

# UC Santa Barbara

## UC Santa Barbara Electronic Theses and Dissertations

### Title

Melancholic Satires: Forms of Embodied Critique in the Eighteenth Century

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3sg6f9vc>

### Author

Cortes, Phillip James Martinez

### Publication Date

2020

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Melancholic Satires: Forms of Embodied Critique in the Eighteenth Century

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in English

by

Phillip James Martinez Cortes

Committee in charge:

Professor William B. Warner, Chair

Professor Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook

Professor James Kearney

June 2020

The dissertation of Phillip James Martinez Cortes is approved.

---

Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook

---

James Kearney

---

William B. Warner, Committee Chair

June 2020

Melancholic Satires: Forms of Embodied Critique in the Eighteenth Century

This project was supported in part by the University of California Office of the President

MRPI funding *MRP-19-600791*.



Copyright © 2020

by

Phillip James Martinez Cortes

All Rights Reserved

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Melancholy can refer to a state of irresolution or refusing to identify the influences and agencies that have long beset the melancholic. This acknowledgement is not a place for such repressive melancholy. Rather, I assume the kind of melancholy that early modern and eighteenth-century writers would understand as a state of passionate and bodily unrest. In this tribute, I recognize those whose impact has unsettled me to pursue this project and appreciate what it means to be alive.

I would first like to thank my committee—William B. Warner (Chair), E. Heckendorn Cook, and James Kearney. Their mentorship and insights have enhanced the quality of my scholarship, and their enthusiasm for my project has validated me throughout this whole process. I also thank the faculty, staff, and graduate students of the Department of English at UCSB. Of special mention, I am grateful for Bishnupriya Ghosh, whose sharp feedback on my prospectus as coordinator of the Doctoral Colloquium helped me refine my project in its emergent stages, and Mary Rae Staton and Katherine Carlman, the English Graduate Advisors, who have made sure to keep me on track during my time as a doctoral student.

I convey my gratitude to the University of California Office of the President Multi-campus Research Programs and Initiative Funding, and the UC Humanities Research Institute for providing me with funding to conduct research at the Houghton Library and Francis A. Countway Library's Center for the History of Medicine. I extend my gratitude to the generosity of the wonderful librarians at the Houghton and Countway Libraries. I am also grateful for the Dissertation Write-In Professional Development Award provided by University of California, Santa Barbara's Graduate Division. Katie Baillargeon, who

administered the Dissertation Write-In sessions, has offered invaluable tutorials on the task of revision.

I am indebted to the care of my friends. Throughout the writing of this dissertation, I have enjoyed the remarkable energy of old and new friends—Rebecca Baker, Oscar Balota, Sifu Rafal Brzozowski and his students, Dalia Bolotnikov Mazur, Nicole Dib, Somak Mukherjee, Mr. Sloth, Mikey Tabuzo, to name a few. I single out Mo Tautuaa, in particular, for teaching me that sass and subversion are integral to friendship. I thank my friends for enabling me to give this dissertation meaning and purpose.

I acknowledge the support of my parents, sister Ashley, and my extended family and relatives around the world – their grounding foundation has unexpectedly stirred me to study the paradoxes of art and reality. Amongst my family, Ning Ning was especially helpful at a crucial time in sending me a useful article for my research and in clarifying some of the legal laws concerning property. I honor the late Rosario Mendoza Cortes, my spiritual and intellectual advocate, whose achievements as academic and matriarch continue to inspire my respect. This dissertation is especially for all those who have passed on and whose influence on my heart is permanent. I especially remember my late dog and best friend Porscha. The trace of her affectionate love has never faded and has always persisted.

For the past 7 years, I have examined satire. My work would not be possible were it not for the satirists of the eighteenth century, and indeed, the continuing passion for satire today assures me that critique, protest, and resistance still and should invigorate our world. Satire in general is an art of *affecting* others into new modes of becoming, feeling, and living. I give thanks to the named and unnamed, the loved and longed for, whose affective imprint on my life will undoubtedly outlast the arguments that I have set forth in the following pages.

VITA OF PHILLIP JAMES MARTINEZ CORTES  
JUNE 2020

**Education**

- 2020 Ph.D., English, University of California, Santa Barbara  
Dissertation: “Melancholic Satires: Embodying Critique in the Eighteenth Century”  
Committee: William B. Warner (Chair), Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, and James Kearney
- 2013 M.A., English and American Literature, New York University
- 2010 B.A. with Highest Honors, English, University of California, Berkeley

**Peer-Reviewed Publications**

“Unmaking Paper in Seven Axioms: The Materials and Techniques of Early Modern Papermaking,” *The Making of a Broadside Ballad*, eds. Patricia Fumerton, Andrew Griffin, and Carl Stahmer (Santa Barbara, CA: EMC Imprint, 2016).

**Scholarly Manuscripts Under Review**

“The Dissent of the Body: Signifying Passionate Reason in Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub*,” under review at *The Eighteenth-Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 2019.

**Scholarly Manuscripts in Preparation**

*Article* “‘To be an Humble Hearer’: Plain Style Practices of Remediation, Regulation, and Simulation in Jonathan Swift’s *A Letter to a Young Clergyman, Upon Sleeping in Church, and Gulliver’s Travels*.”

*Article* “Spleen Trouble in Anne Finch and Alexander Pope.”

*Article* “Revelry and Revolt: Ownership and Affective Irony in Jane Collier’s *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*.”

**Awards / Fellowships**

- 2019-2020 University of California Humanities Research Institute Dissertation Support Grant
- 2019 UCSB Professional Development Award: Dissertation Write-In Participant
- 2017 Early Modern Center Graduate Research Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara
- 2016 William and Marjorie Frost Memorial Essay Award, UCSB English Department
- 2014-2015 Early Modern Center Graduate Research Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara
- 2014 English Department Arnhold Summer Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara
- 2013, 2015 English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA) Fellowship, UCSB English Department
- 2013-2014 English Department Arnhold Fellowship, UC Santa Barbara

## Conference Presentations

“Swift’s Heterogeneous Moral Vision,” “Sight and Seeing” Panel, 50<sup>th</sup> American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Annual Meeting, Denver, CO, 22 March 2019.

“Satire and Passion, The Lash and the Flesh,” Satire: Deaths, Births, Legacies Conference, York St. John University, York, U.K., 2 June 2018.

“The Hypersensitive Critic: The Hypersensitive Critic: Matthew Bramble’s Hypochondria in Tobias Smollett’s *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*,” “Hypochondriacs and their Friends” Panel, 48<sup>th</sup> American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, 2 April 2017.

“Critical Senses: Understanding Sympathetic Encounters in Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*,” The Importance of Sympathy and Feeling Panel, 2016 Annual Meeting of the Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (WSECS), 13 February 2016.

“ ‘A fact that we do not understand’: Experiencing the Digressive Exemplarity of Swift’s Sermons,” “ ‘His Digressions are the Digressions of a Gentleman’: Anecdotal and Tangential Thinking as Rhetorical Devices” Panel, 46<sup>th</sup> American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, 19 March 2015.

“The Work of Art in the Wake of Machine Translation, or Distant Reading Benjamin’s *One-Way Street*,” Translation and Interpretation Panel, 112<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA), Riverside Convention Center, Riverside, CA, 2 November 2014.

“Fragmentation and Incompleteness: Constructing the Knowledge Economy in Bacon’s *New Atlantis*,” Capital Flow: Education as Exchange in Antiquity and the Renaissance seminar, 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), New York University, New York, NY, 20 March 2014.

“The Salvation of Satire: Readers, Reason, and Revelation in Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub*,” Directions and Discovery in Humor and Satire Panel, 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA), Seattle University, Seattle, WA, 21 October 2012.

“Milton and the Ambiguity of Experience: the “Accident” of the Double in the Emended *Paradise Lost*,” Accidents in Literature and Theory seminar, 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA), Brown University, Providence, RI, 30 March 2012.

“Milton and the Voice of the Irreducible: Poetic and Demonic Creation in *Paradise Lost*,” Ninth Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies Graduate Conference, Amherst, MA, 15 October 2011.

## Teaching Experience

### Teaching Associate (Instructor of Record)

Summer 2018 Introduction to Shakespeare

Summer 2016, 2017 Introduction to Literary Studies

Winter 2015 Free Speech and Censorship: From Milton and Locke to Justice Brandeis



and the latest “Free Speech Incident”

### Teaching Assistant

Winter 2020	Shakespeare, Later Plays
Spring 2019	Introduction to U.S. Minority Literature
Winter 2019	Southern Literature: Language and Culture
Spring 2018	American Literature from 1900 to Present
Spring 2017, 2020	Literature and the Information, Media, and Communication Revolutions
Fall 2016, 2017	English Literature from the Medieval Period to 1650
Spring 2016, Fall 2019	Introduction to Literary Studies
Winter 2016, 2018	British and American Literature from 1650 to 1789
Fall 2015, 2018	Introduction to Shakespeare

### Invited Lectures

“Factuality, Reality, and Mediating Agencies in *ROBINSON CRUSOE* and *A TRUE RELATION OF THE APPARITION OF ONE MRS. VEAL*,” British and American Literature from 1650 to 1789, Winter 2018, UCSB.

“Imagery in *The Winter’s Tale*,” English Literature from the Medieval Period to 1650, Fall 2016, UCSB.

“Against Reason: Coming to Terms with the Satire of Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels: Voyage IV*,” British and American Literature from 1650 to 1789, Winter 2016, UCSB.

### Academic Service

2019 - 2020 Humanities Project.  newspapers  humanities	Research Assistant for the 4Humanities <i>WhatEveryISays</i> Digital  This project founded by Alan Liu explores what English-speaking  have to say about the discipline of the humanities, using digital  tools of visualizing topic models. My main role involves analyzing how the rhetoric of the economic and non-economic value of the humanities in newspaper articles shifted from before the Great  Recession  to after the Great Recession.
2018 Conference	Moderator, “Cultures of Satire,” Satire: Deaths, Births, Legacies
2014-2018	Early Modern Center Annual Conference Planning Committee Member
2017-2018	Cohort Representative: Council of Graduate Students
2017 Studies (WSECS)	Graduate Assistant for the Western Society of Eighteenth-Century

Conference.  
 2017 WSECS Panel Moderator for “Aesthetics and/as Science.”  
 2015 Graduate Mentor: English Department Recruitment  
 2015 After Print: Manuscripts in the Eighteenth-Century Conference Co-Organizer.  
 2014-2015 Early Modern Center Conference Chair: Making, Unmaking, and Remaking.

### **Professional Development**

2017-2018 Assistant Editor for *EMC Imprint Issue, Ballads and Performance: The Multimodal Stage in Early Modern England*  
 2014-2015 Assistant Editor for *EMC Imprint Issue, The Making of a Broadside Ballad*  
 2015-2020 Research Assistant for 4Humanities *WhatEveryISays* Project  
 2013-2014 English Broadside Ballad Archive (EBBA): Cataloguer and Transcriber  
 2011-2013 America Reads Tutor, NYU, Booker T. Washington Junior High School Transcriber

### **Specializations**

Writing, Composition, and Rhetoric  
 Eighteenth-Century Literature  
 Renaissance Literature  
 Development of the English Novel from the Eighteenth Century through Romanticism  
 Affect Theory and Theories of Mind  
 Digital Humanities  
 General Literary Theory

### **Professional Memberships**

Modern Language Association (MLA)  
 Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (WSECS)  
 American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies (ASECS)  
 Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA)  
 American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)

### **References**

William B. Warner, Professor of English, UCSB, [warner@english.ucsb.edu](mailto:warner@english.ucsb.edu)  
 Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, Associate Professor of English, UCSB, [ecook@english.ucsb.edu](mailto:ecook@english.ucsb.edu)  
 James Kearney, Associate Professor of English, UCSB, [kearney@ucsb.edu](mailto:kearney@ucsb.edu)  
 Rachael Scarborough King, Associate Professor of English, UCSB, [rking@english.ucsb.edu](mailto:rking@english.ucsb.edu)

## ABSTRACT

Melancholic Satires: Forms of Embodied Critique in the Eighteenth Century

by

Phillip James Martinez Cortes

*Melancholic Satires* argues that eighteenth-century satires invite readers to become more aware that their bodies always unsettle their minds. Scholars traditionally define satire as a normative mode of criticism that uses wit and humour to denounce deviations from moral standards. These scholars have not yet considered that these texts mobilize anti-normative practices of resisting structures of domination through bodily and passionate criticism. My project introduces the affects of passion and the body as valid objects of inquiry in the field of satire studies. Authors such as Jane Collier, Anne Finch, Alexander Pope, Tobias Smollett, and Jonathan Swift develop what I call “melancholic satires,” ones that not only present a figure with a melancholic perspective, but also convey passionate rhetoric that evokes the disruptive body’s influence on the mind. Medical theorists pathologize that the body’s humours and passions destabilize the mind into the delusional state known as melancholy, and moral philosophers recommend the moderation of the disruptive passions as virtuous conduct. These skeptical accounts understand that the passions represent unstable sense-impressions, and they suspiciously believe that the passions can disrupt rational thinking. Instead, eighteenth-century satires advocate that melancholic

destabilization can *beneficially* inspire the mind into subversive critique. For instance, in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*, Matthew Bramble's sickly feelings influence him into criticizing that London's commercialism represents a diseased condition. Bramble's sensitivity to his diseased body enables his satirical sensitivity to commercial excess. Moreover, in Finch's poem *The Spleen*, her speaker articulates a sensitivity to her melancholic spleen in order to critically reject misogynistic views that limit women's occupations to the domestic sphere. My project proposes that understanding eighteenth-century satires requires the analysis of how these texts' affective and corporeal rhetoric persuades audiences of the perverse virtues of embodied sensitivity. *Melancholic Satires* contends that satirical literature champions the emotional foundations of social commentary.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction to <i>Melancholic Satires</i> : Normativity and Anti-Normativity.....	1
2. The Dissent of the Body: Enthusiastic Disconnections in Jonathan Swift's <i>A Tale of a Tub</i> .....	54
3. Spleen Trouble: Deviant Subjectivities in the Affective Backgrounds of Matthew Green, Anne Finch, and Alexander Pope.....	105
4. The Malaprop of Melancholy in Tobias Smollett's <i>The Expedition of Humphry Clinker</i> .....	162
5. Conclusion. Revelry and Revolt: Ownership and Affective Irony in Jane Collier's <i>An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting</i> .....	215
Bibliography.....	268

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO *MELANCHOLIC SATIRES*:

#### NORMATIVITY AND ANTI-NORMATIVITY

Introduction, Part 1: Argument, Interventions, and Affective Formalism

#### 1. Argument

Among the detestable sights that Lemuel Gulliver encounters in his voyages are the dead historical figures summoned by Glubbdubdrib's necromancers in the third voyage of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Gulliver's disgust soon gives way to melancholy, allowing him to offer the following observation:

[I]t gave me melancholy Reflections to observe how much the Race of human kind was degenerate among us, within these hundred Years past. How the Pox [venereal disease] under all its Consequences and Denominations had altered every Lineament of an *English* Countenance, shortened the size of bodies, unbraced the Nerves, relaxed the Sinews and Muscles, introduced a sallow Complexion, and rendered the Flesh loose and Rancid. (187)

In the passage above, Swift's satire on the English's diseased bodies and humanity's degeneration is grounded in "melancholy Reflections." Gulliver's melancholy is an affective sensitivity that enables him to associate implicitly and critically their bodily corruption with their moral corruption. Gulliver's melancholic affective sensitivity, therefore, forms the lens that produces critique.

I begin with this passage from Swift to show that satire can be studied by paying attention to the observer's melancholy. When scholars discuss eighteenth-century satire specifically and satire more generally, they normatively define satire as witty or humorous social commentary attacking perceived deviations from a moral convention.<sup>1</sup> Typically, these scholars produce valuable insights on this genre's sociopolitical contexts like the relationship of satire to classical models and on its usage of literary devices like irony or personas,<sup>2</sup> so in these respects, scholars regard satire for their historical, cultural, and literary significance. These scholars, however, have not yet rigorously examined satire's affective significance. My project argues that satirical criticism is an emotional and bodily activity.<sup>3</sup> I expand our existing definitions of satire and thereby enrich satire studies by arguing that satirical criticism engages its sociopolitical and discursive contexts through what I tautologically identify as *affectively formal experiments* in which literary devices are used *in deeply affective ways*. Through their implementation of affectively resonant forms, eighteenth-century satirists advocate being mindfully sensitive to the body and passions shaping the mental faculties. By considering satire as affective criticism, I contend that eighteenth-century satirists champion being sensitive observers of the body. I define these satires that espouse such embodied mindfulness "melancholic satires," and I introduce an affective formalist methodology of analyzing these satires.

---

<sup>1</sup> For an overview of normatively canonical definitions of satire, see Jonathan Greenberg, *The Cambridge Introduction to Satire* (2019), 13-15.

<sup>2</sup> For example, see John Sitter, *Arguments of Augustan Wit* (1991), and Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974).

<sup>3</sup> For a sampling of some exemplary scholarly accounts of satire, see Simon Dickie (2011), Northrop Frye (1957), Ashley Marshall (2013), Ronald Paulson (1967), and Howard Weinbrot (1982, 2005).

Writers such as Jane Collier, Anne Finch, Matthew Green, Alexander Pope, Tobias Smollett, and Jonathan Swift wrote these “melancholic satires.” These kinds of satires have three primary aims: they present a character(s) or speaker who have a melancholic orientation for engaging with the world; they communicate their satire using affectively resonant formal devices; and, through these affective forms, they teach audiences of the entanglement of the mind with the body. Today, we might understand melancholy as a condition of languishing sadness or a persistent inability to process loss.<sup>4</sup> However, in the classical age, early modern period, and eighteenth century, melancholy was also commonly pathologized as a mental and bodily disorder in which excess elements, such as bile, humours, “vapours,” and most importantly the passions, disrupt the mind’s reasoning. During this era, the mentally disruptive passions in particular referred to the body’s sense impressions, roused feelings, and erratic appetites. I treat all these disruptive bodily forces as the *affects*. *Melancholy, as I define it specifically for my dissertation, denotes a condition of affective destabilization.* The melancholic satirists I examine reinterpret these pathological accounts of melancholy’s disruptive nature as beneficial. Moreover, these satirists reinterpret moral philosophical theories about the passions. Moral philosophers like René Descartes, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, and Frances Hutcheson variously advise that the

---

<sup>4</sup> For example, when discussing melancholy in whatever period, it is inevitable that one comes across Freud’s theorization of “melancholia” in opposition to mourning (“Mourning and Melancholia,” 1914-1916). If there is a convergence between Freud and the eighteenth century, it is that Freud’s theory of *mourning* resembles in part the melancholic critical perspective of the satires: “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (246). The satirist, in one respect, mourns the world’s empty vanities. Yet this project cannot usefully apply Freudian notions of melancholy or mourning for the reason that the satirists do not really deal with “loss” in the sense that Freud discusses “loss” in relation to the ego. Recently, Elizabeth Wilson in *Gut Feminism* (2015) has offered a refreshing new reading of Freud’s melancholy by showing that Freud implies melancholy has elements of revolt against one’s affective attachments.



individual should moderate one's potentially disruptive passions, yet the satirists I study intimate that the affects stimulate the mind into critique. Overall, melancholic satirists communicate an affective criticism celebrating the destabilizing influence of the body.

What is important to realize is that classical and early modern medical texts pathologize melancholy to result from the spleen's failure to regulate the humours, vapours, passions, and other bodily elements, and as a result of this deregulation, these elements rise up into the brain causing imaginative and delusional fancies of enthusiasm, hypochondria, hysteria, and despair. Melancholy's affectivity, therefore, is a condition of bodily destabilization—a condition that medical and moral philosophical texts argue should be regulated for the healthy and virtuous development of the self. Essentially, these texts fashion a normative model of the self in which the mental faculties represent forces of rational control and the bodily faculties represent destabilizing forces threatening this control. Medical writers and moral philosophers recommend that the sovereign subjectivity of the mind establish its dominance over the objectified body. Challenging this binary model of regulation, melancholic satires value corporeal destabilization as beneficial. Melancholic satirists subversively suggest that the passionate body facilitates critical reflection.

*Melancholic Satires* examines the *affective intensities* of the enthusiastic melancholy of the hack-writing narrator in Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), the *corporeal excess* of Matthew Bramble's hypochondriac melancholy in Tobias Smollett's *Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), the *background affects* of the splenetic melancholies in Anne Finch's *The Spleen* (1709), Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, 1714, and 1717), and Matthew Green's *The Spleen* (1737), and the *affective ironies* of Jane Collier's melancholic revelry and revolt in *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* (1753). In

each of these chapters, I scrutinize a specific feature of these satirists' anti-normative formal experiments: as intensity, background, excess, and irony. These features are not exclusive to each satirist, but my method of isolating these elements provides a richer, more textured understanding of these satires. Through these different features, melancholy serve as the lens through which these very different satirists interpret the world. The satirists each materialize the affective facets of melancholy—intensity, background, excess, and irony—through artificial literary forms and techniques. By analyzing these satires' affective features and forms, I can articulate the embodied vitality of melancholic criticism as well as demonstrate how these satirists' formal literary innovations are also affectively attentive innovations.

## 2. Interventions in Satire Studies: Against Definitional Normativity and Towards Formal Practices of Affective Destabilization

My dissertation intervenes in the current literary conversation by approaching satire through theories of mind and affect. Satire scholars have explored quite extensively satire's historical contexts and literary devices; considering satire's affects will yield new insights into how satirists model an embodied sensitivity to the bodily forces that influence reason. By attending to the affects of satirical rhetoric, I argue that these satirists insist that the passions, body, and melancholy are not detrimental to but rather beneficially integral to the functioning of reason; and by drawing from contemporary theories on affect, I emphasize that these satirists sought to evoke through literary representation the affective instability of the body.

My initial intervention is chiefly methodological. In the field of satire scholarship, there is a methodological trend of ascribing certain generic norms for satire. I view satire as an affectively formalistic mode, practice, and performance. Even though critics have contributed many learned insights on satires' generic conventions, I believe these normative approaches can restrict critical inquiry from pursuing other investigative pathways. One limiting effect of approaching satire as bound to normative and generic conventions is assuming satire has an unchanging essence. For example, Northrop Frye in *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) writes: "Two things are essential to satire; one is wit or humor, founded on fantasy or a sense of the grotesque or absurd, the other is an object of attack" (224). Frye's definition systematizes satire into "essentials"; nevertheless, Frye establishes a canonical definition of satire that has since influenced later definitions of satire. For instance, Edward Rosenheim (1963) sums up satire as "an attack by means of a manifest fiction upon discernible historical particulars," and by doing so, he acknowledges satirical attack as having a reference to the "historical particulars" of the world outside of the satire (31).<sup>5</sup> Concurring with Frye and Rosenheim, Sheldon Sacks (1971) identifies that the objects of satirical attack, which he describes as a form of "ridicule," "have some sort of an identifiable counterpart external to the created fictional world" (334).<sup>6</sup> Discussing contemporary satires, Kathryn Hume (2007) classifies attack as the most important feature of satire and more open-endedly acknowledges that the attack can "have a historically specific target" or could target "general human problems" (305).<sup>7</sup> Establishing these normative definitions, these

---

<sup>5</sup> Edward Rosenheim, *Swift and the Satirist's Art* (1963).

<sup>6</sup> Sheldon Sacks, "From: Toward a Grammar of the Types of Fiction" (1971).

<sup>7</sup> The other eight common features of satire for Hume are: humor or wit, the author's revelry in their performance, exaggeration, conveying a moral or existential truth, an attitude of mockery and ironic disparagement, an approach that may be inquisitive, the presence of a

scholars end up creating a discourse of what satire *is* by limiting this topic to normative criteria of ridicule, attack, wit, humor, and the like.

By establishing satire's purported criteria, these scholars likewise participate in the normative exercise of categorical classification. However, as other scholars have pointed out, satire itself can be just as indefinable as, we will see, the condition of melancholy is. As Alvin P. Kernan puts it in his study, *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (1959), "The protean nature of satire has interfered with any precise definition of its conventions" (253), and, more recently in *The Cambridge Introduction to Satire* (2019), Jonathan Greenberg avers that "[s]atire's ambiguous status as genre, mode, and practice already suggests some of the difficulty that besets any effort at defining it" (11). Kernan's and Greenberg's observations on satire's definitional ambiguity caution us from trying to fix this rich literary tradition onto a normative understanding. Satire may very well be an anti-normative mode even though satirists like Swift or Pope may outwardly claim their satires intend to reform audiences. Satire's ambiguity can be briefly compared with Anne Finch's address to the melancholic Spleen in her poem *The Spleen* as a "Proteus to abus'd Mankind...varying thy perplexing Form" (2, 5). Finch's protean Spleen is comparable to satire's protean nature. As Greenberg observes, satire's etymological roots betray a degree of undecidability in the sense that "satire" can derive from the Latin phrase *lanx satura*, "meaning a mixed platter of fruit or nuts," which "presumably refers to the varied and miscellaneous nature of Roman verse satire," or "satire" could be associated with the Greek mythological figure of "satyr," whose crude and sexually aggressive disposition may be

---

moral standard, and a reformatory goal (305). See Kathryn Hume, "Diffused Satire in Contemporary American Fiction" (2007).

related to the “verbally aggressive satirist” (11).<sup>8</sup> Such observations on satire’s (and melancholy’s) ambiguous status support my own resistance to normative understandings of satire.

I believe it is less important to treat satire through a normative framework, but instead as an anti-normative performative practice. In “Some Reflections on Satire” (1968), Patricia Meyer Spacks reflects that satire is less of a genre and more of a “literary procedure, not a kind of writing but a way of writing” (362).<sup>9</sup> Sharing this sentiment, in *The Practice of Satire in England, 1658-1770* (2013), Ashley Marshall makes the convincing case for studying satire as reflecting multifarious practices. The practices of satire, Marshall argues, appear in genres as various and distinct as the novel, play, poem, to name just a few, and these satirical practices tend to be specific to their historical moments. In this spirit of approaching satire as anti-normative, I propose that eighteenth-century satires in particular consistently perform the interrelated practices of *affective criticism* and *affective formalism*—practices of using various literary, technical, and textual forms to interrogate the body’s influence and scrutinize repressive and/or immoral forces in society. I will define in more detail later in this introduction what these concepts of *affect*, *affective criticism*, *affective formalism* mean, and I will elaborate how using these concepts contributes new methodological approaches in literary studies.

Through this method of analysis, I study how satirists critique their targets by formally representing bodily affects as literary artifices. Central to these satirists’ subversiveness is their paradoxical practice of communicating the complex reality of human

---

<sup>8</sup> For another discussion on satire’s relationship to *lanx satura*, see Ronald Paulson, *Satire and the Novel in the Eighteenth Century* (1967), 21.

<sup>9</sup> See Spacks, “Some Reflections on Satire” (1968).

affects through, if you will, the formal artifices of literary affectations. In many ways, their formalism evinces their own tendencies towards relying on normative communicative structures, techniques, and literary artistry. These satirists play with the tensions between form and content, artifice and reality, affectation and affect, body and mind, self and society, in effect blurring these binary oppositions and embracing the fluidity of satire. Despite such fluidity, if satire is complicitly entangled with formal structure, can satire subvert the very iniquitous and/or immoral patterns of society? Can Swift's formal use of metaphors and various prose sequences defeat the enthusiastic structures of thinking of his hack writing persona? Can Anne Finch's Pindaric ode structure overturn misogynistic ideologies? Can Tobias Smollett's repetitive epistolary excesses deconstruct the disease of luxury? Can Jane Collier's affective ironies break down the proprietary ownership of women? Or do these satirists' formal innovations end up reaffirming their targets? Can satire save society?

To engage these questions on satire's efficacy, I analyze the affective and formal dimensions of eighteenth-century satirical literature. These texts complicate the very idea of "form" only because they seek to craft bodily affects into readable shape. I will return to these ideas of "form" and "formalism" later in this Introduction, but what's important to keep in mind at the moment is the sheer difficulty of assessing these satirists' formal experiments. This difficulty has to do with their paradoxical practice of investigating how affect works through formal artifices. Their practice simulates the affects as formal affectations that enable these satirists to think and feel through the aliveness of passion, reason, and social criticism. One of the chief models for these satirists, as I will shortly discuss, is René Descartes, whose experimental excursion into bodily formalism provides satirists with an example of how to engage the affective reality of the self.

### 3. Interventions in Satire Studies Continued: Normative and Anti-Normative Discourses of Sensibility

In this study, I illuminate the ways in which eighteenth-century satirists advocate the perverse moral standard of being mindfully sensitive to the fact that the body and the passions shape the mental faculties. Contrary to scholars who insist on normative definitions, I propose that satires may in fact be deviant because of their resistance to an all-coherent moralistic normativity. My argument intervenes in satire studies by demonstrating that these satires formally represent the destabilizing bodily forces that undermine human rationality. A moral norm perhaps assumes a rationally determined set of conduct. Melancholic satirists strive for an altogether different and subversive norm. Their standard lies in the entangled affective connections between body and mind, passion and reason, self and the social world. In eighteenth-century studies, scholars studying the discourse of sensibility have explored these entanglements. G. J. Barker-Benfield (1992) calls this discourse part of the “culture of sensibility,” a culture in which aspects of economic, political, medical, scientific, sexual, social, and aesthetic discourses were obsessed with “a cult of feeling, a cult of melancholy, a cult of distress, a cult of refined emotionalism, a cult of benevolence, and cults of individual writers,” all tending “toward the aggrandizement of feeling and its investment with moral value” (xix).<sup>10</sup> As Barker-Benfield suggests, this culture encouraged its own normativity when writers associate emotional sensitivity with

---

<sup>10</sup> See Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility* (1992).

moral development. To be emotionally sensitive enables the self, these writers insist, to be virtuous, compassionate, and considerate of the affections of others.

To demonstrate how exactly the discourse of sensibility encourages normativity, let me discuss three nuanced conceptions of sensibility in the realms of moral philosophy, medicine, and fiction. My first example is the moral philosophical text *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) by Anthony Ashley Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury:

The Mind, which is Spectator or Auditor of other Minds, cannot be without its Eye and Ear; so as to discern Proportion, distinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment or Thought which comes before it. It can let nothing escape its Censure. It feels the Soft and Harsh, the Agreeable and Disagreeable, in the Affections; and finds a Foul and Fair, a Harmonious and a Dissonant, as really and truly here, as in any musical Numbers, or in the outward Forms or Representations of sensible Things. Nor can it withhold its Admiration and Extasy, its Aversion and Scorn, any more in what relates to one than to the other of these Subjects. So that to deny the common and natural Sense of a Sublime and Beautiful in Things, will appear an Affectation merely, to any-one who considers duly of this Affair. (Part 2, Section 3, Par. 4)

Shaftesbury idealizes the mind as a panoptic apparatus whose sensibility sees, hears, and feels external sense stimuli and then judges these stimuli as “Soft” or “Harsh,” “Agreeable” or “Disagreeable,” “Foul” or Fair,” and “Harmonious” or “Dissonant.” However, the mind can still be subject to a lack of control when he claims that it cannot “withhold its Admiration and Extasy, its Aversion and Scorn.” He later adds, “[I]n the sensible kind of Objects, the Species or Images of Bodys, Colours, and Sounds, are perpetually moving



before our Eyes, and acting on our Senses, even when we sleep” (Part 2, Section 3, Par. 5). The physical sensibility of the self, according to Shaftesbury, is a constant affective experience of stimuli “acting on...[the] Senses.” Despite the capacity of the sensible self to be overwhelmed by these impressions, the mind ultimately translates these sense impressions into qualitative judgments. Shaftesbury forecloses sensibility as mainly through this normative sovereignty of the mind. For him the mind stabilizes affect, nature, and the body, yet he acknowledges that this cerebral normativity can be disrupted by sense impressions. Shaftesbury recommends that the individual moderates their sensible affections and appetites into a “Regularity,” so that this being “good in *one* sense, causes him to be good also in *the other*” (Part 2, Section 1, Par. 2). He urges that being individually “good” makes one “useful to others...[a]nd thus Virtue and Interest may be found at last to agree” (Part 2, Section 1, Par.2). Shaftesbury’s normative project exemplifies a dominant dictum of this discourse of sensibility: individuals should regulate their passions as an act of private “Virtue,” so that they can exist in social harmony with others in the public “Interest.”

The norm of maintaining the social order, as Shaftesbury’s discourse of sensibility prescribes, hinges on the constant surveillance of the self’s bodily instabilities. To be sensible is to regulate the private body into a social one. Yet in as much as this normative discourse sought to idealize self-moderation, this discourse can encourage a violent domination of the passionate body. Ildiko Csengei (2003), in particular, has demonstrated that eighteenth-century medical writings on violent examinations of animals’ sensations can lead to questions of both sensibility and insensibility.<sup>11</sup> Csengei, for example, considers

---

<sup>11</sup> In her wide-ranging, erudite work, Csengei studies the animal vivisections of Albrecht von Haller and Robert Whytt and representations of torture and human suffering in letters written during the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763). I will only treat Csengei’s account of

Albrecht von Haller's *A Dissertation on the Sensible and Irritable Parts of Animals* (1755).

The relevant passage from Haller is when he discusses vivisectioning animals to determine what they can sense and not sense as signs of sensibility and its absence: "I call those parts sensible, the irritation of which occasions evident signs of pain and disquiet in the animal. On the contrary, I call that insensible, which being burnt, tore, pricked, or cut till it is quite destroyed, occasions no sign of pain nor convulsion, nor any sort of change in the situation of the body" (156 qtd. in Csengei). Csengei introduces Haller's approach of locating sensibility "at its extremities where sensibility—in the process of its emergence—is hardly any more distinguishable from the most intense experiences of pain" (156). According to Csengei's account, Haller determines sensibility happens when he observes animals feeling pain in response to burning, cutting, and lacerating parts of their bodies; and he observes insensibility happens when he perceives the animals not moving in response to his tortuous acts. Csengei compellingly contends that examining "the interrelatedness of sensibility, pain, and cruelty...may lead to a different understanding of sensibility as a supposedly readable, linguistically available construct" (157). Sensibility for Haller is what he readably observes on the suffering animal, yet insensibility or what Csengei qualifies as "*not* sensibility" represents an "absent signified, the unreadable point of Haller's system of signification" (158, emphasis in the original). Csengei's study invites us to think that the discourse of sensibility can create epistemological systems of invasively reading for signs of feeling. In these systems, the sensible observer may be apathetic to the suffering of others.

---

Haller here. See Ildikó Csengei, "Sensibility in Dissection: Affect, Aesthetics, and the Eighteenth-Century Body in Pain" (2003).

Haller fashions a normative system that uses the evidence of pain to define the existence of sensibility. Haller may represent an example of what happens when the normative demands of the discourse of sensibility lead to cruelty. Haller's system suggests that normativity also destabilizes bodies into becoming both painfully readable as sensibility and yet mis-readable and unreadable as insensibility. Unlike the idealized portrait of Shaftesbury's sensibility, Haller's model endorses violently destabilizing bodies for the sake of securing normative knowledge.

Moral philosophy and medicine institute discourses of sensibility through regimens of stabilization and destabilization. In the world of imaginative literature, we will also find the same kind of interplay. On the one hand, there are writers who encourage that literature's effects on audience's sensibilities should be balanced: literature should make them feel only moderate and harmless amounts of passion. For example, in *Rambler, No. IV. Saturday, March, 31, 1750*, Samuel Johnson advises that

[F]amiliar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects. (10)

Referencing stage performances, romances, and other works of fiction, Johnson cautions that such imaginative art should convey the "best examples" to prevent readers from experiencing the "violence" of passions that are "mischievous or uncertain in its effects."

Art for Johnson should entertain passionate subversion, but only if the “so strongly” active passions are not harmful.

Like the moral philosophical and medical accounts before him, Johnson believes the sensibility of feeling should not be unreadable or “uncertain in its effects”; rather, sensibility should knowable, containable, and determinate. However, other writers of art conceive that the dangers of passionate sensibility afford the feeling self a degree of agency over others. For example, Patricia Meyer Spacks (1994) addresses how eighteenth-century women writers, such as of Frances Sheridan, Frances Brooke, Frances Burney, and Elizabeth Inchbald, “recognize that the capacity for feeling can lead a man or a woman in various directions, that sensibility does not automatically equate with virtue...that women, like men, may wish to exercise power” and “make their goodness an instrument of power” (520).<sup>12</sup> In addition to these women writers, I will include Jane Collier as another writer who shows how passionate sensibility as an instrument for subverting the misogynistic rule of men.<sup>13</sup> In the melancholic satire of *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* (1753), Collier ironically assumes a persona who instructs her pupils of mostly married women to torment and emotionally abuse their husbands, servants, female friends, and unmarried female dependents. Her persona enthuses,

This love of Tormenting may be said to have one thing in common with what, some writers affirm, belongs to the true love of virtue; namely, that it is exercised for its own sake, and no other...I know that the most expert practitioners deny this; and frequently declare, when they whip, cut, and slash, the body, or when they tease,

---

<sup>12</sup> See Patricia Meyer Spacks, “Oscillations of Sensibility” (1994).

<sup>13</sup> I will examine Collier’s satire more extensively in the Conclusion chapter.

vex, and torment, the mind, that 'tis done for the good of the person that suffers. Let the vulgar believe this if they will; but I, and my good pupils, understand things better; and, while we can enjoy the high pleasure of Tormenting, it matters not what the objects of our power feel, think, or believe. (43).

The persona conflates virtue with emotional and physical torture; and subverting the Shaftesburian norm that one should regulate one's passions for the public good, the persona insists that tormenters should abuse "for the good of the person that suffers." The deliberately uncompassionate tormenter distorts the virtuous social order into a vicious community of subordination. In this irreverent and ironic text, Collier satirizes that the regulatory norms of sensibility may in fact codify passionate bodies into virtuous and knowable objects, and in such an oppressive system, women can empower themselves by making their passionate bodies disruptively unreadable through acts of cruelty.

Melancholic satirists resist the normative discourses of sensibility in moral philosophy and medicine by committing to the anti-normative mission of affective destabilization. I locate my analyses of satire in relation to sensibility studies that have considered these polar extremes of sensibility, but I do so with the caveat of acknowledging that these satires upend any normative account. Following the approaches established by scholars like Spacks and Csengei, I recognize that in these satires bodily affect destabilizes reason into an affectively charged reason. The eighteenth-century satirists champion the deviant norm of embracing the disruptive affects of their body. By studying satire's affective dimensions, I hope to recover these texts from a scholarly tradition of normative definition and realign them as engaging perversely with the "culture of sensibility." Satirists adopt

melancholic perspectives to illustrate how passionate destabilization productively fuels reason, judgment, and social commentary.

Satirists use affective formalism to negotiate the unstable, nearly indefinable nature of the melancholic and passionate affects. Through literary form, these writers mediate bodily chaos through the tentative stability of different provisional structures. Although they may fall into the trap of norming the body into form, they, to borrow the astute words of Spacks, do so to represent affects “in the process of their emergence.” Through affective formalism, the texts signify the affects as emergent meaningful structures. These satires deploy various kinds of forms, such as imagery, figures of speech, and genre, to give voice to what medicine and moral philosophy would silence. Often, these satires subvert these very forms to evoke the disruptive potentials of melancholic bodies. By representing the body heterogeneously and subversively, satirists practice their mission of anti-normativity.

In the passage I opened with, Swift formally represents the affects of rotting bodies and his own affects of enrapt melancholy through his repeated use of paratactic-like sequences (“altered every Lineament of an *English* Countenance, shortened the size of bodies, unbraced the Nerves, relaxed the Sinews and Muscles, introduced a sallow Complexion, and rendered the Flesh loose and Rancid”). Although I could also explicate Jane Collier’s irony as an example of affective formalism, in which she melds ironic form with affective abuse, I find that her irony touches on issues of property, law, and women’s agency, so I study her text more exhaustively in the Conclusion chapter. For now, I illustrate Swift’s affective formalism to give a brief introduction on this method. Swift’s paratactic style eschews subordinating conjunctions (like “after which” or “therefore”) and only implies logical connectivity by instead using past tense verbs

(“altered...shortened...unbraced...relaxed...introduced...rendered”).<sup>14</sup> If Swift included subordinating structures like “after which” in between each connected set of words, he would have clarified more explicitly that these bodily events happen successively. Because Swift’s parataxis does not impose subordination, his formal style suggests that the different processes of the body’s rotting unfold *either* successively *or* simultaneously. Despite his usage of the past tense, Swift’s affective formalism blurs the temporal readability of these degenerated/ing bodies as both linear and simultaneous. Swift conveys in turn the satiric message that these bodies’ English identities degenerate both in a more orderly linearity and also into a multiplicity of simultaneously concurrent events.

Furthermore, it’s important to note that at the observational level, Gulliver’s melancholic perspective creates these paratactic constructions of bodily rot. If parataxis’ lack of subordination encourages ambiguous links between things, then this structure also invites an ambiguous relationship between Gulliver’s affective melancholy and these bodies’ affective rot. After all, a parataxis resists the syntactic hierarchies of subordinating structures, making logical connections more fluid. It follows that the affects of observer and the observed blur in the structure of parataxis, in which Gulliver’s melancholic feelings become paratactically equivalent to the affects of these rotting bodies. Parataxis illustrates that Gulliver’s feelings are changing just as these bodies are. Although he on the surface satirizes the moral and physical degeneracy of Englishness and humanity, Swift imparts the

---

<sup>14</sup> I’m using Bruce Mitchell’s definition of parataxis in his *Old English Syntax* (1985): “The term ‘parataxis’ is used here in a purely formal sense to mean a construction in which sentences or clauses are not formally subordinated one to the other” (qtd. in Donoghue and Mitchell 163). See Denis Donoghue and Bruce Mitchell, “Parataxis and Hypotaxis: A Review of Some Terms Used for Old English Syntax” (1992).

perverse message that feeling bodies paratactically eschew normative logics of subordination.<sup>15</sup>

As Jonathan Swift's parataxis shows, melancholic satirists embark on a common mission of imprinting their own and other's destabilizing affects on the page. By giving affects a readable, albeit still complicated, shape, satirists educate their readers how the self is anarchically disrupted. Melancholic satires, contrary to what the qualifier "melancholic" suggests, do not mourn the body. Rather, these texts celebrate the body's vital capacity in stimulating the mind into acts of affective criticism. As I stated earlier, I argue that melancholic satirists expose the body's four elements of anti-normativity—disconnected intensity, background affects, corporeal excess, and ironic (mis)conduct. In Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), the narrator's irrational support for modern learning, religious dissent, and hack writing conveys intense affects that disconnect from reason; in the poems of Anne Finch (1709), Alexander Pope (1712, 1714, and 1717), and Matthew Green (1737), the faintly felt background affects of the Spleen can bring about a person's critical subjectivity; in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), Matthew Bramble's communicates the bodily excess of his hypochondriac body to condemn urban luxury and commerce; in Jane Collier's *An Essay on the Art of Ingenious Tormenting* (1753), the interior passions of female domestic tyrants ironically subverts patriarchal structures of domination. Furthermore, these writers explore the body's anti-normativity by representing the psychological orientations associated with melancholy—enthusiasm, hypochondria, and hysteria. I focus on these authors in particular because they craft the melancholic affects into

---

<sup>15</sup> The following Chapter on Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* will discuss more thoroughly the consequences of affect being decaying as a body.



a variety of innovative literary forms and techniques. These texts do not just revel in the self-display of their talents in affective formalism, but they more importantly develop affective tactics of opposing social forces of error and corruption.

#### 4. The Affective Turn, Affects, and the Case for Affective Formalism

What is affect? What is formalism? And what is affective formalism? In this section, I conceptualize these terms in relation to affect theory and critical discussions of formalism. Significantly, what we see in affect theory is the familiar interplay between normativity and anti-normativity. The eighteenth-century discourses of sensibility find their descendants in twentieth- and twenty-first-century discourses on anti-subjective affect theories. Whereas moral philosophy and medical science install rational subjectivity as a ruler over the body, these affect theories more or less extol the body as an empowering entity. In an effort to codify what counts as affect, theorists like Gregg and Seigworth celebrate the body's visceral instability only to institute a normative hierarchy that de-privileges subjectivity. Consider, for instance, this excerpt from Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth's introductory essay, "An Inventory of Shimmers," to the *Affect Theory Reader* (2010):

Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces—visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion—that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability. (1)

Gregg and Seigworth disassociate affect from a subject who expresses emotion and is of “conscious knowing.” Calling affect “at its most anthropomorphic” almost suggests that they want affect to be a kind of subjectivity; and imagining that affect can “drive us toward movement” shows that they install these “visceral forces” as another kind of authority.

In “The Autonomy of Affect” (1995), Brian Massumi goes so far that he defines affects “follow different logics and pertain to different orders” because emotion, he claims, is a “subjective content, the socio-linguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as persona” (88). Like Gregg and Seigworth, Massumi de-emphasizes affect’s subjectivity, and in more explicit terms, he accords affect as obeying paradoxically a normative “order.” In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2015), Sara Ahmed critiques Massumi’s distinction between affect and emotion:

A contrast between a mobile impersonal affect and a contained personal emotion suggests that the affect/emotion distinction can operate as a gendered distinction. It might even be that the very use of this distinction performs the evacuation of certain styles of thought (we might think of these as ‘touchy feely’ styles of thought, including feminist and queer thought) from affect studies. (207)

Ahmed contends that Massumi’s theoretical model enforces a regulatory hierarchy that can subordinate queer and feminist (or even critical race, post-colonial, and disability) perspectives on affective bodies.<sup>16</sup> After all, a “mobile impersonal affect” may be nothing more but a phallogentric signifier that quashes the possibility of emotion, subjectivity, and resistant volition.

---

<sup>16</sup> On her discussion and critique of the affective turn, see Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2015), 205-211.

Suffice to say, I find such subordinating distinctions problematic, as they misrecognize the blurring, fluid interplays between emotion and affect. Furthermore, I will not enthusiastically commit to these hierarchical theories of affect because they disregard the power of intention and subjectivity—elements that are crucial to criticism, judgment, and satire. Affect theorists like Massumi advocate what Ruth Leys (2011) calls in her powerful critique of affect theory, an “anti-intentionalist paradigm” (469).<sup>17</sup> Leys argues that one of the prices of negating the cognitive, intentionalist elements is to make “disagreement about meaning, or ideological dispute, irrelevant to cultural analysis” (472). Leys does not go so far as call for the reintegration of the subject in such analysis, but she does make a convincing case for the potential abstractness and extremeness of a non-intentional affect theory that does not care for the personal, historical, and material facets of experience. Her skepticism of this nonintentional paradigm informs my own approach to the affects. Rather than treat the affects as diametrically opposed to the emotions, I value the pre-conceptuality of affect and the intentionality of emotion as belonging within the same spectrum of subjective experience.

Through this inclusive approach, I negotiate between the extremes of nonintentional paradigms conceived by Brian Massumi and the more formalist kind suggested by Eugenie Brinkema (2014). In this negotiation, I will first discuss the salient points from Massumi’s theory of the affects. According to Massumi, affects resist signification because, as “intensities,” affects are “embodied in purely autonomic reactions most directly manifested in the skin—at the surface of the body, at its interface with things ... disconnected from meaningful sequencing, from narration” (85). The conscious mind *cannot* determine its

---

<sup>17</sup> See Ruth Leys, “The Turn to Affect: A Critique” (2011).

body's reactions to its environment into a completely certain narrative. In "Feeling, Emotion, Affect" (2005), Eric Shouse engages with Massumi's theory of affective intensity and interprets that affects denote the multiple stimuli that "impinge upon the human body and the body responds by infolding them all at once and registering them as an intensity" (par. 9). To synthesize Massumi's and Shouse's interpretations, an affect is intense because its many stimuli *disconnect* from the mind's "meaningful" significations. By acknowledging that an affect remains disconnected, I can tentatively define "affective intensity" or "affect" as a *stimulated bodily experience that remains disconnected from the subjective mind's rational sequencing*.

