278-9)

Her readers would certainly have recalled the Preface to the current work, which uses even stronger terms. Smith declares that this novel has been composed:

> under great disadvantages… at a time when long anxiety has ruined my health, and long oppression broken my spirits; at the end of more than ten years (a very great portion of human life) during which I have been compelled to provide for the necessities of a numerous family, almost entirely by my own labour. And when I am yet to look forward to no other prospect for the future but a repetition of exertions on my part, of injustice and evasion on the part of those who have detained the property of my children from them, or even to the greater inconvenience and distress for them, when, quite worn out by my sufferings, *I* shall no more be able to assist them.
>
> By my friends I have often been congratulated, on the power I have possessed of warding off, in a great measure, the shafts of adversity from my children; but whatever gratification that reflection may afford, it is imbittered [sic] when I consider that *I* have toiled only that others might rob….
>
> The insults I have endured, the inconveniences I have been exposed to, are not to be described…. (108)

The novel, then, under the guise of fiction serves as a medium for describing these inconveniences and insults, as well as for "giving the portraits" of agents of these acts—those "*weazles*, *wolves*, and *vultures*" (108). As in the case of the footnote about the uncle's house, the author of the preface has out-suffered the character who represents her. Or, at least, the tone is more bitter. Her readers may also have been reminded of another recent Preface by Charlotte Smith—that in the sixth editions of the sonnets.

Here, Smith recounts a friend's suggestion that "the Public" might like some poems that are "more cheerful" and "of a more lively cast," to which she responds:

> It was unaffected sorrow drew them forth: I wrote mournfully because I was unhappy—and I have unfortunately no reason yet, though nine years have since elapsed, to *change my tone*. The time is indeed arrived, when I have been promised by 'the Honourable Men' who, *nine years ago*, undertook to see that my family obtained the provision their grandfather designed for them,--that 'all should be well, all should be settled.' But still I am condemned to feel the 'hope delayed that maketh the heart sick.' Still to receive—not a repetition of promises indeed—but of *scorn and insult* when I apply to those gentlemen, [who become "men" in Denzil's letter, and "thieves," "*weazles*, *wolves*, and *vultures*" in the later Preface] who, though they acknowledge that all impediments to a division of the estate they have undertaken to manage, are done away—will neither tell me

> *when* they will proceed to divide it, or *whether they will ever do so at all*. You know the circumstances under which I have so long been labouring; and you have done me the honor to say, that few Women could so long have contended with them. With these, however, as they are some of them of a domestic and painful nature, I will not trouble the Public *now*; but while they exist in all their force, that indulgent Public must accept all I am able to achieve…. *I shall be sorry*, if on some future occasion, I should feel myself compelled to detail its causes more at length; for, notwithstanding I am thus frequently appearing as an Authoress, and have derived from thence many of the greatest advantages of my life, (since it has procured me friends whose attachment is most invaluable,) I am well aware that for a woman—"The Post of Honor is a Private Station."[89]

This earlier preface conveys the same points in less pointed, more "literary" language. She here plays the role of the gentlewoman Authoress and melancholy poet of sensibility who speaks through her first-person lyrics; by the time of the 1795 novel, the Authoress has become both more bitter and more blunt, in part because novel-writing is "labour" and not "effusion," a difference which licenses the less polite tone. These authorial selves then merge with fiction in the character of Charlotte Denzil, who takes up the task of detailing those painful domestic circumstances at length, telling them "in her own way," and translating them into the terms of novelistic verisimilitude.

It was always Smith's intention to expose the public nature of those domestic circumstances, the personal nature of which she emphasizes by developing such a strongly cut figure of a melancholy, maternal author-self, and the public nature of which she emphasizes through her sometimes subtle, sometimes forcible generalization of her circumstances to those of English women. The quotation with which she closes this preface ironically performs this generalizing function through a process like translation from one gendered context to another: it is from Addison's *Cato*, and is spoken by Cato to his son; Smith's formulation aligns Woman with private moral character surrounded by a vicious world where "impious men bear sway."[90] And the Authoress is the representative of Woman whose station is by definition private, only she has found a way—the performance of self, "appearing as an Authoress"—to make the station public. The phrase suggests theatricality, and that "Authoress" is a publicly recognizable role, a character with identifying features determined by genre and set in the public imagination. The fictional character of Charlotte Denzil is a balancing device: the sympathetic character popularized in the *Elegiac Sonnets* must balance the social critic to make her exposure of injustice palatable to her readers.

Smith's political and intellectual agendas in the novel use fiction to expose truth: her own true story, the truth of English prejudice, as well as the more general truth of the ways in which the reformation of manners over the course of the century, and the culture of sensibility, inhibit women and prevent them from developing their potential. Smith's two main feminist aims are for women's education and for reform of the marriage market in which women are "sold" by their fathers, as she referred to her own experience in a letter to William Godwin.[91] Mrs. Denzil and her daughter Angelina represent the positive form these cultural reforms could take. They are both well-educated, and admirably balance intellect with sensibility. Angelina is allowed and even encouraged by

her mother to marry for love, rather than for money, even though she is given the chance to marry a boorish rich man.[92] These tasks of truth-telling require opposing attitudes toward her readers, however. To convey her personal story effectively, and to make it a vehicle for exposing social injustice, she has to gain the reader's sympathy by casting herself as a version of a sentimental heroine—in this case one who was wronged in her youth and has been punished for the crimes of men—her father, husband, and husband's lawyers—ever since. At the same time, she satirizes female characters who accept the constraints of their lives, and criticizes readers who want novels to revolve around romance. In other words, a kind of double performance—of the politically radical author and of the melancholy poetess of sensibility—was necessary for her to exist as an author both as she wanted to be and as her readers wanted her to be.

Lyricism/Realism/Naturalism

Beginning with the third edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, published in 1786, Smith began appending notes that indicated the sources of her quotations, in order to avoid the charge of plagiarism. By the eighth edition (1797) the notes refer to current events and to personal experiences and offer botanical and scientific explanations of wildflowers, trees, lichens, insects, and the revolution of the moon. In the second volume, which included the newer poems, the notes take up twenty-one pages. The nature of these notes suggest that Smith was attempting—as she explicitly did in her children's books—to use literature as a vehicle for teaching science, and to use botanical terms and first-person anecdotes to lend her poems intellectual authority and experiential authenticity. She was also attempting to expand the possibilities of literary genres beyond the reductive sentimental modes that were deemed appropriate for women writers and readers. While the sonnets and notes contain nothing overtly scandalous, however, botany was not a neutral subject.

Judith Pascoe describes Smith's poetry as "a participant in the debate over the role of botany in women's education being waged around the turn of the century."[93] The negative side of this debate was infamously represented by the Reverend Richard Polwhele, who grouped Smith with Mary Wollstonecraft, the paradigm of the revolutionary, scandalously improper woman in his 1798 poetic invective, *The Unsex'd Females* (sold by Smith's publisher, Cadell and Davies). Smith, who had become a friend of Wollstonecraft's briefly before she died in 1797, had dared to recommend like Wollstonecraft that girls be taught botany, along with politics, history, natural philosophy, and everything that boys are taught.[94] In a significant coupling of science with politics—the two subjects about which Smith urges women to education themselves—Polwhele places "botanizing" on a par with supporting the French Revolution (and dressing like a prostitute); plant sexuality was an inappropriate and dangerously arousing subject for young ladies:

> With bliss botanic as their bosoms heave,
> Still pluck forbidden fruit, with mother Eve,
> For puberty in sighing florets pant,
> Or point the prostitution of a plant;
> Dissect its organ of unhallow'd lust,

And fondly gaze the titillating dust.[95]

(Polwhele inadvertently betrays a bit of his own prurience when he says, in a note: "I have, several times, seen boys and girls botanizing together" (11).

Polwhele was not alone in targeting the female study and poeticization of botany, which became quite a fad following the publication of Erasmus Darwin's hugely popular poem, *The Botanic Garden*, in which anthropomorphized plants engage in scenes of courtship aided by supernatural gnomes and sylphs. As Judith Pascoe points out, the poem "became an object of particular fascination for women," while its couching of Linnaean botany in the terms of romance was seen "as a threat to female modesty."[96] For example, the Melissa becomes a scene of *ménage a trois* overseen by "two squires"—the less mature two of the four stamens—while the Meadia's profusion of stamens suggest (to a "warm imagination") the opening scene of an orgy: "Meadia's soft chains *five* suppliant beaux confess, / And hand in hand the laughing belle address."[97] For Polwhele and likeminded critics, however, not only botanical knowledge but knowledge in general is improper and unattractive in a woman: "Yet, alas! the crimsoning blush of modesty, will be always more attractive, than the sparkle of intelligence" (20). "Charming SMITH"'s botanizing and sparkle of intelligence do not invoke as much criticism as the revolutionary suggestions of Wollstonecraft, but Polwhele does say that when she mixed politics into her works, she "resign'd her power to please, / Poetic feeling and poetic ease" (21). Arguably, Smith resigned "poetic ease" willfully and self-consciously in the later editions of the sonnets, in which the paratexts compete for interest with the "feeling" poems.[98]

The eighth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets* (1797) contained three sonnets about "the insect of the gossamer," all of which were appended with explanatory, autobiographical, and literarily allusive notes. The sonnet "To the Insect of the Gossamer," in particular, is almost overwhelmed by its paratextual apparatus of direct authorial speech and quotation.[99] Here is the poem:

Small, viewless Aeronaut, that by the line
Of Gossamer suspended, in mid air
Float'st on a sun beam—Living Atom, where
Ends thy breeze-guided voyage;—with what design
In Aether dost thou launch thy form minute,
Mocking the eye?—Alas! before the veil
Of denser clouds shall hide thee, the pursuit
Of the keen Swift may end thy fairy sail!—
Thus on the golden thread that Fancy weaves
Buoyant, as Hope's illusive flattery breathes,
The young and visionary Poet leaves
Life's dull realities, while sevenfold wreaths
Of rainbow-light around his head revolve.
Ah! soon at Sorrow's touch the radiant dreams dissolve! (66)

This poem might be read, first, as an expression of frustration with the inability of literature to console in the face of "real world" sorrow. Many other of Smith's sonnets strike this chord. Fancy, and the escape it offers, are as tenuous and vulnerable as the

almost invisible gossamer and its minute spider. The poem also makes an implicit and complex argument about the originality, and perhaps the near excessiveness, of the author's feelings, by combining so many innovations in the sonnet form. It is as if the complexity of the author's feelings about literature requires a complex reinvention of the sonnet, with variations on the rhyme and rhythm schemes of the Elizabethan sonnet, and with its prominent use of enjambment, which mimics the imagery of the gossamer, by creating a line that seems to be continuous but which may break unexpectedly.

However, there is more going on in this poem (before we even consider the note). I do not think it is a stretch to read this poem as a mockery of the general reader. We can start by looking at the implicit analogy that Smith sets up. The little spider, "suspended," floats on the thread of gossamer, and mocks "the eye" because it is seen and then not seen, being so "minute." The Poet floats on the "thread that Fancy weaves"—a thread that like the spider's is self-generated; as the spider is blown by the breeze, the Poet is wafted by the breath of "illusive flattery"; as the spider meets its end at the mouth of "the keen Swift," the poet meets his end "at Sorrow's touch" which dissolves his dreams and therefore his poetic self. If every aspect of the spider has an analogy in the poet, whom does the poet mock, as the spider mocks "the eye?" Perhaps the reader, who looks for the authentic self of the poet by following his thread of fancy. But the poet is mocked himself by the real world Sorrow that dissolves his dreamy rainbow aura. Perhaps, too, the poet questions her own "end" or "design" in writing; what is poetry for?

This poem could be read as a lament, with many similarities to other poems on the same theme in *Elegiac Sonnets*, for the limitations of literary consolation. Or it could be read as a mockery of the enterprise of poems of sensibility. Let's take a look now at the note Smith appended to the poem:

> The almost imperceptible threads floating in the air, towards the end of Summer or Autumn, in a still evening, sometimes are so numerous as to be felt on the face and hands. It is on these that a minute species of spider convey themselves from place to place; sometimes rising with the wind to a great height in the air.
>
> (66)

We might say that her parody begins by exposing the unoriginality of this mode of authentic expression. The poets of sensibility are a species, and they produce ephemeral threads that are "so numerous" as to lose their individuality. The note goes on:

> Dr. Lister, among other naturalists, remarked these insects. "To fly they cannot strictly be said, they being carried into the air by external force; but they can, in case the wind suffer them, steer their course, perhaps mount and descend at pleasure: and to the purpose of rowing themselves along in the air, it is observable that they ever take their flight backwards, that is, their head looking a contrary way like a sculler upon the Thames. It is scarcely credible to what height they will mount; which is yet precisely true, and a thing easily to be observed by one that shall fix his eye some time on any part of the heavens, the white web, at a vast distance, very distinctly appearing from the azure sky—But this is in Autumn only, and that in very fair and calm weather." From the Encyclop. Brit.
>
> (66)

The note, while conveying the idea of the poet as a real person who has observed gossamer herself, also suggests in the context of the poem's alignment of insect with poet, that the poet is assumed to have extraordinary powers and an ability to rise to heights that are "scarcely credible"; but that perhaps this notion derives from the difficulty of truly seeing her as she flies, face averted, not appearing to have a design. Smith builds upon this idea of the poet as associated with the fantastic as the note goes on:

> Dr. [Erasmus] Darwin, whose imagination so happily applies every object of Natural History to the purposes of Poetry, makes the Goddess of Botany thus direct her Sylphs—"Thin clouds of Gossamer in air display, / And hide the vale's chaste lily from the ray."
>
> These filmy threads form a part of the equipage of Mab: "Her wagon spokes are made of spiders legs,/ The cover of the wings of grasshoppers,/ The traces of the smallest spider's web."
>
> Juliet, too, in anxiously waiting for the silent arrival of her lover, exclaims, "—Oh! so light of foot/ Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint; / A lover may bestride the Gossamer/ That idles in the wanton Summer air, / And yet not fall—" (66)

When she republished the poem in the 1804 *Conversations Introducing Poetry*, Smith added yet another explanatory note, which also moves from the realm of scientific observation to literature:

> Gossamer is the web of a very small spider. In that entertaining and instructive book, White's *History of Selborne*, is an account of a wonderful shower of gossamer which fell in and about that village, on the 21st of September, 1741. The letter containing the history of this phenomenon concludes thus—"Every day in fine weather, in Autumn chiefly, do I see those spiders shooting out their webs and mounting aloft. They will go off from your finger if you will take them in your hand. Last Summer one alighted on my book as I was reading in the parlour; and running to the top of the page, and shooting out a web, took off with considerable velocity, in a place where no air was stirring; and I am sure I did not assist it with my breath; so that these little crawlers seem to have, while mounting, some loco-motive power, without the use of wings, and to move in the air faster than the air itself." White's *History of Selborne*, 192. (66)

I think it is fair to say that these are strange notes to a sonnet. They combine a proliferation of quotation with accounts of first-hand experience (literally "felt on the face and hands") to an unknown end (like the spider's). Smith wrote about many other topics and objects which might have been unfamiliar to the reader, but this spider, which most likely would have been familiar to many readers, receives inordinate attention. What is the nature of this attention?

The interest of the spider may be its association with enchantment, or at least the unexplained aspects of the natural world, of love, and of literature. To the naturalist Dr. Lister and the writer Gilbert White, the spider seems to have otherworldly powers of locomotion. It does not need to see where it is going, but instead looks backwards, and to the poet, it is "viewless"; the spider is nearly invisible, and itself has limited, or

alternative, vision. It also appears to be immune from some laws of nature: it floats on a sunbeam and has mysterious locomotive powers. To the poets and literary characters, the spider's gossamer, in its improbable fineness, hints at the possibility of escape from the contingencies of this world: fairies may exist to aid in love; a lover's step may be lighter than air; a flower's chastity—its unwilted beauty—may be preserved. While Smith seems, by including these quotations in the notes, to be sympathetic to this possibility of magic, her insistent references to "real life" make it seem to be simply (poetical) wishful thinking. In addition, the poem that takes priority over the notes dispels the illusion of magic. The spell of Fancy, for the poet, breaks as easily as the gossamer thread when it is brushed off the face with the hands (of the other poet, the author Charlotte Smith, who speaks from experience in the note). The return to "life's dull realities" and Sorrow proves the escape to have been temporary, and to have been only "illusive" and a dream, however "radiant."

The combination of the poem and the notes can be read as Smith's dispelling of another's dreams, too: the reader's. One dream the reader might have is of the poet as an individual in touch with the magic of another world who can escape the sorrow of this world. (This dream is the same one Keats will address several decades on in "Ode to a Nightingale.") But even this melancholy poetic stance serves a dream: the idea of the author whose suffering inspires her, whose poetry—an "effusion"—flows spontaneously from the springs of her sensibility and sorrow. The notes offer a further emendation of the dream of the poet as enchanted figure by bringing in the poet as a real body (face and hands) and as a reader like her own readers. In the notes she is a meta-authorial figure pointing to other metaphorical uses of the insect of the gossamer. She is a weaver of literary webs who is aware of the dreams readers want to be sold. But she also wants her readers to recognize that in reading lyric as well as in reading a novel, they are suspending their disbelief: Romeo's footsteps are not as light as air, and the flower cannot be protected from pollination or from the sun's heat. Romance inevitably meets real life.

The poem, with its paratexts, contemplates both enchantment and disenchantment. A further aspect of its disenchantment is the implication that the poets of sensibility are "so numerous"; so many poets can achieve these magical effects, which are really only fashionable conventions. Additionally, the notes highlight the artifice of the lyric utterance, and they point out the sonnet's conventions and limitations as they suggest that there is another version of the author who speaks in a different register. But the juxtaposition suggests that neither of these is "truly" authentic or real because both are rhetorical figures. Like a figure, and like the spider, the poet's self is "viewless," unindividuated, has an unknown "design," and is always about to disappear—"at a vast distance" or hidden in "the veil/ Of denser clouds." The excessiveness of the notes minimize the poem as a vehicle for expression, and could be said to collapse the hierarchy of literary genres. Smith collapses the distinction between speech genres in her novels, too, and in so doing, she collapses distinctions between author and literary figure or fictional character. The tension between Smith's texts and paratexts creates a kind of eddy whereby the main current of expressions of authentic selfhood in the insistent first-person address of the poems, and the narrative of a life rendered in prefaces and notes

swirls back on itself in textual markers that point away from authenticity and toward artifice. Self-reflection is self-representation, another name for which might be self-fictionalization.

Conclusion: The Permeable Limits of the Literary Work

Genette calls paratexts "thresholds of interpretation," and, "this fringe at the unsettled limits that enclose with a pragmatic halo the literary work."[100] I hope I have described the pragmatic purposes of Smith's prefaces and footnotes and authorial interjections, as well as how they act as unsettled limits in their interaction with the literary texts, and how they create a plural and contradictory version of the author, the ironies of which risk alienating the readers she meant to reassure with her prefatorial self-representation. Even in the more subtle ironic performances, though, while she played into her readers' expectations and desires for her to be the heroine of sensibility, she consistently highlighted the literariness and even fictiveness of this persona. As a proto-Romantic poet she instructs the public in how to read for that subjectivity and interiority we come to associate with Romantic lyric expression. She simultaneously teaches her readers not to forget that they are reading literature, with all of its conventions and rules, a translation, and not a transmutation of consciousness. But she blurs that line even as she points to it. With her novelistic self-portraits she instructs readers to read *her*, an activity that both draws them to her sympathetically and risks alienating them with her "impropriety."

Smith's works construct an author who would tell the truth, however painful that truth might be to her readers, while offering the palliative of the literary conventions of sensibility. She was motivated by her frustration with the constraints imposed on female identity as well as on the identity of the novel or of the lyric. Her use of these conventions comforted readers with their familiarity, and with their implication of the real existence of a "true feeler" author. At the same time, though, Smith exposed these comforts and this author as *written* and suggested that the authenticity of first-person lyric or of autobiography was constructed, performative, and possibly deceptive.

Smith wrote at a moment when literary categories of value, and their dichotomies, were hardening: fiction and "real life," novels and autobiography, copying, imitation, or plagiarism and authorial originality, performed feeling and authentic emotion, the lyric voice and satire, private letter and public utterance. Her straddling and blurring of these categories exposed the anxious motive force behind the wish for originality and the calls for generic propriety—as a fear of revolutionary concepts of identity, property, and femininity. In her coexisting display of and disregard for originality and generic propriety, Smith forced her fictions and her comfortingly conventional "effusions" to be permeable to *le vrai* of "real life," of politics, and of science, skirting scandal to do so.