However, even though Massumi theorizes affect as untethered to narrative sequencing, Massumi does admit that affect can be reordered into the subjective narrativity of emotions. In his essay, he analyzes how artificial "forms" found in contemporary media can be indicators of affect. Some of the suggestive formal examples of affect that Massumi invokes are: televisual and digital media's "image- and information-based economies" of "fast-cuts of the video clip"; "constant cuts from the screen to its immediate surroundings...in fits and starts as attention flits"; "joyously incongruent juxtapositions of surfing the Internet [in which users presumably interface with multiple window screens]"; and "our bombardment by commercial images off the screen" (103-104). These media forms are affective because their imagistic "cuts," "incongruent juxtapositions," and "bombardment" exemplify moments of disconnection from a coherently stable narrative sequence. Massumi implies that these moments act as "conveyers of forces of emergence" (104). When one attends to affect as these forms of disconnection, then affect can be recognized as in a state of "emergence." The ambiguity, however, is that Massumi does not

quite clarify how these imagistic moments qualify as affective. Is he referring to how the viewer of these media feels when watching these images? Or is he suggesting that these cuts serve to create affective responses? Or do these cuts figuratively denote the disconnected nature of affect? Much like the way Gulliver's affects blur with the observed bodies' affects, Massumi collapses the spectator's responses with the observed media's potential affects. Because affects, in his formulation, are disconnected from a subjective vantage point, the concept of the affects can also encompass affect-like moments in artificially made media—chaotic moments that simulate disconnections from the intentional designs of an author. As a consequence of dethroning the subject, Massumi's framework facilitates analysis of the affects as artificially created meaning-making structures, like mass media's commercials or, relevant to this dissertation, satirical literature.<sup>18</sup>

Massumi's formal attention offers a way out of his own extreme claim that affects resist signification. Simulated representations of affective disconnection abound in imaginative constructions, like satiric poems, parodies, and novels, the main literary objects of this study. A parallel for the televisual cuts that Massumi describes is Swift's usage of digressive cuts in his *A Tale of a Tub*. Swift interweaves such cuts to convey the affective disconnections that fuel his melancholically enthusiastic narrator's absurd ideas. Swift

---

<sup>18</sup> Massumi would describe the simulated representations of affects as “virtuality,” a concept that relates to how affects reside in states of potentiality that precede or exceed their actualization and qualification as intelligible meaning. Also, I won't have time to discuss at length here, but in his same essay, he also reads Ronald Reagan's bodily jerks and mime-like behavior in public appearances as affective actions that invite persons, parties, and media of differing political biases to interpret these affects as transmitting “vitality, virtuality, tendency, in sickness and [his mime-like movements of] interruption” (103). Massumi does not offer a rigorous close reading of how Reagan's body affords others to focus on the *formal* features of his body, but his theorization of Reagan's affective forms invites us to think of how satire isolates fault and folly through forms.

teaches the satirical lesson of how the disconnected affects inevitably enables the birth of a self to reason out in a disjointed manner. Despite Massumi's own enthusiastic over-privileging of the affects over emotion, Massumi's discourse nonetheless offers entryways into appreciating the affects as analyzable forms. In this fashion, I conclude that affects can only be recognized as *forms*. To analyze an affect means considering them as simulated echoes of their original. *Affective forms*, to modify my earlier definition of affects, *refer to artificially constructed representations that convey the body's autonomous disconnection from the mind.*

Therefore, this dissertation analyzes melancholic satires through what I am calling an affective formalist approach. Affective formalism understands that affects are at once disconnected from rational sequencing but are still representable as artificial meaningful signifiers. My method negotiates between the unrepresentability of the nonsubjective affects and the meaningfulness of the subjective emotions. I incorporate what anti-intentionalist affect theorists like Massumi reject as incompatible with the affects because I inclusively embraces affect, feeling, emotion, passion, and sensation as all equally representable in various formal capacities. In *The Form of the Affects* (2014), Eugenie Brinkema has argued that "reading specific affects as having and bound up with specific forms" enables us to appreciate a denser and more specific knowledge of affects (xv).<sup>19</sup> Brinkema takes issue with Deleuzian affect theorists, such as Massumi, because these theorists understand "affect as a pure state of potentiality" and consequently present an "untheorized notion of affect (specifically, one that is fundamentally *incapable* of dealing with textual particularities and formal matters)" (xii, xiv). Brinkema, on the other hand, regards affects as untethered to the

---

<sup>19</sup> Brinkema (2014), xv. See also Brinkema, xi-xvi, 1-25.

private interiority of a subject and instead as exterior structures whose particular shape can be analyzed.<sup>20</sup> Affects for her are unintentional structures, separate from the reasoning subject.<sup>21</sup> I recognize that affective form grants meaning to affect's disconnected character.

Reading for the forms of the affects means, as Brinkema puts it, “de-privileging modes of expressivity and interiority in favor of treating affects as structures that work through formal means, as consisting in their formal dimensions (as line, light, color, rhythm, and so on) of passionate structures” (37). In the context of her study, she is discussing the analysis of film, so she uses film-specific forms, such as “montage, camera movement, mise-en-scène, color, sound,” but she also refers to forms, such as “duration, rhythm, absences, elisions, ruptures, gaps, and points of contradiction (ideological, aesthetic, structural, and formal),” which are forms found in literary texts as well (37). Melancholic satirists use different literary and technical forms to construct an implicit narrative of how affects' nonrational, autonomous power destabilizes the self into critical judgment. Rather than simply making their satires governed by a purely rational design, satirists adorn their critiques with self-displays of artifice to luxuriate in the vital subversiveness of the body. As a result, through their formal revelry satirists recuperate reason as a passionately corporeal

---

<sup>20</sup> For instance, one particular exterior shape of an affect Brinkema analyzes is the tear in Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*.

<sup>21</sup> It bears mentioning that Susanne Langer serves as an important precursor to the more recent approaches that Brinkema, Ngai, and I espouse. In *Feeling and Form* (1953), Langer distances herself from treating feeling as a subjectively experienced and instead notes, “the most expert critics tend to discount both these subjective elements, and treat the emotive aspect of a work of art as something integral to it, something as objective as the physical form, color, sound pattern of verbal text itself” (17). Langer paves the way for subsequent studies that adapt her claim that the “physical form, color, sound pattern of verbal text” instantiate as the *objective* form of the work's feeling. In my case, I negotiate with Massumi's, Ngai's, and Brinkema's approaches to suggest that the enthused narrator's affects dissent from reason to formalize into broken, disconnected sequences that both elude and yet allow for signification. See Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York: Scribner, 1953).

activity. Or, since affects inevitably reside in the realm of artifice, satirists simulate what reason could become. Form liberates satirists into modeling an affective reason whose judgments emerge via a vocabulary of artifices. Reading these devices becomes necessary in order to develop a descriptive account of how these satirists craft affective criticism on the page.

By invoking the term “formalism,” I also realize that I may be aligning myself with the formalism associated with the New Critics, who treat poetry as a self-contained work and neglect to consider how the work interacts with history. To treat these satires’ affectively formal innovations as separate from history would impoverish these works of their argumentative and intellectual agency. Since a literary work responds to various ideological, social, and other discursive structures, a literary work and its forms necessarily participate as historically situated agents.<sup>22</sup> I view my affective formalism as a tactical choice that negotiates the very different dilemma of how to treat non-subjective affects. Formalism becomes a way for me to respect that affects are disconnected autonomous things that literary and imaginative discourse can best capture in meaning-making forms.

---

<sup>22</sup> Marjorie Levinson has recently written about two competing trends of formalism—what she calls “new formalism”—in her appropriately titled essay, “What is New Formalism?” (2007). In this piece, Levinson distinguishes two types of new formalism: “activist formalism” and “normative formalism.” Activist formalism refers to “those who want to restore to today’s reductive reinscription of historical reading its original focus on form” whereas normative formalism refers to “those who campaign to bring back a sharp demarcation between history and art, discourse and literature, with form...the prerogative of art” (559). Activist formalists aim to bridge a “continuum with new historicism,” and normative formalists are normative because their focus on literary form becomes the “norm-setting work” that relegates any “cognitive and affective and therefore also cultural-political” analysis secondary (559). See Marjorie Levinson, “What is New Formalism?.” For another essay that responds to Levinson’s account while arguing for a flexible and yet still disciplined consideration of form, see Jonathan Kramnick and Anahid Nersessian’s “Form and Explanation” (2017).



Furthermore, because I attend to these satires' conversations with medical and moral philosophical writings as well with other historically relevant phenomena, I view these satires' formal experiments as historically situated emergences. Affective form for these satirists serves as a means of engaging history's phenomena through a language of feelings, emotions, passions, and bodies.

In sum, let me once again supply these definitions. "Affect" flexibly refers to the body's autonomously disconnected responses to internal and external stimuli. "Affective form" denotes the meaningful and yet artificial structures signifying affective disconnection. "Affective formalism" is this dissertation's analytical method of close reading how these "affective forms" enable criticism. In addition, "affective formalism" describes the ways in which medical theorists, moral philosophers, and satirists conceive of the body's affects through imaginative and technical forms. The taxonomy of these forms is variable. For example, these forms can be as references to the "spleen's" agency of "creeping" as Tobias Smollett's character Matthew Bramble imagines in *Humphry Clinker* (54-55). Or an affective structure can involve the consistent usage of metrically irregular lineation in Anne Finch's Pindaric ode *The Spleen*. These structures can function as content-rich words like "spleen," figures of speech like metaphors and irony, rhetorical modes of address or instruction, technical scaffolding like lineation, meter, and parataxis, or genres like odes and epistolary novels. Because satirists imbue these structures with explicit and implicit resonances of affect, these structures become affective forms. My method of "affective formalism" flexibly appreciates that any artificial meaning-making structure can mutate into simulating the body's destabilizing autonomy and disconnectedness.

## Introduction to *Melancholic Satires*, Part 2:

### Rebels and Demons: The Forms of Melancholic Variety and Passionate Autonomy

#### 5. Formal Precedents for the Satirists: The Forms of Melancholy in Medical Literature

*Melancholic Satires* assesses that the genealogical precedents for satire's anti-normativity is the normative discourse of sensibility in medicine and moral philosophy. Moral philosophers and medical experimenters advance ways of dominating the body through schemas of passionate regulation, diagnostic invasion, and virtuous socialization. In the following sections, I clarify how this discourse codifies the body through deliberate acts of formalism. Whereas in my earlier discussion I attended to the *intellectual* contents of these normative writings, I will now analyze these writings' *formal* structures that reinforce their desire for order. In these sections, I examine the imaginative formalism in Robert Burton's medical inquiries on melancholy and René Descartes's moral philosophical meditations on the passions. In their texts, they contain the body not only by suggesting passionate regulation through reason, but more importantly by *imagining* the body as *formal artifices*. Burton's and Descartes' artifices strive to neutralize the unstable agency of the body. These writers inaugurate a legacy for melancholic satires of repressing affect under the rule of form. In response to their normativity, melancholic satirists deploy formal representations to instead celebrate the body's anti-normativity and advocate for a deviant criticism of oppressive social phenomena. By examining Burton's and Descartes' affective formalism, I can give a richer description of their persistent domination of the body and, in effect, establish the formal and intellectual genealogy of the melancholic satirists.

The satirists' main formalistic inheritance from medical discourses on melancholy is the form of variety. The condition of melancholy itself in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries refers to a variety of things, and due to this conceptual variety, melancholic theorists like Burton imagine melancholy's form as variable.<sup>23</sup> We can note melancholy's variety in the following condensed list of the common conceptions of melancholy in the period: (1) a physiological and mental condition of gloom, despair, and/or grief whose duration is either lasting or temporary, (2) a humoural condition that can be further separated into either natural melancholy where the person has a natural predominance of black bile in the spleen or unnatural melancholy where the excess bile leads to frenzy, uncontrolled passions, and/or mania, (3) a gendered condition of anxiety where males were thought to suffer from hypochondria and females from hysteria, and (4) a philosophical pessimism—also called a philosophical melancholy—that bemoaned the vanity of the present world. This by no means exhaustive list suggests that melancholy in the eighteenth century was a not clearly defined concept.

Melancholy in this period is, to say the least, a physiologically and psychologically fraught experience whose foundations and mechanisms escape complete comprehension. Indeed, quoting the early modern physician Thomas Willis' discussion of melancholy, Michel Foucault (1988) writes that the images produced by the melancholic brain “are veiled with ‘shadow and with shades’” (122).<sup>24</sup> Even in the world of poetry, as I've already cited, Anne Finch calls the melancholic Spleen a “Proteus to abus'd Mankind.” In a similar

---

<sup>23</sup> On the topic of melancholy's multiple instantiations and definitions, see Allan Ingram and Stuart Sim (2007), 1-24, and Jennifer Radden (2009), 3-23. On the particular topic of the gendering of melancholy, see Ingram and Sim 27-28.

<sup>24</sup> See Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization* (1988), 121-122.

vein, the medical text *A mechanical account and explication of the hysteric passion* (1755), Charles Perry pronounces that melancholy's related condition of the hysteric disorders "are so very various and multiform in their appearances, that they are, with great propriety and justice, said to emulate *Proteus*, and equal the *Camælion* ("Preface," 1).<sup>25</sup> Part of the reason for melancholy's Protean ambiguity is because seventeenth- and eighteenth-century physicians in particular did not yet have a standardized method for diagnosing melancholy. As Angus Gowland (2006) notes, "one doctor's 'melancholic' might be another's hypochondriac', or (s)he might be both," and the "terminological instability" between what counts as melancholy and other related forms of mental and nervous diseases, made "reliable quantitative appraisals...virtually impossible" (82-83).<sup>26</sup> In these respects, because of this lack of a disciplinary unity, imagining melancholy through the formal imagery of "Proteus" or "shadows" represents these medical writers' desire to capture the mutability of this physical disorder within a language of artifice.

In Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), a locus classicus for discussions of melancholy, he conceives of melancholy through imaginary forms to better

---

<sup>25</sup> Perry most likely borrows the physician Thomas Sydenham's comparison in his *An Epistolary Discourse to the Learned Doctor William Cole, concerning some Observations of the Confluent Small Pox, and of Hysterick Diseases* (1680): "all the Symptoms belonging to Hysterick Diseases; so various are they, and so contrary to one another, that *Proteus* had no more Shapes, nor the Cameleon so great Variety of Colours" (307).

<sup>26</sup> See Angus Gowland, "The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy" (2006). Gowland argues that because of this lack of a disciplinary methodology and because melancholy was theorized to affect both the body and the soul, medical concepts of melancholy were incorporated into religious discourses that used this concept to pathologize instances of demonic possession and divine inspiration. More so, moral philosophical writings associated melancholic emotions and symptoms, Gowland adds, "with the schemes of virtue and holiness or of vice and sinfulness" (99). As a result of melancholy's conceptual plasticity, medical, religious, and moral philosophical writings incorporated melancholy to further their own argumentative agendas.

master this Protean condition. For Burton, melancholy must be imaginatively mastered because it is categorically confusing. Burton identifies three main types of melancholy: “head melancholy” which “first proceed from the sole fault of the brain”; a melancholy where “the whole temperature” of the “whole body” is affected; and “hypochondriacal or windy melancholy” which “ariseth from the bowels, liver, spleen, or membrane, called the mesenterium” (Partition I, Member III, Subsection IV, 176). Despite this classification, Burton confesses that he finds melancholy’s “variety and confused mixture of symptoms” daunting and admits, “how difficult a thing is it to treat of several kinds apart” (Partition I, Member III, Subsection IV, 177). What enables Burton, however, to persevere is his imagination: “[N]evertheless I will adventure through the midst of these perplexities, and, led by the clue or thread of the best writers, extricate myself out of a labyrinth of doubts and errors, and so proceed to the causes” (Partition I, Member III, Subsection IV, 177). In his “adventure through the midst of these perplexities,” Burton gives form to melancholy’s obscurity through the image of the “labyrinth.” Burton reformulates melancholy’s obscurity into the concrete maze, and since a maze has an exit, Burton’s imagery reinstates the possibility that one can escape the melancholic condition. As a result, Burton imaginatively moderates melancholy’s affects into concrete, escapable structures.<sup>27</sup>

To further accomplish his normative mastery over melancholy, Burton imagines the self through contexts of rebellion, usurpation, and hierarchy. He associates melancholy’s

---

<sup>27</sup> In *The signs and causes of melancholy* (1670), the Puritan Richard Baxter echoes Burton’s labyrinthine imagery: “Their Thoughts are all *perplexed* like ravelled Yarn or Silk, or like a Man in a Maze or Wilderness, or that hath lost himself and his way in the Night: He is poring and groping about, and can make little of any thing, but is bewildered and entangled the more: Full of Doubts and Difficulties, out of which he cannot find the way” (Chapter II, 13). Baxter figures melancholic thoughts as “ravelled Yarn or Silk” (which echoes Burton’s image of “thread”) as well as a “Maze or Wilderness.”

forces as rebellious usurpers of the mind. For example, Burton proposes the passions or, as he calls them, “perturbations” as “the most frequent and ordinary cause of melancholy” (Partition I, Member III, Subsection I, 250). Burton elaborates that the passions for the “most part domineer, and are so violent, that as a torrent (*torrens velut aggere rupto*) bears down all before and overflows his banks...they overwhelm reason, judgment, and pervert the temperature of the body” (251). Passions are affective intensities because they “domineer, “are so violent, “overflow, “overwhelm,” and “pervert” reason. Yet it should be clear that Burton follows the classical conception of the passions as still subordinate to the will, as he states in his subsection on the will: “Some other actions of the will are performed by the inferior powers [that include the passions] which obey him, as the sensitive and moving appetite...but this appetite is many times rebellious in us, and will not be contained within the lists of sobriety and temperance” (Partition I, Member II, Subsection XI, 168). Even though the passions remain subordinate to the will, Burton stresses that the passions are “rebellious” and “violent perturbations of the mind” (168-169), so Burton’s passions act as disruptive intensities. Burton figures these bodily passions through a language that evokes “rebellious” opposition to the proper conduct of “sobriety and temperance.” Already then, Burton’s discourse of melancholy poses a hierarchical upheaval, in which the agents of the appetites overwhelm the higher power of the will and mind. This usage of hierarchical language is not surprising. In the same subsection on the will, Burton writes, “Will is the other power of the rational soul...Aristotle calls this our rational appetite [of approving good and abhorring evil]; for as in sensitive, we are moved to good and bad by our appetite, ruled and directed by sense; so in this we are carried by reason” (167). Burton’s model of the self is thoroughly stratified, a hierarchy in which he accords reason and sense their own

governing purviews. Thus, when passions rebel, the orderly hierarchy of the self results in the disturbed unrest of melancholy. Burton suggests that melancholy represents the post-rebellion state of the will usurped by “inferior powers.”

In figuring passions in these ways, Burton insinuates that passion-induced melancholy represents a dissent from a rationally guided self. Melancholy emerges as an intensive and autonomous experience because its passions fiercely renounce the traditional hierarchy of the self. In his formalism, Burton entertains images of affective subversion only in the end to affirm the moderating authority of reason. The legacy of melancholic medical literature, as represented most prominently by Burton, for the satirists is an affective formalism that indulges in and yet contains imaginative subversive artifices. This tension evidences the irreconcilable tensions between the subversive body and the sovereign mind. In the satires I will discuss, satirists dramatize these tensions through literary form in order to lay bare how the self is alive with warring forces.

## 6. Formal Precedents for the Satirists, Take Two: René Descartes and the Demons of Passionate Autonomy and the Affective Imagination

My discussion of Burton’s melancholic passions leads me to the subject of how moral philosophy subordinates the passions. For the eighteenth-century melancholic satirists, René Descartes’ writings inform satires’ exploration of the passions. Like Burton, Descartes’ practice of affective formalism evidences a tension between revealing the passionate sensing body’s agency and asserting the mind’s own authoritative agency. In his earlier texts, *Discourse on Method* (1637) and *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641),

Descartes resolves this tension by giving the mind relatively more agency than the passionate body. However, in his later text *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul* (1649), Descartes changes his thinking by acknowledging more explicitly that the passions are autonomous bodily authorities separate from the mind. In the discussion that follows, I will track how Descartes explores the mind-body tension and uses forms to imagine both explicitly normative and latently anti-normative ways of treating the body.

Instead of proceeding chronologically through his texts, I begin with his later work, *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul*, so that I can demonstrate how Descartes initiates a new paradigmatic model of the passionate self. As the historian of the passions Thomas Dixon (2003) pronounces, Descartes's *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul* "informed thinking about passions in Europe for at least the next hundred and fifty years" (76). Descartes' innovative contribution to the discourse of the passions, according to Dixon, was that he proposed that passions were "perceptions...acted upon by the outside world by means of the sensory apparatus of the body" (76). These passions, as Descartes defines them in Articles 27 and 28 of his *Traité*, were "perceptions, or sensations, or emotions of the soul [or mind]...caused, sustained, and fortified by some movements of the [animal] spirits"<sup>28</sup> in the body; these passions were also "perceptions in the general sense of the word, when it used to denote all thoughts that are not actions of the soul (or volitions) caused by the action of the body upon the soul" (206-207).<sup>29</sup> By calling the passions "perceptions," Descartes accords

---

<sup>28</sup> The animal spirits, as Dixon reminds us, are "very fine parts of the blood" that serve as the medium that connects the body's interaction and response to outside stimuli with the mind's registering of this interaction and response (76). See Dixon (2003) 76-79 for his consideration of Descartes' view of the passions.

<sup>29</sup> Excerpts from Descartes in the main text are from Michael Moriarty's translations of *Traité* and *Principia philosophiae* (1644), written in Latin, or the French version *Les Principes de la Philosophie* (1647). The original *Traité* reads: "des perceptions, ou des



these bodily elements an agency comparable to mental agencies of reflective and judgmental thinking.

Descartes subverts the classical Christian conceptions of the self because he severs the passions from being bound to the volition or will of the mind. Dixon explains that the Christian models, as laid out by Augustine and Aquinas, theorize the passions which include “bodily agitations associated with fear, lust, anger and so on” to come from “the self-initiated activity of the sense appetite, which was the lower part of the will” (77). Descartes departs from tradition by insisting that the passions do not derive from the will. Descartes attributes the origin of passions to the sense perceptions’ bodily excitations. In contrast to the passions, in Article 32 of his *Principles of Philosophy* (1644, 1647), Descartes outlines that the will encompasses agencies of desiring, rejecting, affirming, denying, and doubting (148).<sup>30</sup> To further distinguish the passions from the will, Descartes establishes passions as “thoughts [pensées]...caused by the action of the body upon the soul.” Though the body may not think along the same level as the deliberative, reflective mind, the body, nonetheless, thinks or perceives through its agitation of the spirits in reaction to stimuli. By defining a passion as a “pensée” or thought of the body, Descartes grants the body its own kind of agency comparable to that of the thinking soul.<sup>31</sup> And by making the body, the seat of the

---

sentiments, ou des émotions de l’âme, qu'on rapporte particulièrement à elle, et qui sont causées, entretenues et fortifiées par quelque mouvement des esprits,” and “des perceptions lorsqu'on se sert généralement de ce mot pour signifier toutes les pensées qui ne sont point des actions de l’âme ou des volontés.” All original citations from the *Traité* are from the *Descartes Web Project*.

<sup>30</sup> See 148-151 in the Moriarty edition for Descartes’ account of the freedom of the will.

<sup>31</sup> In her study on the development of the passions in the seventeenth century, Susan James explains that Descartes unified the diverse powers of the soul by suggesting that its powers of intellect, imagination, memory, and sense perception are different kinds of thinking. Descartes, James continues, made it possible to understand how states of the sensitive soul can be available to the intellectual soul and vice versa, and how, for example,

passions, wield its own thinking agency, Descartes in turn endows the passions with an autonomous power of intensively affecting the soul.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, when Descartes figures the passionate body as “pensées” acting upon the mind, he gives these affective forces an external shape or orderly structure. Granted, his figuration of the body as “thoughts” is not comparable to a poetic image, but he nonetheless employs a metaphor to convey his autonomous vision of the body: the metaphor of comparing the bodily passions to mental acts of “pensées.” In essence, Descartes commits an act of affective formalism: he reimagines bodily autonomy comparable to upper-level cognition. On the one hand, Descartes uses this metaphor to validate the body’s autonomy since comparing the body to a thought process makes the body into an autonomous thinker. However, this metaphor enshrines the idea of mental thought as still the standard for what counts as independent authority. Descartes cannot think of another word that doesn’t evoke traces of the mind. Because he associates passion with thinking, Descartes contains the subversive threat of the passions within a familiar metaphor. Descartes normalizes the subversive passions as another kind of thinking. Hence, even though Descartes initiates a paradigmatic shift concerning models of the self, he contains this shift through a cognitive metaphor for the body.

In his *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul*, Descartes both introduces and contains the potential of bodily subversions. In his earlier texts, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

---

appetites of the sensitive soul can be available to the will” (90). For a fuller account of Descartes’ unification of the soul’s powers, see Susan James (1997), 87-94.

<sup>32</sup> Of course, it is important to clarify that the passions remain an integral and united part of the soul. Their autonomy lies in the facts that they do not flow from the will and that their mode of thinking as agitated and excited response differ from the other thinking powers of the soul.

(1641) and *Discourse on Method* (1637), however, he more explicitly upholds the singular authority of the mind. In the conclusion to his “Second Meditation,” he claims, “I now know that even bodies are perceived not by the senses or by imagination but by the intellect alone, not through their being touched or seen but through their being understood; and this helps me to know plainly that I can perceive my own mind more easily and clearly than I can anything else” (8).<sup>33</sup> To further this distinction between the mind and body, he delineates that the mind is indivisible: “Every body is by its nature divisible, but the mind can’t be divided. When I consider the mind—i.e. consider myself purely as a thinking thing—I can’t detect any parts within myself; I understand myself to be something single and complete” (32). By making this distinction, Descartes frames the mind as independent from the body’s influence. Stressing this independence in *Discourse on Method*, he avers that the soul or the mind “does not depend on anything material,” concluding that the “self—that is, the soul by which I am what I am—is completely distinct from the body and is even easier to know than it, and even if the body did not exist the soul would still be everything that it is (25).<sup>34</sup> It appears then that there is a discrepancy between the earlier Descartes who insists on maintaining the mind’s distinctive independence and the later Descartes who in the *Passions* endows the body with influential agency. Regardless of this discrepancy, Descartes in all the texts continually visits this tension between the body and mind. Descartes teaches that the self is a divided figure in which body and mind occupy their own province of influence. In her discussion of Stanley Cavell’s essay “Knowing and Acknowledging,” Kay Young (2010) contends that “the problem of other minds means to recognize that we may never

---

<sup>33</sup> On the *Meditations*, see Jonathan Bennett’s translation.

<sup>34</sup> On the *Discourse on Method*, see Desmond M. Clarke’s translation.

know another or be known as we do ourselves...we are divided by our minds” (72). Young’s discussion can be just as applicable to Descartes’ dilemma.<sup>35</sup> Descartes explores the problem of the self by conceptually dividing the mind from the body, yet perhaps by overvaluing the mind’s independence, Descartes renders the body more mysterious and unknowable.

Descartes suggests that knowing the body belongs to a different order of methods that are incommensurate with the methods of reason and judgment. In his *Meditations*, Descartes offers one such methodology for knowing the body, a methodology of affective formalism. In his “Second Meditation,” he entertains this method when he famously considers the figure of wax as an example of a body. His imaginative scene of considering the wax conveys elements of Descartes’ formalism that later satirists will mirror: namely, Descartes’ indulgence in imagining and then negating the waxen body’s sensory forms. Why must Descartes imagine and negate the body in his meditation? As Martial Geurolt (1984) explicates, “what is at stake in the analysis of the piece of wax is not to seek in what the essence of body consists and even less to establish that body exists—both things that we cannot actually know—but what are the necessary conditions that render possible its representation as such. I then perceive that these conditions reside in an idea of my intellect along, an intellect that must be posited as known first” (qtd. in Warminski 3).<sup>36</sup> According to Geurolt’s argument, thinking about wax serves Descartes’ larger project of conceptualizing the nature of his mind. Descartes imagines wax as part of what Marjorie Grene (1999) calls his “methodological suspension of belief” through which he abandons a reliance on

---

<sup>35</sup> See also Young’s discussion of Descartes’ bodily language in *Imagining Minds* (2010), 11-16.

<sup>36</sup> See Martial Guerolt, *Descartes’ Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons* (1984), Volume I: The Soul and God, trans. Roger Ariew, 97, and Andrezej Warminski, “Spectre Shapes: ‘The Body of Descartes?’” (2013).

sensation and instead trusts in the innate qualities of the mind as a truthful source of knowledge (559).<sup>37</sup> However, insofar he uses the figure of wax ultimately to affirm the mind's indivisible supremacy, he cannot help but indulge in describing the body of the wax.

The fact that Descartes' skepticism necessitates imaginative thinking suggests that his normative view of the self very much depends on his tentative openness to bodily sensation. To be sure, he even admits in the "Second Meditation" that he must entertain erroneous fancies:

I still can't help thinking that bodies— of which I form mental images and which the senses investigate—are much more clearly known to me than is this puzzling 'I' that can't be pictured in the imagination...I keep drifting towards that error because my mind likes to wander freely, refusing to respect the boundaries that truth lays down.

Very well, then; I shall let it run free for a while, so that when the time comes to rein it in it won't be so resistant to being pulled back. (6)

Bodies attract his formation of "mental images." His affective formalism here consists in giving his sensory and imaginative faculties free rein to create these images.

Modern readers might associate the imagination with the higher mental faculties; according to the classical model of the self that Descartes is drawing from, however, the imagination is a lower order belonging to the appetites closely associated with the passions.<sup>38</sup> In Article 21 of his *Passions*, he claims the body's "spirits are agitated in various ways, and flow into the traces of different impressions formed beforehand in the brain"; the brain imagines "the illusions we have in dreams and also the daydreams we frequently have

---

<sup>37</sup> See Marjorie Grene, "Descartes and Skepticism" (1999).

<sup>38</sup> For a further account of classical Christian conceptions of passions and affections, see Dixon, 26-61.

when awake, when our mind wanders carelessly without applying itself of its own accord to anything in particular” (204).<sup>39</sup> Descartes’ “drifting towards that error” of image-forming occasions his meditation on wax: “this piece of wax, for example...has just been taken from the honeycomb; it still tastes of honey and has the scent of the flowers from which the honey was gathered; its colour, shape and size are plain to see; it is hard, cold and can be handled easily; if you rap it with your knuckle it makes a sound” (6). He imaginatively perceives that the *form* of wax is dependent on the mind’s senses of taste, smell, sight, touch, and hearing. Yet when he imagines observing this wax being held near a fire, he observes that “[t]he taste and smell vanish, the colour changes, the shape is lost, the size increases; the wax becomes liquid and hot; you can hardly touch it, and it no longer makes a sound when you strike it” (6). He concludes that his sensory information has “now altered, yet it is still the same wax” (6). Sensuous form turns out to be unstable, so Descartes comes to diminish the integrity of his sensory and imaginative faculties, noting that the “nature of this piece of wax isn’t revealed by” his “imagination” (7). His senses and imagination show his perception “isn’t so and it never was” (7). For him, the nature of the body of wax, once its sensory information is removed, unveils an innate form of “*something extended, flexible and changeable*” (7, emphasis in the original).

In the end, Descartes negates his imagined sensorial forms in favor of the generalized form of the body’s extension, flexibility, and changeability. Descartes entertains deceptive sensorial forms, yet he undercuts them in favor of the superior form that he claims is “grasped solely by the mind’s faculty of judgment” (7). Ultimately, he contains the body within abstraction, generalization, and essentialism. Although Descartes grants the body an

---

<sup>39</sup> See also Chapter 2 where I discuss this passage in relation to Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub*.

autonomous thinking agency, he also preserves the mind's sovereignty over the unstable forms of the body. In many ways, the satirists I will examine play with this tension by both particularizing and abstracting the Cartesian autonomous affects through their various artificial literary forms.

Descartes' brief foray into waxen images results from his own affectively passionate imagination. His imagination leads him to personify the wax when he entertains the idea of giving the wax clothes: "But when I consider the wax apart from its outward forms—take its clothes off, so to speak, and consider it naked—then although my judgment may still contain errors, at least I am now having a perception of a sort that requires a human mind" (7). The wax body is almost anthropomorphized as wearing the clothes of sensuous knowledge. Descartes subversively grants the wax body a potentiality of sartorial and sensuous agency. In this personification, he tentatively embraces the autonomy of the wax's body, yet when he defines wax as extended and changeable, he claims that his intellectual judgment—not his sensory imagination—perceives the true essential or "inward" form of wax. Imagining and sensing the body through its physical forms is an invalid method because this method creates multiple, distinctive outward forms. Descartes stresses that each of the five senses adorns the wax with its own separate sensory form. So, for example, a visual sense will perceive a form of clothing that is distinct from the auditory sense's perceived clothing. Thus, sensual knowledge apparels a multiplicity of different external fashions, and to counteract this heterogeneity, Descartes reduces these many forms into a universalizing innate category. Sensation, for him, grants multiple surface knowledges, whereas mental intellection achieves a true inward understanding. Descartes privileges this homogeneous innate understanding to reject the heterogeneous outward forms of his affective senses.

The body to Descartes brandishes the otherness of maximum difference, whereas his mental judgment satisfies him with categorical unity and universality. He aspires for a form that can explain away the heterogeneous senses as mere extension and change.<sup>40</sup> Yet despite Descartes' attempts to negate his sensuous formalism, his deed has been done. Descartes is an antithetical philosopher because he can only exalt the mental intellect through a prodigal revelry in the opposite of corporeal formalism. On the significance of Descartes' rhetorical figures, Andrzej Warminski (2013) argues, "For as soon as you introduce figures, as soon as you figure the spiritual by the sensuous, i.e., give it a body, you also necessarily introduce the possibility that the spirit or the soul or the mind may also *be* all too sensuous or bodily or mechanical and, on the other hand, that the body may, as it were, have its own reasons, may be all too spiritual" (70). Descartes' outward formalism fulfills his ultimately contained dream of indulging not only in the sensuousness of the mind, but also in the "spiritual" or sovereign authority of the body. As an interrogative experiment, his formalism imaginatively compares the body to a piece of wax with sensuous clothing. If one focuses on Descartes' idea of the mental *cogito*, then his methodological skepticism is a thought experiment—an exercise meant to validate the mind's sovereignty. But if one attends to Descartes' outward formalism that describes the wax's sensuous properties, then his skepticism is a bodily or affective experiment.

---

<sup>40</sup> For another account that discusses how Descartes' methodology values a representational account of reality, see Peter Machamer and J. E. McGuire's "Mind-Body Causality and the Mind-Body Union: The Case of Sensation" (2009). Machamer and McGuire argue that the mind-body relationship hinges on the "active power of the mind...creating the identity of mental content" of these innate ideas "from the content from physical motions" (219).



Descartes engages in a formal experiment in thinking and feeling through the body's processes of unstable affective reactions as "outward forms." What are these outward forms? These forms represent tentative meaningful structures for the body. For Descartes, he invokes the meaningful structures of wax's sensory changes that he then tellingly metaphorically compares to clothes. Because he refigures the general idea of body into the apian context of wax and then into the sartorial context of clothes, Descartes' affective formalism, therefore, mutates these forms from one contextual structure of meaning into another. Notably, his contextual shifts progressively transmute the body into the trace of artifice. Through his formal transmutations, Descartes exemplifies the very subversive instability of the body's affective processes.

Before I conclude my discussion of Descartes, I will dwell on one final image that haunts his *Meditations* to further outline the nature of Cartesian normativity. As a technique of his methodological skepticism, he must position himself into a state of extreme doubt in order to affirm the sovereignty of the mind over the body. In order to achieve this, at the end of the "First Meditation," Descartes conjures the deceiving demon or evil genius whose illusions he must reject:

So I shall suppose that some malicious, powerful, cunning demon has done all he can to deceive me—rather than this being done by God, who is supremely good and the source of truth. I shall think that the sky, the air, the earth, colours, shapes, sounds and all external things are merely dreams that the demon has contrived as traps for my judgment. I shall consider myself as having no hands or eyes, or flesh, or blood or senses, but as having falsely believed that I had all these things. I shall stubbornly persist in this train of thought; and even if I can't learn any truth, I shall at least do

what I *can* do, which is to be on my guard against accepting any falsehoods, so that the deceiver—however powerful and cunning he may be—will be unable to affect me in the slightest. (3)

This demon conveys false knowledge because it encourages him both to view “external things” as “dreams” and to regard his own self as “having no hands or eyes, or flesh, or blood or senses.” The demon tempts him to entertain that the external world and his body do not exist. On the whole, this deceiver functions similarly to the body of wax since both are related to external and bodily impressions. Just as Descartes rejects the waxen body’s deceptive sensory information, he denies the demon’s deceptive idea of worldly and bodily nonexistence. Together, both these deceptive figures convey false norms for engaging with the world. The demon suggests the norm that everything is dreamlike and nonexistent, while the wax invites Descartes to view reality through the norm of bodily sensations. Only by rejecting these norms, Descartes asserts the mind’s innate intellection as the true norm through which he understands himself and his world.

In his *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul*, Descartes complicates his position by elevating the passions as “pensées” that can act on the mind. In one sense, the bodily passions figure as potentially deceptive forces. As I have already referenced, the body’s spirits can cause the brain to imagine dream-like illusions. Whereas in the *Meditations* Descartes treats the demon and waxen body as external entities, in the *Passions* he internalizes deceptive agencies as these imaginative passions. Throughout these texts, Descartes entertains the possibility of bodily and sensorial subversion while at the same time affirming intellection or its correlative of “pensées” as the normative mode of viewing the self. Descartes’s normativity values thinking, pensées, and the innateness of the mind as the

conditions for understanding the self; but because he uses formal imagery, his normativity antithetically depends on the subversive potential of wax bodies and deceiving demons. The legacy of Descartes' affective formalism for melancholic satirists are his ambivalent practices of magnifying and restricting the body's authority.

The paradigmatic models that satirists inherit from Descartes are these moments of the philosopher observing wax and rejecting a deceiving demon. Satirists, such as Swift, Finch, Pope, Green, Smollett, and Collier present their own observers engaging with deceptive figures, and to different extents, they also represent "demons" of deception or error. Jonathan Swift's enthusiastic hack-writer freely avers that "felicity" is a "possession of being well-deceived" ("Section IX," 84); the Spleen Poems of Matthew Green, Anne Finch, and Alexander Pope explore the deceptiveness of the Spleen; Tobias Smollett suggests that Matthew Bramble's splenetic and goutish self-diagnoses are excesses of potentially erroneous knowledge; and Jane Collier's persona instructs married women to perform the deceiving demon role of ironic abusers. Melancholic satires oppose Descartes' normative enshrinement of the mind, but adapt his indulgence in bodily subversion and imaginative deception. These satires invoke their own beguiling "demons" of enthusiastic passionate intensity, splenetic background affects, bodily excess, and affective irony. What Descartes contains—the deceiving affects—become objects of expansive inquiry for the melancholic satirists. Yet taking his cue, these writers betray the same kind of ambivalence to these affects by containing them through the orderly structures of literary form. Paradoxically, these satirists make these unstable affects more visible, intelligible, and readable.

Overall, literary satires inherit Burton's formal variety and Descartes' formal meditations on the body's subversive autonomy. In these satires, writers conceive of the melancholic body's variety and autonomy as part of their satirical practices of criticism. As I discussed in the first part of the introduction, I regard satire not as imbued with an essentialist set of norms. I will not be reducing satire to generic essences. Rather, I attend to these texts' conversations with medical and moral philosophical discourses in particular and with the culture of sensibility in general. Although there are certainly other discursive precedents for these satires, I aim to open up our field of inquiry by examining satire's capacity for affective and embodied critique.<sup>41</sup> In the chapters that follow, I will be examining how satires champion the melancholic passionate self through formal variety and formal subversiveness.

By tracing the connections between literary form and the affective disruptions of melancholic passions, I am proposing that satirists invested in melancholy make visible the affects' destabilizing influence on human reason and behavior. They champion affective disruption because they oppose normative discourses of sensibility. Whereas these discourses argue that the social order is achieved through bodily control, melancholic satires suggest that these discourses obscure the truth that social beings are always already passionate beings. By embracing one's affectivity, one can assume the deviant anti-normative position of critiquing oppressive or immoral structures in society, like dissenting enthusiasm, medical misogyny, and excessive luxury.

---

<sup>41</sup> For example, eighteenth-century satirists' relationship to with the discourses of law, religion, and science, are rich subfields of satire studies. On some representative studies on these subjects, see Andrew Benjamin Bricker (2014), C.P. Kropf (1974), David Alvarez (2019), and Gregory Lynall (2012).

These satires, in effect, inaugurate an anti-normative critic that contemporary theorists of mind would call “embodied.” The mind, as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson aver in *Philosophy in the Flesh* (1999), needs to be regarded as interconnected with the body. Specifically, Lakoff and Johnson attest, “In an embodied-mind, it is conceivable that the same neural system engaged in *perception* (or in bodily movement) [and here perception refers to the bodily sensations] plays a central role in *conception*. That is, the very mechanisms responsible for perception, movements, and object manipulation could be responsible for conceptualization and reasoning” (37-38). For Lakoff and Johnson, body and mind are inextricably connected. We see this interconnection between body and mind in the melancholic satires I study. Consider, for example, that in Smollett’s *Humphry Clinker* Matthew Bramble’s hyponchondriac melancholy is both a physiological and critical reaction to the polluted excess of urban London; thus, his melancholic disdain of London is bodily as well as mental.

Moreover, the external environment of London plays a crucial role in eliciting Bramble’s response. In as much as I recognize the interconnections between body and mind, I also acknowledge that melancholically satirical critique interacts with the environment. Such a notion where the body reacts to the environment is made by Antonio Damasio. In *Descartes’ Error* (1994), Damasio notes that the perceiving body does not only “receive direct signals from a given stimulus” in the environment, but also “actively modifies itself so that the interfacing [or interacting] can take place as well as possible” (225-226). By drawing from such theorists as Damasio, I can demonstrate how satirical critique thoroughly engages the “stimuli” of the external environment. Another example of such engagement is Gulliver’s melancholic disgust with the stench of human odors at the end of *Gulliver’s*

*Travels*. Having witnessed the Yahoo humans in the land of intelligent horses or Houyhnhnms, Gulliver recognizes the odious physicality of human bodies. Gulliver's physical reaction of disgust represents an instance of how the noisome environment stimulates the melancholic subject into expressing critique. Thus, when I invoke the term "embodiment," I recognize that the melancholic satirist is engaged in a phenomenological experience of the world. And in order to give their embodied responses a tentative foundation, melancholic satirists use literary forms as their technical lens through which they can complicate their engagement. Through their affective formalism, satirists resist the hierarchical entronement of the mind over the body implicit in classical conceptions of the self and, thus, articulate the embodied critic's entangled relationships with the oppressive agencies of their existing environments.

## 7. Description of the Chapters

In what follows, I offer descriptions of this Dissertation's chapters. My Dissertation analyzes how the satirists use literary form to convey the passionate body's four elements of anti-normativity—disconnected intensity, background affects, corporeal excess, and ironic (mis)conduct. Each of the following chapters will be dedicated to unpacking each of these anti-normative practices of critique.

Chapter 2, "The Dissent of the Body: Enthusiastic Disconnections in Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*," examines how Swift's early satirical writings both indulge and critique an anti-normative way of engaging with the world: affectively intense reasoning. In his *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), *Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* (1704), and the "Preface" to *The Battle of the Books* (1704), Swift writes in the personas of enthusiastic hack narrators

who are enamored with modern forms of learning like the new science, commercialized hack writing, and dissenting religious sects. These rambling narrators suffer from the melancholically associated condition of enthusiasm, and this text suggests that his melancholic body's organs, "humours," passions, and other related affective forces influence him into expressing delusional and illogical reasoning. Swift criticizes these narrators' unorthodox support for these things, but he obviously revels in speaking in these narrators' highly irrational voices. I analyze the formal properties of this narrators' language—their use of parataxis, vapour imagery, and metaphors, for example—as indicators of affectively intense reasoning. Drawing from contemporary theories on affect and Descartes' theory on the bodily passions, I define affect as a bodily disconnection from reason; and because the narrators express their irrational reasoning through broken sequences of logic, their discourse emulates their bodies' disconnected intensities. Swift's text ultimately encourages an attention to his prose's formal representation of affective disconnections. Through the negative examples of his enthusiastic narrators, Swift demonstrates that the true model of the self is passionately anarchic, disruptive, and always fractured.

Building on the idea of disconnected intensity, Chapter 3, "Spleen Trouble: Deviant Subjectivities in the Affective Backgrounds of Matthew Green, Anne Finch, and Alexander Pope," investigates the second mode of anti-normativity: even though the affects are disconnected from reason, these affects still disrupt the self from the bottom-up into expressing a deviant subjectivity who can conduct social criticism. I explore the ways satirical poetry inquisitively attends to the melancholic spleen's intensity working in the subtle "background" of consciousness. This chapter surveys how medical texts and the poems of Anne Finch's *The Spleen, a Pindaric Ode* (1701), Alexander Pope's *The Rape of*

*the Lock* (1712, 1714, and 1717) and Matthew Green's *The Spleen* (1737) theorize the Spleen's failure to regulate its "humours" as a primary cause of melancholic disorders. I conduct this wider survey to demonstrate the variety of ways these poems sought to communicate the Spleen's unsettling influence on human behavior. I call this influence the "background affects." According to the philosopher of cognitive science Giovanna Colombetti, these affects refer to the barely attended-to body when one is focused mainly on another object, such as the body one feels but does not consciously attend to when focused on reading a page; and these affects nonetheless shape one's conscious experience. I use this concept to illustrate that these texts attend to the Spleen's background influence through the generic forms of the Pindaric ode, mock heroic, and verse epistle and through the technical forms of apostrophe, personification, and rhyming couplet. These works insinuate that being attentive to splenetic bodies enables the deviant delivery of social criticism.

The previous chapters have been addressing in some fashion how the melancholic affects exceed the conscious mind's full knowledge. Chapter 4, "The Malaprop of Melancholy in Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*," studies the third mode of anti-normativity: affective criticism communicates that the corporeal excess of the body remains incompatible with normative paradigms that elevate reason and virtue. In *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), Tobias Smollett resists models espoused by letter-writing manuals, moral philosophy, and medicine in order to insist that excessive bodies are subversively incoherent to normative thinking. Corporeal excess, I define, signifies a condition of incoherence. The contradiction of Smollett's project, though, is that he subverts these models in order to reject societal subversions caused by an increasingly commercialized society dominated by nouveau-riche merchants and non-European



outsiders. I analyze the letters of the hypochondriac gentry landowner Matthew Bramble as well as the letters of the malapropic servant Winifred Jenkins. This chapter ends with a discussion of Jenkins' malaprops, exploring how her unintentionally punning misuse of words best exemplifies the malapropic incoherence of the excessive body. I use the device of the malaprop to frame Smollett's usage of forms such as spleen imagery, metaphors of hysteria, and post-scripts as malapropically incoherent. This chapter contends that Smollett's anti-normative satire navigates the incompatible tensions between body and form, disruption and regulation, and, ultimately, gentry and non-gentry others.

Passionate bodies are anti-normative because of their disconnected intensity, background affects, and incoherent excess. The Conclusion, "Revelry and Revolt: Ownership and Affective Irony in Jane Collier's *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*" synthesizes these different modes of anti-normativity through the fourth mode of affective irony. The Conclusion discusses how melancholic critique formally communicates intensities, background affects, and excess through acts of irony. In *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* (1753), Jane Collier satirizes how coverture's dispossession of married women's property creates unequal and potentially abusive relationships in domestic households. Through irony, Collier's persona advises married women to emotionally torment men. Collier imagines that women can mobilize their malicious passions to launch an ironic resistance against the dominion of patriarchy. *Melancholic Satires* concludes that eighteenth-century satires revel in profoundly anti-normative practices of overturning powers that have oppressed bodies. These texts introduce forms of affective sociability in which sensations, feelings, and desires stimulate social

criticism. By analyzing the subversiveness of these satires, I hope to trace the expressive zest of melancholic subjectivities.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**THE DISSENT OF THE BODY:**  
**ENTHUSIASTIC DISCONNECTIONS**  
**IN JONATHAN SWIFT'S *A TALE OF A TUB***

1. Preliminaries: Intensity, Disconnection, and Form

Among the many targets of Jonathan Swift's early satire *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) are the enthusiastic narrator's zany reasons for supporting various unorthodox positions, such as pro-modern learning, hack writing, and religious dissent.<sup>42</sup> According to Howard Weinbrot (2005), Menippean satires such as Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* concern themselves "with dangerous, harmful, spreading views whether personal or public" that have become "a dangerous or threatening false orthodoxy [or generally accepted theory, practice, or doctrine]" (5-6).<sup>43</sup> Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*, as a Menippean satire, cautions readers of the dangerous potential of the narrator's beliefs in these unorthodox positions, yet beyond satirizing these "false orthodoxies," this text as also a "melancholic satire" presents the narrator as an exemplar of the Cartesian self whose melancholically related condition of enthusiasm embodies affective passions and imaginations functioning independently from

---

<sup>42</sup> References to the *Tale* and, later on, to the *Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* originate from Angus Ross and David Wooley's edition (1986).

<sup>43</sup> Howard Weinbrot, *Menippean Satire Reconsidered* (2005).

the reasoning mind.<sup>44</sup> These “false orthodoxies” do not so much pose a danger; rather, the real danger lies in the melancholic body’s capacity to subvert the self’s rationality.

Swift’s text explores how reason works and fails through the bad example of the narrator. *A Tale of a Tub* teaches that the narrator’s bodily passions and imagination influence the self into becoming an irrational thinker. As a result of these bodily influences, the narrator communicates a corporeally-driven reasoning. Throughout this study, I identify such reasoning to be an affectively intense reasoning. Scholars studying this text’s narrator tend to focus on how this text engages certain seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century contexts: these scholars consider how the pro-modern support for the new science or natural philosophy rejects the philosophic wisdom of antiquity, how the phenomenon of Grub Street hack writers represented a deeply suspect mercenary model of writing, and how the enthusiastic sects who dissented from the Anglican state church espoused heterodox doctrines.<sup>45</sup> In general, the narrator would be dismissed by some seventeenth- and

---

<sup>44</sup> See Kay Redfield Jamison (1995), 34-35, Michael Heyd, “*Be Sober and Reasonable*” (1995), 44-71, and John Sena (1973), 293-309, for further discussion of the long historical association between mania, or enthusiasm, with melancholy.

<sup>45</sup> For a recent study on Swift’s satire on the new science, see Gregory Lynall, *Swift and Science: The Satire, Politics and Theology of Natural Knowledge, 1690-1730* (2012); Paddy Bullard, “The Scriblerian Mock-Arts: Pseudo-Technical Satire in Swift and His Contemporaries” (2013); and Douglass Lane Patey, “Swift’s Satire on ‘Science’ and the Structure of *Gulliver’s Travels*” (1995), 217-218. For context on the ancients and moderns debate, which *A Tale of a Tub* references, see Hans Baron, “The Querelle of the Ancients and the Moderns as a Problem for Renaissance Scholarship” (1959); A. Owen Aldridge, “Ancients and Moderns in the Eighteenth Century” (1968); and Richard Foster Jones, *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Background of The Battle of the Books* (1936). For a more thorough discussion of Swift’s relationship with Grub Street hacks, see Pat Rogers, *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture* (1972), 18-93 and 218-275. On the manic rhetoric of these enthusiasts and the religious significance of the three brothers of the Tale-teller’s allegory, see Clement Hawes, *Mania and Literary Style: The Rhetoric of Enthusiasm from the Ranters to Christopher Smart* (1996). For a study on religious enthusiasm, see Michael Heyd, “*Be Sober and Reasonable*”: *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (1995), 46-71.

eighteenth-century contemporaries as an “enthusiast,” a pejorative term broadly referring to figures who overzealously embraced unorthodox positions.<sup>46</sup> In this study, however, instead of focusing on the narrator’s unorthodox enthusiasm, I reorient our attention onto an unexamined area: the Cartesian body that induces the mind into passionate intensities of rational engagement.<sup>47</sup> *A Tale of a Tub* insinuates, I argue, that there is a correlative cause for the narrator’s deviant positions: the body’s internal dissent from the sovereignty of reason. Overall, despite implicating the narrator’s body as the culprit for his foolish ideas, the melancholic satire of Swift’s *Tale* teaches that the body’s passions are simultaneously detrimental to and yet inevitably necessary to reason.

This chapter places Swift’s satire in conversation with both seventeenth-century and contemporary approaches to the passions. Swift’s text critically assesses René Descartes’ propositions that the passionate body functions independently from the mind. Furthermore, this essay draws from a range of affect theories to suggest that affects at once exceed signification and yet can be formalized into emergent signifying structures of language. By treating the affects in this way, this essay further argues that the narrator’s written discourse materializes into various structures his dissenting body’s affects. By complementing

---

<sup>46</sup> As Michael Heyd notes, the term “enthusiasm” connoted “opposition to established institutions and traditional professions, regardless of whether they were educational institutions, e.g. the universities, medical institutions, e.g. the College of Physicians, or the clerical order.” The term “enthusiasm” broadly referred to those who opposed what was “established” and “traditional.” See Heyd, “The New Experimental Philosophy: A Manifestation of “Enthusiasm” or an Antidote to It?” (1987).

<sup>47</sup> Because I analyze Swift’s narrator persona, my study bears some relation to persona-based studies on Swift. For representative studies on Swift’s vexing deployment of personas, see especially Irvin Ehrenpreis, “Personae,” *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature* (1963), 25-37; Robert Elliott, *The Literary Persona* (1982), 107-123; William Ewald, *The Masks of Jonathan Swift* (1954); Edward Rosenheim, Jr., *Swift and the Satirist’s Art* (1963), 141-154; and Gardner D. Stout, Jr., “Speaker and Satiric Vision in Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub*” (1969).

Cartesian with affective lenses, I contend that the body's affective pressures constantly unsettle the rational self into an anarchic condition that, in turn, increases the probability that fools—like the narrator—will support subversive ideas. *A Tale of a Tub* does not fully condemn the Cartesian model of the body's independent power. Instead, Swift's text suggests that this model is the self's inevitable condition and that acknowledging this truth leads to a greater awareness of one's bodily and mental limitations.

Because *A Tale of a Tub* uses the example of the enthusiastic narrator to convey how reason is entangled with corporeal forces, it conveys an ambivalent attitude towards the body and mind. This ambivalence can be attributable to Swift's religious assumptions. As Donald Greene (1970) clarifies, both body and mind to Swift are fallen in the Augustinian Christian sense.<sup>48</sup> Being fallible renders humanity susceptible to immorality, which includes the tendency toward excessive self-exultation that *A Tale of a Tub*'s narrator repeatedly evinces when praising his own treatise. This suspicion towards the self's fallen-ness inflects Swift's ambivalent attitude towards the passions and reasoning of the individual. It is useful to recognize Swift's religiously inflected skepticism because this insight helps us understand why critics have argued that Swift ambivalently views the body as both dangerously excessive and yet necessarily crucial to his satirical project.<sup>49</sup> Continuing this line of body-

---

<sup>48</sup> For a cogent account of Swift's Augustinian position, see Donald Greene, *The Age of Exuberance: Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (1970), 92-100. See also Marcus Walsh (2010) and Philip Harth (1961).

<sup>49</sup> William Freedman and Susan Gubar, for instance, have argued how Swift's conflicted attitude towards female bodies in his satirical texts hinder and yet facilitate the transmission of meaning. And Carol Flynn has argued that the body for Swift "resists form" and its "opaque, illusive reality" constantly undercuts any rational endeavor to understand experience through a coherent ideal; only through an "immersion into the matter" of the body, Flynn insists, one can make meaning, howsoever of a "radical uncertainty" this meaning is (5). See Freedman, "The Grotesque Body in the Hollow Tub: Swift's *Tale*"

centered inquiry, I emphasize through Cartesian and affect-oriented frameworks that the subversive body is central to understanding *A Tale of a Tub*'s lesson on reason. Moreover, these same critics studying Swift's satire have yet to investigate his satire's affective rhetoric. My study which draws from affect theory intends to enrich this gap in satire studies on Swift. My approach leads me to conclude that Swiftian satire remains thoroughly sensitive to the passionate and corporeal undercurrents that stimulate the self into acts of reason and unreason. Making this conclusion will show that studying Swiftian satire requires a more rigorous attention to the affective reality of satire's language.<sup>50</sup>

*A Tale of a Tub*'s representation of the body responds to Descartes' radical proposition that the passions originate from "perceptions" of the body, rather than from the will of the mind. As the historian of the passions Thomas Dixon (2003) writes, Descartes's *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul* (1649)<sup>51</sup> "informed thinking about passions in Europe

---

(2009); Gubar, "The Female Monster in Augustan Satire" (1977); and Flynn, *The Body in Swift and Defoe* (1990).

<sup>50</sup> I also recognize that because I analyze Swift's melancholic and enthusiastic persona, I also locate my study in relation to persona- and reader-based studies on Swift. My study, here, does not seek to comment on how Swift reimagines the persona. Rather, I am interested in examining the ways in which Swift reinterprets the self as entangled with bodily intensities of passions. For representative studies on Swift's vexing deployment of personas, see especially Irvin Ehrenpreis" (1963); Robert Elliott (1982), 107-123; William Ewald (1954); Martin Price (1953); and Edward Rosenheim, Jr. (1963), 141-154; and Gardner D. Stout, Jr. (1969). For a critical take on trying to arrive at Swift's meaning behind his personas, see Denis Donoghue, *Jonathan Swift: A Critical Introduction* (1969). For reader-based studies, see Clive T. Probyn, "Preface: Swift and the Reader's Role" (1978); 7-14, Robert C. Elliott, "Swift's Satire: *Rules of the Game*" (1995), 50-62; and Claude Rawson, "Order and Cruelty" (1995), 29-49. For works with a decidedly deconstructive bent, see Terry Castle, "Why the Houyhnhnms Don't Write: Swift, Satire and the Fear of the Text" (1993), 57-71, and Robert Phiddian, *Swift's Parody* (1995).

<sup>51</sup> Descartes, *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul. The Passions of the Soul and Other Late Philosophical Writings* (2015), trans. Michael Moriarty.

for at least the next hundred and fifty years” (76).<sup>52</sup> These passions, as Descartes defines them respectively in Articles 27 and 28 of his *Traité*, were “perceptions, or sensations, or emotions of the soul [or mind]...caused, sustained, and fortified by some movements of the [animal] spirits”<sup>53</sup> in the body, and these passions were “perceptions in the general sense of the word, when it [that is, the passions as perceptions] used to denote all thoughts that are not actions of the soul (or volitions)” but rather the actions of the body’s spirits upon the soul (206-207). According to classical Christian theory, as laid out by Augustine and Aquinas, as Dixon states, the passions come from “the sense appetite, which was the lower part of the will” (77).<sup>54</sup> Descartes departs from this Christian paradigm by defining that the passions do not derive from the will, but instead are “thoughts...caused by the action of the body upon the soul.” Through this definition, Descartes elevates the passions into wielding a corporeal authority independent from the mind.<sup>55</sup> Descartes’ departure from the traditional Christian model becomes a central concern of Swift’s satire on the narrator’s reasoning. *A Tale of a Tub* explores the consequences of Descartes’ model in which the body and passions function as separate authorities: a subverted hierarchy in which reason serves bodily powers.

---

<sup>52</sup> Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category* (2003).

<sup>53</sup> The animal spirits, as Dixon reminds us, are “very fine parts of the blood” that serve as the medium that connects the body’s interaction and response to outside stimuli with the mind’s registering of this interaction and response (76). See Dixon, 76-79, for his consideration of Descartes’ view of the passions.

<sup>54</sup> For a further account of classical Christian conceptions of passions and affections, see Dixon, 26-61.

<sup>55</sup> For a fuller account of Descartes’ delineation of the soul’s thinking powers, see Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Early Modern Philosophy* (1997), 87-94.



As I note in my introductory chapter, I establish that satirists, such as Jonathan Swift, Anne Finch, Alexander Pope, Matthew Green, Tobias Smollett, and Jane Collier were influenced by Descartes' proposition that the passions originate from "perceptions" of the body, rather than from the volition or will of the mind. The Cartesian model imagines the passions as wielding a perceptual corporeal authority independent from the mind. This Cartesian model serves as the primary theoretical framework for my approach to Swift's ambivalent attitude to the passions: these passions' separateness from the mind renders them as dangerous and yet their very autonomy enables them to rouse reason. Moreover, as I also explain in my introduction, I complement this seventeenth-century framework with an affective formalist approach that understands the affects can be understood through the imaginative structures of literary and technical forms. I propose that although the passions resist the regulation of reason, they can still be represented through signifying artificial forms. By utilizing this formal framework, I furthermore distinguish my methodology from other scholars concerned with Swift's corporeal obsessions. My study demonstrates that Swiftian satire dramatizes the interplay between reason and passion through its playful forms.

It would now be helpful to review the key term that I discussed in my Introduction Chapter and that I will use when analyzing the passions in Swift: affective or passionate intensity. Affective intensity for Brian Massumi (1995) relates to the ways the conscious mind *cannot* determine its body's physiological reactions to its surrounding environment into a completely apprehensible meaning: "Intensity is embodied in purely autonomic

reactions...disconnected from meaningful sequencing” (85).<sup>56</sup> The non-sequential nature of an affect is what interests me when studying Swift’s formal representations of the affective emergences in the mind-body interplay. An affect is intense because it exceeds the mind’s powers of “meaningful” sequencing. We can define tentatively affective intensity, for the purposes of this study, as a *bodily experience of disconnection* that remains autonomous and, hence, resistant to the rational mind’s qualifications.<sup>57</sup>

What do I mean here by “disconnected from rational sequencing”? To answer this, let’s consider what *A Tale of a Tub* means by “reason.” There are two relevant seventeenth- and eighteenth-century senses of “reason”: “A statement of some fact (real or alleged) used to ... prove or disprove some assertion, idea, or belief” and “[t]he power of the mind to think and form valid judgements by a process of logic; the mental faculty which is used in adapting thought or action to some end; the guiding principle of the mind in the process of

---

<sup>56</sup> Massumi bases his theory of affect on experiments conducted by Hertha Sturm. In these experiments, researchers observed the reactions of nine-year-old children to three versions of a film clip. One version was a wordless version, a second version had voice-over, dubbed “factual”, contained a step-by-step account of the film, and a third, titled “emotional,” included at certain crucial moments “words expressing the emotional tenor of the scene” (83). What researchers found was that the factual versions made the children’s heart beat faster and made their skin resistance fall, but the wordless version registered the greatest response, or galvanic response of electrical resistance, from their skin. Massumi associates this skin response with an affective intensity and argues that the skin’s intensity of response arises autonomously from the qualitative, narrated, or “factual” dimensions of the film. For more information on the experiments, see Sturm (1987).

<sup>57</sup> Sylvan Tomkins also theorizes about affects in terms of intensity. When comparing affects to physical drives of eating, drinking, and sex, Tomkins writes, “[T]he intensity profiles of affect are capable of marked differentiation. Interest may begin in a low key, increase somewhat, then decline in intensity, then suddenly become very intense and remain so for some time. Or it may begin suddenly with high intensity and then gradually decline. Consider the variations in intensity of interest of a somewhat sleepy person reading a mystery story” (50). Affect’s intensity for Tomkins lies in its variability of psychological investment that the subject has for an object or objects of the affect. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank’s edition of the *Tomkins Reader* (1995).

thinking” (“reason, n.”).<sup>58</sup> I will apply these two definitions of “reason” offered by the *OED* for two reasons. First, because a quick search via *The Victorian Literary Studies Archive*’s Concordance tool of *A Tale of a Tub* confirms that the narrator’s usage of “reason” adheres to the first definition, such as in “I have Reason [as a premise or source of proof] to believe they imposed upon my Ignorance” (“To the Right Honourable, JOHN Lord SOMMERS,” 12). Second, it’s reasonable to assume that Swift’s text uses the latter definition of “reason” to refer to the narrator’s faculty of judgment.<sup>59</sup> More importantly, the first definition implies that acts of reasoning require antecedent premises, evidence, and/or connective concepts to justify their assertions. Yet, what about an affect that is disconnected from rational sequencing? In contrast to Massumi’s more extreme views on an affect’s asignifying nature, I recognize that the narrator’s affectively “disconnected” language represents the *beginnings* of rationally constructed sequencing.<sup>60</sup> In this sense, the narrator expresses his affective disconnect through incomplete sequences in which there are conceptual, evidentiary, and/or propositional lacunae that the narrator has yet to specify.

When discussing the narrator of *A DISCOURSE Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the SPIRIT. IN A LETTER TO a FRIEND. A FRAGMENT*, added to the 1704 edition of the *A Tale of a Tub*, Paddy Bullard (2013) observes that this narrator writes in an “elaborate instructional format” discussing “an area of knowledge that is resistant to specification” (613, 616).<sup>61</sup> Bullard’s description can equally apply to *A Tale of a Tub*’s

---

<sup>58</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “reason (n.)”

<sup>59</sup> *The Victorian Literary Studies Archive*, “A Hyper-Concordance to the Works of Jonathan Swift.”

<sup>60</sup> See the Introduction Chapter for a more thorough treatment of Massumi.

<sup>61</sup> Paddy Bullard, “The Scriblerian Mock-Arts: Pseudo-Technical Satire in Swift and His Contemporaries” (2013).

narrator: the discourse of the narrator is “resistant to specification” because of its incomplete, omissive sequences. Even at the local level of the signifying sentence, a lacuna appears in the very last words of *A Tale of a Tub*’s “Conclusion” section: “I already discover that the *issues* of my *observanda* begin to grow too large for the *receipts*. Therefore, I shall here pause a while till I find, by feeling the world’s Pulse and my own, that it will be of absolute necessity for us both to resume my pen” (“THE CONCLUSION,” 103). The narrator’s usage of “therefore” indicates that he is attempting to justify his sequence of ideas, yet when he reasons that he will resume his writing by “feeling the world’s pulse” and his “own,” he omits to explain the explicit connection between his pulsating stimuli—or his affective impingements—and his resumption of writing. Because he is so stimulated by his pulsing body, he has no time to slow down and reflectively detail the chain of causation from pulsation to writing. In this conclusion, the narrator evidences *forms* or *structures* of unfinished sequencing: the incompletely stated connection between his affective stimuli and his written ideas. When using the word “form” or “structure,” I thus broadly refer to the ways in which the narrator expresses his reasoning through various sequences that we can close read. Despite the narrator’s lack of formal reasoning, I nevertheless recognize that his affects are analyzable, and not resistant to any kind of signification.

This essay, thus, analyzes Swift’s satire through what I call an affective formalistic approach. Affective formalism is a method that understands affects are at once disconnected from reasoning but are still representable as meaningful signifiers. This method permits me to demonstrate that the narrator’s writings formalize into disconnected sequences his Cartesian body’s disconnected authority from the mind. My affective method analyzes the *formal* or *structural* dimensions of affects, in the sense that reason’s disconnected, lacunal

sequencing is a sign of the narrator's emerging affective structures of his disconnected body. The particular value of this approach when examining Swift's narrator in particular is that I can treat the signified affects' *external separateness* from the narrator's reasoning mind as a consequence of the narrator's bodily *dissent*. Bodily dissension leads to the formal creation (or excretion) of affective ideas disconnected from the total purview of reason. To understand this dissension, I examine local instances in which the narrator formalizes his affective passions into broken or disconnected sequences of ideas. By analyzing these moments, we can appreciate how these small-scale ruptures correspondingly parallel how *A Tale of a Tub's* larger main parable of the three brothers itself is disconnected by digression sections ("A Digression concerning critics, "A Digression in the Modern Kind, "A Digression in Praise of Digressions," and "A Digression on Madness"). While analyzing the affective structure at this larger scale falls outside the scope of this study, it is helpful to note that affective disconnection pervades from the small-scale all the way up to the larger narrative arc. Rather than study the large scale, I suggest that local ripples of affective rupturing enable the narrator to support deviant positions. Analyzing affects, as Sianne Ngai (2005) puts it, can "not only render visible different registers of problem (formal, ideological, sociohistorical) but conjoin these problems in a distinctive manner."<sup>62</sup> Hence, the narrator's affects conjoin his deviant support for unorthodox practices. The text satirizes the narrator's unorthodox support by formalizing his Cartesian body's affects in the "distinctive manner" of disconnected sequences of ideas.

Before I discuss the text proper, it is important to outline the general directions of my argument. First, I analyze the ways in which the melancholy and enthusiasm of the *Tale's*

---

<sup>62</sup> Ngai, 3.

narrator represent forms of dissenting passionate excess. Then, I analyze how this narrator explains the madness of Jack, a fictional character in this narrator's *Tale*. Because I intend a comprehensive sense of Swift's satire on the dangerous passions of melancholy and enthusiasm, I will examine how the narrator of *The Mechanical Operation of the SPIRIT*, added to the 1704 edition of the *Tale*, theorizes the enthusiastic mind and writes in a passionate language. Lastly, I consider how Swift develops his interest in the body's affective dissent through his formal representation of a fictional reader in the "Preface" to *The Battle of the Books*, also attached to 1704 edition.

It is also important to give a general sense of *Tale* and its related texts to situate the character of the *Tale*'s narrator. The narrator is, as I'll discuss in the following section, a pro-modern who believes that modern forms of learning, such as the new science, can have public benefits for human society. He is also a hack writer of the infamous Grub street, and the *Tale* acts as Swift's parody of the hack writings that authors, or hacks, composed for purely monetary purposes.<sup>63</sup> As this hack, the narrator writes a main "tale" that is an allegory of three brothers, Peter, Jack, and Martin, who each interpret the will of their father differently. The narrator at various points interrupts this allegory with digressions about critics, modern ways, praising digressions, and madness. The *Tale*'s perhaps digressive and interruptive format perhaps best evokes the narrator's madness. His dissent from reason

---

<sup>63</sup> The hack writers of Grub Street, as Pat Rogers points out, included the Moorfields district, the parish of St. Giles of Cripplegate and Covent Garden, Smithfield, Rosemary Lane, and Fleet and Farrington. This street and its adjoining neighborhoods gained notoriety, especially among satirists like Swift and Alexander Pope, for its poverty, its unhealthy and unsanitary conditions, its closeness to the psychiatric institution of Bedlam, and its reputation of being home to criminals, prostitutes, and, of course, to "hack writers" who were known to write ephemeral works for money. See Pat Rogers' *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture*.

finds its formal expression in the way his text dissents, or digresses, from an uninterrupted linear narrative. In this respect, the narrator's *Tale* serves as the expression of his dissenting passions. Thus, being as excessive intensities, these passions disorder the narrative into such a digressive structure. In the argument that will ensue, we will see how these intensities work at a smaller scale when we scrutinize the significance of the narrator's words, metaphors, and language.

## 2. The Narrator's Broken Sequence of Enthusiastic Intensities: Omission, Excess, and Decentralization

Affective formalism is method that scrutinizes the formal properties of the affects. Analyzing form in Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* matters because doing so enables us to understand more intimately the narrator's unorthodox rational positions. Such an intimate understanding necessitates a close attention to what I earlier called the "local ripples of affective rupturing"—ripples through which his bodily affects make their disruptive influence on reasoning visible. These ripples resonate most prominently in the form of this narrator's illogical explanatory sequences of ideas. His affects cause him to reason by omitting to include further explanations or justifying ideas; thus, he affectively reasons out broken or disconnected sequences. And in place of absent justifications in his sequences, he includes content that suggest various kinds of multiplicity and dispersive excess. The dominant forms of his affects, therefore, emerge as these broken sequences, and the specific properties or traits of these formalized sequences are conceptual omissions and images of excesses.

This omissive formal trait emerges when the narrator, at times, omits to include ideas that would better clarify his conclusions. An example of such omission occurs when he offers a gap-filled causal history. In the concluding moments of *A Tale of a Tub*, the narrator in the third-person begs readers not to “be equally diverted and informed, by every line, or every page of this discourse [the narrator’s writings],” but to blame instead or “give some allowance to the author’s spleen, and short fits or intervals of dulness, as well as his own” (“The CONCLUSION,” 102-103). In this miniature causal history, the narrator references the spleen, an organ that was commonly considered since the classical age as the source for melancholy. The narrator alludes to the humoral medical theory that when the spleen fails to regulate its humours of black bile, vapours rise up to the brain and cause impassioned delusions.<sup>64</sup> In addition to blaming the spleen, he accords the spleen’s attendant “short fits or intervals of dulness” the “allowance” of having rule over himself and his readers. He believes that his splenetic, fitful, and dull body has “diverted and informed” him and his audience. Here Swift parodies Horace’s well-known prescription that art should teach and delight. Instead of the artistic creation—his written discourse— itself stimulating the mind, the narrator lays the blame on the stimulated body. By assigning causes, he *does* provide a sequential history of how the body affectively destabilizes the mind. However, he *does not* articulate the evidence that these bodily stimuli of fits, dullness, and spleen have affected his *and* the readers’ mental faculties. It might be reasonable for the narrator to suggest that the readers’ organs alone cause their mental experiences, but because the narrator reasons that

---

<sup>64</sup> For an account on the historical development of melancholy, see Allan Ingram. Stuart Sim, Clark Lawlor, Richard terry, John Baker, Leigh Wetherall-Dickson, *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century* (2011); Shaun Irlam, *Elations: The Poetics of Enthusiasm in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1999); and Jennifer Radden, *Moody Minds Distempered: Essays on Melancholy and Depression* (2009), 3-23.



his own organs (which are undoubtedly *disconnected* from the readers' bodies) somehow affect the readers, he constructs a far from fully qualified narrative sequence.

Massumi claims that when the reflective consciousness delineates the affect into "semantically and semiotically formed progressions," or rather into a meaningful narrative history of how the affect progresses, the affect becomes an *emotion* (28). An emotion, Massumi continues, "is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal" (28). Although Swift's narrator does not name what emotion he feels, he nonetheless constructs a causal history to explain his and his readers' experiences of being diverted and informed. Even though it may appear he has delimited his affects within a narrative sequence, he delivers a sequence marred by a crucial omission of evidence, hence preserving the affective element of being resistant to full qualification. Thus, the narrator's affective reasoning both conveys qualified sequencing (how *A* leads to *B*) and still maintains a disconnected sequencing (how the sequence from *A* to *B* contains some missing evidence).

This affective resistance to a full narrative sequencing of an emotion differs sharply from earlier accounts that attempt to give a narrative understanding of melancholy and enthusiasm. Consider, for example, the classical description given by Aristotle. In his *Problemata Physica* XXX, I, he theorizes how excess corporeal intensities of the body work:

. . . [T]hose who possess a large quantity of hot black bile become frenzied or clever or erotic or easily moved to anger and desire, while some become more loquacious. Many too, if this heat approaches the region of the intellect, are affected by diseases of frenzy and possession; and this is the origin of Sibyls and soothsayers

and all inspired persons, when they are affected not by disease but by natural temperament. (qtd. in Heyd 46)<sup>65</sup>

Aristotle takes care to distinguish between those of “natural temperament” of melancholy who had the potential for prophecy and inspiration and those who were diseased with melancholy. Although Aristotle does not necessarily view prophecy and inspiration as symptoms of a disease, he, nonetheless, narratively describes that black bile gives rise to the enthusiastic state of being frenzied and inspired to prophecy. The “large quantity of black bile” and resultant “heat” represent the bodily intensities of the melancholic. Yet because Aristotle qualifies that prophecy was not a disease, he would not have viewed the invasively excessive intensities of melancholy to be universally problematic. In light of Swift’s classical predecessor, we can read the narrator’s “allowance” to the spleen in himself *and* in his readers to accrue a more slippery or (to conjure the sense of bile) more fluid meaning. Reimagining the Aristotelian vision of the melancholic more satirically and somewhat more in a broken sequence, Swift incriminates the narrator of granting the spleen to have an excessive “allowance” of invasive intensity.

As an affectively melancholic and enthused figure, the narrator gives a sequential account subverted by sins of omissions. Later on in the “Conclusion,” the narrator resumes his omissive tendency when he multiplies the organization of his mental faculties:

In my disposure of employments of the brain, I have thought fit to make *invention* the *master*, and give *method* and *reason*, the office of its *lacquays*. The cause of this distribution was, from observing it my peculiar case to be often under a

---

<sup>65</sup> See Heyd (1995), and Aristotle, *Problemata Physica*, XXX, I, 954a 32-38. For the English translation, see W.D. Ross, *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. VII (1971).

temptation of being *witty* upon occasion where I could be neither be *wise*, nor *sound*, nor anything to the matter in hand. And I am too much a servant of the *modern way*, to neglect any such opportunities, whatever pains or improprieties I may be at to introduce them. (“THE CONCLUSION,” 103)

In this passage, he signifies that his bodily dissent has demoted reason into a “*lacquay*” [or lackey] and promoted the “*invention*” of imagination into the “*master*” of the brain’s “employments.” The passage verges into qualification when he reasons that the “cause” (or really causes) of this demotion were his temptation to be “*witty*,” and his enthusiastic servitude to “the *modern way*” of exploiting any opportunity” to express his wit. The narrator’s statements become even more qualified when he self-reflects (“I have thought fit...observing it my peculiar case to be often under temptation...I am too much a Servant”). However, these qualifications are undercut by his succumbing to states of affective intensity: being “under a temptation” and being “too much a servant...to neglect any such opportunities, whatever pains or improprieties” the narrator may be experiencing. The narrator’s experiences of temptation, possible pain, and even his “improprieties” and excessive servitude represent stimulating causes that his now “*lacquay*” of reason may not be able to fully process.

The narrator communicates multiple affective stimuli. Descartes, if we recall, conceptualizes the body as a separate power acting upon the mind. Here, Swift’s satire explores the effects of this Cartesian model of the self, in which the mind must answer to many corporeal powers, ranging from its spleen, fits, delirious dullness, pain, impassioned temptation, to, as I will soon explain, the bodily imagination. Explaining such affects in signifying sequences must account for these many causes, yet to do so requires more time

and labor—a luxury that not even the narrator wishes to partake in when he confesses that “*Going too long* in writing is a cause of Abortion as effectual...as *going too short*; and holds true especially in the *labours* of the brain” (“THE CONCLUSION,” 101). He cannot signify his reasons *at length* or *in brief* because the “*labours*” of his brain involve multiple “employments” in which “reason” is nothing more but one “lackey” among other “lackeys.” His brain has evolved into something comparable to a corporate entity, in which reason is overcome by the brain and body’s subverted hierarchy.

Central to the narrator’s multifarious experience in body and mind is the influence of the imagination. Today, we might assume the imagination as a feature of mental cognition, yet the representation of the imagination in Swift’s satire is informed in part by Descartes’ thinking on this subject. While Descartes does mention in Article 20 of the *Treatise on the Passions of the Soul* that the will of the mind or soul can “imagine something that does not exist, for instance, to picture an enchanted palace or a chimera,” he also argues that there are imaginings not caused by the will (204). In Article 21, he claims that this latter kind of imaginative activity occurs when the body’s “spirits are agitated in various ways, and flow into the traces of different impressions formed beforehand in the brain, they randomly take their course through certain pores of the brain,” resulting in “the illusions we have in dreams and also the daydreams we frequently have when awake, when our mind wanders carelessly without applying itself of its own accord to anything in particular” (204). Because this type of imagination originates from the body’s sensory apparatus of the spirits, Descartes classes this imagination as “passions of the soul” acted on by the body (204). This bodily imagination results from agitated spirits flowing in a dispersed and random fashion through the brain’s pores. Perhaps because of such dispersive, random movement, these passionate

imaginings, Descartes implies, “do not have so significant and determinate a cause as the perceptions conveyed to the soul through the agency of the nerves” (204).<sup>66</sup> We can think of Descartes’ concept of the dispersive bodily imagination as comparable to the unqualifiable affects. Because they lack “determinate” causes, this imagination cannot be meaningfully sequenced into narratives of cause and effect. Descartes’ suggestive concept of the bodily imagination usefully informs how *A Tale of a Tub* represents its subversive narrator. This text shows that the narrator himself fails to function quite effectively as a *narrator* due to the fact that when he narratively imagines his mental organization, he omits to name determinate causes and instead communicates an affective reasoning that imagines a multifarious array of possible stimuli.

The following questions emerge: Does imagination cause melancholy? And is not the imagination a member of the mind, not the body, so how is the imagination a corporeal intensity? Swift is echoing Robert Burton’s understanding that the imagination acts as another cause of melancholy and that the imagination is part of the sensitive or corporeal soul in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621). On the subject of imagination as a melancholic cause, Burton writes,

If the imagination be very apprehensive, intent, and violent, it sends great store of spirits to or from the heart, and makes a deeper impression and greater tumult; as the humours in the body be likewise prepared, and the temperature itself ill or well disposed, the passions are longer and stronger; so that the first step and fountain of

---

<sup>66</sup> Descartes is not exactly clear why the nerves produce clearer perceptions, when earlier in Article 8, he notes that the nerves “contain a highly subtle air or wind known as the animal spirits” (198). Suffice to say, the sensory agencies of the animal spirits become Descartes’ conceptual figure for conceiving of the body’s imaginative potential.

all our grievances in this kind is *laesa imaginatio* [a disordered imagination], which, misinforming the heart, causeth all these distemperatures, alteration and confusion of spirits and humours...great is the force of imagination, and much more ought the cause of melancholy to be ascribed to this alone, than to the distemperature of the body. (Partition I, Member III, Subsection I, 252-253)

A crucial fact of note is that Burton offers a causal narrative, albeit a highly complicated and detailed one, about how the imagination influences the spirits, humors, misinformed heart, and—it is implied—passions, and how this influence brings about the body's dissent from the proper order of the self.<sup>67</sup> The detrimental influence of the imagination on the body, as Burton demonstrates, creates a dysfunction to the normal hierarchy, and in the new hierarchy of the melancholic self, the body and imagination dominate. In this perverted hierarchy, the corporeal elements of the heart, spirit, and passions under imagination's influence become what would Swift call the "lackeys."

This bodily and imaginative hierarchies that Burton, Descartes, and then Swift conceive of, at its core, describes an affective disconnection from the sovereign rule of reason. Burton, as Michael Heyd explains, associates enthusiasm and melancholy with hierarchical subversion in order to pathologize religious enthusiastic sects that dissented from the Anglican state church (64).<sup>68</sup> Implicit within this medical discourse of enthusiasm

---

<sup>67</sup> See also Partition 1, Member 2, Subsections V-XI for a description of Burton's classical model of the hierarchy of the self.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 64-71. On the development of this pathologizing discourse, see also Jon Mee, *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation* (2003), 25-37. In the seventeenth century and continuing on into the eighteenth century, figures like Burton used the term "enthusiasm" as a pejorative term for religious sects who dissented from the Anglican Church of England. As Jon Mee explains, "in the aftermath of the Civil War... 'enthusiasm' developed its own discourse, a network of associations that articulated a powerful cultural logic for describing certain kinds of religious and other forms of behaviour in terms of deviance. A language of

and melancholy is the suspicion of the physiological intensities of the body. This discourse drew a connection between the individual's physical body and the metaphorical body politic. Such a discourse denounced individuals' deviant behaviors, namely religious dissent, as threats to the body politic of the citizens inhabiting the public, governmental, and religious spheres.

In the case of the *A Tale of a Tub*'s narrator, he dissents from the traditional hierarchy of the self through, indeed, a feat of his imagination: he reimagines the hierarchy of his self into a model, in which the sovereign is the imaginative "invention" and the subordinate "lackeys" include "reason." In addition, to describe his dissenting reimagining as a "distribution" suggests that he decentralizes the authority of his self into, as he puts it, multiple "employments" and "offices." Swift perhaps echoes Burton's description of how imagination's distemperature is decentralized across the "alteration and confusion" of multiple spirits and humors, inflamed passions, and misinformed heart. For us to understand the disconnections of affective intensity, we must elaborate that affective intensity represents the decentralized rule (or misrule) of imagination and its lackeys. Swift formalizes, in effect, affective disconnection through images of decentralized organization.

Swift's decentralized narrator shows no interest in managing his passions. He believes in the efficacious potential of his corporeal intensities and, as a result of his enthusiasm, neglects to value his reason, judgment, or even conscience. In this respect, Swift satirizes an unmediated relationship with one's body and passions. Corporeal and passionate autonomy is too dangerous. The body represents something chaotic, disruptive, and

---

pathology soon developed to explain enthusiasm's explosive presence in the body politic" (28).

degenerate. It is host to passionate intensities that if left unrestrained can encroach upon the mind and overturn the self into the decentralized misrule of melancholy and enthusiasm.

### 3. Imagining Affective Dissent in the “Digression on Madness”: Comparisons, Gas Imagery, Mutual Exclusion, Third-Person Emotions, and Hiatuses

Expressing such affective misrule in signifying sequences, we have learned so far, requires the affective imagination’s practice of signifying protean, dispersive ideas in place of its omitted connective premises. Indeed, if the narrator’s affective reason is better known as his affective imagination—the true “*Master*” behind his self—, then he signifies products of his bodily imagination. To understand these products, it behooves us to read for more instances of their formal incarnations. In this section of the essay, we will further outline the shape of his imaginative body’s dissent in terms of comparisons, gas imagery, third-person emotions, and, lastly, in their most visible form, hiatuses.

A notable section of *A Tale of a Tub* where we witness comparative imagery is the narrator’s “*A Digression concerning the Original, the Use and Improvement of Madness in a Commonwealth.*” In “*Digression,*” the narrator rambles on the madness of his protagonist Jack, whom in the central narrative of *A Tale of a Tub* represents religious enthusiastic sects that dissented from the Anglican orthodoxy. I must clarify, however, that in this section we will analyze the narrator’s descriptions of *another* person’s affective dissent. In contrast, we will *not* analyze Jack’s affects in this study, since doing so would only complicate our inquiry further, leading to a question, like, “Whose affect is it anyway?” In as much as this latter question leads us to consider the ways in which the narrator’s affect seemingly blends



with that of his observed subject, we will set aside this question and instead focus on how the *narrator's* affective reasoning imagines Jack's madness.<sup>69</sup>

To return then to the passage, we note that the narrator describes Jack's "*Madness or Phrenzy*" as affected by gaseous substances ("SECTION IX," 172):

For the *upper region* of Man is furnished like the *middle region* of the air; the materials are formed from causes of the widest difference, yet produce at last the same substance and effect. Mists arise from the earth, steams from dunghills, exhalations from the sea, and smoke from fire; yet all clouds are the same in composition as well as Consequences: and the fumes issuing from a jakes, will furnish as comely and useful a vapour, as incense from an altar. ("SECTION IX," 78)

In this description, the narrator forces absurd metaphorical similarities between radically unlike things. Critics such as Martin Battestin (1974) and Ronald Paulson (1960) read that the narrator tends to find literal meaning in the metaphorical and, hence, to fails to discern difference from similarity.<sup>70</sup> This failure to discern difference, I argue, represents an affective dissent from reason. Rather than discerning difference, the narrator first strangely compares the "*upper region*" or the mental faculties to the "*middle region* of the Air." Then, he makes the logical leap of suggesting absurd similarities among differing kinds of gas

---

<sup>69</sup> In affect theory studies, we can trace this problematic question to W. K. Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley's concept of the "affective fallacy," referring to the error of judging an aesthetic work based on the reader's or spectator's subjective emotional experience. See William K. Wimsatt Jr. and Monroe C. Beardsley, "The Affective Fallacy" (1949), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, 1387-1403. In certain respects, the narrator suffers from the affective fallacy of confusing his own emotional experiences with others' experiences.

<sup>70</sup> See Battestin, *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts* (1974), 232; and Paulson, *Theme and Structure in Swift's Tale of a Tub* (1960), 96.

when he states that the “causes of the widest difference” generate “the same substance and effect” of various gaseous elements arising “from the earth...dunghills...sea...fire.” He further proposes that “fumes issuing from a jakes” are as “comely and useful” as “incense from an altar.” Hence, the sequence of comparisons begins at comparison A (the mind is like the air), is followed by comparison B (mists, steams, exhalations, and smoke end up as the compositionally homogenous clouds), and ends at comparison C (the excremental fumes or odors from a privy are similar to the fragrance of religious incense). In this sequence, the narrator omits extensive justifications for why the mind is like the air, why heterogeneous gasses end up as homogeneous clouds, and why excremental fumes are similar to incense. The narrator paratactically piles comparison upon comparison, without syntactically demonstrating the logical coherence for any of them. Of course, parataxis involves placing clauses or phrases one after another without subordinating conjunctions, yet because he does not conjunctively justify his comparisons with supporting ideas, his comparisons resemble the structure of a parataxis. In this sense, the narrator formalizes his affective imagination by enforcing paratactic parallelisms at the cost of syntactically linked justifications.

Gas, the elementary idea of these disconnected paratactic sequences, surfaces as a formal manifestation of the bodily affects. Through these paratactic comparisons, Swift’s text satirically teaches that the heterogeneous bodily affects of humours, passions, organs, and the imagination are as mutable as gas. This focalized image of gas serves to reveal that the affects have the characteristic property of mutability. We can observe that the gaseous mutability in the way that the gaseous imagery varies from being related to earthly mists, dunghill steams, oceanic exhalations, fire smoke, jakes’ fumes, and altar incense. The narrator’s image of gas changes from one context of, say, the jakes’ fumes, to the extremely

dissimilar context of altar incense. This mutability, in turn, acts as another formal feature of the narrator's affectively shifting imagination. The expressed content of his imagination affectively oscillates between qualified determinacy and incomplete knowledge. Ngai writes that studying "ambient affects" in texts involves considering "passages whereby affects acquire the semantic density and narrative complexity of emotions, and emotions conversely denature into affects" (27). In Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*, the narrator's varied contexts for describing Jack's religious enthusiasm evokes this qualified "semantic density." However, because his description relies on metaphorizing Jack's body into different kinds of gas, the narrator cannot fixate on a single understanding. In this latter respect, the narrator's imaginative content "denatures" into an fuzzily represented array of images. Describing another person's enthused state, for the narrator, both succeeds and fails because his affectively intense condition prevents him from signifying fixed meanings. Thus, the narrator's shifting contexts of representation emulate in turn the shifting reality of his affective imagination.

It would be helpful to note that *A Tale of a Tub*'s usage of gas imagery has antecedents in anti-enthusiastic critiques of dissenting sects. For example, in *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus; Or, A BRIEF DISCOURSE OF The Nature, Causes, Kinds, and Cure of Enthusiasm* (1662), Henry More invokes the vaporous and fuming agents of the melancholic body in his critique of these purported conduits of God.<sup>71</sup> More clarifies in Section XVII that, when religious enthusiasts claim that they are inspired by God's "inner light," these enthusiasts are really motivated by their body's internal heat and vapours:

---

<sup>71</sup> See Daniel Fouke (1997) for a further discussion of More's critique of enthusiasm.

*Fervour, Zeal and Spirit*, is in effect all one. Now no Complexion is so *hot* as *Melancholy* when it is *heated*, being like boiling water...The *Spirit* then that wings the *Enthusiast* in such a wonderful manner, is nothing else but that *Flatulency* which is in the *Melancholy* complexion, and rises out of the *Hypochondriacal* humour upon some occasional heat, as *Winde* out of an *Æolipila* applied to the fire. Which fume mounting into the Head, being first actuated and spirited and somewhat refined by the warmth of the Heart, fills the Mind with variety of *Imaginations*, and so quickens and enlarges *Invention*, that it makes the *Enthusiast* to admiration *fluent* and *eloquent*. (12)

More refers to the religious enthusiasts' belief that they claim to channel the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and he criticizes this belief by showing that their "Spirit" is really a gaseous "Flatulency." More imagines melancholy to work in a diffuse way. In More's particular case, the diffuseness of melancholy occurs when the heated nature of melancholy causes the liquid "Hypochondriacal humour" to boil, evaporate, and hence disperse into a wind-like "fume." More identifies that the passions of enthusiastic melancholy are associated with these following pluralistic components: the heat of the melancholic condition, hypochondriacal humours, fumes, warmth of the Heart, the Mind and its imaginations, and the stimulated invention. In these writings on the passions of melancholy and enthusiasm, we find a preoccupation with outlining the biological processes and actors. These writers, namely More and Burton, reveal that an enthusiastic melancholic's charismatic dissent is really the work of internal organic mechanisms. To these melancholics, their dissenting behavior grants them a religious autonomy from the orthodoxy, yet Burton and More reveal their autonomy is subject to more internal disconnecting autonomies—namely, an

overheated melancholic body generating fumes and an unrestrained imagination. More and Burton defamiliarize the melancholics' dissenting autonomy by pointing out the true autonomous intensities: the diffuse and disparate entities of gases, delusions, a starved, disordered body, imagination, and the passions.

Swift, meanwhile, performs his version of defamiliarization: Swift suggests that although the narrator grants the corporeal elements of the spleen, fumes, starved body, and imagination to hold sway over his reason, his "zeal" or passions primarily drive him to believe that these elements have intensive power. In much the same way that Burton and More reveal that the religious melancholic is really governed by pernicious autonomies within, Swift interprets that the pro-modern, hack-writing enthusiasts exemplified by the narrator are ruled by affective autonomies. What is so different about Swift's defamiliarization is that he emphasizes that the narrator's internal autonomies have their own hierarchy in which his body's *passionate zeal* and *inventive imagination* act as the main fuel for his corporeal beliefs. The narrator's melancholic corporeal intensities hold both a decentralized and centralized organization: the authority over reason is distributed across organs, heat, spleen, imagination, and an emaciated body but is also centralized around the guiding zeal of passion. The driving fuel of passion leads him thus to imagine the new figure of vapours as another ruling intensity.<sup>72</sup>

Anti-enthusiastic critiques, such as More's and Swift's texts, pathologically explained that the "inner light" they purport to have is really the bodily vapors. More's critique, which assigns the vaporous "fume" as causing the "variety of *Imaginations*" and

---

<sup>72</sup> In another section of *A Tale of a Tub*, which I won't discuss at length, the text mocks enthusiasts' belief in the Inner Light as the Æolians' belief in the wind generated by the act of belching ("SECTION VIII," 158-171).

the enlarged “*Invention*,” partially informs Swift’s representation of the usurping role of the imagination. Furthermore, by suggesting that divine agency is really bodily or flatulent agency, these critiques formalize the body’s subversive powers into the expressible content of gaseous imagery. In this fashion, the act of formalizing entails translating the anarchy of the body into relatively intelligible signification. Indeed, More’s emphasis that the enthusiast is “*fluent* and *eloquent*” insinuates that a critic can analyze the enthusiastically affective body as eloquently expressed language. *A Tale of a Tub*’s formalistic critique, then, strives to develop a “fluency” in signifying the subversive affects of the mad narrator’s body as sequences of omissive justifications, decentralized imagery, paratactic comparisons, and gas imagery.