[1] This was the same publishing house that, under James' brother Robert, had published *Tristram Shandy*.
[2] Charlotte Smith, *The Poems of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Stuart Curran (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 2. The phrase is from the Dedication.
[3] Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 55.
[4] Sarah Zimmerman, "Charlotte Smith's Letters and the Practice of Self-Presentation," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* Vol. LIII, No. 1, (Autumn 1991): 69.
[5] Pinch, *Strange Fits*, 66.
[6] *The European Magazine* 10 (August 1786): 125.
[7] Anna Seward, *Letters of Anna Seward*, ed. Archibald Constable (Edinburgh: George Ramsay, 1811), 1:162-63. From a letter to Miss Weston, 20 July 1786.
[8] Polwhele, Richard "The Unsex'd Females: a Poem, Addressed to the Author of The Pursuits of Literature" (London: Cadell and Davies, 1798) 22.
[9] Anna Laetitia Barbauld, Introduction to *The British Novelists* edition of *The Old Manor House* (London: F. C. and J. Rivington, 1810), 36:iii.
[10] Nichola Deane, "Reading Romantic Letters," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 66.3 & 4 (University of California Press, 2003): 403.
[11] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," in *The Novel: Volume I: History, Geography, and Culture*, ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 351. Gallagher also argues that:

> Novels promoted a disposition of ironic credulity enabled by optimistic incredulity; one is dissuaded from believing the literal truth of a representation so that one can instead admire its likelihood and extend enough credit to buy into the game. Such flexible mental states were the sine qua non of modern subjectivity. (346)

[12] Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998), 6.
[13] Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 2.
[14] Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Imagining A Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 1.
[15] Zimmerman, "Charlotte Smith's Letters," 69.
[16] Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentlman* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003), 309.
[17] Judith Davis Miller, "The Politics of Truth and Deception: Charlotte Smith and the French Revolution," in *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution*, ed. Adriana Craciun and Kari E. Lokke (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), [337-363] 338.
[18] Polewhele, "Unsex'd Females," 21.
[19] Pinch, *Strange Fits*, 61.
[20] Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Richard Macksey (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 197. Genette also writes:

> The status of fiction, which obviously governs novelistic *texts* (no one is seriously asked to believe in the historical existence of Tom Jones or Emma Bovary, and the reader who would take it into his head to do so would most certainly be a "bad" reader, one who does not conform to the author's expectations or abide by what must indeed be called the contract—the bilateral contract—of fiction), likewise governs certain elements of the paratext, often implicitly and with dependence on the shrewdness of the reader… but just as often explicitly, by the mere fact of the obvious contradiction between, for instance, one preface… and some other element of the paratext. (182)

[21] Smith, *Poems*, 3.

[22] Curran, introduction to *Poems*, xx.

[23] David Marshall, *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988), 107.

[24] Smith was married at the age of fifteen to Benjamin Smith, the dissolute, prodigal second son of a wealthy East India merchant, Richard Smith. Her father had arranged the marriage after he married a woman not much older than his daughters. Smith had twelve children with Benjamin Smith, lived with him in debtor's prison, fled the country with him, put up with his infidelity and abuse, and finally separated from him in 1787, when she was thirty-eight. She was penniless, and wrote to support herself and her children; Benjamin Smith had legal claim to the money she earned from her writing, and continued to exercise it for twenty years. His father, Richard Smith, had bequeathed in trust most of his estate to the six of Charlotte and Benjamin's children born before he died, but he had written the will without legal council, and it remained the subject of a legal dispute until 1813, years after the deaths of Charlotte and Benjamin Smith and of several of their children. In her fifties, when she was still writing constantly, she suffered from rheumatism, including in her hands, dropsy, and cancer.

One of Smith's most explicit descriptions of her miserable marriage comes in a 1792 letter to her agent and friend in Ireland, Joseph Cooper Walker:

> You are very good to interest yourself so much in my unfortunate situation in regard to Mr Smith—Tho infidelity and with the most despicable objects had render'd my continuing to lie with him extremely wretched long before his debts compell'd him to leave England, I could have been contented to have resided in the same house with him, had not his temper been so capricious and often so cruel that my life was not safe. Not withstanding all I suffer'd, which is much too sad a story to relate.

Deane "Reading Romantic Letters," 406. She breaks out of the etiquette of letters to confess this much, while still seeming to withhold what might be added. Deane says she holds back on details, with the same rhetorical technique of the published confessional statements.

[25] Florence May Anna Hilbish, *Charlotte Smith, Poet and Novelist, 1749-1806* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia University Press, 1941); Loraine Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith: A Critical Biography* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). They quote Catherine Anne Dorset,

"Charlotte Smith," in *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, ed. Sir Walter Scott (Edinburgh: Cadell, 1834), 4:20-58

[26] Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith*, 82. An inventory of George Steevens' personal library is available in the database "Eighteenth Century Collections Online," and there is no version of Prévost's novel listed.

[27] A translation was published in 1767, anonymously, called *The History of the Chevalier des Grieux: Written by Himself*. (B. White, London.) In a recent article, Terry Hale argues that Steevens reacted so strongly against Smith's translation because he was himself the translator of the previous edition he defends against fraud. I have not found evidence for this possibility, but his reading of the situation is not implausible:

> In fact, this minor skirmish was but one of many in a continuing battle of the sexes which was really about the rights of women to the financial remuneration and intellectual prestige of authorship in the widest sense. That Steevens intended to protect his own literary preserve (not to mention potential sales) from interlopers is beyond doubt, but by framing the argument in moral terms he was seeking to marginalize not only Charlotte Smith as a competitor but women authors and translators as a class.

Terry Hale, "Translation in Distress: Cultural Misappropriation and the Construction of the Gothic," in *European Gothic: A Spirited Exchange, 1760-1960*, ed. Avril Horner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 19.

[28] Charlotte Smith, *The Collected Letters of Charlotte Smith*, ed. Judith Phillips Stanton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 7. Stanton quotes the full letter from Dorset, p. 46, not from an original.

[29] Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith*, 83, quoting Dorset, (although she gives no page numbers). It must be significant that all subsequent tellings of this story quote Dorset and her "transcriptions" of letters, and not original letters.

[30] The phrase "fatal attachment" occurs in *Emmeline*, 1788, Vol. 2, 266 and Vol. 4, 81, both in reference to Adelina Trelawny's to Fitz-Edward; *Ethelinde*, 1789, Vol. 2, 292 and Vol. 4, 250 in reference to Sir Edward's to Ethelinde; *The Old Manor House*, 1793, Vol. 1, 62 Orlando's to Monimia; "attachment fatal" occurs in *Celestina*, 1791, Vol. 3, 82, Montague Thorold's to Celestina.

[31] Michael Gamer, Introduction to *The Works of Charlotte Smith*, by Charlotte Smith, eds. Stuart Curran and Michael Gamer (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2005), 1:xxx.

[32] According to Gamer:

> It received at least three reviews, all of them mixed and most of them uncertain about how the book would affect the moral sensibilities of its readers. *Town and Country Magazine* praised the story's interest while criticizing what it called the unevenness of its translation, a flaw seized upon by the more conservative *Critical Review*, which reversed its 1767 review of Prevost's novel by voicing reservations about its moral tendency. The fullest treatment came last, in the October 1786 *Monthly Review*, whose reviewer, after acknowledging the story's ability 'to interest the passions, warm the imagination, and… engage the heart,' refused to come to a conclusion over the novel's dangers to impressionable

readers: 'it is yet questionable whether the book is not fitted to produce bad rather than good effects, especially on some minds.' (xxx)

He also cites a June 1787 letter to Cadell asking him to sell the copies as fast as possible, since she has not yet received any payment for the work.

[33] The third edition of *Elegiac Sonnets* included four translations of Petrarch; one of a poem by Metastasio, who writes of his fatal attachment to Miranda; and five from Goethe's *Sorrows of Werter*, which also address a fatal attachment.

[34] Stuart Curran, Introduction to Smith, *Poems*, xxiii.

[35] Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith*, 62-77.

[36] Gamer, Introduction to Smith, *Works*, I:xxxvi.

[37] Smith, *Works*, I:129.

[38] Michael Gamer's notes point to these moments in the text but do not analyze them.

[39] Gamer points out that the story is "pathetic in its telling, shocking in its details, and libertine in its content so much so that the Marquis de Sade and Alexandre Dumas attempted versions of it" (xxxv).

[40] Quoted in Gamer's Introduction; from *Monthly Review 77* (October 1787), 328.

[41] Gamer, Introduction, xxxvi. Gamer discusses the work's afterlife as the inspiration of a fictional subgenre, "as even the shortest list of titles will corroborate: Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life* (1788); Sophia Fortnum's *Cordelia, Or a Romance of Real Life* (1799); Amelia Opie's *Tales of Real Life* (1813); Maria Edgeworth's *Tales of Real Life* (1818); Charles Brockden Brown's 'A Romance of Real Life' (published c. 1820); John Harmon Bedford's *Wanderings of Childe Harold: A Romance of Real Life* (1824); H. J. Copson's *The Gypsy's Warning: or, Love and Ruin: An Original New Romance of Real Life* (1830); Catherine Maria Sedgewick's 'A Romance in Real Life' (1835); and Randal Geoffrey's *The False Brother: A Romance in Real Life* (1843)" and the anthology edited by Leigh Hunt, *One Hundred Romances of Real Life* (1843) (xxxvi-vii).

[42] Stuart Curran, *Poetic Form and British Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 30.

[43] This literary historical moment, Curran argues, is sandwiched between eras in which the sonnet is a vehicle for more public statements. Gray's posthumously published elegy "On the Death of Mr. Richard West"—"the suppressed record of his unfulfilled secret life, is the motive force underlying the entire Romantic revival of the sonnet" (30).

[44] Smith, *Poems*, 5.

[45] Pinch, *Strange Fits*, 64.

[46] Smith, *Poems*, 39.

[47] Oxford English Dictionary Online.

[48] Toby Ruth Benis, "'A Likely Story': Charlotte Smith's Revolutionary Narratives," *European Romantic Review*, (Sept. 2003) 14: 291-292.

[49] These poets represent the anthologized canon that other novelists, such as Ann Radcliffe, quoted too.

[50] Charlotte Smith, *The Banished Man*, in *The Works of Charlotte Smith*, Vol. 7, eds. Stuart Curran and M. O. Grenby (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2006), 193.

[51] Pinch says this "is often the case in the mid- to late eighteenth-century poetry in which this kind of echolalia reigns" (Pinch, *Strange Fits*, 60). Here is one minor example of a quotation of Sterne in which a thematic reading is possible: "*A hectic of a moment* passed across the languid countenance of the old servant" (Smith, *The Banished Man*, 165). The aged servant in the castle of Rosenheim feels a moment of cautious doubt and possibly resentment when D'Alonville tells him he wants to find the old titles to the estate to bring back to the Baroness. The "hectic" registers the servant's recognition of the disparity in class and therefore power between himself and D'Alonville, while it may also register his fear that this inequality is now only a sham, after the levelings of the French Revolution, and that he is being tricked. Smith quotes *A Sentimental Journey*: "The poor Franciscan made no reply: a hectic of a moment pass'd across his cheek, but could not tarry—Nature seemed to have had done with her resentments in him; he shewed none." (Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey*, 6.) The hectic is the monk's reaction to Yorick's condescending refusal to give him money. A class or power disparity is in evidence here as well.

An example of a quotation where a thematic reading is possible, but may be a stretch, is one which appears near the end, when the expatriot characters are living together in Italy: "I cannot describe the house we inhabit; for if it deserved to be described, which it does not, what are the most magnificent and laboured works of art, when we are contemplating the compositions of Nature, 'with all her great works about her?'" (Smith, *The Banished Man*, 478.) When Tristram is in France in Vol. VII, after his coach breaks near Avignon, he says: "What a fresh spring in the blood! to behold upon the banks advancing and retiring the castles of romance, whence courteous knights have whilome rescued the distress'd—and see vertiginous, the rocks, the mountains, the cataracts, and all the hurry which Nature is in with all her great works about her—" (Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 465). The only similarity may be an ironic glance at both characters' naïve wish for a pastoral utopia.

[52] Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her *Vindication of the Rights of Man* in 1790, and *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792, the year Smith published *Desmond.* During the two years after writing *The Banished Man*, Smith read William Godwin's *Political Justice*, and became friendly with Godwin and Wollstonecraft. Her acquaintance with Wollstonecraft, however, was very brief, because Wollstonecraft died in mid-1797, after which Smith helped Godwin with the infant Mary, for a short time. The ideas and lives of Wollstonecraft and Godwin helped to form the themes of Smith's next novel, *The Young Philosopher*, which Smith published in 1798, the same year that Godwin's memoir of Wollstonecraft was published and met a very negative reception, making the name of Mary Wollstonecraft synonymous with scandalous female author.

[53] Fletcher, *Charlotte Smith*, 223.

[54] *The British Critic* 4 (Dec 1794): 623.

[55] From *The British Critic* 4 (Dec 1794): 621-3; *Analytical Review, or History of Literature, Domestic and Foreign, 1788-1799* 20 (Nov 1794): 254-5; and *Critical Review*, 13 (March 1795): 275-8.

[56] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 314.

[57] *European Magazine and London Review* 26 (Oct. 1794): 273-4.

[58] The anti-French Revolutionary rhetoric in general employed these ideas; the review in the *London Review* describes the revolution as having been right-minded at first, but then having overstepped the bounds of "liberty" into "licentiousness." *European Magazine, and London Review*, 276.
[59] *Analytical Review,* 255.
[60] *The British Critic*, 623.
[61] *The Critical Review*, 275. The misogynistic psychological force of the verb in the phrase "pour *herself*" is interesting when seen as an echo: "She [Manley] hoarded up all the public and private scandal within her reach, and poured it forth, in a work too well known in the last age, though almost forgotten in the present; a work that partakes of the style of the Romance, and the Novel." This is Clara Reeve on Delarivier Manley, an earlier self-fictionalizer. Also interesting is Reeve's use of the terms Romance and Novel as separate but not entirely distinct categories. (*The Progress of Romance: through times, countries and manners; ... in a course of evening conversations.* Vol. I (Colchester: J. Keymer, and London: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1785), 119.
[62] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 129. Gallagher, "Novelistic Fictionality," 340.
[63] Mary Wollstonecraft published the semi-autobiographical novel *Mary: A Fiction* in 1788. Mary Hays would publish her autobiographical novel *The Memoirs of Emma Courtney* in 1796. The actress George Anne Bellamy had publisehd *An Apology for the Life of George Anne Bellamy, late of Covent Garden Theatre, Written by Herself* in 1785. Felicity Nussbaum argues that "despite their seeming marginality as women and as scandal writers, the scandalous memoirists [of the mid-eighteenth century] are intimately connected with canonical eighteenth-century literature." ("Heteroclites: The Gender of Character in the Scandalous Memoirs," in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature*, ed. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (Routledge, 1988), 144.
[64] G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 360. The reformation of manners brought with it concerns about boundaries of all sorts; for example:

> The reformation of men in order to bring them closer to women raised the difficult question of essential, irreducible difference, that is, of sex. This corresponded to the greater permeability of the old barrier between men's public leisure space and women's private work sphere, as the former was entered by significant numbers of women, sharing pleasures with men, and the latter attracted men into it for pleasure. (341)

[65] Smith, *Letters*, 156. (Sept. 10, 1794) Other letters give a sense of the ill fate of this book:

> As I understand by a sentence in your Letter that there will be a speedy demand for a second Edition (which is a matter that I apprehend you can now calculate to a certainty), I shall be much oblig'd to your Father [Thomas Cadell senior] with whom my bargain was made in this matter to let me know *whether* it is his meaning to make me the same allowance as he formerly made for Celestina on a second Edition & which I have invariably had since for each of my works. (154)

(Sept. 9, 1794 to T. Cadell, Jr.) She wants to know how soon she can get the advance of £40 because she is desperate for money. Stanton notes that "early sales of *The Banished Man* did not yet warrant a second edition" (n155). To her friend, James Upton Tripp, Smith writes:

> Mr Cadell, tho he owns that the new Novel will speedily be in a New Edition, positively refuses to pay me the £40 that will then be due to me till the 2nd Edition is publish'd. He is got into one of his fits of close-handed caprice, which makes him often think he shall die in an Hospital—tho worth £70000—& he will not buy another novel I offer'd him 'for fear I should overwrite myself and he should lose by it'; tho I offer'd it at £20 less than I had ever sold one before because I wanted the Money partly advanced. Here then is an end of all hopes from him. (157)

(Sept. 12, 1794.) To Cadell, Jr. and Davies:

> I had on friday a Letter from Lady Crofton who appears to be very much vex'd and hurt at not having received the Banish'd Man & Emigrants which she order'd. She says that She is convinced that Messrs Cadell & Davies do not like to sell books to Ireland & shall make no farther attempt, but says she has read the Novel in an Irish Edition so miserably disgraced that it was hardly to be read at all— Very certainly when, to the stupid blunders which Mr Stafford chose to make, are added the pleasant emendations of an Irish printer, the work must do great honor to all concerned in it—. (178)

(7 Dec. 1794) In response they write: "The Demand for the Banished Man has been so very slow comparatively with that for Emmeline Ethelinde &c. &c., that we have had but little Hopes of printing a 2nd Edition." Stanton says "They offer to print an edition of 500 copies, half the usual number, at half the price originally offered, 20 instead of 40" (n178). Smith accepted these terms and a second edition was published in Jan., 1795.

[66] The seventh edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, published in 1797, lists at the back new editions of the following works by Smith: *The Emigrants*, *Rural Walks*, *Rambles Farther*, *Emmeline*, *Ethelinde*, *Celestina*, *The Banished Man*, and *The Romance of Real Life*. This list implies Smith maintained popularity despite the negative reviews of her 1794 novel. Perhaps it is also significant that *Desmond* is not listed.

[67] *London Review*, 276.

[68] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 193. Corporal Trim is actually never able to utter this complete sentence in one breath. In other words, Smith revises or misquotes Trim's statement.

[69] In fact, when she first submitted the manuscript of *The Banished Man*, which was in her daughter Charlotte Mary's hand as most of her other manuscripts had been, it was rumored not to have been written by her—the flip side of plagiarism. She writes to William Davies regarding the manuscript of *Montalbert*, "I mention sending the MMS that you may see… that it is of my own writing, of which there were some doubts when the Banish'd Man was first in question between me and Mr Cadell, & indeed it is difficult to beleive [sic] that, surrounded as I am with troubles, I can write as I do" (Smith, *Letters* 148).

[70] "Shall we for ever make new books, as apothecaries make new mixtures, by pouring only out of one vessel into another?" (Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 309).
[71] An excellent recent discussion of *The Banished Man* can be found in Antje Blank's article, "Things As They Were: The Gothic of Real Life in Charlotte Smith's *The Emigrants* and *The Banished Man,*" *Women's Writing*, Vol. 16, Issue 1, May 2009, 78-93. Blank sees *The Banished Man* as marking a turn in Smith's career as a novelist away from the sentimental, Gothic fictions that had made her popular. She writes:

> Presumably, Smith began to oppose the Gothic not merely due to the genre's escalating triviality and sensationalism. With the Jacobins' rise to power in 1792/3 and their total war effort against the allied royalist forces which brought pain and loss to so many, escapist fictions that thrilled their readership with fanciful tales of imaginary terrors probably struck her as morally inappropriate. (82)

[72] Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 527.
[73] Brewer, John *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 150.
[74] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 193. Her frustration with the novelist's double bind (to be original and to give readers the content they expect from a novel) comes through clearly in the next paragraph, as does her criticism of other novel writers, whom she calls, sarcastically, "my ingenious contemporaries." These, she says, "have so fully possessed themselves of every bastion and buttress; of every tower and turret; of every gallery and gateway, together with all their furniture of ivy mantles, and mossy battlements; tapestry, and old pictures; owls, bats, and ravens," that to avoid the "danger of *again* being accused of borrowing" she jokes, she considered setting the scene of her novel in Herculaneum or Pompeii, "where I think no scenes have yet been laid" (193). More marketable than these, though, is her mockery of the commonplace scenes of the Gothic.
[75] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 195. She sounds, here, like the Female Spectator.
[76] Smith would, however, write four more novels.
[77] Janet Morgan, "The Meanings of *Vraisemblance* in French Classical Theory," *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (Apr., 1986): 293.
[78] Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 399. The fact that Smith takes these phrases from several chapters apart, and reverses their order, suggests an intimate familiarity with Sterne's novel. (In the Avis, she quotes from Vols. 8 and 5 of *Tristram Shandy*.) Sterne, a copyist himself, took this phrase from Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), in which there is a Lord Pococurante who, like these ladies, is not up on current affairs.
[79] Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 424.
[80] Smith's ideas about women's education recall, of course, the radical social-reformist thinking of William Godwin (whose *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* was published in 1791) and Mary Wollstonecraft (whose *Vindication of the Rights of Women* was published in 1792). In a letter to Godwin from September 1797, Smith claims to be reading *Political Justice* for the first time, probably in connection with her writing of the novel *The Young Philosopher*.
[81] Johnson, Claudia, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), xiv.