The message then of Swift’s affective *fluency*, if you will, is that expressing the affects of the body and imagination displace reason from supreme agency over the self. Through the example of the enthusiastic narrator, Swift depicts this figure’s defiance of logic as his part of his dissent from reason. This defiance is quite observable when the narrator writes in more detail about the bodily vapours:

Thus far, I suppose, will easily be granted me; and then it will follow that, as the Face of Nature never produces Rain but when it is overcast and disturbed, so human Understanding, seated in the Brain, must be troubled and overspread by Vapours ascending from the lower Faculties to water the Invention, and render it fruitful. Now, although these Vapours (as it hath been already said) are of as various original as those of the Skies, yet the Crop they produce differs both in Kind and Degree, merely according to the Soil. (Section IX, 79)

On the surface, the narrator means to say that the vapours ascend from the lower regions of the body, namely the spleen, into the upper regions of the mind in order to enrich his “invention.” Yet when we analyze the logic of this explanation, we find rather absurd metaphorical comparisons. Consider this: rain is meant to fall down, and the words “water the Invention, and render it fruitful” conjures the sense of rain watering down upon soil to produce the fruit of “the crop.” However, in as much as the narrator invokes such imagery of falling, he also introduces imagery of vaporous rising. The ascending vapours perform the act of watering—an act that connotes descending—, yet the narrator suggests otherwise that vaporous rising is unquestionably equivalent to rain falling. Here, the narrator illogically yokes together as similar not only these two opposing directions of movement, but also the two distinctive material states of gas and liquid. Swift’s narrator unwittingly demonstrates the illogical nature of his enthusiastic and melancholically disrupted reason. Brian Massumi’s theory on affective intensity offers a way to frame Swift’s metaphors as affective. He theorizes affective intensity as the “incipience of mutually exclusive pathways of action and expression that are then reduced, inhibited, prevented from actualizing themselves completely” (91). An affect resists the qualifications of meaningful reasoning because the affect represents the emergence of “mutually exclusive pathways of action and expression.” In other words, the affect transpires as an “action” that cannot be sequenced into the neat connective logic of rational “expression.” Such illogical metaphors give readable shape to his disconnective affective intensity at work. His intensities invasively influence his reason into conceiving mutually exclusive ideas.

And if these paradoxical ideas serve as emblems of the paradoxical dissent of melancholy’s intensities, then the idea of vapours acts as symbols of these intensities’

paradox. Vapours signify paradox to the degree that they are both substantial as matter and insubstantial as gas. Their quality as both substance and non-substance—something and nothing—characterizes the paradoxical emergence of the narrator’s reigning affective intensities. Massumi notes that an affect cannot be fully “actualized” into rational language, and, accordingly, the melancholic fails to actualize his ideas into completely rational expressions because the new melancholic sovereign of the self uses now an affectively intense reason. This affective reason, to quote what the narrator said earlier, is one “whose intellectuals were overturned, and his brain shaken out [or decentralized out] of its natural position.” Due to such destabilization, the narrator in turn entertains external acts of destabilization when he imagines that the vapours can influence “*new conquests...new schemes in philosophy...new religions.*” Swift reveals to his readers that the melancholic pro-modern believes in nothing but the unfulfillable promise of the body’s overstimulated intensities. And as the narrator’s mutually exclusive logic demonstrates, his belief does not lead to complete reason. His belief is literally nothing tangible, for the object of his obsession is air. Swift, therefore, cautions that an affectively influenced reason can deflate into endless, incomplete quests of fancy. True to his intensities, the narrator remains locked in an eternal “incipience” of beginning but never completing. In effect, the narrator’s dissent from a self purely moderated by reason leads not to completed “new schemes” or new systems of thought, but rather this dissent fragments the self into an anarchy of paradoxes.

Conveying stable ideas is not a defining trait of the narrator’s subverted reason. Because he communicates his affective dissent through different formal structures, like dispersed imagery, paratactic and mutually exclusive comparisons, and varying kinds of gas, his affective reasoning has versatile modes of expression. When the narrator observes the



“Woman *flay’d*” and the anatomized “Carcass of a *Beau*” in his “*Digression on Madness*,” he permits us to assess further his reasoning’s expressive versatility (“SECTION IX,” 84). In this passage, the narrator engages with mutilated human bodies, which due to anatomical dissection or corporeal punishment have destabilized into what he calls “Defects” (“SECTION IX,” 84). On the one hand, he is observing bodies deforming into “Defects,” yet on the other, his language first stabilizes into emotional cohesiveness and then denatures into affective indeterminacy. The decomposing bodies elicit his own dissenting body into expressing its own kind of decay: his meaningful sequencing decays into the *defective* sequencing of affect’s lacunal and dispersive expressions. Affect, Swift’s satire suggests, is a state of reason decomposing into the reign of the body. In this pivotal passage from the “*Digression*,” the narrator reveals the extent to which these mutilated bodies cause his own corporeally-driven reasoning to lapse into the affective declaration of self-deception:

Last week I saw a woman *flayed*, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse. Yesterday I ordered the carcass of a *beau* to be stripped in my presence; when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his *brain*, his *heart*, and his *spleen*; but I plainly perceived at every operation that the farther we proceeded, we found the defects increase upon us in number and bulk: from all which, I justly formed this conclusion to my self...[h]e, whose fortunes and dispositions have placed him in a convenient station to enjoy the fruits of this noble art [of covering the “Flaws and Imperfections of Nature”]; he that can with *Epicurus* content his ideas with the *films* and *images* that fly off upon his senses from the *superficies* of things; such a man, truly wise, creams off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs, for philosophy and

reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined point of felicity, called *the possession of being well deceived*; the serene peaceful state, of being a fool among knaves. (“SECTION IX,” 84)

To understand how affect is a form of decay, it is first necessary to identify the narrator’s obvious verbal signals that point to some kind of feeling. Such signals are: the narrator’s “amazed” wonder or surprise at the many defects of the damaged body, the narrator’s ostensible pleasure when discussing the hypothetical person who can “enjoy” the art of covering up the body’s defects, the narrator’s possible contentment when referring to another hypothetical person’s contentment with the “*superficies* of things,” and lastly the narrator’s reference to the “felicity” and “serene peaceful state” of “*being well deceived*.” These are different registers of qualified emotions. However, although the narrator is able to identify his sense of amazement in the first-person, he speaks of the latter states of enjoyment, contentment, and well-deceived happiness in the third-person. In this respect, first-person, personalized emotions decay into these third-person, detached emotions. These third-person emotions become affective because the narrator is not the one who is personally expressing them. If an affect represents a bodily state disconnected from the subjectivity of rational reflection, then calling these emotions in the third-person makes these emotions resemble affects that are *disconnected* from the narrator’s first-person subjectivity. The narrator externalizes first-person emotion into third-person affective expression. To externalize emotion as such, thus, causes it to decay into the detached exteriority of affect. As a result, his third-person contentment, enjoyment, and self-deceived happiness are affects too excessive for his own reasoning mind to interiorize as first-person emotions. What then makes this narrator into a “Fool among Knaves” is his absolute detachment not only from

these aforesaid emotions, but also from the more natural emotional reactions of, say, disgust or sympathy towards these mutilated bodies. Could this then be the ultimate consequence of the Cartesian self, in which the passions and body operate separately from the will of the mind? The consequence, Swift's satire reveals, is that the dissenting body leads to the folly of emotion becoming fully exteriorized, and the only way the narrator can express such exteriority is through third-person referents. As the apotheosis of his dissent, the narrator distances himself from sympathetic, disgusted, or fully personalized emotional reflection.<sup>73</sup>

Moreover, as this dissenting being, the narrator leaves "reason" to "lap up" as a "*lacquay*" what he perceives to be the "dregs" of these body parts of nature. Instead, his imagination has usurped his mind. Using the third-person voice earlier in the "Digression," the narrator describes the power of the imagination: "when a man's fancy gets *astride* on his reason, when imagination is at cuffs with the senses, and common understanding as well as common sense, is kicked out of doors; the first proselyte he makes is himself...a strong delusion always operating from *without* as vigorously as from *within*" ("SECTION IX," 82). According to the narrator, the imagination or "fancy" dominates by being "*astride* on his Reason," as though the imagination rides on the horseback of reason, and by being in physical conflict with the body's perceptual senses and the mental faculties of understanding and common sense. Earlier, the narrator determines that this dominant imagination, which he associates with madness, is caused by the "disturbance or transposition of the brain by force of certain *vapors* issuing up from the lower faculties" ("SECTION IX," 82). Engulfed in the throes of fancy, the narrator avers that the body's vapors destabilize the brain into an

---

<sup>73</sup> For an account on how in this scene the satire spills over from having a stable moral vision to which readers can anchor themselves, see Rawson, "Order and Cruelty." For Rawson, this satire's "intensities" results from how this satire prevents readers from having a moral anchor.

anarchy: the demoted reason becomes comparable to a ridden horse; the imagination fights even with the bodily sensations; and understanding and common sense are ejected. This anarchic state certainly represents an affective intensity, since later on in the passage, the narrator enthuses that the imagination's "strong delusion" operates "from [sources] *without* as vigorously as from [sources] *within*" ("SECTION IX," 82). In such a cognitive unrest, the imagination is easily roused by internal and external stimuli. Such external stimuli, he elaborates, include "cant and vision" that can stimulate "the ear and the eye" and "tickling" that can stimulate the "touch" ("SECTION IX," 82-83). Through this sensorial imagery, *A Tale of a Tub* implicates that the narrator's dissenting body renders him easily triggered by a variety of stimulating impingements. Dethroning reason into a mere horse-ridden lackey, this satire reveals, results in a self whose sensory stimulations and imaginative delusions prevail.

This dethronement makes it easier for reason to exhaust itself, and the narrator quite provocatively signifies his exhaustion as a hiatus, a visual lacuna that perhaps represents the extremity of his dissent's affective nature. In the "Digression on Madness," he has been discussing how the body's vapours can lead to the brain producing "effects of so vast a difference...as to be the sole point of individuation between *Alexander the Great, Jack of Leyden, and Monsieur Des Cartes,*" and then he claims, "it strains my faculties to the highest stretch...I now proceed to unravel this knotty point" ("SECTION IX," 183). It is crucial he associates the bodily effects of the vapours with the more large-scale influence of Alexander the Great, Jack of Leyden and Descartes. By making this logical absurd leap from the corporeal to the macroscopic without providing any connective evidence, he experiences the "straining" of his thinking and ends up introducing a hiatus: "THERE is in mankind a

certain \* \* \* \* \* *Hic multa desiderantur.* \* \* \* \* \* And this I take to be a clear solution of the matter” (“SECTION IX,” 82). Reacting to this hiatus, the mock commentator in a footnote states that the lacuna is “another defect in the manuscript” because “the matter which thus strained his faculties was not worth a solution” (“SECTION IX,” 82). The *Tale* formalizes his reason’s “strained” exhaustion into the visible presence of asterisks. These symbols mark not only his exhaustion, but also his rational sequencing’s lacunae.

*A Tale of a Tub* itself has three of these hiatuses. The first happens when the narrator omits to mention why the ladder leading to the gallows represents “*faction*” (“SECTION I,” 29), and the second happens after discussing at length the enthusiastic practice of Jack tearing apart his clothes (“SECTION XI,” 98). Hiatuses also appear in the appended satires of *The Battle of the Books* (1704) and *The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*. If we consider these hiatuses in relation to my overall argument, then these “defects” represent not merely the physical corruptibility of the manuscript or printed text, but also the limitations of formalizing impassioned and imaginative reasoning. Alex Wetmore (2013) has argued that Augustan satirists, such as Swift, Pope, and Henry Fielding, “employ strategies of corporeal defamiliarization that foreground the materiality of books alongside representations of bodily functions and physical deformity in order to undermine commercial print culture by exploiting the tradition connections between economic self-interest and debased corporeality” (20).<sup>74</sup> As Wetmore suggests, *A Tale of a Tub*’s defamiliarizing strategy shows that the printed page represents via hiatuses the straining of

---

<sup>74</sup> Alex Wetmore, *Men of Feeling in Eighteenth-Century Literature: Touching Fiction* (2013).

the narrator's reasoning. Each hiatus indicates that the narrator has reached the limit of trying to signify his dissenting body. He has expressed his affective dissent through omissions of further justifications, decentralized and mutable imagery, paratactic comparisons, and third-person detached emotions, and perhaps expressing his dissent in these ways has exhausted his enthused mind into expressing asterisks.

It is telling that the footnote commentator calls these asterisked hiatuses a "defect." The other important "defects" in *A Tale of a Tub* are the defects on the beau's carcass that the narrator *ignores* so that he can be self-deceived into felicity. These hiatuses ultimately represent his affective desire to ignore the sheer complexity of all the bodily and mental things happening when his reason has strained itself into exhaustion. His refusal to know the full truth of his impassioned self makes him the fool. Rather than develop a more thorough emotional knowledge in which he carefully analyzes the narrative history of his feelings and body, the narrator chooses not to narrativize his affects into emotions; therefore, as his chief "defect," he remains servile to his subversive body.

#### 4. Tinctures in the Narration of *The Mechanical Operation of the SPIRIT*

To further our understanding of Swift's satire on the subversive self of the melancholic enthusiast, it is important to discuss the narrator of *A DISCOURSE Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the SPIRIT. IN A LETTER TO a FRIEND. A FRAGMENT* (hereafter abbreviated as *Mechanical Operation*). This text is written by a different narrator, a Fellow of the Royal Society, who writes about how the "spirit" functions in religious enthusiasm. As Angus Ross and David Wooley (1986) explain, this text satirizes "the communication of abstruse scientific information to a society of *virtuosi*," Descartes' model

that made the mind separate from the body, and religious enthusiastic sects (xv-xvi).<sup>75</sup> Although this text has a different persona, discussing this narrator's corporeal obsessions will sharpen in more detail our knowledge of Swift's obsession with the perverse hierarchy of the self that characterizes the melancholic enthusiast. Moreover, in this text, we will observe, as Paddy Bullard (2013) notes, an "elaborate instructional format" (613, 616). Bullard explains that this kind of format seeks to demonstrate "the absurdity of describing that body of knowledge in technical terms" and, ultimately, satirizes the "modern fragmentation and accumulation of knowledge...associated with experimental method of the new sciences" (616-617). We already have observed this sort of instructional format when the *Tale's* narrator endeavors to explain Jack's madness. What interests me here is not so much Swift's satire on the new sciences, Descartes' mind-body separation, and religious enthusiastic sects. Rather, I am interested in the fact that in these moments of instruction these narrators imbue their rational instructions with, to use a term that Swift's narrator will use, "tinctures" of affective enthusiasm. Instead of approaching these pieces as didactic pedantry as Bullard does, I treat these texts as Swift adopting a formal rhetoric of passionate reason. In this rhetoric, Swift adopts personae of narrators, whose reasoning has become intoxicated by their zealous passion for their arcane subjects of madness or spirit. In the *Mechanical Operation*, this narrator's affectively passionate reason, like the *Tale's* narrator, believes in a subverted hierarchy ruled by corporeal intensities. Because of this similarity, I propose that analyzing *Mechanical Operation's* narrator's melancholic enthusiasm can also

---

<sup>75</sup> See "Introduction" xv-xvii. For a fascinating study on how in this text Swift adopts a mock-didactic style of instruction to satirize absurd habits or beliefs, see Paddy Bullard's "The Scriblerian Mock-Arts: Pseudo-Technical Satire in Swift and His Contemporaries" (2013).

explain the *Tale*'s narrator melancholic enthusiasm, and, in turn, I can expand our understanding of the ways in which Swift satirizes the passionately intense subversive hierarchy that engulf these narrators.

Let me first consider the *Mechanical Operation*'s narrator belief in this hierarchy. In his discussion of enthusiastic preachers, he writes, “[B]y which, and many other symptoms among them, it manifestly appears that the reasoning faculties are all suspended and superseded, that imagination hath usurped the seat, scattering a thousand deliriums over the brain” (“Section I,” 132). In plain terms, this narrator reasons that the enthusiast has experienced an usurpation of reason by the imagination, and this “scattering” of “a thousand deliriums” evokes the action of decentralization. Similar to the *Tale*'s narrator, this narrator believes in a hierarchy whose authority centralizes around a driving force of usurpation—imagination—and yet decentralizes across the “scattering” of “a thousand deliriums.”

What is, however, distinct about this formulation is that the centralizing force is not “passion” or “zeal.” Yet if we recall that this narrator speaks with a zeal about his subject, we must acknowledge that his explanatory reasoning carries the traces of affect or passion. As Massumi notes, affective intensity is an autonomous “incipience” that does not fully actualize into rational expression. Affects are incipient because their potentially latent state remains tentatively separate from rational qualification. *Mechanical Operation*'s narrator expresses latent traces of his passion underscoring his reason. In the letter opening this text and written to T.H. Esquire, a fellow of the fictitious academy of the “Beaux Esprits,” the narrator claims that his inclination to instruct on the matter of the spirit is something he can “contain...no longer” (126, emphasis in the original). Later, he admits to his addressee in the letter, “I am afraid you will publish this letter...I desire you will be my witness” (127). In



these moments, he cannot “contain” his passionate intensity to relate his knowledge, and his obsequious rhetorical use of “I am afraid” and “I desire” betrays that his passions are seeping out into his writing.

The leakage of affects materializes in the narrator’s discourse as what he calls “tinctures.” In his treatise, he exclaims, “I esteem this present disquisition; for I do not remember any other temper of body or quality of mind, wherein all nations and ages of the world have so unanimously agreed as that of a *fanatic* strain, or tincture of *enthusiasm*...has been able to produce revolutions of the greatest figure in history” (“Section I,” 128). Just like the *A Tale of a Tub*’s narrator, this narrator zealously believes in the truth of his knowledge to the point he will “esteem” his writings and will make untenable universalizing statements that “all nations and ages...unanimously agreed” that enthusiasm has caused historical revolutions. Most notable about his word choice here is his use of “strain” and “tincture.” His reasonings resonate “tinctures” or “strains” of passion for his beliefs. To identify his passionate intensity, furthermore, as a “tincture” or “strain” is comparable to calling it a latent “incipience.” As the *OED* notes, one definition operating during the period of “strain” during the period is “inherited tendency” (“strain, n.1” def. 8b.), and one operating definition of “tincture” is a “hue, color...that stains; a tinge, tint” (“tincture, n.” def. 2a). On account of these meanings, we regard the narrator’s writing as tinted with the tendency of his passions. His affective intensities which he cannot “contain,” hence, emerge as “tinctures” and “strains.” Thus, moments when he rhetorically admits he is “afraid” or feels “desires” or when he irrationally makes universalizing statements are moments when his passionate intensities leak out as “tinctures” and “strains.”

In the last sentence of his later satire *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), "tincture" acquires an explicitly negative and immoral connotation. After returning to his native England, Lemuel Gulliver has come to miss the rationally minded Houyhnhnm horses and now views the human "Yahoos" of his civilized society disgusting. Gulliver complains, "I entreat those who have any Tincture of this absurd Vice [of Pride], that they will not presume to come in my Sight" (Voyage IV, Chapter XII, 271). Swift's presumably reformed Gulliver cannot tolerate the "Tincture" of humanity's prideful enthusiasm. Nevertheless, "tincture" in *Mechanical Operation* and *Gulliver's Travels* bears affective resonances, and as a word that denotes "hue" and "color...that stains," "tincture" serves as an imagistic form that gives "color" to the affects. The incipient affects can *only* be expressed as emergent, incomplete traces of hues. This narrator's affective formalism unfolds as enthusiastic attempts to reveal the body's excreta, the "dregs" of what escapes rational qualification. Affective intensities cannot be contained in the body alone, but they enter the mind, destabilize reason, and find their incomplete formal expression in the remainders of language.

In this tainted hierarchy, the narrator's enthusiastic support of his own ideas prevents him from being purely rational. More importantly, his rhetorical leakage signifies also the work of decentralizing: since he cannot contain his passions, his passions leak out as these rhetorical tinctures of overzealous exclamations and passion-related words. In this respect, his text itself serves as evidence of how this narrator's informational reason inevitably decentralizes into the "tinctures" of enthusiasm. A representative instance of this decentralization is evident when he explains how the brain works. The narrator writes,

For it is the opinion of choice *virtuosi* that the brain is only a crowd of little animals, but with teeth and claws extremely sharp, and therefore cling together in the

contexture we behold, like the picture of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, or like bees in perpendicular swarm upon a tree, or like a carrion corrupted into vermin, still preserving the shape and figure of the mother animal; that all invention is formed by the morsure of two or more of these animals upon certain capillary nerves which proceed from thence, whereof three branches spread into the tongue, and two into the right hand. ("Section II," 134)

Setting aside the passage's satirical reference to Hobbes, we note that this absurd rationalization of the brain's makeup oscillates between images of decentralization and centralization. These images exemplify the ways in which the intense passions of the *Mechanical Operation's* narrator constantly coalesce or "cling together" into preserved "shape[s] and figure[s]" and also disperse into the multiplicities of a swarming "crowd" and "spreading" nerves. The narrator formalizes his protean affects into protean imagery. The protean affects of both narrators of the *A Tale of a Tub* and *Mechanical Operation* imbue their imaginations with admittedly creative vitality to conceptualize new iterations of integration and dispersion. It is all the more important to keep in mind that this passage also iterates the feature of omission. In the above passage, the movement from one dispersed image to another suggests a coherent sequence of related images; yet because *Mechanical Operation's* narrator transitions from image to image without further elaborating on each one, the narrator creates gaps that deepen the conceptual disconnection among these images. Even though the "or's" function to conjoin "Hobbes' *Leviathan*" with swarming bees and these bees with the corrupted carrion, this conjunction also functions to suggest alternatives. The "or's" simultaneously forge similar connections yet pose unlike alternatives. Overall, this narrator's content is coherent and yet incoherent, similar and different, unified and

disunified. These contradictions underlie the formal heart of this narrator's affective intensity: his affects refuse decisively coherent representation.

Could affect be formalized, however, if the narrators elaborated more exhaustively and decisively how the images are connected? Perhaps, yes, but remember that these texts satirize these narrators' impassioned support for unorthodox intellectual positions. These narrators have subverted, via dispersive, protean imagery and conceptual omissions, the conventional hierarchy in which reason acts as the superior faculty over the self's body and passions. Ultimately, Swift's early satires caution that the actual model of the self entails an unmediated relationship with one's body, and this anarchic condition heightens the likelihood of the self supporting unorthodox positions.<sup>76</sup> Such an unmediated relationship influences the *Mechanical Operation's* narrator into figuring the brain as physical body parts—"teeth and claws, "carrion corrupted, "morsure [or biting]"—that are not typically associated as members of the cerebral organ. When this speaker invokes body parts associated with the brain's nervous system—"capillary Nerves"—, he insists these nerves "spread into the Tongue...[and] right Hand." The body if left unrestrained can bring forth the dispersive misrule of passions and other corporeal intensities. The body dissents by spreading its influence across brain, nerves, and other body parts.

What is becoming all the more palpable is the fact that written language comes to be the external representation of these narrators' melancholy and enthusiasm. The

---

<sup>76</sup> The text doesn't seem to offer an answer on whether supporting unorthodox positions, like modern learning, leads to such affectively disconnected rationality, or whether this support is an effect of being affectively destabilized. Rather, the text convolutes the very idea of sequential causality from body to mind or from mind to body, such that the text presents an entangled vision of the self, in which the self's hierarchy is really more anarchically decentralized.

decentralizing hierarchy of their selves leads to their passions leaking out as written incomplete similes, irrational exclamations, and words of passion. Thus, it is no surprise that *Mechanical Operation*'s narrator values overly stylized spoken speech. He expresses this belief in the emotive power of stylized speech when talking about enthusiastic preachers:

A master workman shall *blow his nose so powerfully* as to pierce the hearts of his people, who are disposed to receive the *excrements* of his brain with the same reverence as the issue of it. Hawking, spitting, and belching, the defects of other men's rhetoric, are the flowers and figures and ornaments of his. For, the *spirit* being the same in all, it is of no import through what vehicle it is conveyed. ("Section II," 136, emphasis not mine)

To this narrator, these flourishes of speech involve crude bodily gestures, and he reasons that no matter what kind of crude gesture one uses, "the *spirit* [is] being the same in all." These gestures, he continues, can "pierce the hearts of his people." In addition, he earlier argues that "dilating upon syllables and letters" can "draw sighs from a multitude, and...[cause] a whole assembly of saints to sob" (136). By expressing his beliefs through the artifices of outrageous gestures and exaggerated speech, this preacher, according to the narrator, can excite audiences into passions of "sighs" and "sobs." In the same manner that the preachers "dilate" their speech, the narrators dilate, or excessively extend, their ideas beyond the limits of reason and into realms of absurdity.

In these two texts of the *Tale* and *Mechanical Operation*, Swift imparts to his readers the lesson that the immoderate melancholic enthusiast believes in the affective dissent of the body. Swift's narrator deviates from the hierarchy in which reason primarily rules. Presumably, reason grants the thinker to generate a complete, understandable knowledge,

yet if we are to consider this conclusion in light of the fact that passions can prevent such actualization, we would have to admit that reason cannot achieve this feat. Swift suggests that reason's functioning is more complex. Reason is borne from the fraught interplay between reason and the bodily affects. As a result of this interplay, reason will always be incomplete in some regard. There will always be contradictions, incomplete comparisons, and passionate exclamations that represent not so much a short-circuit in logical pathways, but rather the mutual exclusion between rational thought and excessive affective intensities. Swift teaches that the narrators' written language are a series of moments where reason clashes with affective intensities, and because these narrators have so much of these moments, Swift satirically demonstrates that these narrators fail to regulate these clashes with intensities. The only thing one can do, Swift suggests, to retain control over one's intensities is not to deny them, but rather to allow oneself to experience these intensities only to a moderate extent.

## 5. Swift, Intensity, and the Form of Reading

Throughout this chapter, we have explored the ways by which the two narrators, as negative examples, elevate physiological intensity to the point of creating an overabundance of affectively intense illogical writing, yet Swift also represents figures of readers who react to his satire in just as passionately enthused ways. Swift seeks his audience to recognize that interpretation requires a passionate reason. In the conclusion to this chapter, I will explore the represented figure of the reader in these satires. When I refer to the "reader," I am referring primarily to two kinds of readers. First, in practical and historically grounded terms, I situate Swift's reader as the reading publics that emerged due to the revocation of

the Licensing Act in 1695. Jürgen Habermas (1989) observes that the lapse of the Licensing Act “made the influx of rational-critical arguments into the printed press possible and allowed the latter to evolve into an instrument with whose aid political decisions could be brought before the new forum of the public” (58). These “rational-critical” reading public is the reader that Swift writes for and has in mind.<sup>77</sup>

Secondly, more theoretically, this reader is a character imagined in Swift’s satires. This fictional character of the reader can be explained as an “implied reader.” Wolfgang Iser suggests in *The Act of Reading* (1978) that the implied reader “embodies all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect -- predispositions laid down, not by an empirical outside reality, but by the text itself” (34).<sup>78</sup> For Iser, the implied reader “has his roots firmly planted in the structure of the text” and “is a construct and in no way identified with any real reader” (34). Iser argues that the reader emerges as a fictional or imaginary figure instituted by the “structure of the text.” Through my affective formalist framework, I repurpose this implied reader as intertwined with the *affective structures of the text*. Unlike Iser who conceives his “implied reader” within the context of a reader-response method, my approach is *not* a reader-response one. Instead, I analyze how Swift *explicitly*

---

<sup>77</sup> See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1989). On a discussion on the relative growth of the reading public, see Ian Watt’s chapter, “The Reading Public and the Rise of the Novel,” in *The Rise of the Novel* (1957), 35-59, and for an insightful account on the complex development of different reading publics and the printing and publishing industry, see William St. Clair, “The Political Economy of Reading” (2005).

<sup>78</sup> On the subject of the implied reader, see especially, Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading* (1978), 27-38, and Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman Wimmer’s edition of essays in *The Reader in the Text: Essays in Audience and Interpretation* (1980). For a useful survey on the various approaches to studying reading practices in the eighteenth century, see Ian Jackson, “Approaches to the History of Readers and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Britain” (2004).

represents figures of readers. In this sense, I adapt Iser's notions of implied readers to examine the *formal figure* of the reader. What if we were to look at representations of the reader as another kind of affective form comparable to the affective forms of Swift's parataxis and gas imagery? If this is the case, then I treat any explicit references to the reader in the text as formal devices that signify the body's autonomous affectivity. A reader-response approach would speculate on what an implied reader may feel when reading this text, and this approach may be a fruitful avenue of inquiry, since doing so would help explain much of the text's humor. However, analyzing *explicit references* to the reader as *affective forms* yields the equally valuable insight that Swift imagines reading as processes of affective destabilization. In turn, what I am truly examining are Swift's *formal representations* of the stimulated event of *affective reading*. Swift's *forms of reading* act as models for the "rational-critical" reading public on how to immerse themselves in the Cartesian passions. Swift deploys a series of artifices, ranging from technical forms such as parataxis and metaphors to fictional characters such as Jack and the enthused narrators and, finally, to processes of stimulation such as reading, in order to delineate the interrelations between reason and the passions.

Perhaps, the most famous instance of Swift giving affective experience the bodily shape of fictional reading is in the "Preface" to *The Battle of the Books*. Swift begins this introductory piece affirming, "SATIRE is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it" ("THE PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR," 104). Swift imagines the scene of reading satire as involving readers or "beholders" viewing a mirror or "glass" that reflects "everybody's face" and by implication



the body that holds that face. Of course, Swift means that this “face” symbolizes the intended satirized target, yet his usage of the bodily metaphor of the “face” reveals a desire to organize the reception of satire along a physiological orientation of seeing and reading bodies.

However, Swift makes problematic this vision of “beholders” recognizing others in the following sentence, where he uses bodily and passion-related language:

But if it should happen otherwise [that beholders do recognize themselves], the danger is not great; and I have learned from long experience never to apprehend mischief from those understandings I have been able to provoke; for anger and fury, though they add strength to the sinews of the body, yet are found to relax those of the mind, and to render all its efforts feeble and impotent. (104-105)

He suggests that the readers can recognize that they are being satirized. Even if beholders are able to recognize themselves as targets, there is no danger or harm done because the beholders’ “anger and fury” from discovering they are the targets cause their minds to be “feeble and impotent.” Their ensuing passions of rage exhaust their minds into impotence. Through this figure of “beholders,” Swift implies that most people are too dull to witness their own satirized faces, and that for those few who can discern difference, they will be provoked into a rage that dulls their minds into inaction. Is Swift outright condemning the passions as useless? Not so fast. He is rather condemning readers or beholders who become enervated by the intensity of these passions.

Passionate reaction, for Swift, is inevitable. If Swift does conceptualize a *form of reading*, he articulates this form to entail processes of bodily provocation. Swift presents the central activity of what the reading of satire could be: the form of reading involves the body

being provoked into passions, provided that the mind is able to discern the satire's disturbing uncanny truths. And it is important that Swift implies that this stimulated state is bodily when he suggests that "anger and fury...add strength to the sinews of the body." Satire initially stirs the reader into passions that then stimulate the body into arousal, vigor, or added "strength." Satire, it follows, "adds" or stimulates the "strength" of such passionate intensities. Satire provokes, arouses, adds, and stimulates passions. Satire for Swift, therefore, successively stimulates the reader into experiencing passionate intensities. The downside of this strategy, though, is that these numerous passions can disrupt the mind into suffering the kind of enthusiasm and melancholy that the narrator suffers. Here is where the bad model arises, in which the reader's mind easily succumbs under the weight of these passions and does nothing to improve. This model is bad because one dissents from rationally discerning error and immorality and instead submits to the intensities of passions.

But is it really a bad model? It turns out that Swift implicates the "beholders" into experiencing the very kind of passionate excess that he so satirizes in the *Tale's* narrator.<sup>79</sup> Swift claims that the form of reading satire is not a top-down process involving solely conscious reasoning. Instead, more subversively, reading comprises constantly varying intensities of affective, bodily, and mental interactions. It would be helpful here to invoke another theorist of affect to elucidate Swift's vision of a bottom-up engagement. Like

---

<sup>79</sup> In his assessment of Swift's satire, Claude Rawson (1995) asserts, "The potential for freewheeling mental excess and moral depravity is the psychological basis of Swift's satirical vision of the human condition, and one which implicates him, along with the reader and all third parties, in that condition. The view animates his almost unique character as a satirist who, instead of soliciting his reader's solidarity in a conspiracy of the right-minded against the bad, inculpates not only the reader but also himself in the diagnosis of universal turpitude" (9). Swiftian satire implicates all—satirist, satirized, and reader—as subject to "mental excess and moral depravity," and this satiric truth becomes most palpable in the way all three parties exhibit or experience passionate excess.

Massumi, Silvan Tomkins (1995) also viewed affects as intensities, and Tomkin's discussion of the ways in which affective intensity varies is relevant:

[T]he intensity profiles of affect are capable of marked differentiation. Interest may begin in a low key, increase somewhat, then decline in intensity, then suddenly become very intense and remain so for some time. Or it may begin suddenly with high intensity and then gradually decline. Consider the variations of interest of a somewhat sleepy person reading a mystery story...The rate at which affects develop intensity can vary as a function of the rate at which the perception of the object evoking affect increases. (50-51)

Affect for Tomkins can be measured as "profiles...or marked differentiation." In this way, form is the "profile" that the satirist gives to affect. Swift's affective formalism "profiles" not just characters like Jack or the hack writer, but also the bodily agencies that make these characters alive. Tomkin's framework clarifies for us that affects are understandable as existing along a differential spectrum of varying profiles. In the case of Swift, the reader's interpretive engagement, therefore, mutates into intensities of rising and declining interest in the satire. The reader might be "somewhat sleepy," as Tomkins suggests, or even "feeble and impotent," as Swift puts it. Consider that Swift offers distinctive "intensity profiles...of marked differentiation": high intensities of "anger and fury" strengthening the body's sinews *and yet* mellow intensities of relaxing the mind. For Swift, the reader can embody a mixture of differing and conflicting intensities of experience. Readerly engagement, thus, isn't a binary, black and white model where the reader is either like the mad Tale-teller or a moderate reasoner. Rather, affective reading involves a protean experience of shifting

gradients of intensity that can go from feeble and impotent to anger and fury.<sup>80</sup> More broadly, Swift's other affective forms, like the parataxis, mutually exclusive metaphors, and omissive sequences, each offer gradients of intensity, in which each form imagines a different "profile" for how an affect works. Swift's moral program, therefore, values a heterogeneous variety of impassioned engagements.

Throughout this chapter, I have argued that *A Tale of a Tub* and its appended satires of *The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* and the "Preface" to *The Battle of the Books* formalize into more or less legible structures the disturbed condition of the Cartesian self, in which the body, passions, and imagination take over the mind. This satire conveys the rather sobering lesson that the Cartesian self is an inevitable reality. Rather than denounce this model, Swift's early satires acknowledge the validity of the Cartesian self by intimating that rationality is always in close contact or "in cuffs" with the body. This entanglement between body and mind serves as the affective "defect"—the inexplicable and confounding tension—that Swift's satires unknowingly signify. It would be easy to say that *A Tale of a Tub* is told by an idiot, signifying nothing, as Macbeth would utter. However, this satire as well as his other satires do signify *something*. They signify the interrelation between corporeal dissent and the narrator's (ir)rational support for deviant activities, like hack writing, pro-modern enthusiasm, and religious dissension. The trouble of course is that the signified somethings

---

<sup>80</sup> There is of course no space here to discuss how in the parable of the *Tale*, the brothers, Peter, Jack, and Martin represent differing intensities of interpreting the will of their Father, but it is worth considering the possibility that in as much as Swift is rightly satirizing Peter and Jack's dissenting behaviors and upholding Martin's moderate attitude as proper, Swift is also offering three profiles of intensity that readers at any point during their reading experience inhabit: readers can overread like Peter, destructively tear apart the text as Jack tears apart his clothes, or regard the text as Martin does with a more reserved, measured approach.

are affectively expressed as logical omissions, dispersive and mutable imagery, paratactic comparisons, mutually exclusive metaphors, third-person detached emotions, hiatuses, tinctures of self-praise, and provoked intensities of reading. Each of these structures are differentiated “profiles” signifying the affects straining reason to the point that, as *A Tale of Tub*’s narrator confesses, in the context of the written text, “the [written] Subject is utterly exhausted, to let the Pen still move on; by some called the Ghost of Wit, delighting to walk after the Death of its Body” (“THE CONCLUSION, 238). As this confession suggests, the “Subject” or content of the writing conveys the physiological affects of being “utterly exhausted.” The so-called “Death” of the narrator’s body that he imagines in the third-person transfers its exhausted affects to the written words. Affects “fly off” onto the signified text and, consequently, express themselves as afterimages or “ghosts” now untethered to the material existence of the original body. This is perhaps the incisive insight of Swift’s satire: ideas are at once bodily, and once these ideas are written out on the page by the affected mind, these ideas live on as the denatured, ghostly “tinctures” of their corporeal origins. Swift’s satire admonishes audiences, arguing that multiple, disruptive stimuli are always influencing rational thought, and that being aware of this is perhaps the least one can do to avoid being a total “fool among knaves.” Swift’s satires respond to the Cartesian model of the self and reveal their own account of the mind-body problem, in which reason inevitably signifies the constant dissent of the body.

**CHAPTER 3**  
**SPLEEN TROUBLE:**  
**DEVIANT SUBJECTIVITIES IN THE AFFECTIVE BACKGROUNDS**  
**OF MATTHEW GREEN, ANNE FINCH, AND ALEXANDER POPE**

What art thou, *SPLEEN*, which ev'ry thing dost ape?

Thou Proteus to abus'd Mankind,

Who never yet thy real Cause cou'd find,

Or fix thee to remain in one continued Shape.

Anne Finch, *The Spleen, A Pindarik Poem* (1-4)

1. Deviance, Background, and Form

The opening lines to *The Spleen, A Pindarik Poem* (1709) by Anne Finch, the Countess of Winchilsea, encapsulate a central concern of what I call eighteenth-century “Spleen Poems”: an exploration of how human subjectivities are entangled with the Spleen’s affective reactions to the world.<sup>81</sup> In Finch’s poem, her speaker articulates her subjectivity by using the apostrophe form to interrogate the Protean indeterminacy of the Spleen. Her subjectivity emerges through these entanglements between the relative readability of literary form and the unreadable Protean-ness of the Spleen’s affects. In this chapter, I investigate how the melancholic satires’ practice of *affective formalism* renders into meaningful, intelligible shape the affective backgrounds of splenetic body. In the Spleen Poems of

---

<sup>81</sup> In this chapter, I capitalize the “Spleen” when referring to the poems’ representations of the Spleen.

Finch's *The Spleen* (1709), Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, 1714, and 1717), and Matthew Green's *The Spleen* (1737), the speakers' *affective formalism* transpires as processes of using various formal devices to make the Spleen's affects both understandable and imperceptible. In turn, these speakers affirm their deviance from intellectual regimes that value a top-down empirical rationality seeking to master the object. This essay will analyze these three Spleen Poems, so that I can argue that affective formalism champions *deviant affective subjectivities*. The conventional model of subjectivity is one in which the self mediates one's engagement with the world's immediate physical stimuli through the domination of conscious reasoning, judgment, and volition. These Spleen Poems' alternative subjectivities are deviant because their speakers construct a messier, more complex, and more unreadable knowledge of the affective body.

In using this concept of "deviant affective subjectivity," I draw from Anne Finch, who in her poem, affirms, "My Hand delights to trace unusual Things, / And deviates from the known, and common way" (83-84). As I will more extensively discuss later in this chapter, Finch's speaker asserts how as a female poet she "deviates from the known, and common way," by resisting misogynistic discourses that limit women to domestic employments, pathologize women as prone to splenetic hysteria, and dominate female bodies as ultimately readable under a masculine gaze. Finch's speaker expresses her anti-patriarchal resistance through her "deviant subjectivity" that "traces" the agencies of her splenetic body. "Deviant or alternative subjectivity," I define, is a bottom-up mode of "tracing" through literary forms one's bodily agencies. The Spleen Poems of Green, Finch, and Pope, to various extents, resist orienting the self as a top-down subjectivity that prescribes the authority of reason over the body. These poems' speakers demonstrate that

the Spleen's background affects drive speakers into criticizing different structures of oppression.

For these speakers to demonstrate their bottom-up subjectivities, they first attend to what philosopher of cognitive science Giovanna Colombetti has called the "background affects." These affects refer to the bodily stimuli that one barely attends to when consciously absorbed in doing intellectual or physical activities. In Colombetti's "Varieties of Pre-Reflective Self-Awareness: Foreground and Background Bodily Feelings in Emotion Experience" (2011), an essay which anticipates her later work *The Feeling Body* (2014), she describes these background bodily feelings as that "*through which* a situation in the world is experienced by the subject as possessing a specific affective quality (such as a quality of dangerousness, of dullness, threat, intimidation, pleasantness, excitement, and so on)" (9, emphasis in the original). These background feelings, Colombetti later explains, "shape or 'colour' the affective quality of a situation" (17). Even though these affects may be faintly felt in the background, they still shape the self's conscious emotional experience.

Colombetti's framework suggests a "bottom-up" subjectivity because she attends to how the barely conscious sides of feeling inform the more fully conscious self to make these feelings more "specific." Through Colombetti's concept, I understand that these Spleen Poem's deviant subjectivities foreground into literary form their splenetic feelings that lurk always in the background. Top-down regimes of knowledge would focus on conscious processes of reason and judgment, yet the Spleen Poems champion background processes of affect as key to the formation of subjectivity.



These poems' speakers satirically criticize that the negligence of one's backgrounds leads to a more imperfect knowledge of oneself.<sup>82</sup> Each poem's speaker articulates their deviant critiques differently. Green's speaker indulges imagining the background Spleen to criticize at the same time this background's capacity to create enthusiastic delusions. Finch's speaker rejects misogynist discourses on female melancholics and poets. Pope's narrator, meanwhile, imagines the deviant subjectivity of Belinda, so that he can both satirize her artificially limited agency and at the same time celebrate her capacity to indirectly condemn the sexualization of female bodies. These poems resist, in summary, the oppressive structures of delusional enthusiasm, sexist discourses of dominating female bodies, and the artifices of the aristocratic social world. The expressive vehicle for their affective satire is an affective formalism: these speakers express the affects of the background Spleen through the more generic artificial structures of the Pindaric ode, mock heroic, and verse epistle and through the artificial technical devices of apostrophe, personification, and rhyming couplets.

It is important to situate this essay in relation to studies on eighteenth-century representations of the Spleen. The existing scholarship on this subject considers how eighteenth-century medical accounts influence poetic representations of the Spleen.<sup>83</sup> However, these scholars have not yet considered that these texts locate the source of critique in the splenetic body.<sup>84</sup> I make these interventions in satire studies: I demonstrate that poetic

---

<sup>82</sup> See the Introductory chapter, where I rehearse traditional and canonical definitions of satire and where I show how I treat satire's moral imperative as geared towards teaching audiences of the virtues of embodied sensitivity.

<sup>83</sup> See Katherine M. Roger's "Finch's 'Candid Account' vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen" (1989), John F. Sena's "Melancholy in Anne Finch and Elizabeth Carter: The Ambivalence of an Idea" (1971) and "Belinda's Hysteria: The Medical Context of *The Rape of the Lock*" (1987), and William Ober's "Eighteenth-Century Spleen" (1987).

<sup>84</sup> This study owes a debt especially to the following key texts that consider poetry's exploration of mind-body problems: Margaret Anne Doody's "Sensuousness in the Poetry of

satires exploring the Spleen promote the splenetic body's deviant subjectivity as the locus of affective criticism, and I illustrate that formal properties of genre and technique act as the expressive vehicles for this affective criticism.<sup>85</sup> While scholars of satire studies have indeed paid attention to satire's formal elements, they have yet to acknowledge that the backgrounds of the affective body rivals the authority of the reasoning mind.<sup>86</sup> In this regard, my conclusions expand more generally on the work of scholars who have insisted on the affective body as a critical apparatus.<sup>87</sup> I contend that the Spleen Poems formalize the body's authority to stimulate the self into deviant acts of affective criticism.

## 2. A Couplet of Key Terms: Background Affects and Affective Formalism

This chapter on the Spleen Poems develops the concept of the body's background affects or affective background. Giovanna Colombetti is the principal theorist on this

---

Eighteenth-Century Women Poets" (1999), David Fairer's *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century* (2003), and Margaret Koehler's *Poetry of Attention in the Eighteenth Century* (2012).

<sup>85</sup> Because I study these poems' forms, I build on the work of scholars who have analyzed eighteenth-century poetry's preoccupation with form, structure, and style. A sampling of scholars studying this period's forms include: Paula R. Backscheider's *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets and Their Poetry* (2005), Stephen Bending's "Literature and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century," Chester F. Chapin's *Personification in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry* (1955), J. Paul Hunter, "Form as Meaning: Pope and the Ideology of the Couplet," John Sitter's *The Cambridge Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (2011), Patricia Meyer Spacks' *Reading Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (2009).

<sup>86</sup> Examples of satire scholars paying to form include: Wayne Booth (1974), Ashley Marshall (2013), John Sitter (2011), and Howard Weinbrot (2005).

<sup>87</sup> For example, Ali Lara et al. in "Affect and Subjectivity" (2017) and Elizabeth A. Wilson in *Gut Feminism* (2015) especially have argued that the nonconscious bodily processes can form affective and critical subjectivities. See Ali Lara, Wen Liu, Colin Patrick Ashley, Akemi Nishida, Rachel Jane Liebert, and Michelle Billies, and Wilson 1-93.

concept. In *The Feeling Body* (2014), Colombetti compares the background affects using the labored analogy of colored window glasses:

[B]ackground bodily feelings in emotion experience are like colored window glasses: one may be mainly oriented toward the world and nevertheless experience it as affectively toned (colored) depending on how one's body is felt-through in the background (depending on the color of the glass); different emotions affect the body (color the glass) in different ways, and the affective quality of the experienced world (the perceived color of the world beyond the glass) changes accordingly. (123)

Colombetti underscores that the body is not an unfelt or transparent medium. Instead, the person experiences the world *through* the figurative window of an “affectively toned” or “colored” feeling in the background. Colombetti derives her concept of the “felt-through” background affects from her more foundational concept of “affectivity,” which “refers to the capacity to be personally affected, to be ‘touched’ in a meaningful way by what is affecting one” (2).<sup>88</sup> She qualifies that this “affectivity” is a “primordial affectivity”: “a source of meaning that grounds (makes possible) the richer and differentiated forms of sense making in more complex organisms, such as the emotions of animals and human beings—including what are often characterized as the ‘cognitive’ or ‘highly cognitive’ human emotions (such as guilt, romantic love, resentment, and so on)” (19).<sup>89</sup> Affectivity is “primordial” because it exists as the antecedent “source “of the affects that are prior to emotional and rational

---

<sup>88</sup> We should note that when Colombetti uses “personally affected,” she does not exactly mean that affectivity is an immediately subjective experience belonging in the realm of the reflective consciousness. Rather, affectivity is, as she puts it, a “primordial” capacity that exists prior to the conscious ordering of experience into narrative and emotion.

<sup>89</sup> Colombetti develops her notion of “primordial affectivity” as a product of her enactive approach that values organisms make sense of the world through their cognitive and physiological orientation towards the world. See Colombetti 1-24.

reflection. Colombetti's use of "primordial" implies a sense of distance—a before-ness—that the thinking self may not so easily capture. Because affects are primordially distanced or disconnected from reason, they reside in a realm of being faintly felt in the background away from foregrounded thinking. Like background noise, these affects are the nearly imperceptible stimulated feelings, sensations, and bodily responses that slip in and out of conscious attention. In these ways, *I understand the concept of the background affects in these Spleen Poems as the splenetic body's faintly readable reactiveness which the deviant subjectivity persistently tries to "trace."*

The speakers of the Spleen Poems treat the Spleen as a formally representable entity. Colombetti already does this when she figures the background affects as colored window glass. In this rudimentary analogy, she formally translates the bodily affects into a tentatively intelligible interpretation. Here, she conducts an affective formalist treatment of the body. The Spleen Poems likewise represent the background body through the toning lens of poetic structural features. In this way, poetic structure acts as another relevant background structure. In this chapter, as I have discussed in the Introduction, I adapt Eugenie Brinkema's affective formalist method. I perform what Brinkema calls "an attempt to dethrone the subject and the spectator—and attendant terms, such as 'cognition,' 'perception,' 'experience,' even 'sensation'" (36).<sup>90</sup> Analyzing affects' forms means, as Brinkema puts it, "treating affects as structures that work through formal means, as consisting in their formal dimensions (as line, light, color, rhythm, and so on) of passionate structures" (37). Through my method, I analyze how Spleen Poems use the building blocks

---

<sup>90</sup> See Brinkema, *The Form of the Affects* (2014), 1-46.

of different literary forms to construct the alternative deviant subjectivity's affective discourse.

Nevertheless, despite Brinkema's negative view of subjectivity, I think subjectivity is *still* a useful term to use. These Spleen Poems represent alternative deviant subjectivities who have the capacity for satirical, social agency. I reach a middle-ground: these Spleen Poems use poetic forms to construct both these subjectivities' sensitivities to splenetic bodies and these subjectivities' resultant social criticisms. Formalistic analysis prevents me from relying on a top-down rubric of tying these subjectivities to ontological subjects of reasoning "I's." Rather, as a literary method, affective formalism appreciates that the poems use formal tools to build up, or "trace," in a more bottom-up way their subjectivities. These poems are always forming their subjectivities, shaping them through rhyme, meter, personification, and other tools of building, such that these subjectivities are always in the process of emergence. Affective formalism both describes my bottom-up literary analysis as well as these poems' bottom-up subjects. When I use "form" in this chapter, I specifically refer to the ways through which the poems' *generic forms* (Pindaric ode, mock heroic, and verse epistle) and their *technical forms* (apostrophes, personifications, and rhyming couplets) behave as *affective forms* that resonate the splenetic body's primordial reactivity.

### 3. Order and Disorder in Matthew Green's *The Spleen*

In the Spleen Poem, Matthew Green's *THE SPLEEN. AN EPISTLE TO MR. C[uthbert]. JACKSON*, Green, like Pope and Finch, indulge in the affective backgrounds of the Spleen. My treatment of Green will be brief compared to my examinations of Finch's

and Pope's poems. I examine his poem first because Green's piece allows me to outline many of this chapter's concerns: the tension between articulating the alternative, deviant subjectivity of the affective body and articulating such deviance through formally readable structures. In this poem, Green's speaker momentarily entertains the Spleen's alternative subjectivity only eventually to negate it by assuming a moderate rational subjectivity.

A brief overview of Green's poem would be helpful. Although this poem is not as well known or as formally innovative as Finch's and Pope's Spleen Poems, this poem earned praise from literati such as Horace Walpole, Alexander Pope, and Thomas Gray, and his poem's success led Green to being "affectionately known as 'Spleen Green'" (265).<sup>91</sup> The poem itself is lengthy comprising some 30 pages, and it mostly recounts the speaker's remedies to cure the maladies of the Spleen. For instance, to "cure the mind's wrong bias" towards the Spleen, Green's speaker recommends as cures walks along "the bowling green, "exercise," the "mirth" of laughter, frequenting the "coffee-house...For news, "Good-humored tavern charms," card-playing, and gossiping with women (4, 5, 6, 7, 8). And in this poem's concluding lines, the speaker advises the importance of emotional and passionate regulation: "I steer my bark, and sail / On even keel with gentle gale; / At helm I make my reason sit, / My crew of passions all submit" (29). He believes in such regulation because this speaker acknowledges that the Spleen's "dead weight" could drown him, and so avoiding the Spleen leads to his "buoyant" health: "In life's rough tide I sunk not down, / But swam, 'till Fortune threw a rope, / Buoyant on bladders fill'd with hope" (3). In general,

---

<sup>91</sup> See Oswald Doughty, "The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century" (1926). Also, because Green's text does not document the line numbers, I will instead cite the page numbers from the 1804 reprinting.

Green's poem offers a series of remedial solutions to counteract the background gravity of the Spleen.

In terms of genre, Green's *The Spleen* is a verse epistle, a popular form of poetry during the period. This particular poem is a Horatian verse epistle that Bill Overton (2006) defines as "written in a relatively plain manner and addressed to a friend or patron," who in Green's case is Mr. Jackson ("The Verse Epistle" 4).<sup>92</sup> I will not theorize at length on the generic properties of Green's verse epistle. However, I will acknowledge that the epistle's generic format of addressing an epistolary recipient creates a context in which the speaker strives to form a sense of relationship.<sup>93</sup> In the same way that the verse epistle imagines a rhetorical relationship with an addressee, Green's speaker rehearses this epistolary mode by instituting a provisional affective relationship with the subversive Spleen. And he begins such a relationship by imagining the affective delusions of different kinds of splenetic sufferers, and I shall focus later on how he imagines the case of the splenetic enthusiast. Thus, the verse epistle form enables the speaker to construct an affective relationality, but, as I will further demonstrate, Green's speaker forecloses this imagined affectivity under the dominance of a rational subjectivity.

To enact this eventual foreclosure, Green's speaker affirms reason's surveillance of splenetic subjectivity. For example, this speaker warns against enthusiastic raptures: "Since optic reason shews me plain, / I dreaded [enthusiastic] spectres of the brain; / And legendary

---

<sup>92</sup> For more erudite discussions of verse epistles, see especially Bill Overton, "The Verse Epistle" (2006), and Overton, *The Eighteenth-Century Verse Epistle* (2007), and William C. Dowling, *The Epistolary Moment: The Poetics of the Eighteenth-Century Verse Epistle* (1991).

<sup>93</sup> Dowling, for example, argues that the verse epistle rhetorically constructs an internal audience. See Dowling 1-20.

fears are gone” (28). The speaker’s reason forms an “optic” lens that clarifies the false “spectres” of enthusiasm. Rather than succumb to the deviant Spleen, Green’s speaker chooses the safe route of mastering the “crew of passions” and avoiding the Spleen’s “dead weight.” However, he cannot help indulging in imagining the situation of an affectively deviant subjectivity. Such indulgence is plainly clear when he describes the enthusiast who “hush’d in meditation deep / Slides into dreams, as when asleep” (27). To imagine the enthusiast’s deviance, he ventures into describing the interiority of this person’s “dreams,” and from these dreams, the enthusiast entertains “dreams, / As brightest evidence” (27). To give lively color to this description, he compares the enthusiast to the explorer Columbus who “[d]isdains the narrow bounds of space,” pursues “light forms and shadowy things,” and “[b]rings home some rare exotic thought” (27). The speaker indulgently imagines that the enthusiast’s splenetic thoughts are comparable to global seafaring expeditions. Yet despite this indulgence, the speaker emphasizes that the enthusiast in reality sees delusions that “fancy’s telescope” magnifies “with tinctur’d glass to cheat his eyes” (27). While the speaker certainly explores the enthusiasts’ delusive interiority, he inevitably cautions that “optic reason shews” him “plain” the truth of these “dreaded spectres of the brain” (28). Throughout this poem, Green’s speaker entertains dual subjectivities that he encapsulates in the contrasting ocular imagery of “fancy’s telescope” and “optic reason.” Using a formal language of visuality and optical technology, this observer entertains the possibility of an alternative subjectivity rooted in fanciful delusion, before embracing a rational surveilling subjectivity.

He further heightens the duality when he compares himself to a sea captain commanding his “crew of passions [to] submit.” As this captain, he assures himself,



I mind my compass and my way.  
With store sufficient for relief,  
And wisely still prepar'd to reef,  
Nor wanting the dispersive bowl  
Of cloudy weather in the soul,  
I make (may heav'n propitious send  
Such wind and weather to the end)  
Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,  
Life's voyage to the world unknown. (29-30)

Unlike the splenetic figures of Finch's and Pope's texts, Green's sea captain speaker vigilantly avoids the passions which he likens to a "dispersive bowl" containing an alcoholic drink. In this poem, the sea captain speaker imagines situations of potential affective destabilization: the splenetic fancies of enthusiasts and a sea captain overseeing his crew. Green's speaker achieves a neutral middle-way of being between peacefully "becalm'd" and violently "over-blown," whereas Finch and Pope accept more whole-heartedly the Spleen as the overriding authority. Green's speaker cannot help but fashion himself as this sea-captain adhering to a unidirectional course, thereby containing the potential for subversion.

While Green's verse epistle may not be as formally innovative as Finch's and Pope's poems, his text nevertheless reveals that deviantly indulging in enthusiastic delusions remains containable through formal techniques of metaphor and imagery. By comparing the dilemma of the melancholic self to the dilemma of a sea captain, Green's work obscures the background body under the veil of artifice. At one point in the poem, his speaker recounts,

When by its magic lantern Spleen

With frightful figures spread life's scene,  
And threat'ning prospects urg'd my fears,  
A stranger to the luck of heirs;  
Reason, some quiet to restore,  
Shew'd part was substance, shadow more. (2-3)

The background of the Spleen instead becomes foregrounded as “frightful figures” of an illuminating “magic lantern,” and the speaker is quick to add that “Reason...Shew'd part was substance, shadow more.” Reason for the speaker becomes his dominant guide. The Spleen functions like an deluding evil demon, some contrarian-like entity that he must overcome. What he uses to vanquish the Spleen inevitably are the remedies of form, structure, and artistry.

#### 4. Traces of Deviation in Anne Finch's *The Spleen*

In comparison to Green's repressive attitude towards the Spleen, Anne Finch's *The Spleen* gives voice to a splenetic background to fashion a deviant subjectivity. I situate my analysis on Finch with respect to scholars who have focused on the ways in which Finch is a poet who “deviates” from the “common way.” These scholars have illustrated Finch to be a poet of deviation. Namely, the principal discourses that she deviates from are those that misogynistically demean women poets and pathologize women as physiologically prone to melancholy and hysteria. Michael Gavin (2011), for example, has addressed how Finch's printed poetry eschews explicit participation in controversies regarding women poets and, instead, “advocates for readers to disregard critical dispute and focus on readerly pleasure” (651). Whereas in her unpublished manuscript poem, like the “Introduction,” she explicitly

engages anti-feminist attitudes, in her printed works, as Gavin notes, Finch departs from a publicly polemical stance, so that she can construct a more disinterested, pleasure-seeking reader.<sup>94</sup> With respect to the field of medicine, Finch deviates, as Heather Meek (2016) has shown, from physiological and misogynistic models of hysteria and emphasizes instead the social and psychological causes.<sup>95</sup> Finch deviates just as significantly at the representational and ontological level. As Courtney Weiss Smith (2016) argues through a Latourian lens, Finch's poetry rejects privileging the neat binary of subject-object ontologies by instead using descriptive figurative language to explore the complex interactions among things (human and non-human) that "in themselves, act and mean in the world around her" (261).<sup>96</sup> Through this argument on the exploratory power of figurative language, Smith opens up inquiries into the ways in which literary form, as another kind of thing-like entity, permits these negotiations of human and nonhuman relationships. These scholars have contributed compelling accounts of Finch's deviations from public polemics, medical misogyny, and subject-object ontologies. I extend these scholars' accounts by introducing that Finch imagines a subjectivity who resists sexist discourses by giving Protean form to the background body.

In *The Spleen*, Finch's speaker must first lay out two conditions that make her deviance possible. The first of these conditions involves announcing that the poem is a "Pindarik," a genre well-known during the period for its convention of using irregularly

---

<sup>94</sup> Michael Gavin, "Critics and Criticism in the Poetry of Anne Finch" (2011).

<sup>95</sup> Heather Meek, "Medical Discourse, Women's Writing, and the 'Perplexing Form' of Eighteenth-Century Hysteria" (2016).

<sup>96</sup> Courtney Weiss Smith, "Anne Finch's Descriptive Turn" (2016).

metered verse and for its association with masculinist discourses.<sup>97</sup> In the opening lines, *The Spleen*'s irregular Pindaric form is apparent in its metrical arrangement, and I have indicated the syllable count for each line within brackets:

What art thou, *SPLEEN*, which ev'ry thing dost ape? [10]

Thou Proteus to abus'd Mankind, [9]

Who never yet thy real Cause cou'd find, [9]

Or fix thee to remain in one continued Shape. [12]

Still varying thy perplexing Form, [9]

Now a Dead Sea thou'lt represent, [8]

A Calm of stupid Discontent, [8]

Then, dashing on the Rocks wilt rage into a Storm. [12]

Trembling sometimes thou dost appear, [8]

Dissolved into a Panick Fear; [8]

On Sleep intruding dost thy Shadows spread, [10]

Thy gloomy Terrours round the silent Bed, [10]

And croud with boading Dreams the Melancholy Head; [12] (1-13)

The speaker, true to the Pindaric mode, varies the metrical regularity of the opening lines, from 8 to 12 syllable lines. Through this variation, the speaker demonstrates that the Protean spleen causes the sufferer to experience the differing symptoms of the "Calm...stupid Discontent" of the "Dead Sea," a "Storm," a "Trembling" condition, "a Panick Fear," and the "gloomy Terrours" of "Dreams." The speaker uses the poem's Pindaric irregularity to

---

<sup>97</sup> For a discussion of the fraught reception of Pindar during the eighteenth century, see Penelope Wilson, "Pindar and English Eighteenth-Century Poetry" (2012).

highlight the inherent irregularity of the Spleen. Background affects, as Colombetti theorizes them, stimulate the reflective self into structured sense-making, such as consciously registering these faint affects as anxious or melancholic.<sup>98</sup> The irregularity of melancholic affects in particular is the initial, primordially felt experience. Finch's speaker, thus, preserves the initial sense of this irregularity by communicating in irregular Pindaric verse. Metrical variance serves to signify the felt sense of melancholy. Metrical structure, it turns out, functions similarly to the stained window glass analogy of Colombetti: like the toned lens of the glass, metrical structure tones the speaker's expressiveness into an affective ambience of melancholy. Ironically, insofar that metrical irregularity may suggest that this speaker is losing a regular grip on herself, her reliance on the Pindaric's variable form actually stabilizes her to discern that the splenetic affects have "abus'd Mankind." The speaker's "trembling" meter, if you will, paradoxically liberates her to observe that the background affects of the Spleen are protean and elusive.

Moreover, the speaker performs a deviant act by subverting, albeit less explicitly, the Pindaric ode's association with masculinist discourses. Regarding this latter point, I credit Desiree Hellegers' compelling case that Abraham Cowley's popularized the Pindaric ode to promote the new science or natural philosophy as a masculine enterprise. Hellegers (2000) argues that Finch identifies the Pindaric open form with the "masculinist discourses of medicine and with the contingent claims and methodologies of the physician-virtuoso of the Royal Society" because promoters of the new science, such as Thomas Sprat and Abraham Cowley, praised experimentation's open-ended and anti-dogmatic ethos (143). The side-

---

<sup>98</sup> Colombetti, in particular, invokes Heidegger's notion of moods as being attuned to the world to discuss her concept of primordial affectivity. See Colombetti 11-14.

effect of this exaltation, Hellegers elaborates, is the emergence of a masculinist ideology that regards nature and female bodies in particular as passively subordinate to the experimentalist's knowledge. In my own reading, Cowley, for example, expresses this controlling desire to understand nature in his Pindaric ode *To the Royal Society* (1667). Cowley delimits natural philosophy as a "male virtue" whose "curious sight...[can] press / Into the privatest recess" of "Nature's great works...her imperceptible littleness" and "read her smallest hand, / And well begun her deepest sense to understand" (7, 143-144, 141, 145, 146-147). Cowley feminizes Nature and minimizes her into a "littleness" and "smallest hand" in order to inflate natural philosophy as a masculine science. Through this poem, Cowley conflates Pindaric form's metrical variability with the natural philosopher's variable license over feminized nature. In response to this masculinist mastery, Finch, as Hellegers concludes, "appropriate[s] and transform[s] masculine myths and the modes of discourse through which these social myths are shaped" by making these myths and discourses as "indistinguishable from the feminized mutability" of either nature or the female body "they would describe and contain" (145).<sup>99</sup>

Extending Hellegers argument, I contend that Finch constructs her speaker's resistance to any kind of top-down masculinist enterprise. For instance, her speaker suggests that the Protean Spleen and by implication nature or the splenetic body of women resist the knowledge of "Mankind." In light of the male-dominated discourses of natural philosophy, her usage of "Mankind" alludes to the male virtuosi whom Cowley celebrates as invasively prying into female nature's "imperceptible littleness." Whereas the natural philosopher cannot even understand the "privatest recess" of the Spleen, the speaker elevates her own

---

<sup>99</sup> See Desiree Hellegers, *Handmaid to Divinity* (2000), 141-167.

ability to sense the Spleen's deceptive shapes. The speaker fashions herself as the better natural philosopher than her male counterparts. Pindaric variability—the form that echoes melancholic variability—also acts as that structural toning lens enabling her to perceive that her affective body holds no accessible knowledge for the male virtuosi. In imitating the Pindaric form, Finch subverts masculinist assumptions of the knowability of female bodies or, for that matter, bodies in general. As a poet of deviation, Finch crafts a deviant subjectivity rooted in reshaping the Pindaric form for her own satirical ends.

When discussing the disobedience of Adam and Eve, Finch's speaker introduces the second of the two conditions that make her deviant subjectivity possible: a revision of the Christian myth of the Fall. To express this condition, the speaker rewrites the myth by attending to bodily agencies:

Falsly, the Mortal Part we blame  
Of our deprest, and pond'rous Frame,  
Which, till the First degrading Sin  
Let Thee, its dull Attendant, in,  
Still with the Other did comply,  
Nor clogg'd the Active Soul, dispos'd to fly,  
And range the Mansions of its native Sky.  
Nor, whilst in his own Heaven he dwelt,  
Whilst Man his Paradise possest,  
His fertile Garden in the fragrant East,  
And all united Odours smelt,  
No armed Sweets, until thy Reign,

Cou'd shock the Sense, or in the Face  
A flusht, unhandsom Colour place.  
Now the *Jonquille* o'ercomes the feeble Brain;  
We faint beneath the Aromatick Pain,  
Till some offensive Scent thy [your Spleen's] Pow'rs appease,  
And Pleasure we resign for short, and nauseous Ease. (26-43)

The chief revision of this myth lies in her refusal to subscribe to an interpretation of the myth that blames Eve for the Fall. During the period, this Genesis story was used to justify the subjection of women. For example, in *Some Reflections Upon Marriage* (1700), Mary Astell bemoans, “[t]he Custom of the World has put Women, generally speaking into a State of Subjection” on the basis that “that her Subjection to the Man is an Effect of the Fall, and the Punishment of her Sin” (10-11). Astell will later deliver this pithy critique: “If *all Men are born free*, how is it that all Women are born slaves?” (18, emphasis in the original). Astell assesses that the “Custom” of subjugating women is rooted in a misogynistic interpretation of the Fall. Like Astell, Finch questions such a sexist reading of Adam and Eve. Revising this foundational myth, Finch’s speaker explains that human immorality results not from a woman, but rather from the physiological background of the Spleen as the “dull Attendant” to the first couple’s disobedience. Finch’s speaker, in turn, shifts her focus from laying the blame on the female subject to, instead, the protean body.

To make this critical judgment, the speaker uses locational references (which I have underlined above) to demonstrate humanity’s geographical dislocation from paradisaical harmony and concomitant physiological disorientation. As a consequence of this disruption, humanity suffers the following symptoms: the depressive bodily “Frame,” the “clogg’d”



soul, “flusht, unhandsom Colour” in the face as a sign of the Spleen’s “Reign,” and a “feeble Brain...faint[ing] beneath the Aromatick Pain.” The speaker elucidates that in the postlapsarian world, the reigning background affects of humanity are fainting, nausea, depressed bodies, enfeeblement, and pain.<sup>100</sup> To further amplify this experience of disorientation, the speaker juxtaposes the locations of prelapsarian paradise with those of postlapsarian melancholy. The speaker locates the prelapsarian, paradisaic self within the resplendent backgrounds of “Mansions, “native Sky, “Heaven,” and “Paradise.” In contrast, the speaker locates the postlapsarian, splenetic self within the more corporeal backgrounds of “deprest, and pond’rous Frame,” embarrassed “Face,” and a “feeble Brain” fainting “beneath the Aromatick Pain.” The scale of experience shifts from the sweeping spaces of paradise to the multiplying particularities of the body’s different components or what Cowley dismisses as nature’s “imperceptible littleness[es]” (frame, face, brain, pain, and so forth). This shift to the body may be indicative, moreover, of what Margaret Koehler (2012) identifies as the “broad arc of the eighteenth-century ode’s movement from public to private, panegyric to introspection, real persons to personified abstractions, outward focus to inward focus” (86).<sup>101</sup> Through this inward attention, the speaker can reconstruct her subjectivity to appreciate that the depressed frames, facial expressions, mental feebleness, and pain sensations are all crucial to the formation of her self. This is a subjectivity who acknowledges the influence of these “dull Attendant” background affects. The poem’s

---

<sup>100</sup> My interpretation on the dislocating effect of the Spleen is indebted to Stephen Bending’s argument on topographical poetry, which can be seen as a distant cousin of these Spleen poems. As Stephen Bending (2015) observes, the seventeenth-century topographical poets, John Denham and William Gilpin “share...a concern for location that is also an acute awareness of dislocations of various kinds” (par. 14).”

<sup>101</sup> See Koehler’s chapter “Odes of Absorption” (2012), 85-100.

speaker reveals that the self must *feel through*, as Colombetti would put it, the Spleen's faint affective backgrounds in order to emerge as a fallen person. In short, the disorienting affects of the Spleen *reorient* the speaker to be an affectively sensitive subjectivity. Thus far in her poem, Finch deviantly overturns the masculinist ideal of the Pindaric form and misogynistic readings of the Genesis myth through bottom-up methods of discerning the body's Protean affects.

Finch's speaker expresses her deviance a third time when she deviates from the sexist discourses of medicine. In *The Spleen*, Finch's speaker universally diagnoses that both men and women equally are susceptible to suffering melancholy. This alternative diagnosis diverges from the prevailing medical discourses on the Spleen that prejudicially assign members of the female sex as more vulnerable than men are to experiencing melancholy.<sup>102</sup> For example, in *An Epistolary Discourse to the Learned Doctor William Cole, concerning some Observations of the Confluent Small pox, and of Hysterick Diseases* (1681), the English physician Thomas Sydenham claims that "because kind Nature has bestowed on them [women] a more delicate and fine Habit of Body, having designed them only for an easie Life, and to perform the tender Offices of Love," the melancholic disease "seizes many more Women than Men" (308), and in *Of the Spleen* (1723), William Stukeley states that women tend to suffer from splenetic disorders because of "the specific delicacy and softness of their composure" (73). The speaker of Finch's text responds to these gendered opinions by suggesting a more egalitarian judgment that both men and women can be melancholic.<sup>103</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup> On the gendered biases in discourses on melancholic disorders, see John F. Sena, "Melancholy in Anne Finch and Elizabeth Carter" (1971).

<sup>103</sup> For a discussion that makes a similar observation on Finch's response to prejudicial discourses on melancholy, see Paula Backscheider (2005), 72-79.

This alternative perspective is apparent when the speaker assigns the “Imperious *Wife*,” this *Wife*’s “Husband” or “Lordly *Man*,” “The *Fool*,” and “Men of Thoughts” as susceptible to the Spleen. In the character sketch of the *Wife*, for instance, the speaker represents the Spleen as entangled with the wife’s “Imperious” actions:

In the Imperious *Wife* thou Vapours art,  
Which from o’erheated Passions rise  
In Clouds to the attractive Brain,  
Until descending thence again,  
Thro’ the o’er-cast, and show’ring Eyes,  
Upon her Husband’s soften’d Heart,  
He the disputed Point must yield,  
Something resign of the contested Field,  
Till Lordly *Man*, born to Imperial Sway,  
Compounds for Peace, to make that Right away,  
And *Woman*, arm’d with *Spleen*, do’s servilely Obey. (53-63)

These lines stress the agential influence of the Spleen’s “Vapours” throughout the *Wife*’s body. Although it seems that the speaker de-emphasizes the *Wife*’s agency, the speaker in fact blames the bodily agency of vapourous “Clouds” for the perceived fissure in marital relations. Marital instability need not be blamed on the *Wife* per se. Rather, this text suggests that the background of “o’erheated Passions” and vapourous “Clouds” plays a role in instigating marital tensions. And even when the speaker describes the husband’s reactions, the speaker qualifies that the man’s “yielding” and “compounding for Peace” are predicated on the biological influences of a “soften’d Heart” and being “born to Imperial Sway.” In

these respects, the speaker delimits male and female spouses as bound to physical or inherited innate qualities. Overall, these lines question whether or not the Wife's "Imperious" actions and the Husband's yielding are purely volitional actions. By representing the nonvolitional background powers of the Spleen, Heart, and even the inherited trait of "Imperial Sway," the speaker conducts a nuanced diagnosis that differs from the more misogynistic medical accounts. Rather than outright blaming the weakness of women's bodily constitutions, Finch's speaker casts the universal bodily background as the true culprit and affirms an egalitarian corrective judgment. Finch's text, as Paula Backscheider (2005) concludes, "suggests that no class, no sex, no person can be sure to be immune" to the Spleen, and "Finch shows men *and* women subject to it, shows husbands *and* wives using it within their relationships, and describes it as performed by the fop *and* the coquette" (74).<sup>104</sup> Through this inclusive judgment, Finch's Pindaric piece satirically disrupts the misogynistic regularity of popular medical theory.

When the speaker sketches the folly of the "*Fool*" and "Men of Thoughts," she once again amplifies the disruptive influence of the background affects. Here is the following character sketch of these persons:

The *Fool*, to imitate the Wits,  
Complains of thy pretended Fits,  
And Dulness, born with him, wou'd lay  
Upon thy accidental Sway;  
Because, sometimes, thou dost presume  
Into the ablest Heads to come

---

<sup>104</sup> For her discussion of Finch's poem, see Backscheider 72-79.

That, often, Men of Thoughts refin'd,  
Impatient of unequal Sence,  
Such slow Returns, where they so much dispense,  
Retiring from the Croud, are to thy Shades inclin'd. (64-73)

What is significant about this passage is that Finch's speaker is also suggesting social reasons for splenetic fits. As I already noted, Heather Meek argues that Finch "bypasses the physiological emphasis by looking to social causes and by grounding itself firmly in the mind of the sufferer" (182). Indeed, the speaker suggests that the "*Fool*" imitating smarter Wits is interrelated with his pretense of suffering fits, and that the "Men of Thoughts refin'd" are "Impatient of unequal Sence" because they are displeased with the "slow Returns" or unintelligent responses from the "Croud." Rather than assigning biological origins, the speaker acknowledges these social causes of imitation and the "Croud." Most subversive about this etiology is that the Spleen can also be a "pretended" condition resulting from unsatisfying experiences of sociability. In these respects, Finch's sociological diagnosis makes the background affects of the biological Spleen unreadable. She invites a holistic diagnosis that appreciates how the social world's irritating people of wits and crowds can potentially trigger people, like fools and intellectuals, into feeling displeasure. Seeking to deviate from purely physiological discourses, Finch conveys the sophisticated lesson that for one to read one's biological background, one must also be attentive to one's social backgrounds. The Spleen, for Finch, becomes Proteanly complex due *both* its biological *and* social associations.

Admitting that the Spleen is a socially influenced disease, the speaker communicates in the relatively sociable mode of the apostrophe to the "Thou" of the Spleen. By

communicating with the Spleen, the speaker expresses her critical attitudes towards her public profession as a woman poet. So the ultimate addressee of *The Spleen* is her relationship with the profession of poetry. This apostrophe allows her to associate her profession as melancholic and deviant:<sup>105</sup>

O'er me alas! thou dost too much prevail  
I feel thy Force, whilst I against thee rail,  
I feel my Verse decay, and my cramp Numbers fail  
Thro' thy black Jaundice I all Objects see,  
As Dark, and Terrible as Thee,  
My Lines decry'd, and my Employment thought  
An useless Folly, or presumptuous Fault  
Whilst in the *Muses* Paths I stray,  
Whilst in their Groves, and by their secret Springs  
My Hand delights to trace unusual Things,  
And deviates from the known, and common way ... (74-84)

The speaker connects her poetic writings to her bodily background. Because she confesses that her poetry's "cramp Numbers" "decay" and "fail," she comparatively suggests that her writings are as physically debilitated as a splenetic body. The speaker reinforces this comparison through the parallelism between "I feel thy [Spleen's] Force" and "I feel my

---

<sup>105</sup> As John Sitter notes, Finch's poem is part of longer literary tradition of associating melancholy with writing. Sitter recounts that "Renaissance emblem books and other conventional representations associated melancholy with solitude and *reading*... What becomes stronger in the eighteenth century is the association of melancholy and *writing*" (134). Sitter tracks the development of this association through a survey of writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Sitter (2011), 133-139.

Verse,” and the slant rhymes of “Force” and “Verse” accentuate that the “Verse’s” decomposition echoes her Spleen’s forceful influence. Further, in the apostrophe format, she addresses not only her poetic “Verse” and “Lines,” but also the Spleen’s “Force,” the Spleen’s “Jaundice,” and most prominently her “Hand.” In the technical format of apostrophe, the poetic “I” triangulates her relationship with the poet’s profession around the “you” of her feeling body whose independently acting “Hand delights to trace unusual things / And deviates from the known, and common way.” The subjectivity of the “I” cannot control the bodily “you” of the hand. Rather, she fashions an deviant subjectivity where it is the “hand”—referenced as a third-person figure—that feels pleasure and deviates into the art of poetry.

The subversiveness of Finch’s hand imagery leads her to develop an anti-empirical and pro-corporeal subjectivity. To illustrate this point, let me compare her hand imagery with Cowley’s own hand imagery in *To The Royal Society*. In Cowley’s ode, images of hands figure as objects to be controlled by the top-down subjectivity of the natural philosopher. In the earlier quoted line, Cowley imagines the personification of natural Philosophy, who acts as the main addressee in his own apostrophe, “read[ing]...[feminized nature’s] smallest hand,” so the female body of Nature is mastered through being converted into something that is readable. In another passage, Cowley warns against writing about nature in imaginatively elaborate words that are “pictures of the thought” because flowery rhetoric creates “painted grapes” or deceptive imagery (69, 72). Instead, for the natural philosopher, the “real object” of the “natural and living face” should “command / Each judgment of his eye, and motion of his hand” (86-88). Cowley concludes his poem, enshrining the natural philosopher as having a “judicious hand” whose art can convey nature

“without the paint of art” (182, 184). For Cowley, the hand becomes “commanded” into serving as a prosthetic extension of the experimenter’s empirical desire to secure an accessible knowledge of nature. In Cowley’s own affective formalism, he translates his desire for masculine mastery into the synecdoche of the controlled hand. Yet, for Finch, the masculine hand might neutralize the body’s variable affectivity. Cowley’s imagery imposes a subject-object binary in which the reasoning “I” subjugates the “hand” and “nature” into objects of limited agency. In Finch’s poem, her speaker inverts this orientation to suggest that the object of her tracing hand arises as its own background affective subject. She acknowledges the un-master-able body’s potential for feeling.

Overall, Finch’s advocacy for this inverted subjectivity transpires through her apostrophic meditation on the female poet in a male-dominated world. Finch fashions a poetic persona who articulates her legitimacy as a poet against the patriarchal assumptions on what women should and should not be writing about. As Carol Barash (1996) notes, Finch “is working against a tradition in which [Katherine] Philips and [Aphra] Behn represent different models of women’s public writing, an ideological construction in which appropriate women’s poetry is, like the ideal bourgeois woman, sexually modest and chaste” (285).<sup>106</sup> There are indeed ways in which we can read Finch’s *The Spleen* as a resistance against this “tradition.” As I have observed, Finch radically deviates by subverting the subject-object dynamic, acknowledging the variable unreadability of bodily feeling, and blurring melancholy’s biological and social causes. Pamela Plimpton (1998) claims, “A woman poet may in fact want very much to prove her command of craft within the

---

<sup>106</sup> See Carol Barash, *English Women’s Poetry, 1649-1714: Politics, Community, and Linguistic Authority* (1996).



masculinist tradition she sees herself writing in,” and Finch proves her “command of craft” by decisively validating her exceptionally deviant prowess as a female poet (qtd. in Backscheider 33).<sup>107</sup>

Finch further illustrates her resistance against masculinist traditions by erasing their influence. When she laments, “My Lines decry’d, and my Employment thought / An useless Folly, or presumptuous Fault,” the speaker does not directly name the persons who “decry” her “Employment.” She leaves these actors absent, when in contrast she has named her hand and Spleen as performing deviant activities. The speaker ignores these decriers and has her deviant body stray from the “common way[s]” of embroidering “in fading Silks” the images of “th’ inimitable *Rose*...an ill-drawn *Bird*” and “paint[ing] on Glass / The *Sov’ reign’s* blurr’d and distinguished Face” (86-88). Katherine Rogers notes that these artistic activities were medically prescribed regimens that women should perform to keep their minds off their Spleen.<sup>108</sup> By not naming her presumably male decriers and by rejecting these regimens, Finch’s speaker tactically suppresses the influence of these male-dominated discourses. Critics such as Desiree Hellegers and Barbara McGovern point out that Finch’s use of “*Sov’ reign’s* blurr’d and distinguished Face” register Finch’s erasure of the authority of patriarchal figures.<sup>109</sup> Expanding on these critics’ observations, I propose that Finch’s revelation of her *hand* as the actual resistant agent is crucial to understanding her resistance.

---

<sup>107</sup> See Plimpton, “*Inconstant Constancy*”: *A Poetics of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century British Women Poets, 1620-1825* (1998). For a discussion of the social criticism that eighteenth-century women’s poetry and writing conveyed, see Backscheider 58-72.

<sup>108</sup> See Katherine Rogers, “Finch’s ‘Candid Account’ vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen” (1989).

<sup>109</sup> Hellegers point out Barbara McGovern’s claim that Finch’s “reduction of the sovereign’s face to a ‘blurred and undistinguish’d’ image” is “emblematic of the poet’s

Through the image of the delighting hand, Finch illuminates that the background affects of the hand and the Spleen are mysteriously unreadable. To illustrate this point, I offer these questions. Does the Spleen “delight” in creating negative affects? Or does the Spleen influence the hand, and if so, then how do the background affects of the Spleen become delightful for the hand? If the Spleen’s background bodily affects are not the original influences for the hand’s delight, then what is? Or does the speaker misread her Spleen-influenced hand’s affect as “delight”? The speaker’s affective condition can be misread. In Cowley’s poem, the natural philosopher has “learned to read” nature’s “smallest hand.” Meanwhile, in Finch’s text, the speaker makes the affective quality of her hand’s “delight” as unreadably “blurr’d” as the sovereign that this hand refuses to paint. The apotheosis of Finch’s resistance climaxes precisely in this moment of affective imprecision because she refuses to make this hand’s affects readable to a masculinist intellect who would seek to dominate the body. Finch refuses to clarify the disconnect between feeling and form, affect and language, embodied by her splenetic thing of a “hand.” Finch, therefore, resists by obfuscating her affective subjectivity.

The speaker grounds her anti-patriarchal stance, therefore, as mainly affective. The unreadable and/or misread-able “delight” of the hand gestures towards the speaker’s deviance from rational certitude. Colombetti proves insightful again. As I noted in the beginning of this chapter, Colombetti frames her discussion of the background affects within her larger overarching concept of “primordial affectivity.” Colombetti concludes, “The idea,

---

resistance to the reign of William of Orange. Hellegers builds on McGovern’s suggestion to conclude that Finch reduces “representatives of patriarchal control...as a disturbing reminder of the poet’s complex and conflicted relationship to the authority of a monarch, whose power had so longer authorized her own privileged place at court” (166, 167). See Barbara McGovern, *Anne Finch and Her Poetry: A Critical Bibliography* (1992).

then, is that the richer and more differentiated emotions that one finds in animal and human lives are enrichments of the primordial capacity to be sensitive to the world” (19).

Primordial affectivity essentially refers to the body’s ceaseless sensitivity to internal and external stimuli, and the self can “enrich” this sensitivity into emotional states. In Finch’s poem, the speaker’s body primordially reacts to the stimuli of the medical prescription that splenetic women should embroider the “Rose” and “Bird” by instead *straying, deviating*, and, most importantly of all, *tracing* the “unusual Things” of Pindaric irregularity, a reimagined Genesis myth, character sketches of splenetic persons, and the apostrophe. The speaker’s body locates her delightful resistance in what the masculinist Cowley condemns in *To The Royal Society*: the deceptive “paint of art.” For Cowley, the natural philosopher’s “judicious hand” must avoid the “paint of art” because elaborate artistry distracts attention from understanding the truth of nature. In contrast, Finch revels in an alternative “paint of art” that highlights the ungraspably Protean and sometimes unreadable reality of the background Spleen’s influence on the self. In rejecting these male-dominated “known and common way[s],” Finch “traces” the deviant subjectivity of an “unknown and uncommon” speaker.

If there is a principal action that this deviant speaker accomplishes consistently, it is her tracing the Spleen’s background affects. This speaker has traced the universal applicability of the Spleen to all genders. More importantly, she traces that the Spleen is not a truth-teller in making “false Suggestions” (47). Now, this might not be a potent idea at first glance, but the implications of this are important. David Fairer’s commentary (2003) on the poem proves helpful. Fairer writes, “falling a prey to the spleen himself, the poet [or the speaker] is frustrated of any objective vantage-point, since she herself is the victim” (109).

Fairer argues that because of the Spleen's purported "pathological dimension," the "self took on a protean quality that de-established objective judgment" (109). The splenetic self and other selves (i.e. masculinist critics and natural philosophers) cannot secure a graspable account of the splenetic body because this body's protean affects resist being completely understood. Instead, one can only "trace" out these affects through literary forms that paints mis-readable signs on what these affects are. This is then what it means for there to be a loss of "objective judgment." The affectively splenetic body can never be understood as a knowable "object" because it arises as another subjectivity that influences, perplexes, and potentially deceives the self. Finch's speaker ponders this loss of objective truth by associating the Spleen with different sorts of delusion and falsehood: the Spleen's "fond Delusions cheat the Eyes"; this organ has "false Suggestions"; the "*Fool*...imitate[s] the Wits" by claiming to have the Spleen's "pretended Fits"; when the "sullen *Husband*" spends time with his wife, he expresses a "feign'd Excuse" of having the Spleen; the "*Coquette*...Assumes a soft, a melancholy air," swearing to suffer from the Spleen in a "dull Pretence"; and the "weaker Sort" perform the "Tricks" the Spleen's "pernicious Stage" (16, 47, 64-65, 99, 103, 110, and 112-113). These instances illustrate that the Spleen causes the self to experience the Spleen's "false Suggestions," and that the pretentious poser of society "feigns" the condition—Finch muddies the causal origins of the Spleen as both biological and social. And if we dismiss the Spleen's "Suggestions" as outright lies, we miss an important point this poem is making about the body: the affective body expresses a truth that the masculinist natural philosophers would reject as falsehood. The speaker suggests that the body can assume an alternative subjectivity of making sense of the world through a

vocabulary that the rational mind would dismiss. Such a corporeal vocabulary, this speaker traces, entails delusion, fits, and pretention.

By sketching the Spleen's delusive truth, Finch's speaker reveals an enlightened truth that the "weaker Sort" of pretentious posers are ignorant of their background bodies. The speaker qualifies via apostrophe, "Patron thou [Spleen] art to ev'ry gross Abuse" (90), and the speaker concludes that these duplicitous figures' "Tricks" happen on "thy pernicious Stage." In short, the speaker theorizes that these fakers merely are "patronized" by the "pernicious Stage" of Spleen. The speaker points out that the liars remain foolishly unaware that their volitional actions are guided by a bodily background. In this way, they, like the natural philosophers, cannot *read* their bodies as the primordial source for their own pretensions. The speaker judges that these pretenders deviate from a more self-aware truth of their bodies, and even though she may not be able to accurately read her own hand's delight, she qualifies herself as the better reader of other people's Spleen.

In her state of simultaneous blindness and insight, Finch's speaker satirizes this period's upper-class affected practice of assuming the airs and gestures of melancholy. Nicholas Robinson, for example, in his article "Of the Hypp" (which was an abbreviated name for the melancholic condition of hypochondria) in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1732) wryly observes that the "Spleen" has been caught by "court ladies" and a "fine Gentleman [who] was pleased to catch it in Compliance to them [the court ladies]."<sup>110</sup> He makes a point to indicate that those of the lower class, namely the "industrious Farmer, Shepherd, Plowman, and Day Labourer, are indeed safe from this Evil [of the hypp]; Respect for their

---

<sup>110</sup> Robinson, "Of the Hypp" (1732). See Clark Lawlor's chapter "Fashionable Melancholy" in *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660-1800* (2011).

Butters not suffering them to pretend to it.” As Robinson indicates, melancholic distempers could be just the “pretended” behaviors of the upper-classes, and *The Spleen*’s allusions to pretenders bespeak Finch’s dismay at this fashionable behavior. I might even add that Finch’s text insinuates that melancholic fashionability is itself an affective structure. Rephrasing “pretended behavior” instead as *affectation*, whose meaning of “artificial or studied assumption of behavior” was active during the period, I punningly consider that melancholic affectation itself is a *formalized affective structure* (“affectation, n.,” def. 2a). Just as these pretenders *affect* artificial external guises, the speaker likewise adorns or *affects* the poem with artificial structural features. This correspondence between artificial behavioral affectations and artificial poetic structures suggests that appearance, performance, and poetic crafting signify the Spleen’s background affects. Performative affectations and poetic affective structures do not have to manifest affects *truthfully*, since, after all, the Spleen communicates “false Suggestions.” Both pretender and speaker have to “lie” through the “paint of art” to express their own deviant version of truth. Whether or not Finch or her speaker *is* melancholic is unimportant. What’s important is the content of criticism that this faux-melancholic produces. The condition of melancholy, this ode teaches, is not an ontological condition of being, but rather an artificial performance of tracing, acting, and imagining modes of deviant resistance.

Ever a performer, the speaker has marked herself as an exception to the “common ways” of people always failing to understand this Spleen’s causes. The speaker begins the poem, claiming that “ev’ry thing dost ape” the Spleen and that “Mankind...never yet thy real Cause cou’d find.” And midway through the poem, she affirms, “In ev’ry One thou dost possess” (44), and near the end, she reminds us of the futility of apprehending the Spleen:

“In vain to chase thee ev’ry Art we try, / In vain all Remedies apply” (128-129). The repetition of “ev’ry” in these lines resonates the commonness of everyone else failing to *know* the Spleen through a subjectivity of rational inquiry. Throughout this poem, the speaker has attended to her background Spleen’s deviance, so that she can further stray from masculinist and medical discourses. Consequently, her deviation causes her to deliver her exceptional, uncommon subjectivity.

What is so uncommon about the speaker is that she blurs the positionality of her subjectivity because she uses literary forms to situate herself in relation to her background Spleen, her writing poetic hand, her foregrounded reflective self, and oppressive discourses. Finch recasts the entanglement between speaking subject and objectified Spleen as a multi-relational apostrophe between addressing speaker and the addressees of affect, body, mind, and male-dominated knowledge systems. Finch’s apostrophe mutates into a relational genre in which her speaker envisions how her “paint of art” intertwines multiple entities and agencies. In this spirit of multiplication, the speaker ends up imagining other third-person subjects, such as Adamic Man, the “Imperious *Wife*,” the Husband of this wife, the “*Fool*,” the “Men of Thoughts,” the “sullen *Husband*,” the “*Coquette*,” and the male physicians, so that she can better trace the addressed Spleen’s many connections to other subjectivities. The Spleen’s apostrophic structure does not have a single unmediated relationship between addresser and addressee, but instead multiplies into many addresses in which the speaker *mediates* her relation to the Spleen *by means of* imagining other subject positions. The speaking “I” displaces her first-person emotional expressiveness onto the plural subjectivities afforded by third-person expression. In this fashion, the speaker transforms the I-you apostrophe into it/he/she/they-you apostrophe. The purpose of this multiplication is for

her to inhabit indirectly other subjectivities and, consequently, offer a heterogeneous satirical account of the diverse biological, discursive, and social worlds entangled with the background Spleen.

Finch's speaker exploits this potential of the apostrophe especially when she inhabits and critiques the subjectivity of the physician Richard Lower. In the concluding lines of the poem, the speaker imagines the physician Richard Lower as committing suicide due to his failure to study the Spleen:

Not skilful *Lower* thy Source cou'd find,  
Or thro' the well-dissected Body trace  
The secret, the mysterious ways,  
By which thou dost surprise, and prey upon the Mind.  
Tho' in the Search, too deep for Humane Thought,  
With unsuccessful Toil he wrought,  
'Till thinking Thee to've catch'd, Himself by thee was caught,  
Retain'd thy Pris'ner, thy acknowledg'd Slave,  
And sunk beneath thy Chain to a lamented Grave. (142-150)

In real life Lower died from a fever. Finch's speaker (in a more low-key act of revisionary myth-making) reimagines his death as a Spleen-induced suicide.<sup>111</sup> This revision is her poem's last act of critiquing the restrictive enterprise of physicians and natural philosophers. As Hellegers claims, Finch alludes to Lower's "enthusiasm for vivisection and dissection, linking animal experimentation with the violence that the male physician/virtuoso

---

<sup>111</sup> Barash notes that Lower was a physician to Charles II and deserted James II because Lower held anti-Catholic and pro-Whiggish sentiments. Barash argues that Finch implicitly criticizes Lower's desertion as "akin to moral failure and regicide" (275).



perpetrates upon women's bodies in the name of medicine" (164). Although Finch critiques Lower's invasive subjectivity as ending only in failure and death, she also imaginatively inhabits Lower's subjectivity, so that she can position herself as also the "Pris'ner" and "acknowledg'd Slave" of the Spleen.

Finch's speaker defines herself in an entangled social relationship with her Spleen as "thy Pris'ner" and "thy acknowledged Slave." She as Lower positions herself as inextricably bound to the Spleen like a prisoner, thereby suggesting that the Spleen itself assumes the background structure of a prison. And calling oneself the "acknowledged Slave," she as Lower performs a strange self-recognition, in which she indirectly constructs herself as a subject constituted by the Spleen's deviant influence. It is strange not only because she identifies herself as a slave in the third-person, but also because "acknowledg'd" is an ambiguous adjectival modifier. Is she the first-person speaker acknowledging her slave status? Is she as the third-person Lower acknowledging it? Or is the Spleen acknowledging her or Lower? In these respects, the word "acknowledg'd" acquires a distinctly affective resonance because this word, like an affect, refuses to remain definitively connected to a clear rational subject position (is it Lower, the speaker, and/or the Spleen acknowledging?). Finch's speaker renders the position of her deviant subjectivity once again unreadable.

In sum, Finch's poem models a speaker whose embodied sensitivity drives her into third-person exploration of the Spleen's all-pervasive agency. The speaker affirms the Spleen's agency by stressing in the last line that the Spleen's "Chain" drags Lower's body down to its background (or underground). She materializes melancholy as the concrete object of the "Chain" to accentuate that melancholy chains the self onto the new prison of the tomb. The "Grave" symbolizes a figurative death in which the "thinking" Lower/speaker

dies and sinks under the state of affectivity. The “lamented Grave,” moreover, is overlaid with the affective investment of mourning. Freud argues that “melancholia is in some way related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness, in contradistinction to mourning, in which there is nothing about the loss that is unconscious” (245).<sup>112</sup> The lost object for the speaker is total rationalistic, top-down subjectivity. The speaker “laments” or, rather, drowns her pure subjectivity. Throughout the poem, she has resistantly deviated from sexist discourses, and in the end, she in the third-person resistantly deviates from the all-rational “I.” By disaffiliating herself from the “I,” Finch’s speaker adulterates herself into mixed, pluralized subjectivities, empowering her to assume a seemingly omniscient or, if you will, omni-affective position of delivering judgments on false pretenders, masculinist discourses, and the underlying influence of the background Spleen.