[82] Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, xvii.
[83] Nussbaum, Felicity, *The Autobiographical Subject*, 29.
[84] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 267.
[85] Starr, G. Gabrielle, *Lyric Generations: Poetry and the Novel in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 111.
[86] These kinds include footnotes, sonnets "by" characters that then appear under the authorial name of Charlotte Smith in *Elegiac Sonnets*, references to real-world political events and people and to real-world places and historical events, as well as the most blatant kind of chiasmus: self-portrait.
[87] The sonnets sometimes have this double directionality, or tension, especially those accompanied by a footnote that seems to claim a different reality than the sonnet.
[88] Smith, *The Banished Man*, 273. Smith's letters indicate that this year (1794) was one of the tightest financially, because of Augusta's troubled pregnancy and her own medical bills (she moved to Bath because her rheumatoid arthritis was so severe); she also writes about wanting to leave England and move to Switzerland.
[89] Smith, *Poems*, 5-6.
[90] Joseph Addison, *Cato* (London: J. Tonson, 1733). Cato says to his son Portius: "There [far from Rome] live retired, pray for the Peace of *Rome*, / Content thy self to be Obscurely good. / When Vice prevails, and impious Men bear Sway, / The Post of Honour is a private Station" (76).
[91] Published in "Charlotte Smith to William and Mary Jane Godwin: Five Holograph Letters," ed. Pamela Clemit, *Keats-Shelley Journal* 55 (2006): [29-40]. [PAGE?]
[92] Some of Smith's readers might have known that Angelina's story was based on that of Smith's daughter Augusta, who married an exiled Frenchman for love.
[93] Judith Pascoe, "Female Botanists and the Poetry of Charlotte Smith," in *Re-visioning Romanticism: British Women Writers, 1776-1837*, ed. Carol Wilson and Joel Haefner (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 197-8.
[94] Some evidence for the friendship of Smith, Wollstonecraft, and Godwin can be found in "Charlotte Smith to William and Mary Jane Godwin: Five Holograph Letters" ed. Pamela Clemit. Godwin introduced Smith to Coleridge, whom she liked and who read her sonnets with admiration. In a 1797 letter to William Godwin, several months after the death of Mary Wollstonecraft, Smith wrote:

> Why are we here?—There is a sentence I shall never forget in the last work I have ever seen of Mary Woolstoncroft [sic]. "What is existence but a painful consciousness of wretchedness?" *I* have no other consciousness of my identity than that I am the same unhappy person who was at barely I think fifteen sold to an ideot--& from the Sussex hills, condemn'd to be shut up in a wretched Street in the City; who <u>once</u> had a daughter she adored who deserved all her fondness; but who now, with many other Children round her, has <u>nothing</u>!—I should not say so perhaps for I expect by these Ships my eldest Son from India—who tho he has been there twelve years, comes home poor & merely to protect his Sister, perhaps to avenge the injuries his Mother has sustained. (34-5)

More explicitly than Smith, Wollstonecraft had asked in her 1792 *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, "how can women be just or generous, when they are the slaves of injustice?" and argued that social reform began with women's education. She described women's ignorance as incapacitating, and argued that "their minds can take in much more, and ought to do so." Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 236.

When Godwin's memoir of Wollstonecraft (1798) created a scandal in the literary world and met extremely negative reviews, Smith wrote to him in a spirit of solidarity: she hoped the negative comments in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* "raise the indignation of every honest or liberal mind" (Clemit, 38).

[95] Polwhele, *Unsex'd Females*, 10-11

[96] Pascoe, "Female Botanists," 199, 200.

[97] Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, a poem. In two parts. Part I. Containing the economy of vegetation. Part II. The loves of the plants. With philosophical notes.* (London, 1799), Vol. II, 7.

[98] In the next chapter, we will see Byron's ironic self-criticism, in *Beppo*, for producing overly "easy" reading.

[99] The poem appeared in the second volume of the eighth edition of *Elegiac Sonnets*, in 1797. The notes appeared in the back pages of the volume. Poem LXIII, "The gossamer" is followed by this note:

> The web, charged with innumerable globules of bright dew, that is frequently on heaths and commons in autumnal mornings, can hardly have escaped the observation of any lover of nature—The slender web of the field spider is again alluded to in Sonnet 77.

(Smith, *Poems*, 66.) The note serves to reinforce the image of the poet as a solitary wanderer and "lover of nature" and to encourage her readers to become lovers of nature and keen observers, too. Poem LXXIX, "To the goddess of botany" is appended by a very long note, in which Smith quotes and implicitly compares herself to, and comments on the botanical interest of, Milton, Shakespeare, and Rousseau.

[100] Quoted in Richard Macksey's Foreword to *Paratexts*, xvii.

"A Nameless Sort of Person": Byron's Authorial Self

> Man's a strange animal and makes strange use
> Of his own nature and the various arts,
> And likes particularly to produce
> Some new experiment to show his parts.
> This is the age of oddities let loose,
> Where different talents find their different marts.
> You'd best begin with truth, and when you've lost your
> Labour, there's a sure market for imposture.
>
> (*Don Juan*, I, 128)
>
> And after all, what is a lie? 'Tis but
> The truth in masquerade.
>
> (*Don Juan*, IX, 37)

"The Real Simon Pure"

In a letter of 1819 to his friend Richard Hoppner, Byron makes a joke about the mobility of his authorial identity as he recounts an anecdote in which an imposter is using his name:

> One of the Ferrarese asked me if I knew 'Lord Byron,' an acquaintance of his *now* at Naples. I told him '*No!*' which was true both ways; for I knew not the impostor, and in the other, no one knows himself. He stared when told that I was 'the real Simon Pure.'[1]

In typical Byronic fashion, this anecdote's significance is slippery with irony. He refers here to several phenomena. One is the fact that his name was pirated as often as his works; impostors were constantly publishing poems under his name, the authorship of which he would then have to deny, in a statement published by Murray, effectually reasserting his legal authorial identity. Byron points, too, in this anecdote, to the differences between one's name, one's identity, and one's self. The authorial name "Lord Byron" is characterized by and attached to the oeuvre written by the man who goes by this name, and to the public identity of famous poet that he performs.[2] But "no one knows himself"—a statement that indicates his consciousness of the gap between the authorial self which can be made legible and the innate self—if there is one—which is supposed to precede representation. Adding one more layer of complexity is the reference to Susannah Centlivre's 1718 play, *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, in which the name "Simon Pure" refers both to a virtuous, honest man of integrity and to his impostor. The name came, over the intervening century, to signify authenticity, but it was authenticity that always had as its dark alternative imposture, hypocrisy, and fiction. Should a man who asserts himself to be "the real Simon Pure" be believed? Byron's assertion that he is "the real Simon pure" may be read as his ironic acknowledgment that he is the split figure Centlivre created in her drama.

Byron's letter goes on:

> —Another asked me if I had *not translated* 'Tasso.' You see what *Fame* is! how *accurate!* how *boundless!* I do n't know how others feel, but I am always the

> lighter and the better looked on when I have got rid of mine; it sits on me like armour on the Lord Mayor's champion; and I got rid of all the husk of literature, and the attendant babble, by answering, that I had not translated Tasso, but a namesake had; and by the blessing of Heaven, I looked so little like a poet, that every body believed me. (151)

His fame—and its node of signification, his authorial name—is here presented as a burdensome costume and as a layer of (mis)representation. Like scandal, fame straddles fact and fiction, muddying the water between. But perhaps fame is not a misrepresentation, which would imply that there were some true self to mistake, as much as it is a mask giving the illusion of legibility—with "the husk of literature, and the attendant babble"—to an emptiness. In this anecdote, we see just one minor example of Byron's ambivalence about his celebrity. His disdain expresses both his resentment and his ironic amusement towards the way his name has become paradoxically both his own and public property. His name designates the identity of an individual, but the name also designates the body of writing and all of the meanings it generates by association in the minds of readers; it is a form of representation like a costume that can be put on or taken off, like the costumes or performed emotions of actors, and yet it is the mark of his authenticity, his originality—qualities which have come, by the early nineteenth century, to be highly valued in authors.

Both of these anecdotes hinge on the act, or state, of credit. As we will see in this chapter, Byron and his audience were both preoccupied with the question of how much to credit representations—of the self, of the factuality, originality, or authenticity of "what is writ." What was at stake was the authenticity of the authorial self, and the authenticity of fiction. In his subtle reading of the Byron family motto, *Crede Byron*, Jerome Christensen argues that the motto is a command that is paradoxically powerless; while "it has the formula of an imperative" it lacks the force of that type of utterance because its "usage is always in allegorical relation to that original inscriptive moment, itself nonidentical with the immediate presence of the person to whom it refers." It is illogical because it "is the order to believe," which is impossible in a liberal society.[3] In spite of the paradox of this motto, Byron came to see belief (his own and his readers' in him)—or, in Coleridge's formulation, the suspension of disbelief—as a condition that permeated the life of an author in the early nineteenth-century, after the crest of the rise of fiction has broken. Byron attempted to demarcate fiction, to define it and keep it from his work and to assert his authenticity but came to see, more reluctantly than Sterne, his authorship as a grand, jesting performance, and his authorial self as a guise, as a shape-shifting body, as an actor, and as a Humean miscellany—of sensation, memory, and feeling—that would probably benefit from some backgammon, as this piece of *disjecta membra* attests:

> I would to Heaven that I were so much Clay
> As I am blood—bone—marrow, passion—feeling—
> Because at least the past were past away—[4]

* * *

By juxtaposing his practices of authorial self with those of Haywood, Sterne, and Smith before him, I hope to approach Byron's authorial self from angles which haven't all been considered together, and to view his practices in several contexts which helped to shape them. One of these is the development of novelistic fictionality, especially during the second half of the eighteenth century, away from scandal narratives with their keys to real people and toward verisimilitude; as Catherine Gallagher explains, "the widespread acceptance of verisimilitude as a form of truth, rather than a form of lying, founded the novel as a genre (McKeon 2002). It also created the category of fiction."[5] Another development, beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, was of the author-function whereby the author became "the principle of a certain unity of writing" and, as I have quoted above:

> a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short by which on impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction.[6]

A third context is the evolution of fictional characters and how to read them; Deidre Lynch explains that during the latter half of the eighteenth century, "people used characters… to renegotiate social relations in their changed, commercialized world, to derive new kinds of pleasure from the changes, to render their property truly private, to cope with the embarrassment of riches." Writers, in turn, adopted strategies "to make the character the center of their stories and the source of stories' affective hold."[7] Other backgrounds will be those of the previous chapters: the shift in ideas about personal identity to one of personality and the commodification of autobiography and of celebrities. I will also be considering Byron's participation in the novelization of poetic genres. My chapter will focus on the years (roughly 1817-1822) of Byron's transition from famous, adored, melancholic and heroic to scandalized and satirical—the years during which he moved from the character of Childe Harold through Manfred to Beppo and Don Juan, shifting his author-character accordingly.

By the time Byron entered the scene as a literary celebrity, much had changed in the cultural terrain that shaped the reading public's expectations of authors. When Haywood and Sterne wrote, the expectations for an authorial integrity and authenticity of self were just forming, against the backdrop of philosophical and cultural anxieties about the mutability and groundlessness of personal identity. But by the time of Smith and Byron, the popularization and permeation of Lockean ideas, the commercialization of literature, and the rise of novelistic fiction were encouraging authorial assertions of proprietorship, authenticity, and a strong moral grounding. Literary characters took on psychological depth. Autobiography, which "was first conceptualized as a genre toward the end of the eighteenth century," had become a hot commodity, and reassured its readers that "an infinitely varied but unified self exists, and that writing and reading autobiography is morally and aesthetically rewarding."[8] Lyric poetry, due in large part to the writings of Charlotte Smith, had come to be seen as the self-expression of an authentic author. Byron, of course, insisted on displaying how blurred the division between authentic and performative self really is. We might recall here, by way of contrast, Coleridge's reaction to the free circulation of his name, his *Biographia Literaria*, in which he attempts defensively to pin his name to a significance that derives

from his own reading and writing—not from what others would wrongly read into or project upon it.

The Author as Fictional Character

While Byron experimented with representations of an integral, fated, spiritualized self, he would not make the assertions of authenticity or unified narrative growth that Coleridge and Wordsworth would make. His self-representations are always semi-fictional figures—performances—or empty unknowns, nobodies. Let's begin by looking at his farewell to Childe Harold, the character that brought him fame, in the context of how the public had learned to read fictional characters. Over the course of the eighteenth century, as Catherine Gallagher and Deidre Lynch have argued, the reading public came to understand and to use the nonreality and emptiness of characters. In fact, writes Gallagher, "the fact that 'le personage… n'est personne' was thought to be precisely what made him or her magnetic."[9] She argues that:

> Characters' peculiar affective force… is generated by the mutual implication of their unreal knowability and their apparent depth, the link between their real nonexistence and the reader's experience of them as deeply and impossibly familiar. Because we know their accessibility means fictionality, we are inclined to surrender to the other side of their double impact: their seductive familiarity, immediacy, and intimacy. (356)

In part, this was because fiction "provided its readers a seemingly free space in which to temporarily indulge imaginative play" and zero-stakes speculation (347). British culture, beginning in the latter half of the eighteenth century, was "fiction-friendly because it encourage[d] disbelief, speculation, and credit" (345). Lynch describes how readers began to use fictional characters in "their endeavors to find themselves as 'individuals' and to escape from their social context."[10] Lord Byron, who consistently blurred the line between his heroes and his authorial self, was keenly aware of the rewards this free speculation could result in for authors who knew how to play the game of self-representation in a way that would make the author as magnetic as his characters. In doing so, Byron seems to be taking advantage of a historical shift in concepts of identity even while adhering to an earlier version—one that is "mutable, assumable, divisible, or actively malleable" rather than "an innate, fixed, determined core."[11] In his authorial-self-representations, Byron seems consistently to employ the empty magnetism of characters rather than the innate personality as a model of self, even as he counts on his readers' belief in the authentic, proper self of Byron. He counts on his readers' desire to fill that emptiness with their belief in the essence of Byron. Jerome Christensen succinctly describes this process of the mystification of the authorial name: "book as fetish, fetish as magical vehicle to author's spirit, author's spirit as portent of celestial property rights."[12]

Childe Harold IV and its apparatus exemplify this process even as they erode the idea of the essential self of the author. Just as Sterne and Smith have done before him, Byron inserts a paratext—an epistolary dedication to his longtime friend John Cam Hobhouse—in the midst of the work, before Canto IV.[13] Here is the beginning of the paragraph in which Byron makes the performative assertion that unifies character and author:

> With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person.[14]

The rhetorical nature of the separation between character and author is explicitly exposed, and so is dispelled. Let us recall William Warner's description of Western culture's "credo about realistic representation": "it is possible to develop systems for representing what exists that have an autonomy, self-evidence, and presence to the spectator analogous to that ascribed to life itself; in other words, that it is possible to have representation that is free of rhetoric."[15] In his perforation of the boundaries between author, narrator, and character—a permeability that reaches its height in *Don Juan*—Byron does his best to demystify this credo. But if the fictiveness of the separation is so explicit, what is the sense of keeping up the game by sometimes "slightly" keeping character and author distinct? And who makes the distinction: the author or the reader? If the author makes it, hasn't the reader just been instructed to see right through it? The seemingly neat delineation is not so neat for other reasons as well. The concept of the author is qualified by the final phrase "speaking in his own person," which suggests that the author has been all along speaking in the person of Childe Harold, or that the author's "own person" is also like a mask or character that can be spoken in or through. Byron knew that his readers knew that they were reading through his characters to get at him—that ungraspable essence of the celebrity. And these sentences suggest that he knew, beyond what many of them knew, that by writing himself as a character—who could be conceived of as "the author speaking in his own person"—he made his authorial self available as an empty, magnetic outline for his readers to fill in with their desires. He also knew that his rhetorical skill could construct a character, including his own, in their minds.

However, like Haywood, Sterne, and Smith before him, he knows when and how to cajole his readers into believing in both his fiction and in their imaginative power. The dedication goes on:

> The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's 'Citizen of the World', whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined, that I had drawn a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so.[16]

In a flattering gesture of generosity, he claims he has given in to the public's refusal to see the distinction he has drawn between author and character.

He next addresses the fact that this canto will be the last, and that the cessation of a work implies the end of the author as he was: "the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors" (146-7). In sum, this brief paragraph accomplishes so many things: it owns that the distinction between author and character is rhetorical, and seems to offer this ownership to the readers even as it preserves the author's proprietorship; it sketches

the interior life of the author as a character ("anxiety," "disappointment"); and it empties that interior, making the author a condition of the text's being-written and a phantasm of "reputation" dependent upon the readers' reception of his works, to become common property as a myth in readers' imaginations. Byron makes himself mythical in the sense that he is created, imagined, by his believers. And he is mythical in his status as an authentic, self-expressive, fickle genius writing from his own passion, whom everyone wants to read and to know.[17] However, one could also see the author as akin to Diderot's actor—less a true feeler than a vessel for representations that cease to be his own when the performance is over.

One thing that Byron knew about the readers of *Childe Harold* IV was that they were ready to lose faith in him as a worship-worthy celebrity author because of the personal and sexual scandals staining his character. Between 1812 and 1815, "the years of fame" which were launched by *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* I, in the midst of his life as a society favorite, he had a highly-publicized affair with the married Lady Caroline Lamb, who took her revenge on Byron for his ultimate rejection by publishing a scandalous novel (in the old mode) with thinly veiled, scathing portraits of Byron and other figures in their circle. During the year of 1815-1816, he courted, married, and mysteriously but publicly scandalized Annabella Milbanke, who teamed up with powerful lawyers to attain a formal separation from him, after which rumours circulated about his abuse of her, his infidelity, his incest with his half-sister Augusta Leigh, and his practice of sodomy. In debt and with a reputation corroded by scandal, he exiled himself, and spent the rest of his days in Italy and Greece. And yet, Canto III of *Childe Harold*, published late in 1816, had been well-received. With Canto IV, Byron wanted to win back his adoring readers and chose the most seductive route of continuing to remake his author self as a character, and by displacing—by acting the part of—his best loved hero in the process. Towards the end of Canto IV, Childe Harold ceases to exist as a literary character:

> But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
> The being who upheld it through the past?
> Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
> He is no more—these breathings are his last;
> His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
> And he himself as nothing:—if he was
> Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
> With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
> His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass. (195)

The transiency of life "could be class'd" with the transiency of an image, or of a fiction. This is not just a sentimental metaphor, however, for while he erases his hero, the author plays with the ontological confusion of literary characters early nineteenth-century readers are supposed to know how to sort out.[18] The "being" is no more, except that he still *is* textually speaking; he is not quite nothing but is "*as* nothing." As nothing, as a literary character, he can be filled with the reader's desires, sympathies, and identifications. But Byron pretends not to let him slip into the nothingness of textuality yet; the dashes act as breathy hesitations, the last breathings of a living being before he

becomes "a phantasy." Byron wants his readers to grieve for the hero as they would for an individual who lived and suffered, and who had enough substance to have a shadow, which then must "fade away" into abstraction.

But, of course, because this is Byron, the leave-taking of his hero is excessive. Two later stanzas insist with the drumbeat of their pronouns on both the oneness of and the distinction between hero and author:

> But I forget.—My pilgrim's shrine is won,
> And he and I must part,—so let it be,—

(This parting might be a dividing, or a leave-taking they make together, both of which possibilities are played out in the following stanzas.)

> His task and mine alike are nearly done;
> Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
> The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
> And from the Alban Mount we now behold
> Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we
> Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
> Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine roll'd
>
> Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
> Long, though not very many, since have done
> Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
> Have left us nearly where we had begun:
> Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
> We have had our reward—and it is here;
> That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
> And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
> As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.
>
> Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling place,
> With one fair Spirit for my minister,
> That I might all forget the human race,
> And, hating no one, love but only her![19]

Stanza 177 (the last quoted) begins with an abrupt shift to the I, who, through a process of melding with the fictional Childe Harold, has become the main character of the remainder of the lines. At times, the author gives his character life, sharing with him "our mortal race"; at others, he borrows from his character the emptiness of fictionality, as when he wishes for "no man to trouble what is clear."