##### 5. The Mis/Reading of Belinda in Alexander Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*

My affective formalist analysis of Finch’s poem pays heed to the ways through which the speaker formalizes affects into various structures that magnify the body’s powers. In a related sense, her speaker can only convey her deviant body through the “paint” of literary affectation. The Spleen Poems shape subjectivities whose affectivity remains simultaneously accessible and unreadable. This section develops this idea on the tenuous representability of bodily affects in my analysis of Alexander Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*. In this poem, he highlights through the mock-heroic’s absurdly cartoonish panache that splenetic background affects suffuse the poem’s foregrounded actions—namely the Baron’s

---

<sup>112</sup> See Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia” (1914-1916).

theft of Belinda's lock of hair, rank materialism in aristocratic society, and Belinda's vindictiveness.

The poem's narrator imagines an artificial background of sylphs, gnomes, and—most germane to my analysis—the personified inhabitants of the Cave of Spleen and the formal structures of the mock-heroic genre and personification.<sup>113</sup> Like Finch, Pope creates a narrator who is sensitive to the Spleen's influence on the aristocratic character of Belinda. Even though this poem revels in the absurd humor of Belinda's hair theft, Pope implies that the passionate and emotional world of Belinda is comparable to the artificial world of the Splenetic cave: Belinda's passions are pathetically reducible to a *readable* language of absurdly personified and literary forms. Through Belinda's Cave of Spleen, Pope satirizes the aristocracy that Belinda's Cave represents, *reading* her and her aristocratic social world as nothing more but artifices. Yet despite this denouncement, as I will later argue, Pope's narrator constructs Belinda's deviant subjectivity of impassioned anger as also resistant to neat signification. Ultimately, Pope wavers between satirizing the *readable* artificiality of the aristocratic and bodily worlds and awarding Belinda a potentially *unreadable* affective subjectivity.

When I use “reading” here, I clarify that Pope's idea of “reading” resonates acts of determining an object in the same sense that Cowley understands the “reading” of nature to involve delimiting this object into a graspable knowledge. Thus, “reading” echoes traces of natural philosophers' desire to make objects of inquiry knowable. And for Pope, what makes Belinda and her world more readable is the mock heroic's practice of trivializing reality

---

<sup>113</sup> On the faery mythology which Pope drew from, see Pat Rogers, “Faery Lore and *The Rape of the Lock*” (1974).

through absurd imagery, ideas, and incongruities. The mock-heroic trivializing “reads” because this technique makes Belinda’s world knowable as silly and artificial. However, the mock-heroic also “over-reads” and makes reality “unreadable” by virtue of its imaginative absurdities that exceed reason, so this genre’s very act of trivializing “reading” also fails to make the world knowable. By extension, literary form, Pope reveals, both succeeds and falls short in signifying the subjectivity of Belinda.<sup>114</sup>

In making this nuanced argument on Pope, I situate my analysis in relation to critics who recognize the problematic consequences of Pope’s mockery of the hair theft. Critics such as Ellen Polak (1985), Ruth Salvaggio (1988), and Deborah C. Payne (1991) have argued that Pope denies women full subjectivity and, consequently, objectifies them into categorical character types, like the coquettish Belinda or the prudish Clarissa.<sup>115</sup> In a way, his fragmentation continues the masculinist mission to read the female body. Though it may appear that Pope denies total female subjectivity, I have concluded that Pope’s narrator in fact simultaneously trivializes and celebrates Belinda’s female subjectivity. That is, the

---

<sup>114</sup> In these respects, my discussion of “reading” is markedly different from Chapter 2’s analysis of Swift’s representation of “forms” of “reading” in his early satires. Here, reading refers to modes of knowing and unknowing, whereas for Swift, I treat “reading” as interrelated with being destabilized by the text’s affective language.

<sup>115</sup> Payne’s argument, for example, is particularly illustrative of this critique. She argues that Pope implements a “poetic strategy of gender fragmentation”: the poem fragments the female characters into the categories of Belinda the coquette, Clarissa the prude, and Thalestris the termagant, and, consequently, this fragmentation works to guide the female readership to reject the more coquettish and termagant types of women (5, 9-10). See Deborah C. Payne, “Pope and the War Against Coquettes; Or, Feminism, and the ‘Rape of the Lock’ Reconsidered—Yet Again” (1991), and Ruth Salvaggio, *Enlightened Absence: Neoclassical Configurations of the Feminine* (1988). Her analysis is especially indebted to Ellen Pollak’s *The Poetics of Sexual Myth: Gender and Ideology in the Verse of Swift and Pope* (1985). For an argument that reads Pope’s representations of women in relation to his marginal status in society, see also Carole Fabricant, “Defining Self and Others: Pope and Eighteenth-Century Gender Ideology” (1997).

narrator signifies Belinda's subjectivity as both trivially readable and affectively unreadable. His sensitivity reveals that Belinda's subjectivity is a more dispersed, yet hierarchically oriented universe: he shows that her subjectivity embodies a readable pageantry of gnomes, court attendants, the Queen of Spleen, the sobs and tears collected in the bag, and the Cave of Spleen. Through this pageantry, Pope's narrator determines her subjectivity as a mirror of the hierarchical aristocracy. Belinda's subjectivity is, however, is also un/misreadable because Pope's speaker also celebrates her inner world as a spirited, yet nonetheless artificial, affective background of different entities, so that he can teach the satirical truth that human subjectivity is messy. What make his mock-heroic mode so lively are the ways he uses incongruous images to make a neat understanding of Belinda difficult. If one views human subjectivity as only involving the subjective "I," one would conceal the more heterogeneous reality that the self contains a tempest in a teapot. Because Pope's speaker develops a layered micro-universe of Belinda's affective background, he demonstrates that Belinda's readable and unreadable subjectivity has both limited and yet authoritative power.<sup>116</sup>

I will discuss two main structural forms that Pope's narrator uses to explore Belinda's subjectivity: the mock heroic technique of rescaling attention towards the body and the personifications of melancholy into characters. These forms serve as the background affective *felt-through* lens through which the speaker highlights the Spleen's background effects on Belinda's foregrounded behaviors. Since Pope's poem is comparably more

---

<sup>116</sup> A caveat: this conclusion only applies to Pope's representation of women in this mock heroic poem. So it's certainly legitimate to conclude that Pope does fragment female subjectivity in his other poems, but in the case of *The Rape of the Lock*, his fragmentation is messier and possibly verges on sympathy towards Belinda's affective condition.

expansive than Finch's, I will only consider at length the formal structures the speaker uses when depicting the Cave of Spleen in Canto IV since this is the section where the speaker devotes significant attention to Belinda's background body.

Formal representation of this background body, this poem at the outset shows, begins through the mock heroic technique of rescaling. This technique, as Pat Rogers (1993) outlines, works "by means of belittlement and aggrandizement" (599).<sup>117</sup> Pope writes this mock heroic to belittle the real-life courtship scandal of the suitor Robert Petre, 7<sup>th</sup> Baron stealing Arabella Fermor's lock of hair. Pope aggrandizes this scandal by using conventions from the epic genre to describe the incident, so, for example, as Rogers neatly summarizes, the poem parodically depicts "the arming of the hero feminized into a make-up session (i. 121-48); the epic voyage as a boat-trip on the Thames (ii. 1-52); gargantuan feasts into an English tea-table (iii. 105-120); mortal combats into a domestic tiff (v. 75-112)" (599). These mock heroic parodies rescale the attention from the regal contexts of the epic genre to trivial, mundane, and domestic scenes.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, by shifting the focus on the "trivial," this genre enables the narrator to read and pinpoint Belinda in a determinate way that is evocative of the masculinist natural philosopher analyzing nature's "littleness," as Cowley says. However, because the Pope's mock-heroic in particular magnifies Belinda through many personified entities, absurd images, and other formal structures, his poem makes Belinda's readability more elusive.

---

<sup>117</sup> See Rogers' editorial note to *The Rape of the Lock* (1993), 597-600.

<sup>118</sup> For other useful discussions of the mock heroic genre, see Ulrich Broich, *The Eighteenth-Century Mock-Heroic Poem* (1968) and Richard Terry, *Mock-Heroic from Butler to Cowper* (2005).

This contradiction between readability and unreadability is subtly observable in the lines, where the narrator parodies the epic genre's opening invocation: "What dire offence from amorous causes springs, / What mighty contests rise from trivial things, / I sing –This verse to CARYLL, Muse! Is due" (1.1-3). The narrator renders visible or, rather, audible in the medium of song the background of the "trivial" or "amorous causes," which the speaker will elaborate to refer to the trivial elements of sylphs, gnomes, and the Cave of Spleen. However, the silly incoherences between "mighty contests" and "trivial things" and between "dire offence" and "amorous causes" signify a brief moment of instability. Even though the narrator can correctly read Belinda's situation as involving "amorous causes" and "trivial things," he deliberately misreads it with the incongruous modifiers of "dire" and "mighty." Through this playful yoking together of incongruous pairs, the narrator deploys the "paint of art" to blur the readability of Belinda's social world.

Accordingly, the narrator's mock-heroic incongruities give a complicated picture of the affects inhabiting Belinda. In the first lines of Canto IV, the section that introduces Belinda's Cave of Spleen, the narrator paints the affective reality of Belinda's predicament:

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppressed,  
And secret passions laboured in her breast.  
Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,  
Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss,  
Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,  
Not tyrants fierce than unrepenting die,  
Not Cynthia when her manteau's pinned awry,

E'er felt such rage, resentment, and despair,

As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravished hair. (4.1-10)

Through this litany of negations, the speaker mock heroically trivializes and reads Belinda's emotional state. By comparing her to these negated figures of comparatively greater import, the narrator magnifies the absurdity of her passions, superficially mocking her feelings.

Despite this derisive attitude, the reversible syntax in the line, "But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppressed," makes two readings possible: do the "anxious cares" oppress the "nymph," or does the "nymph" use her "pensive" thinking to oppress these "cares?" The narrator's ambiguous syntax muddies the subject/object status of Belinda's passions. The inversion in "felt...sad virgin" also reinforces this confusion. In effect, Belinda's anxieties oscillate *between* having agential authority over her self *and* becoming subordinated under the oppressive rule of her "pensive" reason. In these lines, Pope makes the (un)readability of Belinda's affective subjectivity crucially dependent on these two formal structures of anaphoric negations and reversible syntax.

Pope exploits literary form to progressively construct and deconstruct Belinda. Pope's affective formalism turns out to be a process of piecing together the background affects of Belinda. In the narrator's introduction to the Cave of Spleen, he demonstrates this piecemeal process-oriented approach. Parodying the epic convention of the hero visiting the underworld, the narrator introduces the gnome of Umbriel, "a dusky melancholy sprite," who "Down to the central earth, his proper scene, / Repaired to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen" (4.13, 15-16). Then the speaker gives details on "the dismal dome" of the Cave, where there is "[n]o cheerful breeze" and which is "in a grotto, sheltered close from air...screened in shades from day's detested glare" (4.18, 19, 21-22). The narrator's



piecemeal process is observable through his emotional adjectives he uses to trace the emotional profile of this scene: “dusky melancholy, “gloomy, “dismal, “[n]o cheerful,” and “detested.” Pope demonstrates that the narrator’s experience of reality is deeply affective: he can only know Belinda’s world—in this case, the emotional underworld of Belinda—by *feeling through* and, in turn, identifying affective contours, impressions, and stimulations.

In Belinda’s dark world, the spelunking narrator “feels through” only affective impressions rather than acknowledges the rational, psychological, or judgmental faculties that constitute the glimmering light of Belinda’s subjectivity. His affective sensitivity selectively attends to only the bodily background, and not on the subjective, thinking foreground.<sup>119</sup> As my discussion of the mock heroic structure shows, the mock heroic purposefully subverts what the subjective mind might read as trivial: the felt-through impressions and stimuli of the background Cave. Pope’s mock heroic functions to build a knowledge of triviality that starts at the affective and works its way up to the subjective lament of Belinda.

In order to know Belinda’s background, this affective spelunker, in a fit of world building, populates the Cave with personified cartoonish figures who represent the artifice of her subjectivity. Here, the speaker formalizes Belinda’s background affects through personification, yet in doing so, he also trivializes her emotions as artificial. For example, the narrator personifies the vices of “Ill-nature” and “Affectation” as two handmaids waiting on the “throne” of the Cave of Spleen. “Ill-nature” is a “wrinkled form in black and white arrayed” and is ever ready to launch “lampoons,” and “Affectation, with a sickly mien” is

---

<sup>119</sup> Koehler explores more thoroughly the selective or filtered attention in mock-heroic poetry. See Koehler 61-83.

“[p]ractised to lisp, and hang the head aside, / Faints into airs, and languishes with pride” (4.27, 30, 31, 32-33). Ill-nature and Affectation are attendant qualities of Belinda’s melancholy. The narrator associates these two personified figures with forms of creative artifice: Ill-nature is armed with literary lampoons, and Affectation evokes the fashionable practice of pretending to be melancholic. It is crucial that the narrator associates Belinda’s melancholy with forms of artifice—whether it is the literary artifice of mocking lampoons or the gestural artifice of melancholic pretense. Personifying these artificial practices is itself another kind of artifice. His personifications denote the narrator’s affective formalism: he reads Belinda’s background affectivity of the Spleen as inhabited by artificial life-forms, thereby reducing her feelings to a contrived performance. By implication, these personifications mock the aristocratic beings of Belinda’s world as bound to scripted, predictable actions of pretense.

Critiques of Pope’s representation of female characters have shown that Pope fragments female subjectivity, and these personifications may testify to the ways he restrictively genders splenetic traits of affectation and ill-nature into female beings obsessed with artifice.<sup>120</sup> However, I argue that in spite of these trivializing personifications, the narrator adeptly perceives that affects function only as externalizable entities.<sup>121</sup> For

---

<sup>120</sup> As Deborah Payne (1991) argues, Pope deploys a “textual strategy of fragmenting female readers into respective categories,” so Pope’s personifications of splenetic traits into distinctly female beings exemplify that he indeed fragments female audiences only into identifying with and perhaps disidentifying from a limited set of stereotypes (11).

<sup>121</sup> Taking on a more nuanced and middle-way approach to Pope’s attitudes towards women in his poetry, Carole Fabricant (1997) argues that Pope pursues a strategy of “*appropriation* vis-à-vis women,” through which Pope can fashion himself into a “position of unquestionable power, as a scrutinizing and judging subject vis-à-vis a scrutinized and judged object” (506, 524). Fabricant proposes that Pope appropriates women as a result of his marginalized social status and disability.

example, he personifies Affectation by noting her “woe” is “[w]rapped in a gown, for sickness, and for show,” and by concluding, “each new nightdress gives a new disease” (4.35-37, 38). He pairs bodily states of “woe” and “disease” with the material trappings of a “gown” and “nightdress.” The narrator perceives that these affective behaviors acquire a visible, legible value only through being externalized as clothing: affects need an external structural emblem for them to be readable. The narrator perversely implements a reversal of inside-outside, in which the seeming interiority of the Spleen is now an outside, autonomous agency whose clothing bestows or “*gives*” disease. This, here, is the consequence of the narrator’s affective personifications: he makes more socially expressible the affects of her Spleen through a vocabulary of garments, clothing, and artifice. However, despite making Belinda’s affects more readable, there still lingers the absurd incongruity of making clothing into a metonymy for her melancholy. The incongruity suggests that Belinda’s actual melancholy may be unreadable and, instead, only draped over by these sartorial trappings. In this double sense, sartorial vocabulary reveals and yet conceals Belinda’s melancholy.

Pope’s affective formalism walks this line between making Belinda’s affective subjectivity knowable and unknowable. He questions if there can be anything beyond the language game of forms. In this Cave of Spleen, the acceptable means of communication must be tailored towards a language of garments and, as we will now see, a language of hallucinatory images. After describing Affectation and Ill-nature, the narrator observes human beings changing to the “various forms” of nonhuman “living teapots,” a “pipkin,” a sighing “jar,” a “goose-pie,” “bottles,” and “corks” (49, 51, 52, 54). John F. Sena contextualizes that “this passage reflects the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century medical theory that the disordered animal spirits of one who has suffered from prolonged

melancholia may cause the imagination to present perverse images to the brain with such vigor that one will experience the delusion that his or her body has been transformed into a different form and substance” (136-137). Sena then cites from a few medical treatises that discuss medical cases of hysterics and melancholics claiming metamorphic delusions. For example, Nicholas Robinson writes in *A new System of the Spleen, Vapours, and Hypochondriack Melancholy* (1729) that melancholics can believe that “their Bodies are transform’d into Swans, Geese, Glasses, Tea Cups, etc. and act...as if their Bodies had actually suffer’d such a Metamorphosis” (qtd. in Sena 137).<sup>122</sup> Sena emphasizes that melancholics view their bodies as “transformed” into nonhuman animals and objects. In other words, these people *misread* their bodies as hallucinated things. Pope suggests that these hallucinated teapots and pipkins are essentially affective mis-readings. Now, there remains the question of whether the observing narrator or Belinda is the one hallucinating. Setting aside the idea that the narrator may be hallucinating these images as well, the narrator suggests that the splenetic Belinda is affectively misreading or hallucinating her experience. If hallucinations are according to this period’s medical theory the products of the Spleen, then these hallucinations serve as the readable and yet misread traces of Belinda’s splenetic affects.

These hallucinatory images, an incarnation of artificiality, imply that melancholy is, what Finch earlier describes, a “fond delusion” or, what Swift called a “possession of being well-deceived” in falsehoods. Pope’s narrator acknowledges that Belinda’s melancholy necessitates a stylized practice of artificial gestures, such as wearing a nightdress, fainting

---

<sup>122</sup> See Robinson, 230. On this discussion of hysterical symptoms of hallucination accorded to women that the medical discourses perpetuated, see Sena, “Belinda’s Hysteria: The Medical Context of *The Rape of the Lock*” (1987).

“into airs,” and communicating hallucinations. What if melancholy can only be unveiled as and concealed by artificial structures? The mock heroic form, let us recall, trivializes and aggrandizes. With respect to the deviant subjectivity he is constructing, Pope adapts the mock heroic’s double mode into acts of reading and mis/overreading the satirized target of Belinda. Pope’s artificial forms of personification and hallucinatory imagery, for example, achieve this contradictory labor. We see this tension play itself out once more when the narrator introduces the Queen or goddess of the Cave of Spleen as responsible for Belinda’s emotions of grief, melancholy, and hysteria. The narrator describes how this goddess responds to Umbriel’s petition to “touch Belinda with chagrin” (77):

The goddess with a discontented air  
Seems to reject him, though she grants his prayer.  
A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,  
Like that where once Ulysses held the winds;  
There she collects the force of female lungs,  
Sighs, sobs, and passions, and the war of tongues.  
A vial next she fills with fainting fears,  
Soft sorrows, melting griefs, and flowing tears. (79-86)

The narrator imagines Belinda’s grief as originating from the Queen’s supplied materials of sorrows, tears, and other related elements, thus calling into question if Belinda’s jeremiad that she performs at the end of this Canto really comes from her mental subjectivity. And to call the supplier of these contents a “Queen,” this narrator subversively dethrones Belinda’s rational sovereignty and installs this personified background authority. Unlike Finch’s speaker, Pope’s narrator does not grant Belinda the capacity to call herself the Spleen’s

“acknowledged slave.” Instead, what emerges is a grief whose sighs, sobs, tears, and passions come off as prepackaged artifices. As this splenetic self, Belinda expresses affects that are disconnected from a rational subjectivity. Moreover, she is also disconnected from having an intimate awareness that the Queen, Umbriel, and the sylphs influence her. Her affects are artificial precisely because of these disconnections.

What kind of lesson then is Pope teaching here about Belinda’s affects? Since Pope’s speaker conceives of a monarchical court at work in the Spleen, this narrator suggests that her affects operate according to a hierarchical organization that exists autonomously from mental consciousness. In a sense, Pope reproduces a mirror image of the aristocratic court hierarchy in the Cave to illuminate that Belinda’s feelings are conditioned by her socially stratified world. When discussing the ideological values underlying Pope’s technique of personifications, Chester F. Chapin (1955) theorizes that “particular virtues and vices are often felt to have a sort of existence of their own independent of their particular manifestations in the realm of human activity”; and Pope’s view that moral virtue and vice lives beyond human activity, he continues, “is conducive to personification in poetry” (126).<sup>123</sup> Chapin’s insight invites a more positive interpretation for Belinda’s trivialized self: her affects likewise hold an artificial “sort of existence of their own independent of” the subjective reasoning “I.” Thus, the narrator personifies these independently existing affects to validate their agential influence on Belinda. The narrator’s personifications function to recognize the very alive-ness of Belinda’s complicated splenetic subjectivity.

To construct her alternative subjectivity, he renders Belinda’s expressivity affective and corporeal. Once Umbriel releases the contents of the vial, Belinda goes off into a lament

---

<sup>123</sup> See Chapin (1955), 116-130.

that superficial readers might trivially read as a self-absorbed jeremiad. Yet it's important to recognize that the narrator is sensitive to record Belinda's affective subjectivity. The first half of Belinda's lament is replete with her usage of the "I"; however, once she pays especial attention to her "trembling hand" in the latter half of her speech, Belinda's speech becomes pointedly impassioned and potentially satirical:

Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell;

.....

See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!

My hands shall rend what ev'n thy rapine spares:

These in two sable ringlets taught to break

Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;

The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,

And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;

Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,

And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.

Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize

Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these! (4.159, 162, 167-176)

Belinda emphasizes this deviance through her bawdy suggestion that the Baron's "sacrilegious hands...[should have] seize[d] / Hairs less in sight." She articulates her subjectivity not so much in a way that is oriented around rationality, but rather through bodily affects of anxiety, erotic desire, resentment, and disgust. It is easy to dismiss Belinda's speech as coquettish, yet her Spleen-induced melancholy expresses critique in more affective terms. Belinda's speech melancholically proclaims aggressive affects of

hating the Baron's actions. Her intense affects form the primordial background through which she indirectly poses an ironically satirical question: "Is your intent, Baron, to really seize my own hidden sexuality when you instead seized my more visible hairs? Are you, Baron, an aristocratic male, seeing my body as your property? Is that my value?" Similar to Finch's hand-based subjectivity, Belinda articulates her "trembling hands" resistance against the "sacrilegious hands" of male desire.

But Belinda doesn't explicitly state her criticism of the Baron. The paradox of affective criticism is that the critic does not dictate her criticism in the readability of completely rational language. Belinda's criticism comes from the Spleen. Her melancholically aggressive criticism is, thus, a product of the non-rational background body. Affective criticism thrives in the underbelly of melancholic aggression. Belinda contends that women are subject to the libidinous affects of men. The sound of "sees" in Belinda's "seize" puns with the subsequent word of "sight" to imply that the Baron's sexual affects are mediated through visual sensuality. She intimates that her sexuality—metonymized through the risqué phrase of "hairs less in sight"—can be exposed, externalized, and oppressively read by the male gaze. At the heart of her melancholic anger is her satirical message that she is "seized" by the affects of male lechery. Pope's narrator implies that Belinda views beyond the triviality of the hair theft as, instead, evidence of the encroaching power of male privilege. In summary, the progress of her affective criticism unfolds as follows: she emotes the sobs that the artificial forces of her Spleen supply her, attends to her rending and trembling hands, bawdily accuses the Baron and by implication her society of treating her like their sexual property, and subtly recognizes that her social position is subject to the desiring affects of men. Pope's narrator presents a complex depiction of not only Belinda's



affective subjectivity, but also her affective criticism. Belinda evinces a burgeoning consciousness that her social role is tightly braided with the lustful investments of other men.

Pope implies that Belinda's affective criticism is the ideal model. To demonstrate just how potent her satire is, Pope's contrasts Belinda's lament with Clarissa's more moralizing commentary. In the following Canto, Clarissa makes the more explicitly observable satirical commentary on the vanity of the upper-class: "How vain are all these glories, all our pains, / Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains....Behold the first in virtue as in face! / Oh! if to dance all night, and dress all day" (5.15-16, 18-19). Unlike Belinda, Clarissa does pathologize social symptoms like the constant need to conduct parties and obsess over dresses, and Clarissa does moralistically generalize that these symptoms indicate "virtue" is superficially tied to the "face." As clarifying as Clarissa's satirical judgment is, her judgment has a tepid response: she receives "no applause"; Belinda "frowned"; and she is called a "prude" by "Thalestris" (5.35-36). In contrast, Belinda's speech causes the "pitying audience [to] melt in tears" even though the Baron was unmoved (5.1). Belinda's relatively successful audience reception suggests that Pope's narrator views Belinda's lament as the better way to criticize. Pope also suggests that Belinda's affects are social entities that solicit the response of others. For this reason, Belinda's affective criticism has this decidedly social function; her indirect criticism can move audiences to her side. All in all, Pope affirms that satire is a dialogic process of enfolding readers, audiences, and others. Of course, it is indeed problematic that Pope does not grant Clarissa's satire a better audience reception, but since satire is after all a social activity, he prefers Belinda's methods as the one that is more rhetorically effective/affective. In this poem, Pope's narrator

constructs the deviant subjectivity of Belinda through a strategy of trivially reading and grandiosely over/misreading her background body.

What remains problematic is that Belinda's deviant subjectivity remains mediated through Pope's own male gaze. As a consequence, her subjectivity is intertwined with the forms Pope deploys. It may very well be the case that celebrating Belinda's subjectivity deviates into a celebration of form itself. Pope's mock-heroic after all ends with the narrator urging Belinda: "[C]ease, bright Nymph! to mourn ravish'd Hair...For, after all the Murders of your Eye, / When, after Millions slain, your self shall die ...This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame, / And mid'st the Stars inscribe Belinda's Name!" (5.111, 115-116, 119-120). Attempting to assure Belinda's mourning, the narrator claims that Belinda's stolen hair has transformed into a constellation writing out her name. As his final act, he prioritizes this *readable* inscription as the only memorable leftover thing after she herself has long died. The stellar form of her name becomes the final image that both renders her readable and yet glosses over Belinda's affective mourning. Unlike Finch's *The Spleen* which ends in a submerged grave, Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* concludes in the celestial burial of Belinda's grief beneath the artifice of her name. Pope affirms Belinda's affective life only to edit it away.

## 6. The Asymmetries of the Rhyming Couplet

Pope's act of revision exemplifies a persistent tactic of these Spleen Poems. They walk a fine line of maintaining the tension between subversive affectivity and regulatory restraint. Entertaining these deviant subjectivities may be too subversive and impossible to sustain, so these speakers inevitably moderate these subversive affects by imagining them

through the formal figures of deviant poetic hands, false pretenders, gnomes, Ill-nature and Affectation personified, the Queen of Spleen, Belinda's emotional and yet potentially satirical lament, Columbus-like enthusiasts, and passion-controlling sea captains.

Furthermore, the speakers institute the order of formal structures, such as irregular verse, apostrophes, and personification. Formal structures' very nature *as* meaning-making *structures* contain these affects. For example, the consistency of Finch's metrical irregularity reintroduces a sense of orderly disorder to the poem. Or consider that Belinda's melancholic subjectivity remains answerable to the personified Queen of Spleen. Her passions of sobs and cries, after all, are collected in the image of a container bag. In all three poems, this interplay between subversion and restraint is subtly evident in the technical structure of the rhyming couplet.

The speakers use this device to echo the entangled binary between the regulatory reasoning mind and the subversive, passionate body. How so? In as much as a couplet signifies a rhyme between two semantically different words, the couplet, as J. Paul Hunter clarifies, "formally involves a careful pairing of oppositions or balances but no formal resolution" (266). The couplet, Hunter theorizes, preserves "tension" rather than "negotiating a successful compromise" (266).<sup>124</sup> These rhymes' semantic "tension" symptomatically indicates that speakers are inclined towards preserving the embodied tensions between the mind and body. Although each couplet does not necessarily advertise explicitly this mind-body tension, these rhymes' semantic tensions latently echo the kinds of embodied tensions that these poems discuss. Thus, when speakers structure their poems

---

<sup>124</sup> For his full argument on the ways the heroic couplet formally registers Pope's ideological values, see Hunter, "Form as Meaning: Pope and the Ideology of the Couplet" (1996).

using such couplets, they craft a refining lens to evoke and blur the entangled mind-body binary.

To prove that these couplets resonate such embodied tensions, I will briefly consider the couplets that conclude all three poems:

1. Retain'd thy Pris'ner, thy acknowledg'd Slave,  
And sunk beneath thy Chain to a lamented Grave. (Finch 149-150)
2. *This Lock*, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame,  
And mid'st the Stars inscribe *Belinda's* Name! (Pope 5.119-120)
3. Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,  
Life's voyage to the world unknown. (Green 30)

These couplets introduce a sonic and auditory order in their rhymes: Slave/Grave, Fame/Name, and over-blown/unknown. And these rhymes strive to forge a semantic order for these couplets' rhymed words, but is this semantic order truly possible, since each word of the couplet carries a meaning that is specifically different from its corresponding rhymed word? One may rationally conclude that the speakers use the rhymes' sonic symmetry to enforce a semantic symmetry between, say, being a prison-like "slave" and being chained to a "grave." Yet such a conclusion restrictively views that these speakers subscribe to the delusional sovereignty of a rational subjectivity. Rather than impose a neat symmetrical order, the rhymes preserve the semantic tension between differing meanings. "Unknown," for example, evokes ideas of an epistemological gap that the speaker faces in his "voyage," and "over-blown" connotes senses of extravagant emotion that contrasts with the moderate state of being "becalm'd." These end rhymes also develop relationships with the words belonging to the first halves of their lines: Pris'ner/Slave, Chain/Grave, Muse/Fame,

Stars/Name, becalm'd/over-blown, voyage/unknown. Rather than achieving an economic semantic conclusiveness that a rational subjectivity prefers, the couplets' internal pairings proliferate new sets of unfulfilled semantic relationships. The semantic symmetry of any rhyme, it follows, is artificial. If these rhymes are not rational entities, then they are affective structures. Rhymes are fundamentally asymmetrical affective structures: the incongruous pairs of rhymes evoke the ways in which the background body is asymmetrically resistant to rational explication. Hunter argues that the couplet structure conveys a "questing for relationship" that never finds perfect conclusiveness (267). Modifying Hunter's claim, I suggest that these speakers rhyme to "quest" for a sensitivity to the asymmetries between affect and form, body and mind, self and society.

These Spleen Poems imagine affective relationships. These poems' speakers have forged the following relationships: with the inner Spleen via Pindaric irregularity and third-person apostrophe; with the distressed Belinda via mock heroic rescaling and personification; and with the enthusiast via verse epistle, maritime imagery, and couplets. To imagine these relationships, these speakers pose rhymelike (dis)connections between stimuli and bodies, affective bodies and affective criticisms, backgrounds and foregrounds, affect and poetic artifice. Overall, these poems yearn to undo the chains of reason and, instead, to assemble deviant subjectivities. Yet by vanquishing reason, these speakers cannot help but imagine alternative kinds of order: chains, a Queen, a captain, and the consistency of poetic technique. For these texts to offer any satiric moral on delusional enthusiasm, misogynistic ideologies, and aristocratic folly, these Spleen poems' subjectivities must eventually assent to a new order. Finch's speaker, let us recall, indirectly affirms that she is an "acknowledg'd slave" of the Spleen. By relinquishing the subjectivity of reason to this splenetic master, this

self paradoxically frees herself into a binding sensitivity to her body and the world's stimuli. This is undoubtedly an unsettling conclusion, but these Spleen Poems teach that for any critical engagement with the world to happen, we must embrace the uncompromising affective backgrounds that make and unmake us.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**THE MALAPROP OF MELANCHOLY**  
**IN TOBIAS SMOLLETT'S *THE EXPEDITION OF HUMPHRY CLINKER***

1. Excess, Malapropism, and Displaced Subjectivities

Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771, and hereafter referenced as *Humphry Clinker*) is an epistolary novel obsessed with hierarchical order and disruption.<sup>125</sup> In the first letter addressed to Doctor Lewis, the hypochondriac Welsh squire Matthew Bramble complains that he is “equally distressed in mind and body” by his responsibilities as the head of his manor estate Brambleton-hall: he is bothered that the “children of...[his] sister...plague their neighbours”; he reminds his doctor to “[t]ell Barns to...send the corn to market, and sell it off to the poor at a shilling a bushel under market price”; he notifies the doctor that “Morgan’s widow” can “have the Aldernay cow, and forty shillings to clothe her children” while enjoining the doctor not to divulge his act of charity (“To Dr. Lewis, Gloucester, April 2,” 1-3). Bramble describes a tightly-knit social organization in which his ailments are his obligations to tend to disorderly children, the poor, and a widow. The distress of his “mind and body” is more than a physiological distress, but the problems at home make it a social one. Further, his charitable actions of being un-exploitative to his tenants tell us that Bramble is a benevolent figure. Smollett

---

<sup>125</sup> Citations from Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* are from *The expedition of Humphry Clinker. By the author of Roderick Random ...* Vol. Volume 1, 2, and 3. The second edition. London, MDCCLXXII. [1771]. Citations from the novel will indicate the letter addressee, location, date, and page number.

sketches out a potentially ideal hierarchy in which the patriarchal gentleman knows what is best for his social inferiors.

However, as Bramble travels through England to heal his goutish symptoms, he expresses his passionate disgust that this traditional hierarchy he values is being overturned by the commercial excesses of merchants, non-Europeans, and other outsiders. In addition, this text also shows threats to Bramble's perspectives because Smollett also incorporates the letters of Bramble's sister Tabitha, his nephew Jeri, his niece Lydia, and Tabitha's servant Winifred. John M. Warner (1972) argues that each character's descriptions of the different locales they visit "reflects the characters' varying personalities," so the "reader cannot accept Bramble's view as representing Smollett's own without noting how the other characters' perceptions must qualify Bramble's estimate of the scene" (158).<sup>126</sup> These different letter writers decenter what Warner calls the "dogmatic knowledge" of Bramble and very much prevent his discourse from dominating the novel as its own kind of sovereign (159).

Melancholy, as I have discussed in the Introduction, can denote a condition of rebellious passions usurping the authority of reason. And the hypochondria and melancholy that Bramble feels is mirrored by the disruptions of England metropolitan spaces. However, with respect at least to the commercial opulence that he will deride, Bramble's charity to his tenants can be interpreted as a subversion of exploitative consumer culture. One way to describe these differing kinds of subversions—the condition of melancholic hypochondria, Bramble's charity towards his residents, and consumer culture's disruption of cities—is through the literary figure of the malapropism, the literary device that the servant Winifred

---

<sup>126</sup> Warner, "Smollett's Development as a Novelist" (1972).



Jenkins uses in her letters. Strictly defined, a malapropism, according to *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008), is “a confused, comically inaccurate use of a long word or words.” Originally named after Mrs. Malaprop (after the French *mal à propos*, or “inappropriately”) in Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s play *The Rivals* (1775), the malapropism or malaprop refers to a subversive misuse of words. Or more generally, the malaprop renders the surface sense incompatible with the original intended referent. For the purposes of this chapter, malapropism refers not only to verbal acts of orthographic and punning subversion, but also more generally to formal acts of subverting hierarchies. In *Humphry Clinker*, Smollett uses various malapropically asymmetrical literary forms—hysterical imagery, the post-script, and, most obviously, malaprops, for example—to contest normative discourses of sensibility that subordinate the body, so that he can deliver a malapropic melancholic perspective that overreads, misreads, and satirizes the hierarchical corruptions of the commercial world.

In this chapter, I track Smollett’s formal subversion of the following discourses of sensibility: letter-writing manuals, moral philosophy, and medical rationalism. By challenging these discourses, Smollett provides a critical engagement that denounces the irresolvable excesses of the social world. This is why his central exemplar of affective criticism is the hypochondriac Matthew Bramble, although I will also examine the affective language of Winifred Jenkins to further outline Smollett’s satirical project. Whereas Anne Finch, Matthew Green, and Alexander Pope establish what I have called splenetic “deviant subjectivities,” I name Smollett’s passionate characters as inhabiting malapropic subjectivities. The malaprop of their melancholy rests in their capacity to misrepresent their

affective experiences of disease and/or passions, and part of the power and risk of such misrepresentation is its effect of revealing a provocative truth about the commercial world.

To call Bramble's hypochondriac melancholy malapropic is also fitting since Bramble himself misreads his own body. In her lucid study of hypochondria, *A Condition of Doubt: The Meanings of Hypochondria* (2012), Catherine Belling argues that "[h]ypochondria, as a way of reading, is at odds with the way doctors are encouraged to read when medicine is aligned with the epistemology of science" (35). This conflict points towards what Belling describes as a "representational competition" between the two kinds of readings, or "between the patients' subjective experience and medicine's demands for objective evidence" (37, 32). Belling summarizes medicine's reading method as "reductive, exclusionary, and literalist, a method that rejects the anxious probing of the hypochondriacal method as paranoid and pathological—or as indecorously critical and insubordinate" (35).<sup>127</sup> Belling argues that the hypochondriac patient's overreading of both significant and insignificant details exemplifies a "subjective experience" of "indecorously critical and insubordinate" resistance against medical discourse's rationalism. I adapt her argument to propose that Smollett's satire more extensively embodies this spirit of malapropic overreading, subjectivity, and critical insubordination against the controlling discourses of epistolary manuals, moral philosophy, and medicine. We can witness this kind of insubordination when Bramble tells Doctor Lewis: "The pills are good for nothing...I ought to know something of my own constitution. Why will you be so positive? Prithee send me

---

<sup>127</sup> Belling's argument is concerned with how the hypochondriac's non-objective knowledge reveals the limits and blind-spots of the empirical knowledge of the medicine. Later on in this essay, I address that Bramble's hypochondriac knowledge differs from medical knowledge because his knowledge is entangled with his passions. On her argument, see especially Belling (2012) 1-25, 33-35, and 38-40.

another prescription” (“To Dr. Lewis, Gloucester, April 2,” 1). Asserting the uselessness of the pills, Bramble immediately undercuts the doctor’s medical authority. Smollett fashions a melancholic critic whose aim of attending to the affective excess of his “constitution” is anti-hierarchical.<sup>128</sup>

A further reason for Smollett’s subversive agenda is a sociological one. Juliet Shields (2015) argues that Smollett’s novels “represent the experience of being on the margins of elite metropolitan English society” (par.1).<sup>129</sup> Although Bramble is a squire of the landed gentry, his Welsh background and his fondness for the virtuousness of the Scottish rural countryside make him an outsider to the London elite. Shields documents that the 1707 parliamentary union between England and Scotland led to “post-Union Scottish migration to England, and particularly London, in search of economic opportunity,” and she notes that Scottish migrants encountered prejudice from the English, “who feared that Scots might come to share the wealth and privileges that the English regarded as their own” (par. 4). Shields concludes that Smollett has an ambivalent attitude to these Scots in search of economic opportunity in England’s urban spaces: “Smollett’s fiction captures these dynamics of attraction and loathing, and incorporation and exclusion by depicting both metropolitan England’s lure for Scots and other outsiders and the cost of assimilation into

---

<sup>128</sup> For studies that consider the connection between medicine and Smollett, see, for example, Donald Bruce, *Radical Doctor Smollett* (1965), 22-29, 46-66, Gavin Budge “Smollett and the Novel of Irritability” (2013), Leslie A. Chilton, “Smollett, the Picaresque, and Two Medical Satires” (2011), B.L. Reid, “Smollett’s Healing Journey” (1965), John Sena “Smollett’s Matthew Bramble and the Tradition of the Physician-Satirist” (1968), and most recently Annika Mann, *Reading Contagion* (2018), 81-108. For an analysis on the moral significance of the sickly character type in Smollett’s works, see Ronald Paulson (1967), 190-198.

<sup>129</sup> Juliet Shields, “Tobias Smollett, Novelist: Brutish or British?” (2015).

that society” (par.4). Thus, Bramble’s diseased representation of London, for example, evidences Smollett’s ambivalence to the saving promise of England’s economic riches.

In addition to the phenomena of Scottish migration, Smollett was also engaging with the continuing effects of the financial revolution that began in 1688. As Ron Harris (2015) explains, this revolution involved a “rise of taxation, borrowing and financial institutions” and the “creation of a national debt” (205).<sup>130</sup> This revolution “expanded new markets, enabled specialization, and provided surplus capital and raw materials” (205). In this era of increasing commerce, those who reaped the benefit of this new economy, Harris continues, were “[m]erchants, city financiers and parts of the aristocratic landed elite” (205). The rise of these merchants and financiers in particular disrupted the authority of the monarchy, aristocracy, and landed gentry. Nicholas Hudson (2015) suggests that “[t]raditional genres such as tragedy, the pastoral, and heroic poetry were being displaced by new forms such as the novel and hybrid kinds of drama and verse...because the older genres simply failed to reflect the emerging realities of a fluid and multifaceted commercial society and a broader, more socially mixed audience” (par.4).<sup>131</sup> In response to these historical realities of urbanized commerce, Scottish migration towards cities, and the marginalization of Scottish migrants, Smollett adopts a malapropic perspective of displacement. In the same fashion that traditional genres may not reflect the pluralistic society of England, the normative discourses of letter-writing, moral philosophy, and medicine fail to model an adequate way of living in this heterogeneous world. The phenomena of a rising merchant class and Scottish migrants has displaced the traditional hierarchy of aristocrats and landed gentry. There emerges a

---

<sup>130</sup> Ron Harris, “Government and the Economy, 1688-1850” (2015).

<sup>131</sup> Nicholas Hudson, "Literature and Social Class in the Eighteenth Century" (2015).

tension between old money and new money, inherited wealth and consumer wealth.

Bramble occupies a unique position of not only being a member of the gentry, but also being a non-metropolitan Welshman holding Scottish sympathies. In a way, he is a malaprop, an asymmetrical figure ensconced in the “correct” included classes yet associated with “incorrect” excluded peoples. Bramble’s hypochondriac melancholy is not merely a physiological condition, but also a social one in which his displaced positionality enables him to criticize this commercialized world as out of joint.

These commercial, medical, and discursive contexts, ultimately, inform Smollett’s affectively resonant satire. Smollett fashions Bramble’s malapropic subjectivity whose physiological disorientations are entangled with his social dislocation as outsider. I situate my study in relation to studies on eighteenth-century sensibility. Critics usually locate the impassioned moral judgments of Matthew Bramble or the satirical design of Smollett around the subject of sensibility. Even Bramble’s nephew calls his uncle’s penchant for irritable critique a “sensibility of a heart,” which ostensibly indicates that Smollett himself is participating in the eighteenth-century discourse on sensibility (“To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus college, Oxon. Bath, April 24,” 44). “Sensibility,” in particular, is a concept that has come to encapsulate a variety of meanings.<sup>132</sup> Here, I examine the hypochondriac, passionate, and affective excess that saturates the content of Smollett’s satirical criticism. Scholars concerned with this satire’s version of sensibility have argued that Smollett suggest the bodily faculties of sensation grant the subject with a sensibility of viewing the world

---

<sup>132</sup> For studies on the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility, see, for example, G.J. Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility* (1992); R.F. Brissenden, *Virtue in Distress* (1974); Ildiko Csengei, *Sympathy, Sensibility, and The Literature of Feeling* (2012); Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility* (1996); John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability* (1998).

through an orderly moral framework.<sup>133</sup> Bramble's orientation towards the world is indeed sensorial, yet as valuable as these scholars' insights are, their studies only fill part of the picture.

To expand the current conversation, I consider that Bramble expresses a critical orientation that yearns for an anti-normative sensibility. Bramble's passionate language conveys not so much an ordered moral vision of the world. Rather, his passions enable him to deliver a moral criticism bursting with the malapropic asymmetries of affective excess. I, therefore, shed light on how such affective experience is crucially formative to the sensible self's development. My study demonstrates that Smollett's melancholic satirist projects an *ambivalent* orientation towards passionate sensibility: the satirist pathologizes passionate experience at once as disruptive, yet celebrates such disruption as integral to producing a malapropically misread knowledge of changing social hierarchies.<sup>134</sup>

#### 1b. Excess and Malaprops

Affective excess and malapropism are two key terms that ground my analysis.

Having defined intensity in the chapter on Swift, I here reiterate that an affective intensity

---

<sup>133</sup> On studies that determine Smollett's idea of sensibility entails an orderly perspective, see Ronald Paulson's *Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (1967) and Gavin Budge's "Tobias Smollett and the Novel of Irritability" (2013), for example. On scholarship that focuses on the sensorial basis of sensibility with respect to Smollett, see Gavin Budge (2013), Aileen Douglas' *Uneasy Sensations: Smollett and the Body* (1995), and Donald Siebert's "The Role of the Senses in *Humphry Clinker*" (1974).

<sup>134</sup> In a similar conclusion, Anne C. Vila has noted that the purveyors of the eighteenth-century discourse of sensibility ambivalently viewed sensibility "between enlightenment and pathology" (1). On her introductory discussion of this two-sided attitude, see Vila, *Enlightenment and Pathology* (1998), 1-10.

represents a *bodily experience of disconnected excessiveness* that remains autonomous and, hence, resistant to the mind's rational qualifications. An affect's excessiveness refers to the multiple bodily stimuli and processes that can escape the mind's full knowledge. Yet such excess does not make an affect totally inaccessible. In *Ugly Feelings* (2005), Sianne Ngai concludes, "affects are less formed and structured than emotions, but not lacking form or structure altogether; less 'sociolinguistically fixed,' but by no means code-free or meaningless" (27).<sup>135</sup> My approach is similar to Ngai's even-handed consideration of affects because I recognize that the excess of an affective intensity rests in how the body's multiple stimuli represent the *beginnings* of structure, rather than their absence, and how the affective critique represents the *beginnings* of meaning, rather than total meaninglessness.

*Excessiveness, therefore, denotes the body's not yet realized extra-ness, a state that is at once outside reason but can nevertheless be incorporated and understood by reason.*

Accordingly, for Smollett, the affects finds their tentative representation in signifying structures of his letters. I formulate that Bramble's affectively critical rhetoric represents an excess of what is *incompatibly outside* to and *potentially incorporated* by reason.

Smollett understands that the affective body is both unrepresentable and representable. In *Humphry Clinker*, Bramble avers that "[t]here are mysteries in physick" that even a doctor may not be able to rationalize ("To Dr. Lewis, Hot Well, April 20," 37). In another moment, after discussing the imprisonment of Humphry Clinker due to being mistaken for a highwayman, Bramble admits: "I find my spirits and my health affect each other reciprocally—that is to say, every thing that discomposes my mind produces a correspondent disorder in my body; and my bodily complaints are remarkably mitigated by

---

<sup>135</sup> See Ngai, *Ugly Feelings* (2005), 1-37.

those considerations that dissipate the clouds of mental chagrin” (“To Dr. Lewis, London, June 14,” 220). Bramble ascribes the agency of “complaint” to his body and the agency of “considerations” to his mind. Smollett emphasizes that the body corresponds its unknowable “mysteries” of passionate “complaints.” In response, his mind seeks to “dissipate” the body’s affective language through “considerations.” However, the fact that Bramble persistently returns to recounting the “complaints” of his body suggests that the body exceeds the regulatory apparatus of his mind. The form of Bramble’s language derives from this tension between the mind’s representational tendencies and the body’s mysterious affectivity.

In order to unpack this mind-body conflict, Smollett casts the form of Bramble’s language and the novel as a whole as malapropic. Bramble malapropically misuses normative discourses of sensibility to describe his unreadable body. Or to borrow from the first words of Winifred Jenkins, “Heaving this importunity,” Bramble “heaves” out or physiologically vomits the persistently irritating “importunities” of his hypochondriac affects (“To Mrs. Mary Jones, Glostar, April 20,” 14). Bramble inhabits a malapropic subjectivity of always trying to convey his corporeal side’s “mysteries.” His hypochondriac overreadings enable him to transition into the public role of asserting his malapropic observations of the metropolitan masses. As a result, Bramble recasts the conflict between his rational mind and affective body onto the social world’s tensions between the authoritative gentry and the passionate nouveau riche. His recasting functions as a malapropic displacement, in which he transposes his bodily metaphors onto the body politic. Bramble’s satirical practice is profoundly malapropic. More than just a literary device, malapropisms articulate the displaced and misapplied positionality of his character Matthew



Bramble. Through a malapropic gaze, Bramble displaces himself into over/mis-reading the world as bodily, affective, and passionate.