There are yet more erasures and displacements to take place before the poem ends. In the final lines, the author dwindles with the cessation of writing, displaced by text and by what remains in the readers' imaginations:

> …what is writ, is writ,—
> Would it were worthier! but I am not now
> That which I have been—and my visions flit
> Less palpably before me—and the glow

Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain! (201)

Following the moving chiasmus of "what is writ, is writ" the next lines here seem to have fairly conventional implications: inspiration, "the glow/ Which in my spirit dwelt," has ebbed and so the poem should end; the writing of this poem has changed the author. But there is also the sense that the death of the author entwines with the writing of the poem; the arresting enjambment of "I am not now / that which I have been" effects the death of the author with his hero and his text, and then moves, in a slightly lower register to the continuing history of the individual author. The glow that made him an author is "fluttering, faint, and low." The author—or this version of the author—only *is* when writing. This suggestion is taken even further by the erasure of the author in Stanza 186, wherein only "you," reader, and "the Pilgrim"—the fictional character—are left. And Childe Harold only lives on in the reader's memory as "a thought which once was his," "a single recollection" and "the moral of his strain," all of which are left in the reader's hands. Post-fame, and post-scandal, like Haywood, Sterne, and Smith before him, Byron sets about an authorial-self-transformation; he takes on a new guise that is in part responsive to his audience's shifting taste. He also gives some of the substance of his authorial existence over to the readers' imaginations, memories, associations, and interpretations.

Fiction, A "Life," and *Disjecta Membra*

What did it mean to Byron to become a fictional character in his readers' collective imagination? We can begin to answer this question by looking at Byron's ideas about fiction and by considering their ramifications for his work and practice of authorial self. While he was writing *Manfred*, during 1817, Byron frequently mentioned in letters to Murray his desire to write something in prose, but was undecided about which genre to use for this urge: novel, memoir, or essay.[20] The crux of the problem in deciding seems to have been the degree of fictionality to employ. Several comments he made about fiction suggest that the word, for him, implied groundlessness, imposture, or fantasy. He often insisted on the factual basis, and therefore validity, of the stories, characters, and events in his poems. He writes in a letter of 1817 to Murray: "I hate things *all fiction*; and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no great associations to me: but *Pierre* has. There should always be some foundation of fact for the most airy fabric, and pure invention is but the talent of a liar."[21] This is an intriguing statement for a few reasons. Before looking into these, however, let us consider several contexts.

Byron wrote this letter while in Venice, and names three characters whose stories take place in Venice. *Pierre* was the vengeful and valiant conspirator against corruption, loyal friend, and soldier in Thomas Otway's *Venice Preserved*, a tragedy that was performed and reprinted many times between its first performance in 1682 and the 1830s. The character triad Byron names has appeared in another form in his writing—stanza 4 of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* IV—where it has a different significance. Whereas in the letter, Pierre takes priority over "the Merchant" or "the Moor," for his "associations," in *Childe Harold* all three characters have equal value as figures immortalized by literature. Compared to "the dogeless city's vanish'd sway":

> Ours is a trophy which will not decay
> With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
> And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
> The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
> For us repeopled were the solitary shore.[22]

The distinction he makes in the letter is based on referentiality; while Othello and Shylock have no "association" with current or historical events, Pierre was written into a play with contemporary references and political allusions (although these were not of Byron's contemporaneity). Byron gives Pierre more credit because of this greater degree of referentiality, while the Shakespeare characters are devalued in comparison, because of their greater degree of fictionality.

This is a strange evaluation coming from an early-nineteenth-century author of fictions. It is a well-known idiosyncracy of Byron's that he claimed to write only about places he had actually been, and his interest in historical fiction was directly influenced by the novels of Walter Scott, many of whose fictions were anchored in factual events.[23] While Byron is concerned here with drama and poetry, his writings in these genres may be considered novelized, or at least heavily influenced by the developments in the novel genre.[24] His assertions about fiction are therefore interesting, even anachronistic, in light of what Catherine Gallagher has demonstrated about the history of the meaning of fiction: "Because the novel defined itself against the scandalous libel, it used fiction as the diacritical mark of its differentiation, requiring that the concept of fiction take on greater clarity and definition" in terms of its referentiality.[25] She argues that: "The founding claim of the form, therefore, was a nonreferentiality that could be seen as a greater referentiality" (341). Furthermore, Scott's innovations in the form could have provided Byron, at this point, with a perfect model for his experiment. As Ian Duncan puts it, Scott's first novel, *Waverley*, published in 1814 "designat[ed] fiction as the mode in which we imaginatively inhabit the present."[26] Fiction was no longer a false other realm of romance.

Byron, however, was not yet ready to accept this Humean vision. As he tossed about in Venice, in the feverish first year of his exile, intent on shifting his authorial style and version of self, he turned to generic experimentation just as Haywood, Sterne, and Smith had done before him in their (sometimes ironic) attempts to tamp down scandal. But Byron's rigid, and perhaps anachronistic, ideas about fiction pointed him away from novel-writing toward self-writing or semi-fictional travel-writing. He wrote to Murray:

> If I write, I think of trying prose, but I dread introducing living people, or applications which might be made to living people. Perhaps one day or other I may attempt some work of fancy in prose descriptive of Italian manners and of human passions; but at present I am preoccupied.[27]

His "dread" can be understood in two ways: as a dread of the particularized reference to his own scandals, which he would be unable to avoid making; or as a dread of how his introduction of "living people" will be received—as outrageous scandal. Byron seems to equate on the one hand the specified referentiality of historical fiction with that of allusive satire or scandal and, on the other hand, nonreferentiality with lying, in spite of the fact that novelists and readers had, over the preceding six or so decades, developed a more sophisticated sense of these distinctions: "The claims to truth and fiction were not in contradiction with each other; practitioners understood that the novel's general applicability depended on the overt fictitiousness of its particulars, since taking examples from among real people would only confuse the issue of reference."[28] We don't have a clear sense of what Byron thought about the fictionality of works like *Tom Jones* or Smollett's novels, of which he was fond. Were these "airy fabrics" to him? What about Don Juan, a figure of legend? Byron's own compositions, and his choice of heroes and events suggest a desire to hark back to something like the scandal narratives based on real people, of the early eighteenth century, if not for the dangers that might lurk under those jests. Alternatively, he seems to want to invent, like Scott, historical fiction, fiction with "associations." In light of his epistolary comments, Byron seems naïve about literary history, lumping together plausible but nonreferential stories with "airy fabrics" even though, as Gallagher points out, "…early novels stressed their departure from plausible narratives with referential assumptions, not from improbable fantasies" (345). What are we to make of this improbable naivete? What was at stake in Byron's opinions about the meaning of fiction?[29]

When we consider several Byronic inclinations or attitudes together, an explanation begins to emerge. He had a tendency toward autobiography; "*all* fiction" was a lie; his authorial self was theatrical; he often expressed the idea that we cannot know ourselves; he was a reader of Hume, who posited a self that was authenticated by the imagination, like a fiction. He wrote the sentence "I hate things *all* fiction" in April of 1817, several months before he began composing *Childe Harold* IV. This chronology is significant because he may have been working through his attitudes toward fictionality in general, and the fictionality of his authorial self, during the composition of Canto IV; it also suggests that during 1817 his ideas about fictionality were complex and contradictory, and were closely tied to the divergent forms of self-representation he employed in *Childe Harold*, *Manfred*, and *Beppo*. It is possible that his negative attitude toward fiction was a defensive response to his own skeptical belief that his authorial self was nothing but a fictional character, and that the self more generally is constructed like a text—written and read and imbued with meanings that are contingent on context—or like an actor's performance, self-abnegating and oriented outward towards the audience.[30] His contradictory attitudes toward fiction, and his resistance to writing (becoming?) an "airy fabric" manifest in the simultaneous composition of a prose memoir

(autobiography), *Beppo* and the first cantos of *Don Juan*, and his dramas, *Manfred* (a form of autobiography) and *Marino Faliero* (historical dramatization, if not fiction).

Within a few months of these letters, he begins seriously to write a memoir, in spite of the danger of its referentiality. But he exhorts Murray and Moore not to publish it until he is dead. When he and Murray discuss the proposed memoir, Byron is fully aware of the possibilities Claire Tuite points to in "the commodification of scandal [which] could […] involve the sacrifice of social reputation in the form of a speculative risk, venture, or gamble that could find a return in sales. It could also involve a deferral of reputation that is then capitalized through literary posterity."[31] Either way, he knows how much money it would bring in:

> You tell me to 'take care of myself;'—faith, and I will. I won't be posthumous yet, if I can help it. Notwithstanding, only think what a 'Life and Adventures,' while I am in full scandal, would be worth, together with the 'membra' of my writing-desk, the sixteen beginnings of poems never to be finished![32]

Are the echoes of Sternean performance apparent enough? In this letter (written a week after that proclaiming his hatred of "things *all* fiction"), Byron promotes, by seeming ironically resigned to, the commodification of his author self and the public appetite for scandal—still hot despite the popularity of domestic, sentimental, moral, fiction. Tristram Shandy, at his writing desk with his spurting pen, is present too in the pun on the eroticization of his celebrity image. Not only would his "Life and Adventures"—not far removed from, and more active than a "Life and Opinions"—sell well, but so would the "membra" of his writing desk. This Latin word came into this particular usage in English—the scattered parts of an oeuvre—by way of Horace, who refers to the "disjecti membra poetae."[33] As Byron well knew, the primary meaning of this word's English descendent, *member*, is *penis*, and more generally, bodily limb. Byron's use of this word, then, brings into play the eroticization of his author-self as a public image whose virility in both life and work, in both body and oeuvre, is widely known. Sterne and Byron both exploited their sexualized public images through self-representation within their works, because they knew these versions of transgressive (adulterous) virility excited as they scandalized, and helped to sell books by offering the illusion of intimacy with the membra of the author. In an earlier letter, he draws a similar figure:

> I believe that *prose* is, after all, the most reputable; for certes, if one could foresee—but I won't go on—that is, with this sentence; but poetry is, I fear, incurable. God help me! if I proceed in this scribbling, I shall have frittered away my mind before I am thirty; but it is at times a real relief to me.[34]

Here, poetry is associated with bodily or psychological function or affliction. In either sense, poetry is more spontaneous and subject to the force of appetite than prose, which is perhaps why prose—more controlled and less erotic—is more reputable, (a sentiment that echoes that of Anne Elliot in Austen's just-published *Persuasion*).[35] A great part of Byron's appeal, of course, was the idea of his burning, eroticized poetic inspiration, a scandalous version of uncontrolled self he did much to promote and control.

But when Murray tells Byron how much the dedicatory epistle to Hobhouse of *Childe Harold IV* has been liked, and "speak[s] of prose," and even though he has already

written many pages of a memoir, Byron proposes a de-eroticized, non-scandalous literary life:

> I think of writing (for your full edition) some Memoirs of my life, to prefix them, upon the same model (though far enough, I fear, from reaching it) of Gifford, Hume, &c.; and this without any intention of making disclosures, or remarks upon living people, which would be unpleasant to them: but I think it might be done, and well done. However, this is to be considered. I have *materials* in plenty, but the greater part of them could not be used by *me*, nor for these hundred years to come. However, there is enough without these, and merely as a literary man, to make a preface for such an edition as you meditate. But this is by-the-way: I have not made up my mind. (133, From a letter of July 10, 1818)

If he is to avoid writing a "Life and Adventures" that might offend "living people" by its disclosures—if he is to avoid writing scandal—he must pose "merely as a literary man" (like Coleridge in his *Biographia Literaria*).[36] Hume's autobiography, in its spareness and rectitude, achieves this posture, even if many readers knew it to be a posture. Byron knows, however, that he can never be for his public merely a literary man; everything else in his life and adventures is a part of the character known as Lord Byron.

In the end, for Byron, the memoir turns out to be the contradictory product of conflicting pressures. A month later (while he is composing *Childe Harold* IV), he writes to Murray:

> You may go on with your edition, without calculating on the Memoir, which I shall not publish at present. It is nearly finished, but will be too long; and there are so many things, which, out of regard to the living, cannot be mentioned, that I have written with too much detail of that which interested me least; so that my autobiographical Essay would resemble the tragedy of Hamlet at the country theatre, recited 'with the part of Hamlet left out by particular desire.' I shall keep it among my papers; it will be a kind of guide-post in case of death, and prevent some of the lies which would otherwise be told, and destroy some of which have been told already. …And when finished, although it might do a good deal for you at the time, I am not sure that it would serve any good purpose in the end either, as it is full of many passions and prejudices, of which it has been impossible for me to keep clear:—I have not the patience. (135, Aug. 26, 1818)

We have here a paradoxical representation of a text we can never interpret or know for ourselves, since it was burned by Murray, Moore, and Hobhouse soon after Byron's death. On the one hand, as Byron represents it, the Memoir lacked a main character. On the other hand, it was too "full of passions and prejudices" which forced their way in like the spots of ink from Tristram's spurting pen, the disjecta membra of the authentic personality of Byron the man. It was merely a "guide-post" amidst the web of lies imposed upon the "true" life and adventures of a character named Byron. If "*all* fiction," for Byron, involves a lack of referentiality to actual historical events, people, or objects, then his "Life" in this essay, has become close to fiction. In the attempt to be scandal-free, has he constructed an airy fabric of a life? Although its treatment by Moore, Murray, and Hobhouse would suggest that it was not exactly airy, these are the

implications of his description of it as a performance of *Hamlet* with no Hamlet, the construction of a "Life" with no subject.

Byron's difficulty with the memoir genre speaks to the necessarily fragmentary nature of any representation of a life—as Sterne ironically demonstrated. Byron's desire to write a "full" life, one without an empty center, is related to his disdain for fiction and his desire to base all of his "stories" on actual occurrences in actual places. But he had trouble finding the middle way between stripped down and all-inclusive Shandean Life; between all the facts and "*all* fiction," which was no better than imposture. His frustration may also express his anxiety about the novelization of all literary forms. Byron intuited but was just on the cusp of embracing this process in which other genres:

> become more free and flexible, their language renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia and the 'novelistic' layers of literary language, they become dialogized, permeated with laughter, irony, humor, elements of self-parody and finally—this is the most important thing—the novel inserts itself into these other genres as an indeterminacy, a certain semantic openendedness, a living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality (the openended present).[37]

Byron's conflicted attitude toward fiction and his interest in "trying prose" reflect his desire for a writing that is in "living contact" with reality. He wants to work with the greater realism of novels but "dread[s] introducing living people" and worries about the possibility that fiction is "pure invention," "the talent of a liar." We can see, before *Don Juan*, these attitudes toward genre taking shape in Byron's experiments with self-writing and entwining with his recognition and cultivation of an indeterminate authorial self. In other words, a novelization of the author comes about with a novelization of literature in general.

When we take a wider scope, and consider Byron's conflicted attitudes toward fiction and toward his own self-representation in the context of the larger cultural forces at play in the realm of personal identity, they begin to make sense as a reaction and as an argument. The early- and mid-eighteenth-century masquerade-loving, newly commercial society of "the *ancién regime* of identity," in Wahrman's phrase, was characterized by "playfulness and… insubstantiality" of identity.[38] The increasing desire of the reading public for their authors and characters to be highly legible and bounded identities, which arises during the second half of the century, seems to stem from the flip side of this playfulness: anxiety. By the 1790s, "identity became personal, interiorized, essential, even innate. It was made synonymous with self. …Identity [was] that quintessential uniqueness that separates a person from all others" (276). Byron's conflicted attitude about fiction expresses his Humean skepticism of this notion.

Byron's younger contemporary, John Keats, also posited an authorial (poetic) self that differed significantly from this idea of a personal essence. Keats described "the poetical character"—in contrast to the "Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime"—as a receptive emptiness and as a "camelion": "it is not itself—it has no self—it is everything and nothing—It has no character— …A Poet is… is continually in for and filling some other Body. [Others] have about them an unchangeable attribute. The poet has none; no identity."[39] Byron's concept of authorial self (and of what he called his "mobility")

differed from Keats's in its social orientation and in its dependence on the conventions and theatrics of everyday life. He knew that as an author-self, his assertions of individual uniqueness were part of a performance and of a semi-fictional (scandalous) story that existed in the space between publishing and reading, public and private. He was not only "in for and filling other bodies" but others were filling the figure of "Lord Byron" with their own imaginative projections. He knew that as an author he was a commodity and a construct of an innate self designated by his famous name and his texts. And he knew that as an imaginary construct, like a fictional character, and as a performer, like an actor, he was as a posturing, performing, and prostituted identity. Keats's poetical character, characterized by emptiness, would have been seen by Byron as a mystification as pompous as Wordsworth's. Like Haywood's, Sterne's, and Smith's, Byron's recognition of his demystified authorial self was one of both ironic acceptance and resentful defiance—an ambivalence that manifests in the divergent representations of self he created during these years and their different degrees of "living contact with contemporary reality": the dramatic, literary, other-worldly Manfred and the urbane, ironic, self-consciously fictive narrators of *Beppo* and *Don Juan*.

"A Horror of the Stage"

One of the iconoclastic and genre-blending innovations of Byron and other writers of the Romantic period was the drama that was not meant for the stage and was even unperformable. Along with Shelley, Byron was interested in writing "lyrical drama," works for the "mental theater."[40] Part of this innovative energy came from the Romantics' desire to create "what Friedrich Schlegel called a 'progressive' program for integrating poetry with philosophy, criticism, and manners" and to radically recreate old genres.[41] Between 1818 and 1822, Byron wrote three historically based dramas, all of which he insisted not be performed. When he sent a version of *Manfred*, the autobiographical and supernatural drama, to Murray in March of 1817, he claimed to have "composed it with a *horror* of the stage."[42] Why horror?

Some pragmatic reasons may be enough to explain it. In June of 1815, Byron had become a member of the subcommittee that ran Drury Lane Theatre. He held this position for a full season, which made him "more knowing" and "more cynical" about the possibilities for poetic dramatic productions in London.[43] Alan Richardson explains the declining reputation of the stage in London:

> Both Drury Lane and Covent Garden were widely viewed as failing in their mission to guarantee the health of what was variously called 'legitimate', 'regular', or 'national' drama. One problem inhered in the design of the theatres themselves: in an effort to increase profits, theatre managers had insisted on an absurdly enlarged house, and many spectators simply could not hear the actors' spoken lines. (134)

This resulted in the use of special effects, overacting, and "ranting," which would not have served Byron's dramas well (134).[44] Byron had expressed a desire to reform the stage, but did not want to write for it.

In the case of *Manfred*, perhaps he knew that if performed, mannerism would become burlesque. Let us consider the rest of the letter in which he expresses his "horror

of the stage." After complaining that it is "too much in my old style," he says that he wrote it:

> with a view to render the thought of [performing] it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representation.
>
> I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must leave off; but what could I do? Without exertion of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagination and reality.[45]

In this letter, then, Byron acknowledges his mannerism (which is a kind of opposite mannerism of the stage) and expresses his "repugnance" of the idea of making "a representation" of his textual representation. It is as if an over-acted stage representation would make grotesque the over-written text.

In the semi-public letters to Murray, Byron consistently disparages *Manfred*, an attitude that can be read as a defensive measure against attacks on a work that he knows will be read as personal, with Manfred the mask of ventriloquist Byron. He claims, above, a therapeutic function for its composition. But he also defends it for its organic originality. He says of the ending, which he later rewrote:

> The Third Act is certainly damned bad, and, like the Archbishop of Grenada's homily (which savoured of the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which it was written. It must on *no account* be published in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I have no chance of making any thing out of it. I would not have it published as it is on any account. The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil possessed me. (73, April 14, 1817)

(Byron's paratextual, and idiomatic, references to himself as the "devil" in the case of *Manfred* are particularly funny, because of the way the verse drama aligns Manfred with Milton's Satan through quotation and with the story of Faust, which he claims not to know.) He represents the writing process as one of "impulse," of translation of a bodily state, and as psychological "possession," with the result that the text is a piece of *disjecta membra*, containing "dregs" of his fever. The implicit argument here is that the author is an individual embodied personality that expresses itself originally, authentically, with immediacy, in the form of literature. And yet the play is mannered, the author bedeviled.