A related term that we can use in this analysis of Smollett's satire is "catachresis." A malaprop is sub-type of "catachresis," since, as defined by *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (2008), a "catachresis" is "[t]he misapplication of a word." In analyzing the malapropic misuses of Bramble, I take as my inspiration from post-colonial scholarship that has viewed their critique of colonial institutions as a catachrestic mode. Namely, in *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (1993), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's delineation of postcolonial critique as catachrestic informs my own affective formalism. Spivak explains why post-colonial critique relies on a catachrestic mode:

[T]he political claims that are most urgent in decolonized space are tacitly recognized as coded within the legacy of imperialism: nationhood, constitutionality, citizenship, democracy, even culturalism...what is being effectively reclaimed [by postcolonial criticism] is a series of regulative political concepts, the *supposedly* authoritative narrative...in the social formations of Western Europe. They are being reclaimed, indeed claimed, as concept-metaphors for which no historically adequate referent may be advanced from postcolonial space, yet that does not make the claims less important. A concept-metaphor without an adequate referent is a catachresis. These claims for founding catachreses also make postcoloniality a deconstructive case. (60)

For Spivak, the critic must use what Spivak calls "identitarian ethnicist claims of native or fundamental origin," or affirm the "concept-metaphors" of "nationhood" and "citizenship" that originate from imperial colonizers (60). Spivak recognizes that structures of oppression

can persist as traces within the structures of one's inherited language, and as such, a colonized subject may unwittingly use the language of the oppressor and perpetuate the cycle of domination. Hence, it is imperative for the postcolonial to subvert the remainders of the "concept-metaphors" of imperialism. This subversive role of Spivak's post-colonial critic involves catachrestically "reversing, displacing, and seizing the [imperialist] apparatus of value-coding" (63). Postcolonial criticism is catachrestic because the critic "displaces" imperialist "concept-metaphors," reclaiming and repurposing them to embody anti-imperialist resonances. In turn, these reclaimed values are catachreses because they render their imperialist discourses as "inadequate referents." Catachresis, therefore, unfolds as a practice—a malpractice—of resisting the tendency to embrace the normative "referents" of imperialist values.<sup>136</sup>

Smollett's satire is not necessarily post-colonial in its orientation, since he does not advocate for Britain's decolonization of Scottish or Welsh spaces. However, throughout this chapter, I will catachrestically deconstruct that Smollett's subversions paradoxically affirm traditional social values of Eurocentric and gentry-centric supremacy. In my reading of Smollett's malaprop of melancholy, I, thusly, refuse to be enchanted into becoming colonized by his satire's values. Instead, I repurpose his satire as gesturing towards excluded others who threaten to "reverse, displace, and seize" Britain's social hierarchy.<sup>137</sup> In

---

<sup>136</sup> For an article that has also helped me understand better the catachrestic mode of post-colonial criticism, see Sian Melvill Hawthorne and Adriaan S. Van Kinken's "Catachresis: Religion, Gender, and Postcoloniality" (2013).

<sup>137</sup> Although "catachresis" and "malaprop" are related terms, I will use "catachresis" to refer to my effort of deconstructing Smollett's paradoxical hierarchy of values, and I will use "malaprop" to refer to Smollett's subversions of normative discourses of sensibility. I recognize the irony that in creating this distinction, I am imposing my own arbitrary hierarchy.

response to these threats, Smollett malapropically subverts normative discourses of sensibility in letter-writing, moral philosophy, and medicine, so that he can reclaim a vanishing traditional authority. Why these discourses? These serve as the chief extensions of Britain's "apparatus of value-coding" concept-metaphors or, as I will describe them here, social values of moral virtue and reason—values of what I referred to as the "culture of sensibility."<sup>138</sup> These values were integral to preserving the stability of Britain's traditional stratified hierarchies of pre-union and pre-revolution times. To be a virtuous letter-writer or a rational physician, for example, is to be a loyal subject in the "natural" social order. These discourses create "referents" of normative values for people to follow. However, through his formal subversions, Smollett malapropically makes these values into "inadequate referents" that are no longer valid ways of engaging with an increasingly commercialized and hierarchically disrupted world.

Smollett's malapropisms unfold in a rather paradoxical way. Insofar he displaces these normative discourses of sensibility, he also affirms exclusionary hierarchies of class. The reason for Smollett's simultaneous subversion and non-subversion has historical precedents. E.P. Thompson (1978) has argued that, during the eighteenth century, although England experienced the "erosion of paternalist forms of control through the expansion of 'free,' masterless labour" (144), the conflict between the gentry and the masses of professional workers, or what Bramble calls derisively "a mob of impudent plebeians," was for the most part contained ("To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 57). This conflict never evolved

---

<sup>138</sup> We might also call these values of sensibility the values of politeness—a concept that Paul Langford argues came to encompass both the elite aristocrats and gentry and the new moneyed consumer classes after the financial revolution of 1688. See Paul Langford, "The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness" (2002).

into outright revolution because, as Thompson explains, when the plebeian workers protested, “they often turn back to the paternalist regulations of a more authoritarian society...food rioters appeal back to the Book of Orders and to legislation against forestallers, etc., artisans appeal back to certain parts (e.g. apprenticeship regulation) of the Tudor regulatory labour code” (154).<sup>139</sup> Calling this tension the “reciprocity of gentry-crowd relations,” Thompson concludes that resistance against the gentry inevitably upheld the “authoritarian” and “paternalist” logic of maintaining hierarchical order (158). When the un-plebeian Bramble formally subverts discourses of sensibility, he perversely echoes these popular instances of protest; and his embrace of traditional hierarchies evokes these protests’ trust in the safety net of authoritarian regimes. Malapropically, these historical realities of popular protestors are the inverse, “inadequate referents” for the gentry Bramble.

The novel embeds forms of resistance only to allow for their deconstruction. Smollett explores (1) the historically contingent hierarchical relationship between gentry and the urban classes and (2) the “value-coding” of letter-manuals, moral philosophy, and medicine; so that he (3) channels the un/representable excess of his affects and, in effect, malapropically mis/reads the world and assents to gentry-centric hierarchies. Hypochondria becomes the main practice through which Smollett’s Bramble imagines the malapropic incompatibilities between body and mind and between gentry and non-gentry others. Through my catachrestic method, I expose how Smollett’s satire complicitly remains enamored with the seductions of social hierarchies even as he tries to champion the anti-normativity of the hypochondriac sensible self.

---

<sup>139</sup> E.P. Thompson, “Eighteenth-Century Society: Class Struggle without Class?” (1978).

## 2. Malapropic Letters

In order for Smollett to satirize society, he uses what scholars have identified generically as the “epistolary novel.” What is significant about this genre is its transgressive form. As Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook (2006) explains,

Epistolary novels rely on the potentially transgressive translation of private communication into public discourse, both formally and often thematically. As a result, the letter-novel calls into the foreground of our reading experience many of the big questions underlying Western practices of representation: ideas about mimesis and performance, about presence and substitution, about authority, interpretation, and property...Structurally, epistolary novels are constituted in dialogue with their readers, who double the position of the intended reader of its letters and take an active part in assembling the discrete letter units making up the whole; the reader is in a strangely liminal relation to the novel, and as a result, the epistolary novel is never entirely under its author's control.<sup>140</sup>

The epistolary novel, as Cook argues, negotiates the limits of representational practices and the role of the reader “assembling the discrete letter units making up the whole.” Because this genre commits the “transgressive translation of private communication into public discourse,” this letter-novel ends up destabilizing the constituent letter’s formal “discreteness.” In addition, because the presence of a reader makes the novel “never entirely under its author’s control,” the novel already has an anti-hierarchical quality. The author and the novel’s letter-writers don’t inhabit sovereign statuses as masters of their writing, since

---

<sup>140</sup> See Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, “Epistolary Novel” (2006).

the reader can misinterpret the writer's original sense. The novel's transgressive nature as a public and mis-readable document becomes the ideal place for Smollett to inscribe his anti-normative agenda.

Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* is no stranger to this practice of transgression. He transgresses, I propose, the letter-writing manuals' conventions of plainness and concision. To understand the scale of Smollett's epistolary destabilization, I must compare him with the pervasive normativity of letter-writing manuals. For this essay, Samuel Richardson's manual *Letters written to and for particular friends, on the most important occasions* (1741) and the anonymously authored *The Complete Letter Writer; or Polite English Secretary* (1768) serve as representative exemplars of the conventionality that Smollett is working against. For Richardson, the purpose of these epistolary conventions, of course, is to encourage proper communicative etiquette. As Victoria Myers (2003) argues, the manuals especially of Daniel Defoe and Samuel Richardson "pressed letter-writing instruction into the service of moral resuscitation" (373). In the "Preface" to his *Letters written to and for particular friends, on the most important occasions* (1741), Richardson evinces this spirit of "moral resuscitation" when he declares that the manual's "Forms [or examples of letters] requisite to be observed on the most important Occasions" and the "Rules and Instructions contained in them, contribute to *mend the Heart, and improve the Understanding*" ("Preface," par. 1, emphasis in the original). The letter writer "*mend[s] the Heart, and improve[s] the Understanding*" by pursuing the "chief Objects" of "NATURE, PROPRIETY of CHARACTER, PLAIN SENSE, and GENERAL USE" ("Preface," par. 2, emphasis in the original). Myers observes that Richardson works "out the proper relation between head and heart, so as to support the traditional hierarchy of authority," but also "informing the

feelings by the reflections of reason and easing the authority of the reason by the promptings of sentiment” (382). For Richardson, following letter-writing conventions, such as writing in the “PLAIN SENSE,” for example, makes the writer a more rationally ordered being. In short, the proper letter writer imprints orderly reason and moderate sentiments onto the page.

In comparison to Richardson’s complementary approach, Smollett presents in the figure of Bramble an irritable sensibility that seems to challenge the letter manual’s insistence on mending the heart. For example, Bramble complains,

I ought to know something of my own constitution...I am as lame and as much tortured in all my limbs as I was broke upon the wheel: indeed, I am equally distressed in mind and body—As if I had not plagues enough of my own, those children of my sister are left me for a perpetual source of vexation...my niece Liddy, has disordered me in such a manner, that I expect to be laid up with another fit of the gout—perhaps, I may explain myself in my next. (“To Dr. Lewis, Gloucester, April 2,” 1-3)

Bramble expresses statements of resoluteness (e.g. “I am as lame and as much tortured in all my limbs, “I am equally distressed in mind and body,” “those children of my sister are...a perpetual source of vexation,” and “I expect to be laid up with another fit of gout”) and statements of irresoluteness (e.g. “I ought to know something of my own constitution, and “I may explain myself in my next [letter]” or I may explain why I am disordered at a later time because I am uncertain presently). Bramble destabilizes what Richardson would call “PLAIN SENSE,” an overarching clarity of expression. In another letter manual, *The Complete Letter Writer*, this plainness is described within the following recommendation: “Express your Meaning as freely as possible; long Periods may please the Ear, but they

perplex the Understanding; a short Stile and plain, strikes the Mind, and fixes an Impression; a tedious one is seldom clearly understood, and never long remember'd" (32). Bramble's penchant for a "long Stile" or "long Periods" of making unresolved statements disobeys the epistolary convention of plain style concision. Bramble's irresolute "Stile" exceeds his reason. In many ways, this irresoluteness breaks the rhythm of his reasoned out judgments. Formally, his style's broken rhythms work echo his body's "lame" and "tortured" physical state. Thusly, Bramble writes out his body, making his "long Periods" of complaints echo the affective and physiological disruptions on his self. Instead of making a letter-manual as his "referent," Bramble "writes after" or simulates the "adequate referent" of his affective body. Only by breaking the epistolary manual's conventions, Bramble can express the legitimacy of his affective body. Through this affective formalism, Bramble undoes the epistolary manual's hierarchy of mind over body.

By displacing the normativity of letter-manuals, Smollett's hypochondriac over-reads and mis-reads his social relationships. In another letter to Doctor Lewis, Bramble describes his "domestic vexations": he calls his niece Lydia Melfod at once a "good-natured simpleton, as soft as butter" and also "deficient in spirit, and so susceptible" for having read "romances"; he is bothered also that his nephew Jery Melford is a "pert jackanapes, full of college-petulance and self-conceit; proud as a German count, and as hot and hasty as a Welch mountaineer"; and he complains that his sister Tabitha, a "fantastical animal," is "so intolerable" as the "devil incarnate" ("To Dr. Lewis, Clifton, April 17," 20-21). Bramble cannot sympathize with Tabitha's animalistic nature; he expresses misogyny towards Lydia by demeaning her reading of romances as a cause for her "deficient...spirit"; and he fumes over Jery's juvenile attitude using ethnic stereotypes of German and Welsh people.



Smollett's Bramble asserts his hierarchical superiority over others through prejudicial language, yet, at the same time, he also refuses to conform to the letter manual norm of "mending the Heart." In this passage, Bramble conveys a malapropic asymmetry of affective attitudes between affirming feelings of prejudice and rejecting a mended sensibility. Bramble, howsoever problematically, exposes animalistic, sexual, and ethnic differences. Smollett suggests that, at the level of intra-familial relations, a malapropic self blurs social identities into mis-readability.

Richardson's perhaps all-too neat binary model of an improved mind and heart represses the problematic complexities of social bodies. Establishing his hierarchical model, Richardson states, "he every-where aimed to write to the *Judgment*, rather than to the *Imagination*, he would chuse, that should generally be found more *useful* than *diverting*" ("Preface," par. 2, emphasis in the original). Richardson's various epistolary models for how to write in certain occasions are guided by his rational "*Judgment*," rather than by his "*Imagination*." In his hierarchy, he encodes as acceptable reason, judgment, and conscious thinking of the "head" and excludes the subordinate forces of the passionate and imaginative self from the form of the epistle.<sup>141</sup> In Smollett's letter-novel, however, Matthew Bramble's affects of melancholic hypochondria—anxiety, doubt, obsession, uncertainty, peevishness, irritability, and the like—enable him to blur the social identities of others. Rather than "mending the heart," Bramble revels in unmoderated sensibilities and reveals what he considers are un-mend-able social, gendered, and bodily differences.

---

<sup>141</sup> Of course, I should add that it can be argued that Richardson's own epistolary novels, *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1748), and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753), mess with epistolary conventions. The point I'm making is that the letter-manual itself institutes a restrictive normativity that is an "inadequate referent" to the transgressive genre of the epistolary novel.

### 3. Anti-Normative Forms: Bramble's Passionate Antecedence and "Shafts of Satire"

To understand Bramble's malapropic position further, I focus now my attention on how Smollett challenges the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century moral philosophical suspicion towards the passions.<sup>142</sup> Moral philosophers, such as René Descartes, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, and Frances Hutcheson, for example, have variously emphasized that the passions must be regulated with continual discipline. This context informs the letter-writing manuals' insistence that letter-writing cultivates virtue. Richardson's model of regulating the heart is influenced by moral philosophy's belief in passionate moderation. While there is no space here to discuss each of these philosophers' suspicions at length, I consider Hutcheson's statements on the passions as an exemplary model against which we can compare Smollett's representation of Bramble's passions.<sup>143</sup> In *An essay on the nature and conduct of the passions and affections* (1728), Hutcheson recommends the constant self-monitoring of the passions: "[W]e may raise an *habitual Suspicion and Dread* of every *violent Passion*, which, recurring along with them continually, may in some measure counter-balance their *Propensities* and *confused Sensations*. This *Discipline* of our Passions is in general necessary" (Treatise I, Section VI, 110). Self-monitoring prevents what he

---

<sup>142</sup> This eighteenth-century suspicion has been discussed at length by critics such as Jon Mee who have identified the excess of passions with enthusiastic raptures. See Mee, *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation*.

<sup>143</sup> It would not be a stretch to say that Hutcheson's thought influences Smollett's views on the passions. Richard J. Jones speculates that Smollett "probably experienced some of his [Hutcheson's] teaching in the late 1730s" when Hutcheson was the chair of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow between 1729 and 1746. For a discussion of the connections between Hutcheson's aesthetic theories and Smollett's views of art and beauty, see Jones, *Tobias Smollett in the Enlightenment* (2011), 53-63. Another way of approaching Smollett's views of the passions is through theatrical theories of performing the passions. For an illuminating discussion on this subject, see Thomas R. Preston, "The 'Stage Passions' and Smollett's Characterization" (1974).

terms the “*destructive Affections*” of anger, hatred, and aversion and even the more “*benign Affections*” and “calm Desires” from being “hurried into *universal and absolute Evil*” (Treatise I, Section VI, 110). Hutcheson would urge that Smollett’s Bramble be habitually suspicious of both his violent and calm affections because they can plunge the self into “*absolute Evil.*” Informed by Hutcheson’s admonition, Smollett remains ambivalent towards the passions because they can degenerate into chaos; thus, he imagines Bramble’s affective criticism as an entanglement of rationally certain criticisms with passionately unrepresentable affects.

Whereas Hutcheson recommends suppressing the violent potential of the passions, Smollett preserves them as fundamentally necessary. Jeri Melford’s assessment of his uncle Bramble is one example of Smollett’s preservation: Jeri observes that his uncle’s “little distresses...provoke him to let fly the shafts of his satire, keen and penetrating as the arrows of Teucer” (“To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus college, Oxon, Bath, April 24,” 44). In this metaphor, Smollett suggests that Bramble’s criticisms are processes untethered to a thinking, reasoning subject. These “distresses” are figuratively arrows, objects untethered in midair flight. Contrary to Hutcheson’s prescribed program of moderation, Smollett imagines Bramble’s distressed processes as autonomous and flying away from the moderating clutches of reason.

A second crucial departure from Hutcheson is that Smollett affirms that “Art” can capture these antecedent passions. Hutcheson claims that a self’s original, unmoderated “State, those *Dispositions and Actions, natural...* antecedently to any *Volition of our own...* flow from some *Principles* in our Nature, not brought upon us by our own Art, or that of others” (130). Hutcheson divides the passions from “Volition” and “Art” because the

passions are excessive to intentional actions of will, artistry, and craft. He furthers this division by also insisting that the “Art...that of others” or people’s intentional observation of other’s passions is incapable of experientially understanding these passions. Only by making the passions autonomously separate from reason and art, Hutcheson walls off the passions from the normative arbitrations of the mind. Hutcheson’s theory makes the passions into a “They,” whose radical autonomy attracts the surveillance of reason. In contrast to Hutcheson’s artificial separation of the passions, Smollett reintegrates these elements as forms of intentional “Art.” Jeri’s figure of the arrow demonstrates Smollett’s departure from a Hutchesonian model of suspicion and separation because, through the “Art...of others” or through the observation of Jeri, Smollett translates these otherly passions into figures for understanding the body. Hence, the power of the mind’s reflective “Art” enables Bramble to translate the passions of Tabitha, Lydia, and Jeri into his animalistic, gendered, and ethnic mis-readings. Art brings the self into a malapropic relationship with the body’s excesses and with the malleable social identities of others.

In opposition to moral philosophy’s rational hierarchy, Smollett vigorously pursues the disruptive “Art” of the hypochondriac orientation. A particularly illustrative instance of this “Art” is when Bramble describes his reaction to a ball he attends while visiting the city of Bath:

[I] could not help wondering, that so many hundreds of those that rank as rational creatures, could find entertainment in seeing a succession of insipid animals, describing the same dull figure for a whole evening, on an area, not much bigger than a taylor’s shop-board. If there had been any beauty, grace, activity, magnificent dress, or variety of any kind, howsoever absurd, to engage the attention, and amuse

the fancy, I should not have been surprised; but there was no such object: it was a tiresome repetition of the same languid, frivolous scene, performed by actors that seemed to sleep in all their motions—The continual swimming of those phantoms before my eyes, gave me a swimming of the head; which was also affected by the fouled air, circulating through such a number of rotten human bellows... Then, all of a sudden, came rushing upon me an Egyptian gale, so impregnated with pestilential vapours, that my nerves were overpowered, and I dropt senseless upon the floor.

(“To Dr. Lewis, Bath, May 8,” 96-97)

Bramble’s hypochondriac criticism unfold as a hypersensitivity, in which his “nerves” are responsive to the diseases carried by the “fouled air” and “gale.”<sup>144</sup> His hypersensitivity compels him to attend to the “succession of insipid animals,” and as a consequence, he registers a lack of “any beauty, grace, activity, magnificent dress, or variety” in this social gathering. His hypochondria compels him to react vehemently toward every displeasing object, causing him to list detail after detail without elaborating further.

Bramble’s hypochondriac critique delivers a fragmentary knowledge of the urban balls. As we read further into the same letter, we come across Bramble’s fainting in the ball:

[M]y swooning was entirely occasioned by an accidental impression of fetid effluvia upon nerves of uncommon sensibility. I know not how other people’s nerves are

---

<sup>144</sup> The idea that air can be a medium for contagions can be traced back to the Italian physician Giralamo Fracastoro. In his *On Contagion and Contagious Diseases and their Cure* (1546) Fracastoro theorized that seeds or “seminaria” transmitted diseases. Any changes in the atmosphere brings about the transmission of diseases, so those who breathe this air would catch the same disease. For more discussion on Fracastoro and the disease theory that influenced the early modern and eighteenth-century periods, see Margaret DeLacy’s thorough account “Nosology, Mortality, and Disease Theory in the Eighteenth Century” (1999).

constructed; but one would imagine they must be made of very coarse materials, to stand the shock of such a horrid assault....Imagine to yourself a high exalted essence of mingled odours, arising from putrid gums, imposthumated lungs, sour flatulencies, rank arm-pits, sweating feet, running sores and issues, plasters, ointments, and embrocations, hungary-water, spirit of lavender, assafœtida drops, musk, hartshorn, and sal volatile; besides a thousand frowzy steams, which I could not analyse. Such, O Dick! [or Dr. Lewis] is the fragrant æther we breathe in the polite assemblies of Bath—Such is the atmosphere I have exchanged for the pure, elastic, animating air of the Welsh mountains.—*O Rus, quando te aspiciam!*—I wonder what the devil possessed me— (“To Dr. Lewis, Bath, May 8,” 97)

Bramble communicates ambiguity when he conveys his uncertainty as to what “devil possessed” him. And it is hard not to identify this possessing devil to be a passion that resembles ecstasy, since he exuberantly exclaims that he would “exchange” Bath’s polluted atmosphere with the pure air of the Welsh countryside. The fact that he does not identify his passion but figuratively names it as a “devil” once more demonstrates he has no total knowledge of his bodily state. Through his exchanging, Bramble evokes the Greek etymological sense of “ecstasy” as “withdrawal of the soul from the body, mystic or prophetic trance” (“ecstasy, n.”). From his displaced vantage point as Welsh outsider, Bramble legitimizes his passionate sensitivity as better able to denounce the noisome excess of Bath’s “polite assemblies.”

As part of his ecstasy, Bramble’s criticism – his “Art” – bursts forth into a stream of fragmentary ideas. Bramble describes each diseased body part and injury (“putrid gums, imposthumated lungs, sour flatulencies, rank arm-pits, sweating feet, running sores and

issues”) and each medicinal treatment (“plasters, ointments, and embrocations, hungary-water, spirit of lavender, assafœtida drops, musk, hartshorn, and sal volatile”). This fragmentary rhetoric does not really amount to a unified and clear conception. Bramble communicates a series of physical symptoms, cures, and remedies, but doesn’t give a resolutely authoritative assessment. And his inability to “analyse” all of the contents of “frowzy steams” further demonstrates the limits of his knowledge. Bramble’s list-like enumeration conveys an incomplete knowledge. And this is the point. The purpose of a malapropic criticism is to displace a hierarchical apparatus of encoding bodies through a rational framework; and rather than rely on the authority of his reason, Bramble relies on the unrestrained hypersensitivity of his body. It takes a sickly body to critique other sickly bodies. As part of his anti-normative agenda, Smollett suggests that the body exceeds the mending “Art” of the letter manual and the surveiling “Art” of moral philosophy. The arrow shafts of Bramble’s hypochondriac melancholy may miss the targeted mark, but its persistent sensitivity to social bodies enables him to decenter his disorderly environs.

#### 4. The “Creeping” of Social and Physical Bodies

As I have argued, Smollett subverts the conventions of letter-writing by entertaining un-mended hearts, so that his letter-writing Bramble can cast his suspicious gaze on an anarchic society. To accomplish this task, Smollett’s Bramble communicates in fragmentary, rather than unified forms. Mark Blackwell (2011) argues that Smollett’s novels tend less to convey organic unities, but rather “mixtures of separable, recombinable, Lego-like components” in which there exist “characters that shiver into assemblages of quirky

attributes, a thematic emphasis on fragmented bodies and fungible identities...and an oeuvre almost without parallel in the eighteenth century in its diverse experiments with point of view” (424).<sup>145</sup> Working against formal unity, Smollett’s epistolary novel presents fragmented experiences that are most evoked through the form of the letter.

This fragmentariness is apparent when Bramble describes the excessive opulence of Bath society. Bramble frames his complaints through his nostalgia for a time when there was modest levels of fortune:

About a dozen years ago, many decent families, restricted to small fortunes, besides those that came hither on the score of health, were tempted to settle at Bath, where they could then live comfortably, and even make a genteel appearance, at a small expence: but the madness of the times has made the place too hot for them, and they are now obliged to think of other migrations—Some have already fled to the mountains of Wales, and others have retired to Exeter...Bath is become a mere sink of profligacy and extortion....every petty retainer of fortune piques himself upon keeping a table, and thinks ‘tis for the honour of his character to wink at the knavery of his servants, who are in a confederacy with the market-people...Here is now a mushroom of opulence, who pays a cook seventy guineas a week for furnishing him with one meal a deal. This portentous frenzy is become so contagious, that the very rabble and refuse of mankind are infected. I have known a negro-driver, from Jamaica, pay over-night to the master of one of the rooms, sixty-five guineas for tea and coffee to the company, and leave Bath next morning, in such obscurity, that not one of his guests had the slightest idea of his person, or even made the least inquiry

---

<sup>145</sup> See Mark Blackwell, “Disjecta Membra: Smollett and the Novel in Pieces.”



about his name. Incidents of this kind are frequent; and every day teems with fresh absurdities...But I feel the spleen creeping on me apace; and therefore will indulge you with a cessation. ("To Dr. Lewis, Bath, May 5," 85-86)

Regarding Smollett's general depiction of Bath's luxuries, Charlotte Sussman (1994) argues that "[t]he very patternlessness of the collection of riches at Bath, and the syntax of iteration this accumulation provokes, signal the irreversible cultural changes" of the "indiscriminate mixing of social classes" (606-607).<sup>146</sup> Smollett registers his distress over these "fresh absurdities" of "opulence" that has forced "decent families" of "small fortunes" to migrate to more rural or less profligate areas like Wales and Exeter. He finds Bath's opulence corrupt because of business practices that make consumers pay excessive amounts like "seventy guineas a week" for a meal or "sixty-five guineas for tea and coffee." Materialist luxury, Smollett satirizes, fragments society because these "decent families" become displaced from their traditional stations.

To amplify this sense of social fragmentation, Bramble makes the form of his letter somewhat incomplete. He ends the letter abruptly to prevent the "creeping" of his "spleen." It is important to remember that Bramble's use of "creeping" alludes to his gout. The disease of gout, as Roy Porter and G. S. Rousseau (1998) explain in their study on this condition, "afflicts the joints of the extremities, classically the great toe" (3).<sup>147</sup> As this description of the disease suggests, gout threatens the mobility of the sufferer. Bramble's invocation of "creeping" spleen and passions echoes the ways in which gout impedes mobility, causing the self to "creep" sluggishly. Through the spleen imagery, he delimits his body's potential

---

<sup>146</sup> Sussman, "'Lismahago's Captivity: Transculturation in Humphry Clinker'" (1994).

<sup>147</sup> For a more extensive discussion on this disease, see Porter and Rousseau, *Gout: The Patrician Malady* (1998).

as diseased. However, alternatively, Bramble invokes the idea of “creeping” to remind his reader Dr. Lewis that his spleen mobilizes his inner spirits into a critical observation on the similar but different phenomena of “creeping” opulence. In this related sense, Bramble suggests a malapropic connection between his biological disorder of gout and the social phenomena of “profligacy and extortion.” This connection is malapropic because the two things are not really “adequate referents” for each other. A malaprop displaces the proper referent, and the nostalgic Bramble observes that Bath’s nouveau riche have displaced the so-called “proper referents” of “decent families.”

The disrupted order is made most apparent by the fact that Bramble references the “negro-driver, from Jamaica.” He exposes how this opulent urban space mixes different social groups. He associates this “negro-driver” with “every petty retainer of fortune” who “winks at” or approves the “knavery of his servants.” In another encounter with Africans, Jeri recounts how Bramble became irritated with “[t]wo negroes, belonging to a Creole gentleman” whose boisterous playing of the French-horn with “such discordant sounds” (“To Sir Warkin Phillips, of Jesus college, Oxon, Bath April 24,” 48).<sup>148</sup> Jeri stresses that these Africans “continued their noise, and even endeavoured to make it more disagreeable; laughing between whiles, at the thoughts of being able to torment their betters with impunity”; in response to these players’ refusal to stop playing their music, Bramble attacks

---

<sup>148</sup> It is quite possible that these Africans may be enslaved as the word “belonging” suggests. As Peter Fryer explains, “For the first three-quarters of the [eighteenth] century at least, black slaves were brought here [to England], not merely by slaver captains, but also by returning planters, government officials, and army and navy officers...such people objected to paying wages to English servants when there were black slaves available to work for nothing but food and clothing” (69). Fryer also remarkably details the vibrant communities that freed black people formed and their different professions. I will also discuss the representation of slavery later in this chapter. See Fryer, “The black community takes shape,” *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (2018).

them with his cane, causing “their heads and horns...[to be] broken in a twinkling” (“To Sir Warkin Phillips, of Jesus college, Oxon, Bath April 24,” 49). Smollett’s unsympathetically distorts these African musicians into bestial caricatures, since his punning phrase “heads and [French] horns” malapropically misreads these characters as horned animals. Smollett represents the potential revolt of African musicians against a more privileged member of British society, but he dissipates the possibility of revolt by having Bramble retaliate with physical force.

In this scene where mischievous merriment is met with racial violence, Smollett rehearses prejudicial attitudes towards non-European peoples. Nicholas Hudson (1996) reminds us that in the eighteenth century this Euro-centric bigotry was informed by the “‘scientific’ theory that human ‘races’ formed a hierarchy, with ‘Negroes,’ ‘Americans,’ and other groups inferior to the Europeans” (252).<sup>149</sup> Naturalists and taxonomists, like Carl Linnaeus, Johann Blumenbach, and Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, Hudson continues, “converted the scattered misconceptions and antagonisms of [slave] traders and [European] travelers into coherent systems” (252). Smollett’s anxiety towards the “negro-driver” and the “two negroes” comes from this belief that non-Europeans are biologically inferior in these so-called natural hierarchies. Furthermore, Europeans demean groups like Africans and Native Americans because they assumed that they fell “short of European ideas of urbanity and sophistication”; in particular, Europeans viewed their civilization as superior to these non-Europeans’ “political and social systems” (250). In *Humphry Clinker*, Smollett confirms racist stereotypes because he represents the African subordinates as lacking such

---

<sup>149</sup> Nicholas, Hudson, “From ‘Nation to ‘Race’: The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought” (1996).

“urbanity and sophistication”: these characters participate in practices of over-paying money or over-playing their instruments, and he describes the musicians as relishing the opportunity to “torment their betters with impunity.” Therefore, Smollett’s desire for a traditional Eurocentric and gentry-centric hierarchy rests in his belief that so-called “impolite” races and mercenary plebeians threaten the decorum of England. These groups figure for Smollett as the social spleen “creeping” to destabilize the traditional status quo.

The irony is that Smollett must destabilize existing normative discourses in moral philosophy and letter manuals to denounce these disruptive “outsiders.” As part of his malapropic subversion of these discourses, Smollett rejects these racialized others. In effect, he makes these others unrepresentable. For instance, Bramble stresses that the “negro-driver” exists in “such obscurity, that not one of his guests had the slightest idea of his person, or even made the least inquiry about his name.” On the one hand, he might be slightly satirizing the inhospitality of the inn’s inhabitants to this “negro-driver.” On the other, Bramble cannot countenance to give this individual a nameable identity. The “negro-driver” is an “obscurity” whom Bramble denies him the “adequate referent” of full representation. These Africans are malaprops that Bramble judges to have erroneously replaced the “decent families” of “small fortune.” For Smollett, criticizing society should not mend the heart or regulate the passions because these models fail to capture the ways society is irrevocably un-mended and hence displaced socially. As problematic as Smollett’s satire is for modern audiences, his social criticism deliberately misreads certain people into otherly figures.

## 5. Doctors and the Post-Scripting of Oneself

Bramble produces a malapropic vision of society. For us to understand this vision, we need to compare Smollett's model of satirical criticism against the medical rationalist model of diagnosis. Once more, Smollett goes against another generic form—medical discourse. This comparison is necessary because medical writers advance a method of producing knowledge that differs from Bramble's method. The medical writers' rationalistic diagnoses espouse a foreclosure of the unknown comparable to the moral philosopher's foreclosure of the autonomous passions. In this next stage of my argument, I will develop the concept of Smollett's affective criticism in relation to medicine's rationalistic methods. I demonstrate that Smollett embraces irresoluteness by satirically showing the methodological limits of medical rationalism.

Smollett demonstrates this embrace when he has Bramble affirm in his letter to Dr. Lewis the value of the unknown. Bramble asserts this sentiment when discussing the topics of medicine and religion:

There are mysteries in physick, as well as in religion; which we of the profane have no right to investigate—A man must not presume to use his reason, unless he has studied the categories, and can chop logic by mode and figure...For my own part, I have had an hospital these fourteen years within myself, and studied my own case with the most painful attention; consequently may be supposed to know something of the matter, although I have not taken regular courses of physiology *et cetera et cetera*.—In short, I have for some time been of opinion, (no offense, dear Doctor)

that the sum of all your medical discoveries amounts to this, that the more you study the less you know. (“To Dr. Lewis, Hot Well, April 20,” 37)

Crucial to this embrace of “mysteries in physick” is Bramble’s gentle criticism of the doctor’s “medical discoveries.” To accept these “mysteries,” Bramble must critically reflect on the impossibility of medical exploration yielding complete certainty. Bramble is skeptical of the medical person’s knowledge. His skepticism has already been evident in the first words of the first letter that opens the novel: “The pills are good for nothing...I ought to know something of my own constitution.” This hypochondriac patient expresses skepticism toward Dr. Lewis by doubting the efficacy of the prescribed pills and by insisting that he possesses a knowledge of his “own constitution.” Bramble’s resistance to fully trust his doctor’s knowledge bespeaks an overarching doubt characteristic of the hypochondriac.

Smollett presents Bramble’s doubt in part to satirize the limits of eighteenth-century medicine’s rationalistic practices. As Lester King (1963) notes in his essay on eighteenth-century medical rationalism, physicians, such as Boerhaave, Friedrich Hoffmann of Germany, and George Cheyne of England, sought to “erect a deductive system” that “rested on observation (or experience) and reason” (262). It was deductive rather than inductive in the sense that the physician based one’s reasoning on generally arrived principles from many observations. As King (1974) puts it in his essay on Cheyne’s mode of medicine, the physician valued more of an “internal consistency” from such principles than “empirical verification” (539).<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> On Cheyne’s alignment with eighteenth-century medical view of valuing logic over empiricism, see King, “George Cheyne, Mirror of Eighteenth-Century Medicine” (1974).

I should also make clear that when I speak of the methods of eighteenth-century medicine, I do not refer to eighteenth-century theoretical approaches to how disease is spread. I am mostly interested in how medical practitioners applied reason in making

In addition, eighteenth-century diagnostic methods, as Allan Ingram (2007) and Dorothy and Roy Porter (1989) have shown, also valued a superficially non-inductive examination. The Porters note that during this period “systematic and disciplined use of the senses, apart from the eye, for diagnostic purposes had not advanced far” (74), and diagnostic equipment, such as stethoscopes and ophthalmoscopes, had not been in use until the nineteenth century. Because of eighteenth-century medicine’s limited range of study, physicians, as Ingram clarifies, relied on “received wisdom and handed-down case lore...of individual and family history, or, even better, of established precedents based on the security of the written word” (119).<sup>151</sup> Smollett parodies this deductive, narrative-based approach when Bramble says, “A man must not presume to use his reason, unless he has studied the categories, and can chop logic by mode and figure.” Calling this deductive methodology as “chop logic by mode and figure,” Bramble satirizes that such physicians’ received wisdom and deductions essentially consist in studying “categories.” To categorize, for Bramble, is to limit or “chop” via logic the suffering body into neat categories. Bramble satirizes the physicians of his day because they delimit the patient’s body into the formal category of complete knowability.

Smollett, instead, promotes a model of criticism that differs from medical methods. What is so limited, for Smollett, about this method is that this knowledge of the medical rationalist is not a patient’s knowledge. Bramble even emphasizes the authority of his own

---

conclusions about observations of evidence. For a survey of eighteenth-century theories of contagion, see Annika Mann’s knowledgeable study *Reading Contagion: The Hazards of Reading in the Age of Print* (2018).

<sup>151</sup> On this subject of eighteenth-century diagnostic methods, see Ingram, “Dear Dick: Matthew Bramble and the Case of the Silent Doctor” (2007); and Dorothy and Roy Porter, *Patient’s Progress: Doctors and Doctoring in Eighteenth-Century England* (1989).

knowledge contra the physician's: "For my own part, I have had an hospital these fourteen years within myself, and studied my own case with the most painful attention." When Bramble insists he has "studied" his "own case" for many years, he declares ownership of his experiences of sickness. Smollett, in this light, respects the patient's personal knowledge as a valid source of authority. More significantly, when he reminds the doctor he has "had an hospital these fourteen years," he is asserting his privileged rank as owner of his estate and small community. Bramble intertwines his proprietary privileges with his patient's knowledge, and in one sense, he overturns the hierarchical dynamic between doctor and patient into the traditional one between landowner and tenant. Bramble's hypochondriac authority is a vehicle for asserting his gentry status. By becoming hypochondriacally sensible, Bramble can reassert his class-based dominance over plebeians, Africans, and doctors.

Fundamental to this demonstration of power is the manipulation of established formal structures. In addition to disrupting the medical structure of the diagnostic category, he once again repurposes the letter form to maintain his authority. Specifically, in his letter to the doctor, his subversion is evident in his post-script: "P.S. I forgot to tell you, that my right ancle pits, a symptom, as I take it, of its being *oedematous*, not *leucophlegmatic*" ("To Dr. Lewis, Hot Well, April 20," 39). Bramble reinforces his backhanded rejection of the doctor's diagnosis by indulging in the formal excess of the post-script. Out of the letter writers in this novel, Bramble writes the most post-scripts, which are just three ("To Dr. Lewis, Hot Well, April 20," 39; "To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 58; "To Dr. Lewis," September 20," 143), while his nephew Jeri Melford writes one ("To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus college, Oxon, Hot Well, April 20," 36), his niece Lydia Medford two ("To Miss Letty



Willis, at Gloucester, Hot Well, April 21,” 42; and “To Miss Lætitia Willis, at Gloucester, Glasgow, Sept. 7,” 114), and Winifred Jenkins two (To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall, Bath, May 15,” 106; and “To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall, Grasco, Sept. 7,” 117). Tabitha’s letters do not have post-scripts or addendums. And in one letter, Bramble includes as an addendum to the letter a poem by Tobias Smollett, titled “ODE to Leven-Water” (“To Dr. Lewis, Cameron, Aug. 28,” 98-99). As Richard Terry (2014) informs us, including post-scripts in eighteenth-century everyday correspondences generally “allowed for the inclusion of expressing compliments to a third part or acknowledging a gift, often considered to banal or formulaic for inclusion in the main body of the letter” (42). Moreover, Terry notes that letter-writing manuals frowned on how post-scripts disrupted the standard epistolary format of having a salutation, main body, and complimentary close. John Hill’s *The Young Secretary* (7<sup>th</sup> ed., 1696), for instance, dismisses “*Mixt Letters*” that contain “Things of different Subjects” and are “mixed with any coherent or incoherent Matter; ever observing to make a *Break* or *Section*, at the End and Beginning of the different Subjects”; and these letters “may be underwritten by Way of *Postscript*” (13, emphasis in the original). And in another manual, *The Complete Letter Writer; or, Polite English Secretary* (12<sup>th</sup> ed., 1768), the anonymous writer comments that one should insert “Compliments...in the Body or Conclusion” of the letter “than by Way of Postscript, as is too often done, but is neither so affectionate or polite” (36).<sup>152</sup> For these manual writers, the letter writer must exercise a degree of moderation in abstaining from the “incoherent matter” and impoliteness of a post-script.

---

<sup>152</sup> For a discussion on these letter-writing manuals and the use of post-scripts in letters and fiction in this period, see Richard Terry, “‘P.S.’: The Dangerous Logic of the Post-Script in Eighteenth-Century Literature” (2014).

In Bramble's post-script, he directs no compliments toward the third-party of that quack doctor, but rather back-handedly insists his diagnosis *leucophlegmatic* is wrong. There is then a modicum of impoliteness in this post-script. This indecorous post-script not only neglects the conventions of the epistolary manual, but also offers a post-scripted diagnosis that counters the categorical neatness of rationalist medical discourse. In these ways, Bramble uses the post-script to undercut mildly both the letter form and the doctor's authority. Ultimately, his subversion can be read as part of his overall desire to reclaim a traditional hierarchy over subordinates. By malapropically including the "incoherent Matter" of post-scripted "Mixt Letters," Bramble reorients himself as the master over the doctor.

To truly demonstrate the "Incoherent Matter" of Bramble's post-scripted subversion, permit me to draw attention to the following addendum below:

After having been agitated in a short hurricane, on my first arrival, I have taken a small house in Milsham-street, where I am tolerably well lodged, for five guineas a week. I was yesterday at the Pump- room, and drank about a pint of the water, which seems to agree with my stomach; and to-morrow morning I shall bathe, for the first time; so that in a few posts you may expect farther trouble; mean while, I am glad to find that the inoculation has succeeded so well with poor Joyce, and that her face will be but little marked— If my friend Sir Thomas was a single man, I would not trust such a handsome wench in his family; but as I have recommended her, in a particular manner, to the protection of lady G——, who is one of the best women in the world, she may go thither without hesitation, as soon as she is quite recovered, and fit for service— Let her mother have money to provide her with necessaries, and she may ride behind her brother on Bucks; but you must lay strong injunctions on

Jack, to take particular care of the trusty old veteran, who has faithfully earned his present ease, by his past services. (Addendum to Bramble's Letter, "To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 58)

What is relevant about this breach in letter-writing decorum is that the contents of the lengthy addendum drastically differ from the contents of the letter proper. Bramble's addendum is of a congenial disposition. He approves that Bath's water "seems to agree with...[his] stomach," voices his paternalistic attitude of recommending "poor Joyce...to the protection of lady G—," and urges the doctor convince "Jack, to take particular care of the trusty old veteran" of Sir Thomas ("To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 58). In short, he expresses conventional virtues of good-will, paternalism, and sociability.

In the letter proper, however, Bramble "discharge[s] the overflowings of...[his] spleen," disparaging the "general tide of luxury" in Bath's mixed society of new money:

Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath...Clerks and factors from the East Indies...planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commisaries, and contractors, who have fattened, in two successive wars, on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers of every kind; men of low birth, and no breeding. ("To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 56)

Bramble rants that a "very inconsiderable proportion of genteel people are lost in a mob of impudent plebeians, who have neither understanding nor judgment, nor the least idea of propriety and decorum...insulting their betters" ("To Dr. Lewis, Bath, April 23," 57). In the majority of the letter, Bramble voices his resentment that the "plebeians" are like a disease infecting this city because these lower classes "insult their betters."

Bramble's post-scripted addendum formalizes the exclusion of the gentry from the city proper. The fact that Bramble intimates gentry virtues of care in the "Incoherent Matter" of an addendum suggests that these virtues are perhaps improper to the letter-form. Normative virtues have been displaced by his splenetic letter. Bramble's expressive subjectivity fragments into the normative form of the letter and anti-normative excess of the addendum: Bramble conveys anti-normative passions of un-mended disgust in the normative letter form, and he inscribes his normative virtues within the anti-normative addendum. Smollett produces another malapropic mixing of improper content with proper form and proper content with improper form. Because the common denominator of these mixings are affects—irritability and care—, affects serve as mobile entities that resist being contained within discrete formal structures. By means of these affects, Bramble misuses his inherited discourses of medical rationalism and epistolary propriety, so that he can exercise his privileged license to undermine doctors, lower class plebeians, and non-European races.

## 6. Swollen Forms: Hysterical Cities and Bodies

I have so far discussed how Smollett develops his affective criticism vis-à-vis moral philosophical, medical, and epistolary manual discourses. Smollett splenetically insist upon the validity of old social hierarchies. In this section, I will now proceed to complicate the matter of Smollett's malapropic formalism by showing a fourth discourse he subverts for satirical ends: the misogynistic discourse that naturalizes women as sufferers of hysteria.<sup>153</sup> He appropriates images and ideas from this discourse to satirize the luxurious excess of

---

<sup>153</sup> For a further discussion of this topic, see also the chapter on Anne Finch's satire on medicine misogyny.

London as womb-like and hysterical. His failure to condemn these misogynistic views reinscribes the hierarchy of a male gaze viewing the feminized body of London. Vassiliki Markidou (2010) has suggested that Bramble genders the urban spaces as female as a way of “renegotiating (male) identity” (62).<sup>154</sup> In so far that Bramble asserts his male identity, his spirit of subversion indicates otherwise. Instead, I would like to insist that Smollett through Bramble indulges in these hysterical images, and his indulgences registers that Smollett finds the excesses of female hysteria both destructive and productive. Hence, in this discussion, I will outline how Smollett subverts precedent discourses’ formal hierarchies by championing how hysteria—an originally misogynistic formulation—is in fact ambivalently corrupting and yet salubrious. In doing so, we can understand that Smollett’s epistolary novel does not just embody the melancholic variant of hypochondria, but also emulates the related variant of hysteria. Smollett’s formal subversiveness is Protean, shape-shifting from one categorical context of hypochondria to the context of hysteria.

Before I can discuss the passage of Bramble’s satire on London, I will give an overview of how medical discourse perpetuated sexist understandings of hysteria. The word “Hystera,” as Clark Lawlor (2011) explains, is the Greek word for “womb,” and hysteria was thought since the classical age to be a condition of the wandering womb, an entity thought to move along the woman’s body.<sup>155</sup> In her rich study on hysteria, Sabine Arnaud (2015) explains that some theorists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries claim that the womb wandered or “moved based on its attraction to or repulsion from the vapors of specific odors” (15). According to medical theorists in these centuries, the womb functions

---

<sup>154</sup> On his argument on Smollett’s gendered urban spaces, see Markidou, “Gender and Space in Tobias Smollett’s ‘The Expedition of Humphry Clinker’” (2010).

<sup>155</sup> See Clark Lawlor, “Fashionable Melancholy” (2011), 28.

to evacuate waste matter, like menstrual blood, which was thought by physicians as a noxious substance. Failure to properly evacuate such material creates vaporous fumes that could spread throughout the body and even enter the brain, and the womb becomes swollen with blood, semen, and vaporous fumes.<sup>156</sup> In these early modern and eighteenth-century accounts, medical writers pathologically diminish the biology of women as vulnerable and weak.