The play meets mixed reviews that evince the confusion readers felt about how to categorize it. Francis Jeffrey writes in the *Edinburgh Review*, that "this piece is properly entitled a dramatic Poem—for it is merely poetical, and is not at all a drama or play in the modern acceptation of the term. It has no action; no plot—and no characters; Manfred merely muses and suffers from the beginning to the end."[46] Jeffrey mentions an essay that compares *Manfred* with Christopher Marlow's *Dr. Faustus* and defends the originality of *Manfred*. Byron, in response, becomes histrionically sincere about the work's originality:

> The Edinburgh Review… is very kind about Manfred, and defends its originality, which I did not know that any body had attacked. I *never read*, and do not know that I ever saw the 'Faustus of Marlow,' and had, and have, no dramatic works by me in English, except the recent things you sent me; but I heard Mr. Lewis

> translate verbally some scenes of *Goethe's Faust* (which were, some good and some bad) last summer—which is all I know of the history of that magical personage.[47]

The play had been reviewed positively by Goethe, who suggested that the play was at once very particularly autobiographical *and* that it was influenced by his own recently published *Faust*: "This singular intellectual poet has taken my *Faustus* to himself, and… has made use of the impelling principles in his own way, for his own purposes, so that no one of them remains the same."[48] Byron insistently denies the influence, almost as if he has been accused of plagiarism:

> As to the 'Faustus of Marlow,' I never read, never saw, nor heard of it—at least, thought of it, except that I think Mr. Gifford mentioned, in a note of his which you sent me, something about the catastrophe; but not as having any thing to do with mine, which may or may not resemble it, for anything I know. […] I deny Marlow and his progeny [Goethe?], and beg that you [Murray] will do the same.[49]

These claims of literary ignorance, from the man who made a list of thousands of texts in all genres which he had read while still in school, is hard to believe. Even if it were true, the point here is that he makes the claim of pure originality, uninfluenced by the writings of others, seemingly without irony. Indeed, Byron's defensive hyperventilation sounds quite a bit like Coleridge's self-defense against the same charge, which was recent news because of the just-published *Biographia Literaria*. Coleridge had written:

> In this instance [of his ideas resembling those from Schelling's 1797 *Natur-Philosophie*], as in the dramatic lectures of Schlegel to which I have before alluded, from the same motive of self-defence against the charge of plagiarism, many of the most striking resemblances, indeed all of the main and fundamental ideas, were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a single page of the German Philosopher; and I might indeed affirm with truth, before the more important works of Schelling had been written, or at least made public.[50]

Coleridge, like Byron, denies having seen the work he has been accused of copying. Both writers hesitate, though, in their claims of complete independence: Coleridge wrote "at least" before the works of Schelling had been *made public*, and Byron had "at least" never *thought* of Goethe's verse drama. Neither will name the author he has supposedly copied. As if in compensation for this hesitation, Byron develops the claim of independence further by describing, as Coleridge had done, the organic, personal origins of the work:

> as to the germs of Manfred, they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh (part of which you saw) when I went over first the Dent de Jaman, and then the Wengen or Wengeberg Alp and Sheideck, and made the giro of the Jungfrau, Shreckhorn, &c. &c. shortly before I left Switzerland. I have the whole scene of Manfred before me as if it was but yesterday, and could point it out, spot by spot, torrent and all.[51]

This insistence on the fact- and experience-based authenticity of the work is consistent with Byron's disdain for things "all fiction" and casts the work in autobiographical terms as a facet in the character and authorial self of Byron.

When he defends the originality of his conceptions and his lack of knowledge of any version of the story of Dr. Faustus, he behaves like those authors—Coleridge, for example—I have been contrasting with the scandalous figures of this study. He asserts his authenticity, his organic originality, his proprietorship. Was *Manfred* a sincere, vatic expression of high Romanticism, an attempt to escape irony? Did Byron simply want it to be read that way, and then eventually turn away from this pose as false? The excessiveness of the paratextual detail (in this letter and the Journal) and its defensive tone bring to mind Smith's sonnet footnotes, heavy with botanical, literary, personal, and historical reference, because of the way these paratexts perform the authenticity of the author as a feeling, experiencing, bodily individual. As in Smith's textual complex, however, I think that we can see in the case of *Manfred* the text and paratext working together in ironic dialogue to undermine the very myth of authorial originality they seem actively to represent. Byron's insistence that the play cannot be performed can be read as an acknowledgment of the threat that performance, with its inherent intersubjectivity and its public nature, might erode the myth of the original, integral self, or make a joke of it. But even if we read *Manfred* as an attempt to represent an original self uncontaminated by too many layers of representation, the text itself would seem to arrive at the recognition of the tenuousness of the myth of the original authorial self, which was liable to be blown away by a mere whisper of irony, or by an "abstracted" performance by an actor. I read the verse drama as an assertion, heavily qualified by irony, of freedom from the imposing fictions of others on Byron's own self-construction and –performance. This is not the same as an assertion of originality or of psychological freedom from worn out obsessions, but is specifically about the fact of being a famous author, embodying the author-function, existing as a fictional character in the minds of his readers, feeling prostituted to their desires, and engaging an ironized fantasy of freedom from those desires.

Byron's "horror of the stage" is not just a pragmatic disdain for the state of London theater, but is a direct reaction to the fame he loved and hated. Let us consider one of Manfred's closing speeches, with the assumption that Byron expected the play to be read autobiographically and as semi-fictionalized self-expression. Manfred is arguing with the Spirit who would impose its version of death on him; he wants to die in his own way. It is tempting to interpret the Spirit as the voice of "the world" who imposes its characterization, its definition, on the recently scandalized Byron. Manfred says:

> I do defy ye,--though I feel my soul
> Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
> Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
> To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
> To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
> Shall be ta'en limb by limb.[52]

(*Disjecta membra*.) The assertion of extreme self-sufficiency and originality goes on:

> Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
> Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
> What I have done is done; I bear within
> A torture which could nothing gain from thine:

The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without,
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours! (313)

Manfred's act of radical self-assertion ironically is his suicide. He claims complete self-creation as an act of resistance to those who would impose a final form on him, and is ironically forced to destroy himself so as not to be shaped by another. Even the "immortal mind" is, unlike Coleridge's "I AM," completely autonomous and alienated. But the performance of such extreme self-alienation for a Byronic self is unrealistic, even an imposture. This speech may be read, then, not only as a description of authorial self as a temporary character—as a role—but also as a recognition of the true state of authorial self: the idea of anti-social self-creation, the solipsism of the claim of originality, is a myth. The ironic relation of Byron's letters about *Manfred* to the verse drama proper demonstrate his complete self-consciousness on this topic.

Central to the ironic toppling of this myth is Byron's use of quotation in these lines; the devil that possessed him is of course Milton's Satan. Alan Richardson argues that: "the presence of quotation within these assertions of psychic independence and absolute self-identity discloses the emptiness of Manfred's radically autonomous pose. In *Manfred*, Byron models an asocial, isolated, heroic selfhood of titanic proportions only to underscore its limitations."[53] I would add that the particular selfhood being modeled here is that cultural creation, the author-function, rounded out by emotionally speculative practice of reading fictional character. Thus, *Manfred* is not just about coming to terms with the "limitations" of the Byronic hero, or about Byron's own act of facing himself. It is *not* "in short, a play of personal catharsis."[54] In a touchstone psychological reading, Sperry argues that Byron's confrontation with himself was part of the "exorcism" of the "obsession" with his own offenses and guilt: "In the apparition of the devil we see revealed the power that for some time had alternately served and dominated Byron's poetic character and its compulsive needs—the spirit of guilt and self-recrimination that was a vital part of his Calvinist background and upbringing" (199).[55] Rather than read the emancipation in the drama as purely psychological, I read it in terms of Byron's authorship: the play offers an ironic fantasy of freedom from the shaping force of audience in the theater of the market.

We might remember, here, Haywood's—much less dramatic—act of self-destruction as the Female Spectator. Rather than let her reading public tire of her in that form, or turn away in defiance of the irony of her identity, she took it upon herself to shift

into another shape. Byron, too, has done some public leave-taking of certain authorial guises—most recently that of Childe Harold—and will soon become the "nameless sort of person" who narrates *Beppo*. Byron's friend and biographer Thomas Moore makes several observations about the nature of Byron's self which are interesting in light of these ideas about Byron's acceptance of the mythic nature of an essential, non-performative identity. Moore describes Byron as an "ever-shifting character" with a "perverse fancy… for falsifying his own character, and even imputing to himself faults the most alien to his nature."[56] As we know well, Moore is too generously protective of the posthumous Byron, although he does capture the inevitably theatrical social life of his friend:

> Conscious as he was that, wherever he presented himself, all eyes were fixed on him, and all lips, particularly those of the women, were opened to say 'There he is, that is Lord Byron,'—he necessarily found himself in the situation of an actor obliged to sustain a character, and to render an account, not to others (for about them he gave himself no concern), but to himself, of his every action and word. This occasioned in him a feeling of uneasiness which was obvious to every one. (176)

Moore presents Byron as proud and victimized (like Manfred), but the uneasiness could be interpreted as an effect of losing his sense of self, as if when he's put on stage he becomes, even to himself, a work or performance to be interpreted. Moore, his friend, wanted to present Byron as he thought Byron would want to be represented: self-sufficient, authentic in an inauthentic world, careless of what the world thought—just the posture that *Manfred*, *Beppo*, and *Don Juan*, in their different ways, argue ironically against. Byron's "*horror* of the stage" and ironic defensiveness about literary influence express his ambivalent and anxious recognition that the posture of radical self-sufficiency or solipsism is only an imposture hiding the authorial self's groundlessness, and yet, it is the pose in which his audience wants to believe, the heroic, fictive character in which they invest their desires.

"Scandal's my aversion": Anonymity and Impropriety in *Beppo* and *Don Juan*

During this period of generic experimentation, Byron also played with the mutability of authorial identity. The Byronic self seemed in the public imagination to be as solid as the marble bust Bertel Thorwaldsen carved, which Hobhouse thought a perfect likeness and Byron found all wrong; but the Byronic self could also inhabit different forms, it could shift meanings, it could become unrecognizable for a moment, or a month, which is about the time it took before everyone knew the anonymous author of *Beppo* to be Lord Byron in a new guise. *Beppo* and then, of course, *Don Juan* have been read as Byron's turn against Romanticism, his burlesquing of all of the sacred sublimities of the new, natural, inspired, organic poetics. Jerome McGann, for example, points to the poem as a hinge "in literary history because it announced Byron's critical turn upon his own earlier Romanticism as well as the entire Romantic Movement."[57] Part of Byron's mockery took aim at the new cult of the author as original genius and deep subject. His own conflicted attitude toward performing this figure culminated in *Manfred*, in which the self that scorns society and performance inevitably destroys himself, ceases to be a

self or becomes an alienated, solipsistic "mind." Byron's satiric targets include, of course, the rules and regulations of literature which had developed over the eighteenth century. By the time he wrote *Beppo* (in October 1817)—a poem suspended between categories and based on a scrap of (factual?) scandal—and then began *Don Juan*, Byron had worked through some of his anxious, opinionated ideas about fiction, and became the ironic deregulator of the fictive, revealing in the process novelistic fiction's permeation of the whole sphere of literature, including works, texts, oeuvres, authors, the imaginary relationships between readers and authors, and the author's relation to everyone, including himself. With his new comic poems, Byron teases his audience with his shape shifting: he knows that they will ask, "but which shape is true?" His answer to this question, full of ambivalence, is "neither." In the writing of these poems, in their anonymous publication, and in the ramifications of their piracy, we can see several kinds of erosion of the integral identity of the author, some kinds of which Byron controlled—his blurring of the categories of author, narrator, and fictional character, for instance—and others of which he could not: the accusations of imposture and impropriety, and the piracies against which copyright law did not protect him. I would like to start by considering the first sort.

What does it mean when this famous author trades the armor of his famous name for the armor of namelessness? Byron employs at least two well-established functions of anonymity: protection and the creation of excitement through mystery. Stripping himself of the identity his name provides is a way of protecting the integrity of his publisher's business-identity. Acknowledging that one function of the author's name is to make the author legally accountable for his words, Byron urges Murray to publish *Beppo* anonymously: "I send you the Story in three other separate covers. It won't do for your Journal, being full of political allusions. *Print alone, without name*; alter nothing."[58] A week later, he writes again: "I sent you Beppo some week agone. You must publish it alone; it has politics and ferocity, and won't do for your isthmus of a Journal" (110). Two months later, he reconsiders the mandate to publish anonymously, because attaching his name to the comic poem might promote a positive change in his authorial image: "If you think that it will do you and the work, or works, any good, you may put my name to it; *but first consult the knowing ones*. It will, at any rate, show them that I can write cheerfully, and repel the charge of monotony and mannerism" (119).[59] And of course, always implicit in these letters is the issue of how to make the most money both for himself and for Murray. Another month later, they have decided to publish the poem anonymously, but Byron is defensive about his comic satire, and hopes that it will be judged by aesthetic and not moral standards. He tells Murray that he will:

> eke you out in case of public caprice or my own poetical failure. If you choose to suppress it entirely… you may do as you please. …I will not alter or suppress a syllable for any man's pleasure but my own.
>
> You may tell them [the informal editorial board made up of friends of Byron and Murray] this; and add, that nothing but force or necessity shall stir me one step towards the places to which they would wring me. …If 'Beppo' pleases, you shall have more in a year or two in the same mood. (122)

The ostensible reasons Byron gives for publishing *Beppo* and the first cantos of *Don Juan* anonymously are pragmatic: to protect his own and Murray's reputation in the event that the new style of writing—and the new authorial pose—is ill received; to protect himself from the accusations of libel, immorality, or scandal the texts might invite; and to protect the people who are satirized from the repercussions—the scandal—of being recognizably represented. These are seemingly valid reasons, if it weren't for the fairly explicit moments of self-reference in the poem. But perhaps the ambivalence of his pragmatism in this instance points to Byron's ambivalence about "being a name" and about having a personality shaped and even pinned down by his previous works and their afterlives in the minds of readers. His mask of anonymity also highlights, by its similarity to that of Haywood, Swift, and other scandal-writers and satirists of the early eighteenth century, the relation of his new style to the satires and scandal narratives of old. Not as particularly referential as *The Dunciad*, *The Tale of a Tub*, or Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, for example, *Beppo* and *Don Juan* employ the level of referentiality that Haywood's *Female Spectator*, or *Invisible Spy* employ. In other words, Byron chooses instead of the general referentiality associated with mid- and late-eighteenth century novels, an earlier version of fictionality more closely aligned with scandal, in which current events and contemporary people appear in familiar guises.

Much has changed during the decades separating Eliza Haywood and Lord Byron, but were these moments in their careers really so different? Both were shape-shifting as authorial selves—changing their style and content in order to keep their fickle audiences coming back for more as well as to avoid prostituting themselves to the whims of that audience. Both were repairing damaged reputations by taking on new authorial guises. Both faced criticism not for their aesthetic abilities but for their moral transgressions, which were sometimes confused with generic transgression or experimentation. The authorial self of *Beppo* would be at home in a work of Haywood's, during the masquerade-loving *ancién regime* of identity when selves could be put on or taken off like masks. This carnivalesque version of authorial self is playfully introduced by a carnivalization of all identities at *Beppo*'s opening, in the description of the customs that govern the Venetian Carnival's social chaos. "However high their rank, or low their station," every person can participate. "All people, as their fancies hit, may choose" whatever guise they like "except the ecclesiastical" "unless you paid them double."[60] The almost-free-for-all scene, in which money buys license and even identity resembles the print culture of early-nineteenth-century Britain, where many can read, and anyone with money can self-publish and pose as an author; it is like the world of a celebrity author who can buy acceptance and identity with money, persuasion, flattery, and rhetoric. This shifting terrain of identity becomes another site for Byron's erosion of authorial identity through self-fictionalization. Why erosion rather than self-fashioning? Because he blurs the rhetorical categories of author, narrator, and character readers have come to see as marking distinctions between real life, or history, and fiction.

First, he blurs the roles of author and narrator by inserting himself as a knowledgeable observer who both looks back on and is immersed in the scene. He poses as an experienced advisor: "And therefore humbly I would recommend / 'The curious in fish-sauce'… to… buy in gross… / Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Harvey, / Or, by the

Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve ye;" (318) *and*, as a poet with enough authority or bravado to put Ketchup into an ottava rima stanza and to rhyme Harvey with "starve ye." He poses as a rakish travel-writer:

> I said that like a picture by Giorgione
> Venetian women were, and so they *are*,
> Particularly seen from a balcony,
> (For beauty's sometimes best set off afar)
> And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,
> They peep from out the blind, or o'er the bar;
> And, truth to say, they're mostly very pretty,
> And rather like to show it, more's the pity! (320)

The narrator also becomes a scandal-monger: "Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,/ I've heard the Count and he were always friends" (341). Or:

> His friends the more for his long absence prized him,
> Finding he'd wherewithal to make them gay,
> With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them,
> For stories,—but *I* don't believe the half of them. (340)

Beppo's stories, like the story of Beppo and like this author's, have truth claims which might be false, fictive, or simply facetious. Like the stories that circulate about Lord Byron, they are suspended between truth and fiction. The readers, in the scheme, are put in the position of buyers and creditors—a position of power; however, the substantiality and value of the goods is questionable.

Beppo invites its readers to have their doubts about the sources of their pleasure in reading this work. Is it a poem or a bit of scandal held together with mischievous digressions? Byron makes it consistently unclear who or what in this literary work has the authority (the author, the readers, the story itself, the associations called forth in the author's mind by the story's particulars, the verse form, the physical page on which the author writes?). The author represents himself as barely in control. Twenty-one stanzas in: "But to my story" (321).[61] The discursive and narrative urges of the author constantly vie with each other, and then there is also the verse form, which Byron represents both as a vessel to be filled:

> Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
> And so we'll call her Laura, if you please,
> Because it slips into my verse with ease. (321)

and as a rigid form he cannot escape:

> To turn,—and to return;—the devil take it!
> This story slips for ever through my fingers,
> Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,
> It needs must be—and so it rather lingers;
> This form of verse began, I can't well break it,
> But must keep time and tune like public singers;
> But if I once get through my present measure,
> I'll take another when I'm next at leisure. (332)

Writing, in this case, is not labor; Byron represents it as spontaneous (as Smith represents the writing of her sonnets, in contrast to the labor-intensive writing of novels). Writing is an activity of leisure ruled only by minor contingencies like the measure or the page:

> My pen is at the bottom of a page,
> Which being finished, here the story ends;
> 'Tis to be wished it had been sooner done,
> But stories somehow lengthen when begun. (341)

This spontaneity and attention to the materiality of writing also recalls Sterne, as does the possibility that the readers are really the ones with the authority. Byron gives it to them, even while minimizing it:

> But to my tale of Laura,—for I find
> Digression is a sin, that by degrees
> Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
> And, therefore, may the reader too displease—
> The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
> And caring little for the author's ease,
> Insist on knowing what he means, a hard
> And hapless situation for a bard. (328)

The acknowledgement begins ironically: the digressions are, of course, the bulk of and the most entertaining parts of this poem. Yet Byron has experienced how little readers care "for the author's ease"—(lack of anxiety, or facility?)—and gives them the credit of being able to provide it, if only to jab back at them for wanting only the gratification of easy (untroubling, or facile) reading, and at himself for having provided it:

> Oh that I had the art of easy writing
> What should be easy reading! could I scale
> Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
> Those pretty poems never known to fail,
> How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
> A Grecian, Syrian, or *Ass*yrian tale;
> And sell you, mix'd with western sentimentalism,
> Some samples of the finest Orientalism. (329)

With a few quick strokes, Byron devalues and denigrates not only his own previous immensely popular poems, but also a whole generic mode and the masses of readers (asses) who have been pleased by it. (Those are Byron's italics.) The author is reduced to a swindler and the reader to a buyer of false medicine—characterizations he will come back to in his unpublished Preface to *Don Juan* I and II, in which Wordsworth is called a "mountebank."

All of this deauthorization calls into question the poem's claim to be a literary work.[62] And if the poem has no authority as literature, who or what is the author? In the following stanza, and in a further act of authorial audacity, Byron claims to be a nobody:

> But I am but a nameless sort of person
> (A broken Dandy lately on my travels) (329)

Riddling on his anonymity and his knowledge that his identity will soon be guessed, as well as more generally on his complete lack of anonymity, Byron also comments here on

the fact that "Byron" is just a name and not a true designator of personal identity. Its meanings can shift with style, with what's "in fashion," and with how much credit his readers will give it—which depends in part on his performance as a peddlar (and a product) and in part on the "mart." Byron sees the function of the author's name as an effect of "what is writ." It "seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being."[63] It is "the husk of literature," the armour. Byron intuits the part of Foucault's author-function that conflicts with his readers' desire to invest his name imaginatively with real substance, as they would a fictional character, even though this substance derives from his texts, their interpretations of his texts, rumor, sightings, second-hand stories, and scandal. In addition, the narrator's claim that he is "but a nameless sort of person" makes a playfully ironic attempt to undo the author-function by taking away the author's name (he's just a fictive narrator whom readers name "Byron") and by de-authorizing the text as a piece of discourse that might have an author. This de-authorization, however, rides on the suspension of disbelief associated with fiction; it asks the reader to suppose that the poem is not a poem but a digressive story uttered by an individual who is no author, only a "broken dandy." The claim of namelessness, of course, has the function of highlighting the name of Byron (when it comes to light) and commanding that it be credited. As Jerome Christensen says, in reference to Byron's family motto, *Crede Byron*, his "career is the allegory of that imperative's residual strength in an age when the grounds of authority have been disclosed as being no more than nominal: authority derived from distinction, distinction the function of opinion, and opinion concocted by the powers that be."[64] Byron's tricks with anonymity sardonically play off of the power of the "mart" to set the standards of cultural capital. The questions of authority in *Beppo* are darkly playful, but may be seen as a sign of what is to come in Byron's wrangles with disapproving critics, copyright law, and pirates.

* * *

The decision to publish the first two cantos of *Don Juan* anonymously in an expensive quarto edition may be seen as a grand Byronic jest about the nature of his authorial self. Some have seen the decision as an attempt to evade prosecution for indecency by the Society for the Suppression of Vice.[65] The dangers lying beneath this jest were indeed very real for Murray, who could lose money and reputation, and for Byron, who thought he might lose custody of his daughter, Allegra, along with his readers, some income, and reputation—though he must have known his readers would recognize the style of *Beppo* right away. Making the decision required a weighing of interests pragmatic, moral, and aesthetic. We can read in his letters to Moore and Murray a record of the process. Byron wrote to Moore in September of 1818:

> I have finished the First Canto (a long one, of about 180 octaves) of a poem in the style and manner of 'Beppo,' encouraged by the good success of the same. It is called 'Don Juan,' and is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon every thing. But I doubt whether it is not—at least, as far as it has yet gone—too free for these very modest days. However, I shall try the experiment, anonymously, and if it do n't take, it will be discontinued.[66]

In the end, it seems that anonymity was a formality for the benefit of Murray; but when Murray decided to cut several stanzas—on the basis of a moral and not an aesthetic judgment—Byron was enraged. He would rather have his own name cut than any of the poem's substance:

> You sha' n't make *canticles* of my cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail: but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously*; it will, perhaps, be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a porcupine. (141)[67]

Byron's defensive abilities—especially with his quills—make him fearless in the face of his critics, those bears and wolves.

The outcry that met the poem, indeed, was like a howl. Murray had only produced fifty copies of the first quarto edition, but the poem was almost immediately pirated. The decision to publish it anonymously and cut certain "too free" stanzas backfired, according to some of Byron's contemporaries: "if you had published *Don Juan* without hesitation or asterisks, nobody would ever have thought worse of it than as a larger *Beppo*, gay and lively and a little loose. …There would have been no outcry either against publisher or author," John Wilson Croker wrote to Murray.[68] Recent critics, too, have argued that the material conditions of publication—the "overpriced and unacknowledged" volume—"simply announced his temerity, provoking its piracy by radical publishers and thus increasing fear and excoriation of the poem in the Tory periodicals and anti-radical pamphlets."[69] Colligan points to an anonymous 1822 article in the *Quarterly Review* (which has been attributed to Southey) that "demonstrate[s] how the material culture around *Don Juan*—its size, press, appearance, retailer, publisher, and reader—helped brand it as indecent" (440), and helped create the market for pirated editions. These copies were much cheaper, and therefore were affordable to working class readers—clearly not the audience Murray had been aiming at.

What was it about the early cantos that was so outrageous, improper, and indecent? What was the nature of this upsetting "looseness?" Yes, there was a flippant and flagrant display of sexiness and sexism. But Byron's readers were also reacting, perhaps less consciously, to the looseness of his representations of authorial self and of the loose interpretation of genre, the novelization, embodied in the poem. Let us consider the former sort of looseness first. As *Beppo* had done before, *Don Juan* eroded the authority and integrity of the author by bringing fiction back to the realm of scandal, by exposing the author's nature as scandal monger, and by generally blurring the lines that were supposed to divide reality from fiction, high literature from low, and authenticity from performance or imposture. As he had done in *Beppo*, Byron blurs the ontological categories of author, narrator, and character, deregulating the fiction of his story.[70] For example, when the narrator explicitly becomes a character, it is as a friend of the family, involving himself—like the narrator of *Beppo*—in their scandal:

> Don Jóse and his lady quarreled. Why,
> Not any of the many could divine,
> Though several thousand people chose to try.
> 'Twas surely no concern of theirs nor mine.
> I loathe that low vice curiosity,

But if there's anything in which I shine,
'Tis in arranging all my friends' affairs,
Not having, of my own, domestic cares.

And so I interfered and with the best
Intentions, but their treatment was not kind. (51)

When he introduces himself as a character, it is during a shift from narrator/writer speaking ironically, like the Female Spectator, of his disapproval of "curiosity" *and*, like Smith in *The Banished Man*, drawing attention to his author-self's story by pointing ironically to a distinction between the narrator and author ("not having… domestic cares"). Byron's written self inhabits several roles: he is the author retelling his own domestic scandal and so seizing partial control of it; he is the narrator who is and is not Byron; he is Don Jóse, the husband who sleeps around and is "hen-pecked" by his "lady intellectual" (51); he is the subject of the scandal and the scandal monger. I would not argue that Byron is being simply mean and self-protective (by telling his own story) or that he is throwing up his hands because the scandal and his authorial self is out of his control. He seems to be doing both at the same time:

And if our quarrels should rip up old stories
And help them with a lie or two additional,
I'm not to blame, as you well know, no more is
Anyone else; they were become traditional. (53)

He points here to literary fiction's close relationship with scandal, and to readers' complicity in reading and telling stories they pretend to be scandalized by.

Don Juan, like *Tristram Shandy*, invites the reader to be an actor in its making, and in the making of its author:

This was Don Juan's earliest scrape; but whether
I shall proceed with his adventures is
Dependent on the public altogether.
We'll see, however, what they say to this;
Their favour in an author's cap's a feather,
And no great mischief's done by their caprice,
And if their approbation we experience,
Perhaps they'll have some more about a year hence. (95)

Byron makes the self a product of self-writing, which combines scandal and high-literary conventions, as Smith had done. And he performs the self as a fictional character, as Sterne did.[71] Byron also owns the lack of ownership he has over his author self, as Haywood did. Like the winking Female Spectator, he owns himself as the ironic subject of scandal when he asserts, "scandal's my aversion. I protest/ Against all evil speaking, even in jest" (58).[72] Much of Canto I is concerned with rewriting his own scandal and with recasting the figure of Lord Byron as aloof satirist rather than aloof true feeler (or sinner).[73] He owns the scandal about his marriage with an ironic reversal/denial that serves as a very obvious wink:

I hate inconstancy; I loathe, detest,
Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal made

Of such quicksilver clay that in his breast
No permanent foundation can be laid.
Love, constant love, has been my constant guest,
And yet last night, being at a masquerade,
I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from Milan,
Which gave me some sensations like a villain. (98)

The extremity of his denial of impropriety is his way of owning his impropriety—seizing it back from his audience through irony and self-fictionalization, which, in effect mocks them for getting so worked up about it.

In this sphere of scandal, in which readers are agents and the author is both agent and object, the author becomes a fiction just as he is a scandal. And he writes to an audience who has an appetite for scandal and mistakes it for news:

The pleasant scandal which arose next day,
The nine days' wonder which was brought to light,
And how Alfonso sued for a divorce
Were in the English newspapers, of course. (93)

Scandal and news, fiction and fact, the real Simon Pure and the impostor: all are confused in this world that has become "a mart." Claire Tuite's observation of Byron's "ambivalent awareness of how easily the original can be translated by the properties of the marketplace into an object of public consumption" refers to an original text, specifically Lady Caroline Lamb's love letters.[74] I would extend the sense of "original" here to his own identity.

Just as scandal and commodification undermine the authority of the author as a proprietary self, they undermine the ownership of the text. For Byron this occurred not only in the public imagination, but also in court, at the intersection of copyright law with obscenity law. Colligan points out:

> by 1822 these [radical pirate] publishers were asserting that the poem was 'common property.' William Hodgson, a radical agitator, insisted in the preface to his 1822 pirate copy of the poem that 'this work…seems…a sort of common property amongst the booksellers: for we have had editions of all sorts and sizes' (*Don Juan, with a Preface by a Clergyman*, p. vi).[75]

The theoretical implications of this pirating, made possible by the work's impropriety, were the erosion of the authority, identity, and supposed authenticity of the author. The following year, 1823, when Byron published Cantos VI-VIII—known as "the harem cantos"—with Leigh Hunt, he obtained an injunction against William Dugdale, the radical publisher, for producing pirate copies. Dugdale attempted in court to have the injunction dissolved on the grounds that the poem was obscene, and won the case: the court decided the work was indecent, and therefore was not subject to copyright. This implied that the author was not the owner, could not claim it as his property, and was stripped of a legal identity.[76] The focus of British copyright law on the commodity rather than on the personality, as I discussed in the Introduction, implies that the author-function may have a different reality in the British literary world, in which the author may not be seen as the unifying figure in a body of work. "Byron" and his work both become common property.

The Critics

Before moving on to a discussion of novelization in *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, I would like to consider the kind of impropriety critics saw in these poems. As with our other authors in this study, part of Byron's impropriety was in transgressing generic boundaries. When his identity was known as the author of *Beppo*, Byron was met with harsh criticism for mixing personal scandal with fiction. Following what many readers knew to be a reference to his wife, in which he says that Turkish women do not "deal (thank God for that!) in mathematics" the narrator merges, through the particularized referentiality of satire, into the author named Byron:

> Why I thank God for that is no great matter,
> I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
> And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,
> I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose.[77]

Byron plays here with the way generic conventions dictate the level of referentiality that might be acceptable. Since he is not writing a *Dunciad*, though he has "a little turn for satire," the overt references to actual people must be saved for the "life… in prose," a place where convention calls for honesty and exposure, where readers can expect to meet "the real Simon Pure." Generic impropriety in *Beppo*, though, was taken as a moral transgression (just as it was for Charlotte Smith in *The Banished Man*).[78] The poem received some positive reviews, but the reviewer for *Blackwood's Magazine*, one so-called "Presbyter Anglicanus," attacks the poem on moral rather than aesthetic grounds. This was standard fare in *Blackwood's*, as was the emphasis on the "personal," but the criticism is still of particular interest for my argument.[79] The reviewer discusses several transgressions. First, Byron has improperly mixed the personal with the public/published:

> Any other poet might complain with justice, should he see remarks of a personal nature mixed up with a criticism upon his writings. You, my Lord, can scarcely flatter yourself that you have any right to expect such forbearance. …We were well enough disposed to treat you with distant respect, but you have courted and demanded our gaze. You have bared your bosom when no man entreated you….[80]

Secondly, not only has he "bared" himself, but he has made the act of baring a rhetorical and theatrical performance:

> You have made yourself your only theme; shall we not dare to dissect the hero, because, forsooth, he and his poet are the same? You have debased your nobility by strutting upon the stage; shall we still be expected to talk of you as of a private and unobtrusive individual? You must share the fate of your brethren [actors, debased noblemen, self-performing authors?] and abide the judgment of the spectators. (129)

Through his improper self-exposure and self-performance, Byron has exposed "the English mind" to the infectious "fever of debauch" and used "his genius" as an "instrument of evil."

The main complaint of this negative review, for which the most heated invective is saved, however, is that Byron's previous authorial identity was a sham, *all* fiction, his self-expression a mere theatrical performance that he has used to deceive—and defraud and discredit—his audience. He describes Byron's imposture (and his readers' complicity in it):

> We gave you credit for being sincere in your affliction. We looked upon you as the victim of more than human misery, and sympathized with the extravagance of your public and uncontrollable lamentations. …In time, however, we have become less credulous and more inquisitive; the farce was so often renewed, that we became weary of its wonders; we have come to suspect at last, that whatever sorrows you may have, they are all of your own creating. (129)

This reviewer, in effect, strips Byron of what was presumed to be his proper self, as he attempts to strip him of his readers' credit. The terms of this review might remind us of other literary authenticity scandals of the eighteenth century, of Byron's experience with copyright law, and of the criticism Charlotte Smith met with which questioned the authenticity of feeling expressed in her *Elegiac Sonnets*.[81] Byron's crime of writing was imposture, but he posed as himself; the crime was a fictional performance of what was taken to be true, actual, and authentic. One aspect of the poem the reviewer does not comment on is its style. Perhaps, as in Charlotte Smith's case in *The Banished Man*, the negative response to Byron's opening and loosening of generic proprieties became confused with the moral impropriety of self-representation, of behaving too much like an actor who was dangerously devoid of real feeling or self and who was too much like a prostitute, which implicated and degraded the audience as well, for paying for and giving credit to the "spectacle."

An early response to *Don Juan*, like the review above, takes as its theme the authenticity and credibility of the authorial self expressed through the poem. The evaluative difference between the reviews—one negative, one positive—should not obscure the fact that both reviewers begin from the same premise that there is an authentic author self in the first place. They also both emphasize belief. In the response written by John Gibson Lockhart but published anonymously as a "Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Byron. By John Bull," the writer triumphantly declares that he has discovered the true nature of Lord Byron—the comic, the satirist—and that the melancholy hero was "humbug":

> In spite of all your pranks, (*Beppo*, &c. *Don Juan* included,) every boarding-school in the empire still contains many devout *believers* in the amazing misery of the black-haired, high-browed, blue-eyed, bare-throated, Lord Byron. …Such beautiful scenes as these [of ladies reciting his poems and fantasizing about him]:—they are the triumphs of humbug…. You ought to put a stop to them… and never [write] a line more except upon the anti-humbug principle. …Stick to *Don Juan*: it is the only sincere thing you have ever written.[82] (My italics.)

Although he praises Byron and *Don Juan*, Lockhart in effect takes the same line as "Presbyter Anglicanus" when he accuses Byron of imposture. Both think they have seen through to the real Lord Byron beneath the melancholy, but hypocritical, disguise. One sees wickedness, the other comic satire.[83] But what if the satire is just another exposure

of the authenticity of authorship as imposture, just another representation of self that takes on life like a character inhabited by an actor whose skill is self-abnegation? Is Don Juan, whose name Byron rhymes in the first stanza with "true one" "the real Simon Pure?" Byron's transgression was to expose the author as an ideological figure, the one "by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction."[84]

The Scandal of a Novelized Poetics

While anonymity, stripping the identity of a proper name, enables impropriety, impropriety strips an author or a genre of its property. The ironic consequence of the court decision of 1823 against Byron and in favor of the pirate Dugdale was to make the reproduction, sale, and circulation of this "obscene" work all that much easier, and the reading audience bigger and more diverse. What was first presented as an expensive specimen of high art, *Don Juan* came to circulate as freely and as loosely as a popular novel. But even if there had been no declaration of the work's indecency, impropriety lurked in the fact of novelization itself. Byron seized upon the inclusiveness of the novel just as he did its serio-comical potential, and he intuited the scandalous possibilities in novelization Bakhtin would articulate two centuries later: "Laughter demolishes fear and piety before an object, before a world, making of it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it."[85] I argue, in this section, that the infectious and undermining nature of laughter, directed at the pieties about authorial authenticity and authority and about generic propriety, was part of the deeper cultural reason for the brouhaha surrounding *Don Juan* and for its importance as a critical alternative in the history of the invention of Romantic subjectivity.[86]

Novelization and laughter have leveling effects. Byron invests poetry with what Duncan describes as the trope of fiction as cultivated by Byron's favorite novelist, Walter Scott: "the Humean medium of the conventional, the customary, the everyday."[87] After the narrator of *Beppo* claims he is a nobody, ironically undermining the author's identity, he proceeds to undermine too the cultural identity and authority of poetry:

> [I] take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
> The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,
> And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
> Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;
> I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
> But verse is more in fashion—so here goes![88]

"Verse," in *Beppo* is a degraded form that has almost equal value with "prose" and which garners respect simply because "fashion" is confused with cultural capital. Anyone who can read a rhyming dictionary could write verse, the implication goes, and poetry has bent to the everyday realities of novelistic fiction. I read these lines less as an ironic critique of fashionable poetry (though they are) than as an expression of Byron's interest in novelizing poetry, in testing out the possibility of perforating the boundary between prose and poetry so that the colloquiality, contemporaneity, and looseness of novels

might enter his works, whether they are in verse or prose.[89] Soon after publishing *Beppo*, Murray encouraged Byron to write a novel:

> May I hope that you will favour me with some work to open my campaign in November with! Have you not another lively tale like 'Beppo'? or will you not give me some prose in three volumes?—all the adventures that you have undergone, seen, heard of, or imagined, with your reflections on life and manners.[90]

The suggestion of three volumes, and the possibility of "imagined" adventures point toward a novel, while the emphasis on Byron's own experiences points, perhaps, toward a travel memoir. What might the difference have been to Byron?

Part of Byron's resistance to writing prose fiction (even as a voracious reader of novels) stemmed from his attachment to his identity as a poet and an aristocratic one at that; his attitude toward the traditional hierarchy of literature reflects a nostalgia for the glamour and prestige of the high, masculine genres of poetry and a fear of losing cultural capital by appearing to be writing purely for capital. When Murray suggests he tone down the freedom and satire of the first cantos, Byron responds with characteristic lordly hauteur:

> I have not written for their pleasure. If they are pleased, it is that they chose to be so; I have never flattered their opinions, nor their pride; nor will I. Neither will I make 'Ladies' books' 'al dilettar le femine e la plebe.' I have written from the fullness of my mind, from passion, from impulse, from many motives, but not for their 'sweet voices.'
>
> I know the precise worth of popular applause, for few scribblers have had more of it; and if I chose to swerve into their paths, I could retain it, or resume it. But I neither love ye, nor fear ye; and though I buy with ye and sell with ye, I will neither eat with ye, drink with ye, nor pray with ye. They made me, without my search, a species of popular idol; they, without reason or judgment, beyond the caprice of their good pleasure, threw down the image from its pedestal: it was not broken with the fall, and they would, it seems, again replace it,--but they shall not.[91]

But the laughter in *Don Juan* demolishes hauteur as well. Pride fluctuates with and dissolves in the face of his ironic acceptance of his commodification: having got fame, he claims in *Don Juan* that he writes "for avarice."

With *Don Juan*, Byron invents a prose-like poetics, a novelistic poem, and a narrative style that embraces the mundane details and polyglossia of fictional realism and self-consciously rides the scandalous borderline between fact and fiction. *Don Juan* depends upon Byron's working through of his ambivalence about the cultural and personal value and meaning of fiction and of prose, and of authorial authenticity. In this new kind of poem (in Bakhtin's phrase) "language… not only represents, but itself serves as the object of representation" and as the object of free investigation.[92] Novelizing poetry has many ramifications, but the main consequence of import here is Byron's intuition that the novelization of literature in general undermines the claims to authenticity and originality of the author, the deep self that we would come to call the Romantic self. Bakhtin says that the "serio-comical" mode common to novels "is

characterized by a deliberate and explicit autobiographical and memoirist approach. [The representation of contemporaneity] permits the author, in all his various masks and faces, to move freely onto the field of his represented world" (27). We have seen Byron do this before, of course, explicitly in *Childe Harold* III and IV. But in *Don Juan* this moving onto the field of his own representation takes on a heightened self-consciousness and ironic awareness of the masks and faces, the representations and performance, as the very substance of authorial self. Like Sterne, the author of *Don Juan* represents himself as a performance, a fictional character, a written self, a nobody who is still Lord Byron and everything that name signifies. We might recall here Margaret Russett's observation that eighteenth-century notions of imposture, delusion, and forgery existed on the same blurry spectrum with the more benign *fiction* and that "spectacular fakes participated in defining the 'fictional identity' bequeathed to the modern subject by Romantic culture. …Poetic identity, even and especially in the honorific mode called 'authenticity,' is a *fictional* construction, but this does not make it false."[93]

What happens to Byron's insistence on authentic factuality when he adopts the novelistic memoirist approach? He had always set out to dramatize and novelize actual realities, whether they were historical events or scraps of gossip. This adherence to factual bases kept him far from the "airy fabrics" he despised but brought upon him charges of plagiarism, scandalous self-exposure or libel, and indecency. He writes to Murray, after being accused of plagiarism, "almost all Don Juan is *real* life, either of my own or from people I knew."[94] Aside from self-defense, in this case, why is the distinction between fiction (as pure invention) and fact (as experience, as "real life") so important to Byron? Or is it? "*Almost* all Don Juan" is based in experience, and the legendary figure of Don Juan has a cultural presence that makes him *almost* factual. As I argued above, Byron wants to invent historical fiction like Scott's, but a personal historical fiction that will not be mistaken for scandal or for fantasy or imposture. His insistence upon fact protests too much because he knows how much "*real* life" is subject to interpretation. In a parody of the kinds of fictive truth claims made by Scott's narrators and the fictive or pseudonymous authors of the works involved in the late-eighteenth-century authenticity scandals, Byron—speaking as the author—jokes at the beginning of *Don Juan*:

> There's only one slight difference between
> Me and my epic brethren gone before,
> …They so embellish that 'tis quite a bore
> Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
> Whereas this story's actually true.
>
> If any person doubt it, I appeal
> To history, tradition, and to facts,
> To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,
> To plays in five, and operas in three acts.
> All these confirm my statement a good deal,
> But that which more completely faith exacts
> Is that myself and several now in Seville

Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.[95]

His deliberate collapsing of these textual, historical, and experiential categories, with their different degrees of "truth" or of fictionality, as well as of cultural capital, suggests that even though "*all* fiction" is an airy fabric, a labyrinth of fables, "truth" and "*real* life" are subject to interpretation, are contingent, and are compromised (or even created) by their representation in literature, performance and newspapers (which, as English readers should know, are full of scandal). Byron's insistence on the factual foundation of his works, then, has less to do with avoiding fantastic invention and more to do with exposing to view the scandalized nature of "*real* life" when it is an object of representation. More generally, Byron has come to a revised notion of authenticity that is much like the Scottian/Humean version Duncan describes: "an authentic representation is a fiction established by force of custom."[96]

Exposed to demystifying view, too, is the ideological figure of the author as original genius (or simply as a subject of "great moods"). In the plane of novelistic serio-comedy, Bakhtin writes, objects become "naked": "one can disrespectfully walk around whole objects; therefore, the back and rear portion of an object (and also its innards, not normally accessible for viewing) assume a special importance. The object is broken apart, laid bare (its hierarchical ornamentation is removed)."[97] When Byron parodies all other genres including the poetic, and his own poetics, the supremacy of the lyric and heroic authorial self are both undermined by the parodic, performative novelistic author-self of *Don Juan*. Peter Manning observes that the self of *Don Juan* "is not a static essence, but a relation revising itself in response to others."[98] I would argue that Byron posits this performative state to be common to, but not acknowledged by, all authors. Just as it was for the other scandalous authors in this study, Byron's erosion of the essential self goes along with his leveling of generic hierarchies and of the ground between fictionality and *real* life.

In his discussion of the Humean influences on the rise of fiction, Duncan argues that if custom, in an enlightened civil society, is seen as collective consent in a fiction:

> the person who appeals to fundamental principles is an adversary of the modern political and social order; he is, in the key term that Hume mobilizes in his historical writing and Scott takes up in his novels, a *fanatic*, the name for a cast of mind antithetical to civil society—a cast of mind, to put it bluntly, that refuses to accept reality in the form of a fiction, and rejects fiction, concomitantly, as the mode of representation of a liberal society.[99]

In Byron's acceptance of the permeation of fiction, and his invention of a novelized, inclusive, polyglossic poetics, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey come to stand for those stubborn fanatics. The criticisms of Southey in the Dedication to *Don Juan* turn on the question of authenticity: "Bob Southey! You're a poet, poet laureate, / And representative of all the race."[100] Like the modern actor and politician, this representative, or actor, deceives his audience with passions he only pretends to feel (which is the same charge Byron's critics made against him). Specifically, Byron represents Southey's false authenticity as purchased with political apostasy and flattery:

> I would not imitate the petty thought,
> Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,

For all the glory your conversion brought,
  Since gold alone should not have been its price.
You have your salary; was't for that you wrought?
  And Wordsworth has his place in the Excise.
You're shabby fellows—true—but poets still
And duly seated on the immortal hill. (42)

Both Byron and Southey thought they knew what an authentic English poetry should look like. None of his contemporaries measured up, for Byron, to Pope or Milton. But one gets the sense that, even if the idea of a true English poetry is something worth defending, Byron is more comfortable with its "authenticity" as a collective fiction, than Southey, who calls *Don Juan* "a foul blot on the literature of his country, an act of high treason on English poetry."[101] In Byron's comic-Humean view, Southey—like those readers who would pay for the *disjecta membra* of the Real Simon Pure Lord Byron—is a fanatic.

Along with what Byron saw as their purchased and hypocritical sense of aesthetic and moral superiority, he despised the claims to superiority that rested in the spiritual, natural romanticism which implied that the author was an essential, original self—the, in Keats' phrase—egotistical sublime.[102] In a succinct formulation, Peter Manning says of the "serial character" of the self in *Don Juan* and of the poem itself: "Byron gains his freedom to move forward unconstrainedly by forgoing [Wordsworthian] notions of origin" and—also in contrast to Wordsworth—by being unconcerned "to fashion an integrated self and a coherent narrative."[103] Byron compares Wordsworthian self-absorption to the pre-teen Juan in the throes of first love:

Young Juan wandered by the glassy brooks
  Thinking unutterable things. He threw
Himself at length within the leafy nooks
  Where the wild branch of the cork forest grew.
There poets find materials for their books,[104]
  And every now and then we read them through,
So that their plan and prosody are eligible,
Unless like Wordsworth they prove unintelligible.

He, Juan (and not Wordsworth), so pursued
  His self-communion with his own high soul
Until his mighty heart in its great mood
  Had mitigated part, though not the whole
Of its disease. He did the best he could
  With things not very subject to control
And turned, without perceiving his condition,
  Like Coleridge into a metaphysician.[105]

Through bathetic comparison and near quotation of "Tintern Abbey," he reduces the "great mood" of Wordsworth's poetry and its inspiration from nature to a "disease" that is childish, unworldly, pre-sexual, masturbatory, solipsistic, and conventional.

Byron's rejection of the Wordsworthian "great mood" is layered with contradiction, however (and of course). When the third canto of *Child Harold* was

published, Wordsworth had accused Byron of plagiarism. Thomas Moore records in his journal a conversation in which Wordsworth said that:

> the whole third canto of "Childe Harold" [was] founded on his style and sentiments. The feeling of natural objects which is there expressed, not caught by B. from nature herself, but from him (Wordsworth), and spoiled in the transmission. "Tintern Abbey" the source of it all; from which same poem too the celebrated passage about Solitude, in the first canto of "Childe Harold," is (he said) taken, with this difference, that what is naturally expressed by him, has been worked by Byron into a laboured and antithetical sort of declamation.[106]

Wordsworth accuses Byron of an act of inauthentic copying or representation, a bad translation of "nature." "The feeling of natural objects" is "caught" by Wordsworth from nature; it is an authentic and organic transmission. Byron's transmission of this feeling, however, is mediated, unoriginal, rhetorical. If Byron's style had been so close to his object of criticism, then, what exactly is he deriding in Wordsworth? Is there some self-criticism in these lines for Manfred's, and especially for Childe Harold's, "great mood" or organic inspiration by the sublime scenes of nature? The difference between his own and Wordsworth's "great moods" is one of perspective (or irony), of Byron's highlighting (even if through mimicry) the rhetorical nature of his "nature." His attitude is informed by his acceptance of the fact that novelized literature, like the novel, "has a mediated aesthetic relation to what it represents. [And that] the realist claim is founded upon a judgment made at a particular time among a social network of readers who produce, consume, and criticize."[107] Even though he has defended the organic originality of his own poems, in *Don Juan* Byron articulates his revision of these claims in light of his acceptance of novelistic fictionality, which is social, and which is parodically critical of the romantic idea of pure, authentic, original transmission. Without this ironic, (newly) Byronic perspective, romance is a disease, a silly lovesickness, not a transcendent state of poetic, moral, spiritual achievement, which has become the myth for sale in the mart.

Some of these ideas about the relation of fiction and authorial self to imposture, scandal, and the commercialization of literature, and about Byron's relation to Wordsworth, are best articulated in the unpublished Preface to the first three cantos of *Don Juan.*[108] In the first few paragraphs of the Preface, Byron interrogates and mocks the contract of narratorial fiction set forth by Wordsworth in "a note or preface (I forget which)" to "The Thorn":

> …the courteous reader is desired to extend his usual courtesy so far as to suppose that the narrative is narrated by 'the captain of a merchantman or small trading vessel, lately retired upon a small annuity to some inland town, etc. etc.' I quote from memory but conceive the above to be the sense, as far [as] there is sense of the note or preface to the aforesaid poem, as far as it is a poem.[109]

In this representation of the contract between author and reader, the reader's "courtesy" is a euphemism for his credulity. The suspension of disbelief required by the reader pertains to the narrative voice within the poem as well as to the poem itself as an aesthetic object. In other words, the reader agrees to be taken under the illusion about the poem's narration, and agrees with what Byron implies is a delusion: that the text is a

poem or object of aesthetic value at all (a question he raised ironically about his own *Beppo*).[110]

The preface goes on to accuse the reading public of being duped, and to expose Wordsworth as both insane and a "mountebank" whose claims to spiritual superiority are hubristic at the least (38):

> This is the sort of writing which has superseded and degraded Pope in the eyes of the discerning British public, and this man is the kind of poet who, in the same manner that Joanna Southcote found many thousand people to take her dropsy for God Almighty re-impregnated, has found some hundreds of persons to misbelieve in his insanities, and hold his art as a kind of poetical Emanuel Swedenborg or Richard Brothers or Parson Tozer, half enthusiast and half impostor. (37)

Byron reduces this poet of authentic expression—of the self, of "the real language of men," of the poet's spiritual relation to nature—to a popular impostor, a mystical fraud, a self-appointed apostle and preacher of a dubious divinity.[111] His readers, by extension, are no more than enthusiasts, deluded members of a sect.

The strength of Byron's negativity toward Wordsworth may derive, too, from the kinship he perceived between his novelized poetics and the poetic project Wordsworth had laid out eighteen years before, in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. Wordsworth also had no use for "airy fabrics"—in the form of personifications—which: "are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men…. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood."[112] This does not seem so different from Byron's novelistic intentions. Byron's desire to write a prose-like poetry, his belief that prose is more "respectable," though entirely different in the result, finds a precursor in Wordsworth as well:

> …not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. …It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. (601)

Byron probably would agree, although his interpretation of this injunction results in such phrases as "hen-pecked you all" (I, 22), "a so-so matron" (XIII, 82), and "war's a brain-spattering, windpipe slitting art" (IX, 4). The inclusiveness, the dialogical contact with the polyglossia of everyday life Byron employed as tools and objects of representation in his new poetics find a reflection in Wordworth's "situations from common life" which he sought to "relate… or describe… as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect."[113] Wordsworth specifically meant an unadorned simplicity of language and event, but in the abstract, the idea of introducing conversational or idiomatic language and the events of everyday life is novelistic in precisely the sense that Duncan describes

as Humean: Hume's theory of the imagination "grants fiction its philosophical license as a representation of the world."[114] What Byron objected to in Wordsworth's project was the inauthenticity in the *selection* of "language really used by men" and what he saw as the condescending gesture of "throw[ing] over them a certain colouring of imagination," which falsified, by stylizing, the authenticity of what Wordsworth claimed to be "real."

In the Preface to *Don Juan*, Byron completes his critique of Wordsworth, his exposure of the fictionality of authenticity, and his grand jest on those readers still probing for the real Lord Byron, by proposing the same contract of fiction he has criticized in Wordsworth to his own readers. He asks his readers to "acquiesce" to his fiction as they have to Wordsworth's and "to suppose by a like exertion of the imagination" that his narrator is "a Spanish gentleman in a village in the Sierra Morena on the road between Monasterio and Seville, sitting at the door of a *posada.*"[115] He then elaborates a vividly detailed novelistic social setting to exaggerate the demands upon the reader's credulity required by the clumsy fictionality of Wordsworth's narrators, *and* to expose to laughter the idea that the fictive narrator and the "*real* life" self of the author are ever so different anyway. He emphasizes the difference between author and narrator in part to say that the version of author readers believe in is also—like the legal personality who owns a copyright—a collective fiction.

Byron seems, in the case of Wordsworth, to be deliberately unwilling to suspend his disbelief, to allow for the difference between fictional and fake. But is his criticism really so naïve? I hope that my chapter has argued the opposite: that it is Byron's clear-sightedness about the fictionality of authenticity that makes him prickle like a porcupine at those who would pretend that imposture and authenticity are opposites. I am not saying he was right about Wordsworth, but that the source of his invective is his belief that Wordsworth was promoting himself as "the real Simon Pure" without a sense of irony, and that the reading public had a strong desire for authenticity, the real thing, including the true Lord Byron, and refused to see the role played by their own imaginative projections and involvement in constructing the figures they wanted to believe in. Lockhart was correct, in a way, when he said that *Don Juan* was the most sincere thing Byron had ever written. The sincerity of this novelized poem exists in the laughter that lets Byron "disrespectfully walk around whole objects" and expose their back sides and innards to view—including those of the authentically fictional nobody of an author—until they become ridiculous.[116]

[1] Lord Byron, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron with Notices of his Life*, ed. Thomas Moore, Vol. II (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1855), 151. (June 6, 1819.)

[2] As I discussed in the Introduction, here is Foucault's discussion of the author's name:

> The proper name and the author's name are situated between the two poles of description and designation: they must have a certain link with what they name, but one that is neither entirely in the mode of designation nor in that of description; it must be a *specific* link. However—and it is here that the particular difficulties of the author's name arise—the links between the proper name and the individual named and between the author's name and what it names are not isomorphic and do not function in the same way. …These differences may result from the fact that an author's name is not simply an element in a discourse (capable of being either subject or object, of being replaced by a pronoun, and the like); it performs a certain role with regard to narrative discourse, assuring a classificatory function. …It would seem that the author's name, unlike other proper names, does not pass from the interior of a discourse to the real and exterior individual who produced it; instead, the name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being. The author's name manifests the appearance of a certain discursive set and indicates the status of this discourse within a society and a culture.

(Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Vintage, 1984), 106-7.)

[3] Jerome Christensen, *Lord Byron's Strength: Romantic Writing and Commercial Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 44.

[4] Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, ed. T. G. Steffan, E. Steffan and W. W. Pratt (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 591. This is a cancelled stanza from *Don Juan*, Canto I, which Byron may have intended to insert between Stanzas 218 and 219:

> What is the end of fame? 'Tis but to fill
> A certain portion of uncertain paper.
> Some liken it to climbing up a hill,
> Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour.
> For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill,
> And bards burn what they call their midnight taper,
> To have, when the original is dust,
> A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.
>
> What are the hopes of man? Old Egypt's King
> Cheops erected the first pyramid,
> And largest, thinking it was just the thing
> To keep his memory whole and mummy hid;
> But somebody or other rummaging,
> Burglariously broke his coffin's lid.
> Let not a monument give you or me hopes
> Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops. (100)

[5] Catherine Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," in *The Novel* Vol.1, ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 341.
[6] Foucault, "What is an Author," 111, 119.
[7] Deidre Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture, and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 4-5.
[8] Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 1-2.
[9] Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," 351.
[10] Lynch, *The Economy of Character*, 6.
[11] Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 275.
[12] Jerome Christensen, *Lord Byron's Strength*, 248.
[13] In *Paratexts*, Genette discusses the use of the dedication in the eighteenth century:

> Tending to disappear at the beginning of the nineteenth century, therefore, are two features, obviously connected: the most direct (economic) social function of the dedication, and its expanded form of laudatory epistle. …The classical dedicatory epistle, by the very fact of its textual expansion, could accommodate other messages besides praise for the dedicatee. These might include information about the sources and creation of the work, or comments on the work's form or meaning—messages by which the function of the dedication clearly encroaches on that of the preface. …From the nineteenth century on, the dedicatory epistle barely hangs on except for its prefacing function, and as a result the addressee is more apt to be a colleague or a mentor capable of appreciating its message.

Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 123-5. He also says that:

> Whoever the official addressee, there is always an ambiguity in the destination of a dedication, which is always intended for at least two addresees: the dedicatee, of course, but also the reader, for dedicating a work is a public act that the reader is, as it were, called on to witness. A typically performative act, as I have said, for in itself it *constitutes* the act it is supposed to describe. (137)

[14] Lord Byron, *The Major Works*, ed. Jerome McGann, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 146.
[15] Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 34.
[16] Byron, *Major Works*, 146.
[17] Peter Manning reminds us of the role of John Murray, Byron's publisher for a decade, in shaping his persona and his myth:

> Resourcefully cajoling Byron to continue in genres he calculated would sell and incurring accusations of negligence in order to discourage others, surreptitiously circulating or adroitly publicizing some poems while suppressing or excising others, Murray carefully fostered the image of the author from whom his wealth sprang.

Peter Manning, "*Don Juan* and the Revisionary Self," in *Romantic Revisions*, ed. Robert Brinkley and Keith Hanley (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), 211.

[18] "But as the eighteenth century wore on and fictionality became commonly understood, writers no longer thought that sentimental readers were confused about the ontological status of characters, as early naïve readers might have been." Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," 351.
[19] Byron, *Major Works*, 198-9.
[20] One problem, of course, is that it is impossible to tell when Byron is being sincere or is performing in his letters, because he knew that Murray would read some of them aloud to entertain their friends in his shop, making the letters a performative gesture of a performative self. We can take what he said as non-private—as *public*, but not as public as *published*.
[21] Byron, *Letters*, 67. From a letter to Murray, April 2, 1817.
[22] Byron, *Major Works*, 149.
[23] "I have more of Scott's novels (for surely they are Scott's) since we met, and am more and more delighted. I think that I even prefer them to his poetry…." (From a letter to Bankes, Feb. 20, 1820.) "Pray send me W. Scott's new novels. What are their names and characters? I read some of his former ones, at least once a day…. Pray make him write at least two a year: I like no reading so well." (To Murray, March 1 1820.) Byron, *Letters*, 211 and 212.
[24] The novel "infects [other genres] with its spirit of process and inconclusiveness," according to Bakhtin. (M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Vadim Liapunov and Kenneth Bromstrom (Austen: University of Texas Press, 1981), 7. Byron's poems exhibit these characteristics of Bakhtinian novelization, as well as this one: "The hero is located in a zone of potential conversation with the author, in a zone of *dialogical contact*" (45). Byron claims, by age nineteen, to have read thousands of novels: "I have also read (to my regret at present) above four thousand novels, including the works of Cervantes, Fielding, Smollett, Richardson, Mackenzie, Sterne, Rabelais, and Rousseau, &c. &c. The book, in my opinion, most useful to a man who wishes to acquire the reputation of being well read, with the least trouble, is "Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy," the most amusing and instructive medley of quotations and classical anecdotes I ever perused" *Life, Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, ed. Thomas Moore (London: John Murray, 1839), 48. Sterne might agree with the last point.
[25] Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," 340.
[26] Ian Duncan, *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 136.
[27] Byron, *Letters*, 50. (Jan. 2 1817.)
[28] Gallagher, "The Rise of Fictionality," 341.
[29] It goes along with Byron's attitude toward the visual arts, evident in this oft quoted paragraph:

> You must recollect, however, that I know nothing of painting [after visiting Palazzo Manfrini in Venice]; and that I detest it, unless it reminds me of something I have seen, or think it possible to see, for which reason I spit upon and abhor all the saints and subjects of one half of the impostures I see in the churches

and palaces; and when in Flanders, I never was so disgusted in my life, as with Rubens and his eternal wives and infernal glare of colours, as they appeared to me; and in Spain I did not think much of Murilo and Velasquez. Depend upon it, of all the arts, it is the most artificial and unnatural, and that by which the nonsense of mankind is most imposed upon.

Byron, *Letters*, 73. From a letter to Murray, Venice, April 14, 1817.

[30] He was distressed to be moved by theatrical "fiction":

> Last night I went to the representation of Alfieri's Mirra, the two last acts of which threw me into convulsions. I do not mean by that word a lady's hysterics, but the agony of reluctant tears, and the choking shudder, which I do not often undergo for fiction. This is but the second time for any thing under reality; the first was on seeing Kean's Sir Giles Overreach.

Byron, *Letters*, 161. Aug. 12, 1819 to Murray.

[31] Claire Tuite, "Tainted Love and Romantic Literary Celebrity," *ELH* 74.1 (2007): 71.

[32] Byron, *Letters*, 69. (April 9, 1817)

[33] Horace, *Satires* I, 4, 62.

[34] Byron, *Letters*, 31. (Oct. 5, 1816)

[35] Austen wrote *Persuasion* during 1816, but it was not published until December, 1817, after her death.

[36] He resists even posthumous fictionalizing: "my first object is the truth, even at my own expense," he writes, in a letter to Thomas Moore, Dec. 9, 1820 (264).

[37] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 7. As we know, Byron was one of the writers Bakhtin had in mind when he wrote these sentences, but it was the Byron of *Don Juan*.

[38] Wahrman, *Modern Self*, 211.

[39] John Keats, *Selected Letters of John Keats*, ed. Grant F. Scott (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 195.

[40] From Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Byron *Letters*, 356, respectively. Byron uses this phrase in reference to the drama he has just finished writing, *Cain*, in a letter to Murray written August 23, 1821, from Ravenna.

[41] Alan Richardson, *A Mental Theater: Poetic Drama and Consciousness in the Romantic Age* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 1.

[42] Byron, *Letters*, 60. Mar. 9, 1817. In the letters of February and March 1817, he keeps telling Murray that he doesn't think much of *Manfred* and that Murray can "put it in the fire" if he doesn't think it is good.

[43] Alan Richardson, "Byron and the Theater," in *The Cambridge Companion to Byron*, ed. Drummond Bone (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 134. [133-150.]

[44] Richardson argues, additionally, that writing for a "mental theater" allowed Byron "to write dramatic works of a much greater length, and touching on more sensitive political, ideological, and religious issues than would have been allowed on the licensed stage of the time" (136).

[45] Byron, *Letters*, 60. (Mar. 9, 1817)

[46] Andrew Rutherford, ed., *Lord Byron: The Critical Heritage*, (London: Routledge, 1970), 116.

[47] Byron, *Letters*, 104. (Oct. 12, 1817.)
[48] Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 119. Although the review was not published until 1820, Richard Hoppner translated it for Byron soon after the publication of *Manfred*.
[49] Byron, *Letters*, 104.
[50] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Major Works*, ed. H. J. Jackson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 235.
[51] Byron, *Letters*, 104.
[52] Byron, *Major Works*, 312.
[53] Richardson, "Byron and the Theater," 139.
[54] Sperry, Stuart, "Byron and the Meaning of *Manfred*," *Criticism* 16/3 (1974): 189.
[55] Sperry, like Richardson, reads *Manfred* as an acknowledgment of "limitations":

> It is a work that is in nature genuinely heuristic for the reason that it expresses, more clearly than any other work Byron composed, his efforts to come to terms with the quality of his own talent, its strengths and limitations, by an action of dramatic self-confrontation and appraisal. It suggests his struggle to transform himself by casting off a role he was no longer able or willing to play. (202)

[56] Thomas Moore in Byron, *Letters*, 186 and 188.
[57] Jerome McGann, "Notes," in Byron, *Major Works*, 1039.
[58] Byron, *Letters*, 110. (Jan. 19, 1818.)
[59] We might recall Charlotte Smith's insistence, in a Preface, that she could not write "cheerfully" because her writing is a direct expression of her authentic feelings of melancholy. Byron has decided to try a different role, just as Eliza Haywood did many times, to avoid "the charge of monotony."
[60] Byron, *Major Works*, 317 (lines 7, 22, 21, 32).
[61] Byron nods here to Robert Burns, whose "Tam o'Shanter" he imitates: thirty-seven lines into Burns' mock-epic the narrator says, "But to my tale."
[62] In his attacks on Wordsworth Byron also questions the status of Wordsworth's works as literature. In the Preface to *Don Juan* he refers to "The Thorn" as "the aforesaid poem, as far as it is a poem," as "the poem or production to which I allude," and as "a system of prosaic raving." (Byron, *Don Juan*, 37.)
[63] Foucault, "What is an Author?", 107.
[64] Christensen, *Byron's Strength*, xvii.
[65] See Collette Colligan, "The Unruly Copies of Byron's Don Juan: Harems, Underground Print Culture, and the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 59, No. 4 (Mar., 2005), University of California Press, 436.
[66] Byron, *Letters*, 137. (Sept. 19, 1818.) Byron is alternately humble and defiant, pragmatic and reckless in his letters to Murray about the publication of the first cantos of *Don Juan.* Even if he saw his identity as a husk of fame or a projection of readers' imaginations, he still was consistently concerned about what readers thought, and if they would keep buying him:

> If you would tell me exactly (for I know nothing, and have no correspondents, except on business) the state of the reception of our late publications, and the

feeling upon them, without consulting any delicacies (I am too seasoned to require them), I should know how and in what manner to proceed. (134)

(Jul. 17, 1818) He constantly vacillates in these letters to Murray between insecurity and complete dependence on public regard to decide "in what manner to proceed" and defiant egomania or at least *sprezzatura*. This vacillation often happens, as it does here, in the same letter.

[67] (April 6, 1819.) Byron writes to Murray:

> I have written to you several letters, some with additions, and some upon the subject of the poem itself, which my cursed puritanical committee have protested against publishing. But we will circumvent them on that point. I have not yet begun to copy out the Second Canto, which is finished, from natural laziness, and the discouragement of the milk and water they have thrown upon the First. I say all this to them as to you, that is, for *you* to say to *them*, for I will have nothing underhand. If they had told me the poetry was bad, I would have acquiesced; but they say the contrary, and then talk to me about morality—the first time I ever heard the word from any body who was not a rascal that used it for a purpose. I maintain that it is the most moral of poems; but if people won't discover the moral, that is their fault, not mine. I have already written to beg that in any case you will print *fifty* for private distribution. I will send you the list of persons to whom it is to be sent afterward. (140)

(Feb. 1, 1819)

> Keep the *anonymous*, in any case: it helps what fun there may be. But if the matter grows serious about *Don Juan*, and you feel *yourself* in a scrape, or *me* either, *own that I am the author*. *I* will never *shrink*; and if *you* do, I can always answer you in the question of Guatimozin to his minister—each being on his own coals. (168)

(Aug. 24, 1819)

[68] Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 162. The material conditions of publication also influenced the opinion of William Blackwood, the Edinburgh publisher, but in the opposite way:

> [Murray] sent me copies of the book per mail, without either letter or invoice, so that when I received them I was not disposed to read it with a favourable eye. I did read it, and I declare solemnly to you, much as I admired the talent and genius displayed in it, I never in my life was so filled with utter disgust. It was not the grossness or blackguardism which struck me, but it was the vile, heartless, and cold-blooded way in which this fiend attempted to degrade every tender and sacred feeling of the human heart. (164.)

[69] Colligan, "Unruly Copies" [433-462], 436.

[70] In the first seven or so stanzas the narrator is the author ("I want a hero, an uncommon want…."); he then shifts into the fictive narrator, who shifts into the narrator-character at stanza 23 or 24 (although the narrator also shuttles back and forth between these modes, as when he puts in a piece of reference to the contemporary literary world of the author: "she was… Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers" (50)).

[71] There are many other places where Byron explicitly makes the narrator a character. For example: "He died, and most unluckily, because/ According to all hints I could collect" it would have been a good legal case (54). "I asked the doctor after his disease" (54). "Yet Jóse was an honourable man;/ That I must say, who knew him very well" (54). Also in the manner of Sterne and Smith, Byron quotes from himself, placing text that existed as private or semi-public and sub-literary into the literary text, leading his posthumous readers especially to see the alignment of character with self. In stanza 36, Don Jóse is Byron, when the narrator quotes a letter from Byron to Moore:

> It was a trying moment that which found him
> Standing alone beside his desolate hearth,
> Where all his household gods lay shivered round him. (55)

The letter says: "I could have forgiven… anything, but the deliberate desolation piled upon me, when I stood alone upon my hearth, with my household gods shivered around me" (Byron, *Letters*, 138, Sept. 19, 1818).

[72] Like the Female Spectator, too, he pretends not to want to say what he is saying:

> For my part I say nothing, nothing, but
> This I will say (my reasons are my own)
> That if I had an only son to put
> To school (as God be praised that I have none),
> 'Tis not with Donna Inez I would shut
> Him up to learn his catechism alone.
> No, no, I'd send him out betimes to college,
> For there it was I picked up my own knowledge.
>
> For there one learns—'tis not for me to boast,
> Though I acquired—but I pass over that,
> As well as all the Greek I since have lost.
> I say that there's the place—but *verbum sat*.
> I think I picked up too, as well as most,
> Knowledge of matters—but no matter what.
> I never married, but I think I know
> That sons should not be educated so. (59)

At the end here, he uses the trick Smith used, of differentiating between author and narrator with a minor detail ("I never married"). As narrator, he presents himself as a gallant, experienced bachelor—sexy, but not scandalous. For example, on childish love he says: "A hand may first, and then a lip be kist. / For my part, to such doings I'm a stranger" (66). And on the difference between Juan's childish and his idea of solitude: "I'm fond myself of solitude or so, / But then I beg it may be understood; / By solitude I mean a sultan's, not / A hermit's, with a harem for a grot" (67).

[73] For example:

> I can't help thinking Juvenal was wrong,
> Although no doubt his real intent was good,
> For speaking out so plainly in his song,

So much indeed as to be downright rude. (56)

Through irony, he aligns himself with Juvenal as a great satirist and plain speaker. The public may accuse him of immorality or meanness, but it's really just rudeness, and his readers are getting their feathers ruffled over nothing. Just as it was for Smith in *The Banished Man*, Byron's "speaking out so plainly" about—or, actually, ironically deflating—his own scandal, and satirizing his enemies crossed the threshold of public tolerance.

[74] Tuite, "Tainted Love," 62.

[75] Colligan, "Unruly Copies," 440.

[76] See David Saunders, "Copyright, Obscenity and Literary History," *ELH*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (Summer, 1990): 431-444. Saunders explains that in British civil law:

> If a work is deemed immoral or obscene, the owners of the copyright cannot sue for an injunction against a pirate for damages, or for an account of profits so as to estimate the returns for the infringing edition. In short, the civil obscenity doctrine means that an obscene work can be treated as if it were in the public domain. Copies can be reproduced and sold, and profits pocketed, without contravening the civil law, though there remains the risk of criminal prosecution. (432)

Saunders touches on the fact that "the historical instances of the withholding of copyright protection from immoral, obscene or blasphemous works raise" an important theoretical question:

> what happens to the status of 'author' when individuals are rendered incapable of exercising the rights that the law invests in them when constituting them as 'authors'? …When Shelley and Byron seek to assert their status as owners of a copyright [he uses the examples of them trying to seek an injunction against pirates of Queen Mab and Cain], but are constrained from doing so by their status of liability for an immoral publication, we can observe that the legal personality of the author—in these circumstances—has no essential unity. (435)

[77] Byron, *Major Works*, 336.

[78] The mask of anonymity was thin. Francis Jeffrey, in an unsigned review in the Edinburgh Review praised *Beppo*—on aesthetic grounds—as novel and original for using conversational English in verse with consistent ease. Only one example of high rhetoric and "rapture" hinted that the author had "caught a spark from the ardent genius of Byron." (Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 124).

[79] See Peter T. Murphy "Impersonation and Authorship in Romantic Britain, *ELH*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (Autumn, 1992), 625-649. Murphy writes:

> *Blackwood's* is still infamous, in a quiet way, today; when it is remembered, it is remembered for containing most of the personal and vicious reviews of Keats that his survivors would say killed him. These reviews attack Keats's poetry, but more importantly they attack his person and character and are part of a larger pattern in the early years of *Blackwood's Magazine*. This pattern can be described as a nearly obsessive interest in the interaction, attachment and slippage between authors (published names) and persons (bodies indicated by names).

(626)

[80] Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 127.

[81] See, for example, Susan Stewart's *Crimes of Writing: Problems in the Containment of Representation*, in which "crimes of writing" are seen as "inversions or negations of cultural rules" (3); and Margaret Russett's *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845*, which argues that "modern subjectivity should be understood as a subset and, to some extent, as a precipitate of the representational practices the Romantics called 'romance' but which, in their derogated forms, also go by such names as 'imposture,' 'forgery,' plagiarism,' and 'delusion'" (5).

[82] Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 182-3.

[83] Byron's friend Thomas Moore believed in both the Romantic and the comic versions of self, and saw the evidence for their authenticity in Byron's physiognomy. Moore writes, about seeing Byron in August 1819:

> I was a good deal struck, however, by the alteration that had taken place in his personal appearance. He had grown fatter both in person and face, and the latter had most suffered by the change,—having lost, by the enlargement of the features, some of that refined and spiritualized look that had, in other times, distinguished it. The addition of whiskers, too, which he had not long before been induced to adopt, from hearing that some one had said he had a "faccia di musico," as well as the length to which his hair grew down on his neck, and the rather foreign air of his coat and cap,—all combined to produce that dissimilarity to his former self I had observed in him. He was still, however, eminently handsome; and, in exchange for whatever his features might have lost of their high, romantic character, they had become more fitted for the expression of that arch, waggish wisdom, that Epicurean play of humour, which he had shown to be equally inherent in his various and prodigally gifted nature; while, by the somewhat increased roundness of the contours, the resemblance of his finely formed mouth and chin to those of the Belvedere Apollo had become still more striking.

This retrospective account was written in or before 1830; Moore, in Byron, *Letters*, 172. The wish to believe in an authentic Byron, of course, has lived on. In *Byron and the Victorians,* Andrew Elfenbein points to the way readers wanted to believe "that they had made immediate contact with the poet's soul and that this intimacy proved *them* special" (quoted in Russett, *Fictions and Fakes*, 138). See also John O. Lyons, *The Invention of the Self The Hinge of Consciousness in the Eighteenth Century* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978). Lyons says that the difference between Byron and Childe Harold, "is at times razor thin, and the names are changed only to maintain the domain of fiction and to protect the creator's innermost privacy of self" (15).

[84] Foucault, "What is an Author?", 119.

[85] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 23.

[86] Peter Manning points to the work's relation to orality as its trouble spot:

> The loose construction of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and *Don Juan*, their episodic structure and additive, aggregative character, their repetitiousness and

copiousness, are the natural means of imagining extended narrative in an oral context. The seeming anomaly which needs to be resolved is that the conditions of literature in the early nineteenth century were scarcely those of an oral culture. (Manning, "Don Juan," 215.)

[87] Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, 136.

[88] Byron, *Major Works*, 329.

[89] Manning suggests that the "open-ended indeterminacy" of *Don Juan*'s speech-like style was eventually "stabilized by the books in which it was preserved." (Manning, "Don Juan," 216.)

[90] From a letter from John Murray to Byron, July 7, 1818, in *A Publisher and His Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of the Late John Murray*, ed. Samuel Smiles, (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2003), 396.

[91] Byron, *Letters*, 142. (Apr. 6, 1819.)

[92] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 49.

[93] Margaret Russett, *Fictions and Fakes: Forging Romantic Authenticity, 1760-1845* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 5.

[94] Byron, *Letters*, 355. When, for example, Byron cleaved too closely to the details of real shipwrecks in his novelistic scene in *Don Juan* III, he was accused of plagiarizing other shipwreck narratives. His response to this accusation is interesting for the perspective it offers on his idea of the importance of foundations in fact. He writes to Murray, on 23 August, 1821: "there was not a *single circumstance* of it *not* taken from *fact*; not, indeed, from any *single* shipwreck, but all from actual facts of different wrecks" (355). He defends himself here against two charges: the one that he has copied or stolen someone else's description of a shipwreck (which hardly seems a crime, unless the description was an invention—was fiction) and the other that he is not writing fiction but a transmutation of "actual fact" and "*real* life."

Some readers were outraged by the satiric references to his wife in Canto I. The reviewer at *Blackwood's* wrote: "Those who are acquainted, (as who is not?) with the main incidents in the private life of Lord Byron will scarcely believe [that he has] commence[d] a filthy and impious poem, with an elaborate satire on the character and manners of his wife." (Quoted in Manning, "Don Juan" 217.

[95] Byron, *Don Juan*, 96.

[96] Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, 135.

[97] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 24.

[98] Manning, "Don Juan," 219. This observation comes in a comment on these lines from Canto XVII: "I almost think that the same skin / For one without—has two or three within."

[99] Duncan, Ian "Hume, Scott, and the Rise of Fiction," *Angles on the English Speaking World*, Vol. 3, January, 2003, [63-76] (72).

[100] Byron, *Don Juan*, 41.

[101] Rutherford, *Critical Heritage*, 179; from a letter of 20 Feb. 1820 to Walter Savage Landor. See also Jerome McGann, *Byron and Romanticism* (New York: Cambridge

University Press, 2002). McGann explains Byron's representation of Southey in terms of lying and cant:

> Everyone is involved in deception; only the canting person reifies these deceptions, seeks to turn them from images of falsehood into figures of 'truth.' The latter is precisely the extension of the meaning of the word 'cant' which Byron's work carries out. Southey is therefore called not merely a liar in *Don Juan*, he is 'that incarnate lie' (X, st. 13). …The Byron of *Don Juan*… is a deceiver, whereas men like Southey are taken as the representatives of accepted Truth—'truth' being understood now, however, according to that excellent modern proverb, 'Truth is lies that have hardened.' (69)

Rather than seeing Byron simply as "a deceiver," I present him here as a scandalized figure aware of the fictionality, contingency, and commodification of his authorial self.

[102] Keats, *Letters*, 194.

[103] Manning, "Don Juan," 218.

[104] "Materials" is an interesting word choice. The figurative sense is primary: "Facts, information, evidence, etc., on which a conclusion is based, or from which an idea is developed, esp. in creating a work of literature or art" (OED). But might it have a punning sense, too, especially considering Byron's Shandean attention to the material conditions of the text, as we saw in *Beppo*? "Matter (not precisely characterized); that which constitutes the substance of a thing (physical or non-physical); a physical substance; a material thing" (OED). Although paper would not be made from wood pulp on an industrial scale until the 1840s, papermakers had begun experimenting with wood-based papers in the 1760s. In 1800, the author-inventor Matthias Koops produced "the first *practical* paper made from wood." (Dard Hunter, *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft* (New York: Knopf, 1974), 374.) The ancient Chinese used a dye and insecticide in their paper which was derived from the Amoor cork tree, but it is impossible to know whether or not Byron was aware of this esoteric fact.

[105] Byron, *Don Juan*, 68.

[106] Thomas Moore, *Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore*, ed. Lord John Russell (London: Longman, Greene, Longman, and Roberts, 1860), 271.

[107] Warner, *Licensing Entertainment*, 34.

[108] The most pointed, and personal, attacks on those contemporaries he saw as parasitic, hypocritical impostors, however, Byron didn't dare to publish. The Preface and Dedication to Cantos I & II, with their excoriating attacks on Wordsworth and Southey, remained unpublished (though how un-public is less certain) during Byron's lifetime and long after. Murray was too savvy a businessman to print them; and perhaps Byron felt they went beyond the Juvenalian mere rudeness he wanted to cultivate. (And if he would be rude, he would own it: he tells Murray to publish "*Juan anonymous, without the Dedication*, for I won't be shabby, and attack Southey under cloud of night." (Byron, *Letters*, 144; May 18, 1819.))

[109] Byron, *Don Juan*, 37.

[110] Byron extends this criticism in the Dedication:

> And Wordsworth in a rather long *Excursion*

(I think the quarto holds five hundred pages)
Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages.
'Tis poetry, at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the Dog Star rages,
And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the tower of Babel. (42)

[111] "Richard Brothers (1757-1824), an enthusiast, declared that he was a descendant of David and that Kind George must deliver up his crown to him. The Reverend Mr. Tozer, a follower of Joanna Southcott, predicted from the pulpit the birth of Shiloh," with whom Southcott claimed to be pregnant (Notes, in Byron, *Don Juan*, 563).

[112] William Wordsworth, *The Major Works*, ed. Stephen Gill (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 595.

[113] Wordsworth, *Major Works*, 597.

[114] Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, 135. "Hume's case, that all representation is a fiction, a *poesis*, since all experience is mediated through the imagination, provides a stronger and more comprehensive theoretical base for fiction than any that had appeared hitherto, delivering it from the sentence of inauthenticity, of categorical opposition to reality" (133).

[115] Byron, *Don Juan*, 38.

[116] Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, 24.

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