This pathological practice is further worsened by the fact that the womb comes to be associated with the female body's waste products. Notably, the physician André du Laurens in *Le septiesme Livre des œuvres anatomiques*, or *The Seventh Book of Anatomic Works* (1646) denigrated the womb as “the shameful part of women, soiled by so many infections & set for this reason in the lowest parts, like a sewer & sink of the body” (qtd. in Arnaud 15). In this misogynistic formulation, the womb acts as a site of the body's sewage management. Hysteria represents the womb's failure to be a proper “sewer” of the body's waste matter; and such dysfunction, Du Laurens theorizes, involves the “suppression of menstrual blood & the semen, leading to suffocation & at times interception of breathing” (qtd. in Arnaud 15).<sup>157</sup> In summary, medical writers negatively view women's bodies as prone to dysfunctional swelling and ineffective waste management.

---

<sup>156</sup> On the historical and cultural development of hysteria as a medical category, see Sabine Arnaud, *On Hysteria* (2015), 9-50.

<sup>157</sup> We should also note that the melancholic counterpart organ of the spleen could function as a waste management site. Consider, for example, Bernard Mandeville's *A Treatise of the Hypochondriac and Hysterick Passions* (1711), in which Misomedon expounds upon the spleen's function: “It [the spleen] is by others reputed to be of a most vile use; that it is only the Sink, or Jakes, into which the Fæculencies [foul or filthy matter] of the Blood are cast...it seems that is, as it were, a Store-house for the receiving of the Earthly and Muddy part of the Blood...the Dregs and Caput Mortuum of the Blood” (84-85, emphasis his).

Smollett appropriates this misogynistic imagery of the womb's sewage through Bramble's satire of London's luxury as pregnant with waste. When describing the wasteful consequences of London's luxury, Bramble comments on the city's water:

If I would drink water, I must quaff the maukish contents of an open aqueduct, exposed to all manner of defilement; or swallow that which comes from the river Thames, impregnated with all the filth of London and West-minster—Human excrement is the least offensive part of the concrete, which is composed of all the drugs, minerals, and poisons, used in mechanics and manufacture, enriched with the putrefying carcasses of beasts and men; and mixed with the scourings of all the wash-tubs, kennels, and common sewers, within the bills of mortality. (“To Dr. Lewis, London, June 8,” 172)

Key to understanding this list is the idea that “filth” has “impregnated” the Thames river. Bramble identifies multiple impregnators: human excrement, drugs, minerals, poisons, human and animal carcasses, and scourings of wash-tubs, kennels, and sewers. Through the metaphor of impregnation, Bramble insinuates that the city's various human, animal, and inanimate inhabitants have reproductively inseminated London's waters with their own varieties of waste. Bramble satirizes that the metropolis' commercial opulence has degenerated into a vile cesspool of corruption. By using this waste and pregnant imagery, Bramble reinvokes medicine's misogynistic ideas about the hysteric womb in order to criticize London's economic excesses.

Even though he pathologizes London as hysteric and, as a result, re-inscribes a misogynistic gaze, Bramble's satire also emulates a hysterical excess. Near the end of his letter, Bramble relents, “My letter would swell into a treatise, were I to particularize every

cause of offence that fills up the measure of my aversion to this, and every other crowded city—Thank Heaven! I am not so far sucked into the vortex, but that I can disengage myself without any great effort of philosophy” (“To Dr. Lewis, London, June 8,” 176). Bramble’s usage of “swell” gestures towards an unrealized metaphor of a swollen hysteric womb incubating excessive satire. Just as the “creeping” spleen aligns Bramble with the “creeping” onset of melancholic hypochondria, a swelling womb implicates him as a sufferer of vapors and hysteria, which medical discourse genders as primarily female in orientation.<sup>158</sup> Because Bramble’s letters echoes his male body’s spleen and the female body’s womb, his letter resists a stable gendered form. I will not go so far as to argue that Bramble’s letters embodies a hermaphroditic form, but his letters un-limit themselves beyond unifying categories of understanding.

Bramble’s moments of creeping and swelling signify his commentary verging on excess. To boot, his post-scripts also signify another kind of extra-ness. These instances of excess happen towards the ends of his letters. What is it about the ends of letters that invite Bramble to self-consciously signal his excesses? Perhaps, he questions the boundaries of the epistolary form and by implication the boundaries of satire. To what end can his Bramble critique? And how much can he critique? Because Bramble self-consciously references his creeping body and swelling letter, he expresses his own anxiety regarding both his body’s and letter’s excessive affects. His anxiety makes sense since he is also criticizing the excess appetites of Londoners. Bodily and epistolary excess is a bogey-man for Bramble, but it also productively births his critical commentaries. His hypochondria/hysteria can best be

---

<sup>158</sup> Swelling might also suggest a phallic engorgement. The word “swell” is so ambiguous that it embodies the ways in which affect resists determination.



described as an inability to regulate the economy of his body and letter. Through the voice of Bramble, Smollett fashions a mode of criticism that goes beyond regulatory regimes. The medical accounts delimit the female body into an overwhelmingly negative, disease-prone system. Instead of negating his own body, he negates the bodies of others as a hysteric mass. Notably, he reduces these bodies into the objects of “excrement... drugs, minerals, and poisons,” denying them of subjective agency. He also in another letter calls these Londoners “an over-grown monster; which, like a dropsical head, will in time leave the body and extremities without nourishment and support” (“To Dr. Lewis, London, May 29,” 127). Instead of delivering rational diagnoses, he malapropically misuses medical discourse to lambaste a whole city as diseased, hysterical, and degenerate. As an outsider to this metropolitan morass, Bramble defamiliarizes London’s commercial prosperity as instead pregnant with corruption to affirm his own superiority.

#### 7. Post-Script: The Concealment of “Labour” in the Discourses of Obadiah Lismahago and Winifred Jenkins

Despite Bramble’s persistent need to brandish his authority, he also misses the mark and at times is undercut by the viewpoints of others. In this section, I discuss how the Scottish Lieutenant Obadiah Lismahago and the servant Winifred Jenkins provide alternative perspectives that challenge Bramble’s dogmatic position. The novel’s malapropic structure revels in the persistent displacement of value-systems. At first, it seems that the letter-novel deceptively sides with Bramble’s ideas, yet another character may subvert his own values and invite us to question where this novel stands. In *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters* (1996), Elizabeth Heckendorn

Cook argues that the letter “[o]n the one hand...was considered the most direct, sincere, and transparent form of written communication,” yet “was simultaneously recognized as the most playful and potentially deceptive of forms, as a stage for rhetorical trickery” (16).<sup>159</sup> To wit, Smollett’s epistolary narrative conveys this contradiction between sincerity and deception. Bramble supports a traditional social hierarchy, yet the fact that he subverts the moralistic and rationalistic hierarchies of certain discourses implies that he is ambivalent about hierarchy itself. In addition, because the novel shows other characters not sharing Bramble’s splenetic viewpoints, this text performs its “rhetorical trickery” of overturning this hypochondriac’s dogmatism.

One such example of Bramble being challenged is during his conversation with Lismahago on the economic relationship between Scotland and England. Bramble believes that the “Scots were now in a fair way to wipe off the national reproach of poverty” due to the “happy effects of the [1707 parliamentary] union” (“To Doctor Lewis, Sept. 20,” 135). In response, Lismahago disagrees: “[G]ranting that poverty were really matter of reproach, it cannot be justly imputed to Scotland” (“To Doctor Lewis, Sept. 20,” 136). Using biological imagery, he claims:

There is a continual circulation, like that of the blood in the human body, and England is the heart, to which all the streams which it distributes are refunded and returned: nay, in consequence of that luxury which our connexion with England hath greatly encouraged, if not introduced, all the produce of our lands, and all the profits of our trade, are engrossed by the natives of South-Britain; for you will find that the exchange between the two kingdoms is always against Scotland; and that she retains

---

<sup>159</sup> See Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, *Epistolary Bodies* (1996), 5-29.

neither gold nor silver sufficient for her own circulation. (“To Doctor Lewis, Sept. 20,” 140)

Lismahago compares the circulation of the blood to the circulation of commodities, and he diagnoses that this circulation favors the lower body of England. Lismahago elaborates that the Scots “seem to vie with each other in purchasing superfluities from England; such as broad-cloth, velvets, stuffs, silks, lace, furs, jewels, furniture of all sorts, sugar, rum, tea, chocolate, and coffee; in a word, not only every mode of extravagant luxury, but even many articles of convenience” (“To Doctor Lewis, Sept. 20,” 140-141). In one sense, the economic body of Britain suffers something akin to hysteria: lower Britain or England has become swollen with the waste matter of many luxurious “superfluities.” Contesting Bramble’s faith in the unity, Lismahago teaches him that the British economic system unfairly prioritizes England’s cities.

The satire of the Scottish Lismahago functions to upset the gentry authority of the Welsh Bramble. Put another way, an outsider from the North strives to change the views of a different outsider from Wales. Smollett’s satire, it seems, criticizes Britain’s economic hierarchies from these relatively marginal perspectives. However, assuming a catachrestic perspective of displacing Smollett’s own value judgments, I must address that Lismahago’s biological metaphor for the economy obscures the human labourers. Specifically, Lismahago conceals that the economy of Scotland itself thrives on the exploitation of slave labor. T. M. Devine’s edition *Recovering Scotland’s Past: The Caribbean Connection* (2015) has documented Scotland’s extensive participation in the slave trade. As Stuart M. Nesbit (2015) shows in this edition, ever since the 1660s, Scotland established a slave-

trading port at Glasgow and reaped the benefits of the transatlantic slave trade (62).<sup>160</sup> And in *Scotland and the Abolition of Slavery* (2006), Iain Whyte points out that “Glasgow West Indian merchants invested large amounts of capital to facilitate plantation settlement, with the replacement of slaves being amongst the heaviest of calls on finance” (43). Whyte notes that there “fifty-nine slave-trading voyages” led by two Scots “between 1748 and 1784 at a total profit of £30,841” (43).<sup>161</sup> Smollett’s concealment of these historical facts of enslavement indicates that his satire is indifferent to the suffering of enslaved African peoples, and instead he resents the exclusion of Scotland and the gentry from the English metropolis. We can thus read references to African musicians and drivers as muted references to the legacy of slavery, yet instead of sympathizing with these peoples, Smollett treats them as aberrations to the social order.<sup>162</sup> His satire challenges normative discourses of sensibility only to preserve complicitly social inequalities.

The novel does reference the idea of slavery, yet it does not talk about the European or Scottish slave trade. Let me give two examples. In the first example, upon encountering Lismahago, Jeri recounts, “our pity was warmed with indignation, when we learned, that in the course of two sanguinary wars, he had been wounded, maimed, mutilated, taken, and enslaved [by Miami Native Americans], without ever having attained a higher rank than that of lieutenant” (“To Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart. Of Jesus college, Oxon. Newcastle upon Tyne, July 10,” 16-17). And in the second example, Bramble misogynistically derides the

---

<sup>160</sup> Nisbet, Stuart M. “Early Scottish Sugar Planters in the Leeward Islands, c. 1660–1740” (2015).

<sup>161</sup> Whyte, *Scotland and the Abolition of Slavery* (2006), 41-69.

<sup>162</sup> For an intriguing discussion on the representation of Native Americans in Lismahago’s encounter with the Miami tribe, see Charlotte Sussman (1994).

treatment of his friend Baynard and Baynard's neighbors by their materialistic wives, judging that the "ridiculous pride and vanity of silly women...are held in contempt by the very men whom they pillage and enslave" ("To Dr. Lewis, Sept. 30," 162). In both passages, Smollett describes the enslavement of British men by women and indigenous Americans. These scenes inspire "pity...warmed with indignation" and "contempt" in Jeri and Bramble because they represent instances of subversive enslavement of the British imperial patriarchy by excluded others. The novel displaces proper references to Scottish slavery onto these topsy-turvy versions of female and Native American domination. Furthermore, because feelings of pity, anger, and hatred underscore these malapropic displacements, we can implicate that excessive sensibilities complicitly preserve supremacy. That is, reason does not enable Bramble's bigoted thinking; rather, the unrestrained commerce of affective appetites fuels the desire to maintain dominance.

The economy of affect in *Humphry Clinker* is prejudicially selective. Smollett neglects to express feelings for enslaved black lives, but he shows characters expressing sympathetic feelings for other kinds of labourers, such as manorial tenants and servants. Smollett's affective representation of Winifred Jenkins, Tabitha's servant, in particular, deserves now our attention.<sup>163</sup> The novel begins with the splenetic complaints of the upper-class gentleman Matthew Bramble, but it is quite telling that it ends with the impassioned malapropisms of the newly married servant Winifred Jenkins. To emphasize perhaps her servant status and suggest her lack of education, Smollett has Winifred write in the incoherence of numerous misspellings and malapropisms. Expressing her surprise and

---

<sup>163</sup> For a fascinating essay on the complex puns of Winifred Jenkins, see Marta Mateo's "Translating *Humphry Clinker*'s Verbal Humour" (2010).

growing infatuation with Humphry Clinker's newly revealed status, she begins her letter as follows: "I HAVE met with so many axidents, suprisals, and terrifications, that I am in a parfeck fantigo, and believe I shall never be my own self again" ("To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall, Oct. 14," 224). Winifred's subverts form because her words' incorrect spellings are incoherent with their intended meanings. Her discombulated state of "parfeck fantigo" denotes also a physiological incoherence that she is not her own self. However, Winifred's writing may be following the letter manual's valuing of authenticity and effortlessnes. For example, *The Complete Letter Writer* recommends that "in familiar Letters of the common Concerns in Life, Elegance is not requir'd, nor is it the Thing we ought to aim at; for when attempted, the Labour is often seen, and the End perverted by the very Means" (33). But, as Smollett shows, Winifred's ease of un-laboured writing has "perverted" the "very Means" of correct communication. This same manual also enjoins, "Write freely, but not hastily; let your Words drop from your Pen, as they would from your Tongue when speaking deliberately on a Subject of which you are Master" (33). Perhaps, Winifred takes this recommendation ironically because her misspelled words figuratively "drop" and err; her misspellings indicate that she is not even "Master" over her own self since she worries she may "never...[be her] own self again."

Winifred does not "Labour" to write in the normative fashion. It is quite remarkable that the letter manual suggests overly stylized "Elegance" can reveal the "Labour" of letter-writing. The virtue of being a good letter writer involves concealing that there is "Labour" at all in the composition process. In many ways, letter writing strives to suppress un-mended hearts as well as the "Labour" of crafting elegance. So what do we make of Winifred's un-laboured writing? On the one hand, Smollett the author labours to conceive of these

malapropisms. On the other, although Winifred's writing may be a product of a lack of education, her writing also registers her resistance to the "Labour" of converting her thoughts into a veneer of "Elegance." In this latter sense, Winifred's malapropisms signify her refusal to obey the letter-manual's mandate that writers obscure their "Labour" of editing away any infelicitous writing. Through these malaprops, Smollett ironically reveals not only his own "Labour" of punning, but more importantly the idea that letter-writing demands a form of "Labour." Smollett points out that Winifred has more "labouring" to do if she is ever to become a respectable letter-writer. Moreover, in her un-laboured writing, she misspells her confused feelings of "suprisals and terrifications." Winifred's misspelling insinuates that stimulated bodies can exceed the "Labour" of writing. They exist outside the parameters set up by repressive discourses found in manuals, medicine, and moral philosophy. Through Winifred's writing, Smollett demonstrates that affective bodies exceed regimens of "Labour."

The concealment and revelation of "Labour" haunts this novel. Recall that Smollett obscures the fact that slave labour of Africans is crucial to Britain's economic wealth. Smollett's resistance to normative sensibility necessarily depends on the exclusion and subordination of others. For Bramble, the exploitation of a race of people may be something he is unwilling to reveal in writing. After all, as E. P. Thompson reminds us, "[t]he landed gentry are graded not by birth or other marks of status but by rentals: they are worth so many thousand pounds a year...Use-rights, privileges, liberties, services – all could be translated into an equivalent in money...in which liberties become properties" (138). Proprietary authority, in other words, underscores the ideology of the gentry. Owning others

through rentals to the gentry Bramble is as acceptable as mastering black lives as commodities.

The malapropic servant figure of Winifred represents a liminal being who is not owned like an enslaved African and is still free to resist the call to “Labour.” She misspells as part of her avoidance of the “Labour” required in epistolary composition. She is not tethered to a sovereign virtue of proper spelling, so she stylizes herself as a passionate being. She makes her feelings apparent when she reveals her growing desire for Humphry Clinker, whose surname is revealed as “Loyd”: “I scorn for to do, or to say, or to think any thing that mought give unbreech to Mr. Loyd, without funder occasion—But then I have such vapours, Molly—I sit and cry by myself, and take ass of etida, and smill to burnt fathers, and kindal-snuffs; and I pray constantly for grease, that I may have a glimpse of the new-light” (“To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall, Octr. 14,” 225-226). Winifred’s confession of having melancholic “vapours” is sentimentally heartening, but her misspellings deflate the depth of her feelings. Indeed, her vulgar misspelling of “asafetida” as “ass of etida” especially undercuts her dramatic passions. While these malapropisms function to make dismissive readers laugh *at* her, they also trace out her anti-normative sensibility, inviting sympathetic readers to feel *with* her. For her to share her feelings, Winifred must signify her body incorrectly. Normative discourses of sensibility oppress the feeling body, so “authentic” feeling requires these un-laboured acts of writerly error.

In the novel’s last letter, Smollett re-inscribes for a final time Winifred’s subversiveness. In her letter to her friend and servant Mrs. Mary Jones, Winifred states that because she has married the socially respectable Humphry Clinker, she has now ascended from her original social status. She attempts to alleviate potential concerns that she has



transgressed class boundaries: “Present my compliments to Mrs. Gwyllim [a servant at Brambleton-hall], and I hope she and I will live upon dissent terms of civility.—Being, by God’s blessing, removed to a higher spear, you’ll excuse my being familiar with the lower sarvents of the family” (“To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-hall, Nov. 20,” 245). Despite her intended sentiment of good-will, Winifred inscribes an incoherence between “dissent’s” sonic sense of *decent* civility and “dissent’s” semantic sense of indecent resistance. Further, the weapon-related sense of “spear” suggests that the veil of civility represses violent class-based resentment. On the surface, Winifred conveys that her more respectable social spear/sphere allows her to be “familiar with the lower sarvents,” but the militaristic “spear” satirically implies that social hierarchies coercively condition servants into repressive behaviors of civility. To wit, she ends her letter addressing her servant friend Mrs. Mary Jones: “as I trust you’ll behave respectful, and keep a proper distance, you may always depend upon the good will and purtection of Yours, W. Loyd” (“To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-hall, Nov. 20,” 245). Assuming a superior position, Winifred assures that if Mrs. Mary Jones maintains a deferential role of “respectful...distance,” she will reward her with “good will and purtection,” social values of affective care that a servant or tenant would expect from the manor’s gentry landowner. Yet the misspelled “purtection” suggests otherwise: the values of care Winifred will express are a pale imitation, a malapropic misuse of the original.

Winifred’s malapropism forces the following questions: will she affirm the repressiveness of stratified communities, or will she introduce her own subversive form of care? Will Winifred continue her spirit of “dissent” from established forms and, if you forgive my own pun, “win a friend” in Mary Jones? The ambiguity of the nature of her care

perhaps is symptomatic of this novel's ambivalence towards transgressions in the social hierarchy. The novel is uncertain if lower class, subordinated, and exploited figures can emulate their betters. Epistolary novels, to recall the words of Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, commit the "potentially transgressive translation of private communication into public discourse," and Smollett transgressively brings to the surface these rupturous elements in the social order: plebeian merchants, African musicians, quack doctors, a hysterical metropolis, and a disenfranchised Scotland. At the same time, Smollett conceals less problematically the "Labour" of epistolary composition and more problematically the "Labour" of chattel slavery. At the heart of this satire is a forgetting of forced "Labour," a background spleen whose "creeping apace" is never registered. The novel subverts letter-manuals, medicine, and moral philosophy in order to reify unequal social hierarchies. Only by manipulating these inherited discourses, one can exist in "dissent terms of civility" with people, yet as this pun hints, civility can fracture, perpetuating the mistreatment of friends into "others." In her essay, "Responsibility" (1994), Gayatri Spivak proposes, "If deconstruction comes tangled with responsibility to the trace of the other, the reader(s) stand(s) in here as the indefinite narrow sense of that radically other which cannot even (have or) be a face" (21).<sup>164</sup> Though Smollett's satire shows the benevolence of Matthew Bramble's charitable responsibility extending to his tenants and his illegitimate son Humphry Clinker, his satire does not acknowledge the "trace of the other" of black lives. However, by catachrestically

---

<sup>164</sup> Spivak, "Responsibility" (1994). In my reading, the reader "cannot even (have or) be a face" because the reader's face—identity, ontology, and sense of self—does not take priority in being responsible to the "other." She frames her essay around the idea of responsibility to examine Jacques Derrida's *Of Spirit* and the Conference on the World Bank's Flood Action Plan in Bangladesh. She argues provocatively that "(the thinking of) responsibility is also (a thinking of) contamination" (23).

deconstructing Smollett's satire, we as the "radically other" readers imagine how Winifred Jenkins' ambiguous "purtection" may gesture towards the (im)possibility of a care for the "trace of the other." Through our efforts, we can recode satire as an anti-normative practice of acknowledging excluded bodies.

**CHAPTER 5**  
**REVELRY AND REVOLT:**  
**OWNERSHIP AND AFFECTIVE IRONY**  
**IN JANE COLLIER’S *AN ESSAY ON THE ART OF INGENIOUSLY***  
***TORMENTING***

“[K]eep up in your mind the true spirit of contradiction to every thing that is proposed or done; and although, from want of power, you may not be able to exercise tyranny, yet by the help of perpetual mutiny, you may heartily torment and vex all there that love you; and be as troublesome as an impertinent fly, to those who care not three farthings about you.”

Jane Collier, *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting; With Proper Rules for the Exercise of that Pleasant Art* (1753), 118

1. Setting the Stage: Property, Subversion, and Irony

In her satiric instructional manual on tormenting, Jane Collier aptly describes the essential ironic impulse of eighteenth-century melancholic satires. For Collier, tormenting serves as the means through which those with “want of power,” who in her text include married women, can dominate tyrants, husbands, unmarried women dependents, fellow female friends, and servants. The melancholic satires I have examined, in a sense, “torment” audiences into developing an affective critical sensitivity to the world’s absurdities and immoralities. In *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), Robert Burton imagines that melancholic destabilization results from a tormenting mutiny of “rebellious” bodily forces

against the rule of reason (Partition I, Member II, Subsection XI, 168). Such destabilization displaces reason from its reign, and to parallel this internal strife, melancholic satires present melancholic figures whose affective disruption enables them to revolt against and also revel in satirizing their targets. Collier's *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting; With Proper Rules for the Exercise of that Pleasant Art* (1753 and hereafter referenced as *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*) is an exemplary case study that interrogates the possibilities of melancholic revelry and revolt.

In this concluding chapter, I consider that melancholic mutiny results in an affective criticism whose mode is formalized through irony. Accordingly, I identify this irony as an “affective irony.” For Collier, irony *includes* dissimilar emotional attitudes towards satirized targets. For the purposes of this chapter, I flexibly redefine irony, a concept that fundamentally refers to the entertainment of oppositions, as an affective irony: the *inclusion* of different emotional investments ranging from reveling indulgence to rebellious disgust towards the satirized targets. This inclusive irony is most palpable in Jane Collier's *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*. In this text, through an enthusiastic persona, Collier satirizes that property relations in domestic households are themselves ironic in the general sense of entertaining opposites: in marriage, the English common law of coverture at once dispossesses women's proprietary agency and concentrates property under the husband, yet, oppositely, common law's inclusion of the “law of agency” or “law of necessities” also allowed married women to use their husbands' credit to buy alternative forms of property called “necessaries (food, clothing, lodgings and medicine)” (353).<sup>165</sup> In addition, equity law

---

<sup>165</sup> On these alternative forms of separate property, on which I will elaborate throughout this chapter, I have consulted Joanna Bailey, “Favoured or oppressed? Married women, property and ‘coverture’ in England, 1660-1800” (2002), Margot Finn, “Women,

allowed married women to own separate property such as pin money, and through the equity courts, women could litigate to protect their property. Further, women could use the ecclesiastical courts to litigate over testamentary will and probate without the consent of their husbands.<sup>166</sup> The ironic legal reality, thus, of women lies in how England's tripartite legal system of common law, equity, and ecclesiastical courts both denied and granted them proprietary rights.

In order to accentuate women's alternative agencies, Collier suggests that women subversively can lay claim to their interior affections as a subversive form of property through which they emotionally torment others. Collier crafts a pervasively affective ironic mode because (1), at the instructional level of the persona addressing her "pupils," her persona affectively revels in and revolts against coverture's principle of proprietary domination, (2), at the representational level, her persona conceives of wives affectively tormenting and dominating others, and (3), at the moralistic level of what her satire teaches, her persona intimates that wives' interior affects must be also valued as the wives' dispossessed and separate properties. If affects so thoroughly suffuse Collier's ironic text, Collier's text affirms the Cartesian paradigm that the passions are a separate power from the mind. For Collier, the Cartesian passions' power lies in their potential as ownable properties autonomously independent of reason and coverture. Collier believes that, for married women to own these affective properties, they should engage in the irony of simultaneously

---

Consumption and Coverture in England, c. 1760-1860." Robert W. Gordon, "Paradoxical property" (1996), and Susan Staves' *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* (1990).

<sup>166</sup> For a summary of English women's legal agency through the equity and ecclesiastical courts, see Lindsay Moore's "The Varieties of Anglo-American Law: Property, Patriarchy and Women's Legal Status in England and America" (2019), 22.

reveling in coverture's patriarchal violence and revolting against it through affective abuse.<sup>167</sup>

Before I detail my argument further, I give a brief overview of *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*'s basic structure. The text, divided into two parts, parodies conduct manuals that instruct women to obey their husbands. Curiously, in each part, the persona instructs "exterior" and "interior" tormentors. In the first section, Collier's persona instructs how "exterior" masters and mistresses, patronesses, parents, and husbands can torment their servants, unmarried women, children, and wives. The persona calls the pupils of part one "exterior" because they "have an exterior power from visible authority, such as is vested, by law or custom, in masters over their servants; parents over their children; husbands over their wives" (49). Meanwhile, in the second section, she instructs how "interior" married women and female friends can torment husbands, servants, unmarried female dependents, and fellow female friends. The persona calls the pupils of part two "interior" because they "have an interior power, arising from the affection of the person on whom they are to work; as in the case of the wife, the friend" (49). Through this text's formulaic segregation, Collier poses the contrast between "exterior...visible authority" of patriarchs and household authorities and the "interior," implied invisible power of married women (Collier doesn't go

---

<sup>167</sup> Throughout this chapter, I alliteratively use "revelry" and "revolt." "Revelry" signifies for the purposes of this chapter complicit indulgence in patriarchal registers of oppression (emotional, physical, and proprietary violence against other women and dominating men, subordinate servants, and unmarried women as one's property). "Revolt," on the other hand, signifies the alternative resistance against patriarchal coverture and oppression through affective torment. The words are not neat antithetical opposites, since acts of revolt may be acts of revelry. But this is the point. Affective irony blurs binary oppositions. Thus, alliteration evidences my own affective formalism of sonically echoing the simultaneous similarity and difference between pro-coverture and anti-coverture practices.

into much detail how unmarried women, children, servants, and friends can torment). Collier insinuates that forms of patriarchy, i.e. coverture, “covers” women and conditions them into accessing the *invisible* authority of “interior” affective tormenting.

Such covering up alludes to the essential violence that coverture enacts upon wives. Common law coverture rendered the husband the sole executor of the wife’s property, legally disempowering the wife in relation to her own property. As Karen Pearlston (2009) summarizes, until the third quarter of the nineteenth century, “a married women (or feme covert) could not own property (including wages) or make contracts, and she could not sue or be sued without the joinder of her husband” (265-266).<sup>168</sup> Coverture awards the husband maximum authority while restricting the legal and proprietary agency of the “feme covert” or the married “covered woman.” By enforcing a restriction on the wife, coverture creates a legal fiction that the married couple is a unity. As the anonymously authored legal text *Baron and Feme. A Treatise of Law and Equity Concerning Husbands and Wives* (originally published in 1700 and later published in 1719 and 1738) states, “Baron and Feme are commonly said to be one Person in Law; the Consequents of which are, that a Man cannot grant Lands and Tenements to his Wife” (8). This fiction of “one Person” creates the further fiction that the husband can deny his wife proprietary land ownership. This dispossession constitutes the violence of coverture. William Blackstone in *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765) will later develop coverture’s legal fiction as follows: “By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and *cover*, she performs every thing...and

---

<sup>168</sup> See Karen Pearlston, “Married Women Bankrupts in the Age of Coverture” (2009).



her condition during her marriage is called her coverture” (77).<sup>169</sup> Stated more baldly than *Baron and Feme*, Blackstone conceives that coverture rests on this coercive erasure of the wife’s “legal existence.” Because she “is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband,” the wife comes to disappear under this patriarchal system. So when Collier establishes her binary of the “exterior” husband and “interior” wife, she alludes to coverture’s ideological construction of “one person” in which the husband rules the exterior realm of absolute legal power and the wife dwells in the interior spaces of their affections.

Coverture’s enforced binary is, I must stress, a violence. As Frances E. Dolan (2003) aptly argues, coverture “shapes our imagination of marriage in ways that make violence *seem* inevitable” (272, emphasis in the original). Dolan claims, “At the level of representation, the conception a marriage can contain only one legal agent enacts violence by concentrating resources and privileges in the husband and erasing the wife. In a subtler way, this conception casts the wife’s self-assertion as itself a kind of violence, which, in turn, provokes retaliation” (272).<sup>170</sup> The value of Dolan’s argument is that she clarifies how coverture ideology inscribes in its linguistic “representation” an implied violence of denying the wife’s “legal existence.” Dolan’s claims on the violence of coverture allows us to explore how women are figures subject to different kinds of violence, ranging from the husband’s assumption as the “exterior” master to the husband’s denial of property.

---

<sup>169</sup> See William Blackstone, “Husband and Wife,” *Commentaries* (1796), 72-80. Although his *Commentaries* is originally published from 1765-1770, I am using the 1796 edition.

<sup>170</sup> The greater context for her argument is that she uses the early modern and eighteenth-century legacy of coverture to understand contemporary American depictions of wives murdering their abusive husbands. See Frances Dolan, “Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture” (2003).

At the same time, Dolan insinuates that coverture “casts the wife’s self-assertion” or acts of disobedience as also violence because these resistant actions threaten to rupture the legal fiction of unity. In Collier’s satire, she imagines the wives’ tormenting as alternative forms of violence. In doing so, she responds to the eighteenth-century contexts where married women circumvent coverture by accessing separate property like dowery and pin money as afforded by the equity courts or by making purchases for the household through the common law concept of “agency,” under which, as Joanna Bailey (2002) puts it, “one man gave another individual the authority to act of his behalf without gaining rights or benefits” (359).<sup>171</sup> As a result of this law, the wife could “act as her husband’s economic agent...in gendered marital economic roles, dividing husbands and wives into male provisioners and female consumers” (354).<sup>172</sup> For example, *Baron and Feme* describes the wife’s agency as follows: “We all agree, that when the Wife contracts for the Necessaries of her Husband, Children or Family, that this shall not charge him by any inherent Power in the Wife, but by a reasonable and implicit Assent, which must be found by a Jury” (278). Conceived as a contractual right, the wife’s agency in this text remains dependent nonetheless on the “reasonable and implicit Assent” of a jury.

---

<sup>171</sup> See Joanna Bailey, “Favoured or oppressed? Married women, property and ‘coverture’ in England, 1660-1800” (2002), and Margot Finn, “Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, c. 1760-1860” (1996).

<sup>172</sup> I should also acknowledge Mihoku Suzuki’s scholarship on how early modern women, such as Brilliana Harley, female Leveller petitioners, Margaret Fell, Anne Halkett, Elizabeth Cellier, Anne Docwra, and Aphra Behn, “demonstrated the ways in which they were heirs of [Edward] Coke in thinking with and through the law, while extending the rights accorded to subjects by the common law to themselves (and to native peoples in the New World in Behn’s case)” (191).<sup>172</sup> In this respect, these women were circumventing the law’s patriarchal violence by reinterpreting the law itself. See Suzuki, “Daughters of Coke: Women’s Legal Discourse in England, 1642–1689” (2014).

While she does not directly represent these historical realities of alternative agency in *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*, Collier offers affective tormenting as her own alternative strategy for circumventing the patriarchal law of coverture. In *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*, the persona suggests that married and privileged women embody the “spirit of contradiction” by tormenting not only husbands but also the economically and legally underprivileged figures of servants, children, and unmarried dependents. Collier’s persona reveals that women viciously re-inscribe coverture’s violence through these other displaced forms of malice. Collier’s text, as Audrey Bilger (2003) rightly puts it, “sheds light on the harm to society that arises when power is distributed unevenly and when individuals use their power to abuse those who are deprived of any means of achieving independence” (30).<sup>173</sup> *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* teaches that “distributed” traces of coverture’s violence ironically allows for these wives’ anti-coverture resistance.

Collier’s ironic satire revels in the contradiction that married women can perform acts of violent subjugation and, at the same time, resist their “exterior” authorities. This contradiction may defeat the purpose of her anti-coverture satire; however, this “spirit of contradiction” obliquely references the legal phrase, “cui in vita siia, ipsa contradicere non potuit,” translated as “whom in his lifetime she could not gainsay or contradict.” Such phrasing appears in *Baron and Feme*: “The Law of Nature hath put her under the Obedience of her Husband, and hath submitted her Will to his, which the Law follows, *cui ipsa in vita siia, ipsa contradicere nonpotuit*; and therefore will not bind her by her Acts [as in legal acts and deeds] joining with her Husband, because they are judged by his Acts, and not hers” (7,

---

<sup>173</sup> See Bilger’s discussion of this subject in the section “Gender and Power” of her editorial “Introduction” (2003).

emphasis in the original). This treatise refers to the legal statute that states that during marriage the wife could not *contradict* and legally challenge her husband's decision to transfer her properties to someone else, but she could advance a legal writ for entry against this person who now owns her property after the husband has died.<sup>174</sup> Collier's usage of "contradiction" echoes these proprietary and legal senses in order to suggest that the wife's affective contradictions seek to reclaim some form of proprietary compensation even when the husband is alive. By contradicting the husband, Collier's wives can assert a supplementary proprietary authority that is otherwise denied to them because of law.

Married women express the irony of their tormenting because it *inclusively* reinscribes and, hence, instructively *uncovers* coverture's coercive violence. The irony lies in how anti-coverture satire must embody coverture's violence in order to resist it. By ironically spotlighting the legal violence of coverture, Collier's text understands what Karl Marx (1867) would later theorize about the accumulation of property—namely, that the private acquisition of property necessitates violence.<sup>175</sup> Although Marx's concerns are markedly different from Collier, we can appreciate that Collier's text attends to the violence inherent in the husband's acquisition of the wife's property.

---

<sup>174</sup> On the legal meanings of "Cui Ipsa In Vita", see Walter Shumaker's *The Cyclopedic Law Dictionary* (2001) and Charles Viner's *A General Abridgment of Law and Equity* (1791).

<sup>175</sup> The key excerpt from Marx's *Capital, Volume I* (1867) is: "The different moments of primitive accumulation [in various industrial societies]...depend in part on brute force, for instance the colonial system. But they all employ the power of the state, the concentrated and organized force of society, to hasten...the process of transformation of the feudal mode of production into the capital mode...Force is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power" (Chapter 31, 915-916).

## 2. Affective Property and Affective Irony

The chief intervention of this chapter is the insight that Collier imagines affects as proprietary entities. Collier's persona reveals that various proprietary affects – malice, self-reproach, contempt, enjoyment, grief, gratitude, and pleasure – inclusively are shared among abuser and abused. By sharing perversely such affects, the legally disempowered figures in Collier's text reclaim their displaced authority. Terri Nickel (1995) has argued that Collier's focus on "the exquisite nuances of emotional affect within the family" suggests that the family is grounded "in the terms of affective alliances" (237).<sup>176</sup> Meanwhile, Betty Rizzo, whose chapter on Collier in *Companions Without Vows* (1994) is one of the few sustained studies on her satire so far, contends that Collier recognizes that "human nature was such that anyone could actually enjoy the moment-to-moment business of humiliating and hurting an assigned inferior," and that Collier "sought to abolish tyranny, to educate it away" through "the development in people of altruism to temper their aggressiveness" (53).<sup>177</sup> In my study, I agree with Nickel and Rizzo that Collier asserts the affect of malice inherent to human nature. Collier affirms what I have demonstrated throughout my dissertation's argument: the Cartesian self's inextricable entanglement with disruptive abusive passions.

---

<sup>176</sup> See Nickel, "'Ingenious Torment': Incest, Family and the Structure of Community in the Work of Sarah Fielding" (1995).

<sup>177</sup> See Betty Rizzo, "Satires of Tyrants and Toadeaters: Fielding and Collier," *Companions with Vows* (1994), 41-60. For a discussion of women satirists during the period, see also Jayne Lewis, "Compositions of Ill Nature: Women's Place in a Satiric Tradition" (1986).

Collier shows that the Cartesian self indulges freely in immoral and malicious passions of enjoying another's suffering.<sup>178</sup>

Moreover, in this chapter, I enrich the scholarly conversation on Collier's text by showing that Collier ends up envisioning emotional abuse or what she calls "interior power" as a comparable form of figurative, affective property (49). By presenting affects as ownable, Collier's text presents a novel way of mobilizing criticism. She posits that tormenting wives can exact arresting control over targeted audiences through affective stimulation. Using Collier's text as a case study, I propose that these melancholic satires conceive of affective stimulation as a mode of proprietary transformation, in which the melancholic critic's affective criticism at once secures figurative ownership over oneself and one's intended targets.

Having discussed the issue of property in relation to affect, I would be remiss if I did not define what I mean by property. In this chapter, I offer theoretical and historically attentive understandings of property. First of all, it is important to limit the connotations of my usage of "property," so when using this term, I do not intend to touch on issues of copyright, authorial property, or intellectual property, even though one can certainly make the argument that Collier asserts her proprietary authorship through this satire.<sup>179</sup> Instead, I am interested in what Robert W. Gordon (1995) would call eighteenth-century property's "paradoxical" status. Gordon explains that public and legal discourse about property paradoxically acknowledges both the ideal of absolute dominion and the actual practice of

---

<sup>178</sup> For a work that discusses the moral philosophical fascination with malice, see James Steintrager's *Cruel Delight* (2004).

<sup>179</sup> On the issue of eighteenth-century debates over copyright, see Mark Rose's "The author as proprietor: *Donaldson v. Becket* and the genealogy of modern authorship" (1988).

“property rights fragmented and split among many holders” (96).<sup>180</sup> Gordon argues that the ideology of absolute dominion dictates that “property rights are gathered in a single owner, the rights to enjoy and to exploit the owned resources without restriction...all secured by fixed, stable, predictable rules of law against diminution or encroachment” (95). Yet, as he shows, this dream of dominion is impossible to realize. In his article, Gordon discusses mostly eighteenth-century American colonial examples of deviations from absolute property, “in which rights of formal ownership or of management and control are split among or held collectively by several proprietors” (97).<sup>181</sup> Even though Gordon’s main subject is colonial America, his argument is also applicable to the ways in which the English common law acknowledges not only the husband’s absolute control over the wife’s property, but also the wife’s “law of agency” of acquiring necessities in the husband’s name. Additionally, because the equity courts grant wives the right to own separate forms of property, these courts also subvert the ideology of absolute dominion. In these senses, absolute property becomes “split among or held collectively” by husband and wife. Coverture’s legal fiction of unity is also a fiction of irony: on the one hand, husband and wife are unified through the dominion of the husband, but on the other, the husband’s absolute dominion transforms into the wife’s shared ownership of necessities and her acquisition of separate forms of property. In these respects, I approach Collier’s affective torments as alternative tactics of acquiring affective proprietary control over their own passionate “interiors” and over “exterior” patriarchs.

---

<sup>180</sup> See Gordon, “Paradoxical property” (1995).

<sup>181</sup> For Gordon, the chief example of deviations from absolute property in colonial is family property. Family property “is shared by dependents (wives, children, servants, day-laborers, indentured servants, slaves) who all (though to some extent part of the household property themselves) have some legal claim on it” (98).

To enrich my analysis of Collier's affective criticism, I treat her satire as ironic. As the second contribution of this conclusion, I offer a formal analysis of Collier's uses of verbal and structural ironies as "affective ironies," so that I can further propose that affective irony both emulates and critiques how coverture and eighteenth-century property operate. Irony, simply defined as the encapsulation of contradictory ideas, echoes the contradictory inclusion of coverture's absolute dominion and female wives' shared and separate ownership. The form of irony, in this sense, reenacts the contradictions of eighteenth-century property.

At the heart of these contradictions are the entangled relationships among these absolute and shared owners and, relevant to Collier's context, among tormenting wives and tormented husbands and subordinates. Proprietary dispossession complicates these human relationships, and Collier uses the literary form of irony to illuminate that the ironic paradoxes of property create contentious, tormenting power dynamics. Because irony is so linked to property's effects on human feelings and relationships, I define affective irony as an inclusive and relational device: irony inclusively embraces contradictory affects of revelry and revolt and forges relationships not only between these affects, but also between tormenting ironist and tormented audiences.<sup>182</sup> This both/and approach to irony differs from either/or definitions of irony. Either/or definitions, such as Ross Murfin and Surpyia M. Ray's definition (2018) of "structural irony" and Wayne Booth's concept (1974) of "stable

---

<sup>182</sup>When formulating my affective position on irony, I remain mindful of the following scholarship on irony: Wayne Booth's *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974), Claire Colebrook's *Irony* (2004), Linda Hutcheon's *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (1994), Jonathan Greenberg's *The Cambridge Introduction to Satire* (2019), Northrop Frye's *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Dustin Griffin's *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* (1994), Alvin Kernan's *The Plot of Satire* (1965).



ironies,” impose interpretive either/or strategies of rejecting surface meanings in favor of the unsaid ironic meanings.<sup>183</sup>

In this study, I use an inclusive rather than an exclusionary approach because it brings attention to irony’s inclusive relationality. My sense of inclusively relational irony is indebted to Linda Hutcheon’s definition (1994). Hutcheon has argued that because “[i]rony is a **relational** strategy in the sense that it operates not only between meanings (said, unsaid) but between people (ironists, interpreters, targets),” irony “comes into being as the consequence of a relationship, a dynamic, performative bringing together of different meaning-makers, but also of different meanings” (58 emphasis in the original). She uses this definition of irony to treat ironic meaning as “*simultaneously* double (or multiple),” such that “both the said and the unsaid together make up that third meaning...what should be more accurately called the ‘ironic’ meaning” (60 emphasis in the original).<sup>184</sup> Irony includes the said and unsaid, such that it never negates either meaning.

In the case of Collier, irony’s inclusiveness is relevant to understanding the proprietary paradox of absolute dominion and alternative property. Collier imagines how affective tormenting can inclusively resonate *both* husbands’ absolute dominion over wives’ property *and* wives’ alternative and separate forms of property, so that a “third meaning” of

---

<sup>183</sup> For example, consider Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray’s definition of irony as “characterized by a discrepancy between what a speaker or writer says and what he or she means or believes to be true,” and structural irony occurs when “an internal feature...creates or promotes a discrepancy that typically operates throughout the entire work ... [such that] the audience or reader [is invited] to probe beneath surface statements or appearances” (252, 254). I will acknowledge though that Murfin and Ray’s definition was written for the *Bedford* edition (2018), and defining it in this either/or way practically serves the pedagogical motives of this college textbook. On “stable ironies,” see Booth.

<sup>184</sup> On her discussion on this inclusive model of irony, see Hutcheon, *Irony’s Edge*, 59-66.

irony is engendered in these women's subversions. In this "third meaning," wives' affective tormenting both indulges in coverture's "said" ideology of absolute dominion and subversively resists this ideology through "unsaid" possibilities of alternative ownership. In turn, their subversion makes their irony "relational" because these wives establish un-amiable relationships with their targets.<sup>185</sup> Wayne Booth has argued that irony results in "the building of amiable communities" between ironist and interpreter (28). In these communities, the interpreter experiences a "joining...finding and communing with [the] kindred spirits" of the ironist because the interpreter comes to agree with and perhaps even admire the ironist's double meanings (28).<sup>186</sup> Even though Booth offers an either/or definition for irony, his insight on irony's communal facets is refreshing. Booth invites us to consider the possibility that Collier's wives use ironic tormenting to forge *un-amiable communities* in their domestic households. Ultimately, Collier sheds light on how the ironic paradox of property brings forth a family of subversive abusers.

### 3. Enforcing Emotional Labor: Ladies against Maids and Servants

Collier's persona revels in and revolts against the institutionalized systems of proprietary dispossession by discussing "exterior" and "interior" forms of manipulation. In

---

<sup>185</sup> Because of the limits of this chapter, I will not have time to analyze the historically situated and implied reader's humorous reception of the absurd irony. Affective formalism permits me only to analyze the textual form of affect as separate from the reader's own affects of laughter; however, by analyzing the contradictory inclusive meanings that irony permits, we can come to appreciate that the reader's laughter affectively reacts to something far more complex than what a reasoning mind could untangle.

<sup>186</sup> See Booth, *The Rhetoric of Irony*, 27-31, and Hutcheon also discusses Booth's ideas on communities in Hutcheon, 54.

the first section, the persona claims to give directions on how social superiors with “exterior” authority should torment their subordinates. Each of this section’s four chapters are directed to a specific group of “exterior” authority: “Instructions to Masters and Mistresses, concerning their Servants”; “To the Patronesses of an humble Companion”; “To Parents”; and “To the Husband” (50, 56, 69, 76).<sup>187</sup> This chapter will examine the instructions given to “Mistresses” and “Patronesses.” I will not examine extensively the directions given to parents because the chapter on parents touches on issues of childhood education, which falls outside the scope of this essay.<sup>188</sup> Also, because I do briefly discuss the chapter on husbands when I examine the second section directed to “interior” wives, I will not give an elaborate treatment on the directions to husbands. Moreover, as one reads through this first section, it starts to become apparent that the persona’s directions given to those with “exterior” authority are in fact “interior” forms of tormenting. That is, Collier’s persona directs her “exterior” audience to abuse the interior affections of others. Thus, all the recommended torments outlined by the persona are “interior” because the persona teaches her pupils to engage in acts of emotional cruelty.

In the first chapter, “Instructions to Masters and Mistresses, concerning their Servants,” the persona offers directions indicating what a “lady” should do to her servants. The persona does not really give instructions to “Masters” because she reasons that the

---

<sup>187</sup> Collier uses the gendered terms of “mistress,” “lady,” and “patroness.” These terms may be problematic because they preserve the segregated binary between two genders, but I use them here because Collier invokes these terms in order to make more visible and less “interior” how women’s authority remains bound to their social and gendered positions.

<sup>188</sup> In the “Appendix C: On Education and Conduct” (2003) to Bilger’s edition, Bilger gives contexts for Collier’s instructions to parents by including discussion on childhood education from John Locke’s *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, London, 1699. As Bilger notes, Collier parodies “Locke’s didactic tone and his utterly reasonable style” (163).

“intercourse between a master and his man is not so frequent as between a lady and her maid,” yet she still “hope[s]” that the male master “will be so kind as to convert them [the directions] to his own use” (50). By delimiting her address to female mistresses or ladies, the persona reaffirms the segregation of genders, and by assuming a tone of respectful deference to the male masters, she implicitly acknowledges these masters’ more authoritative status. Through her deference, the persona subdues her authority, and, at the same time, introduces modes of torment that her fellow women can unleash on their servants. In this respect, the persona commits to the ways in which irony acknowledges a surface level meaning—the deferential affirmation of the master’s dominion—yet at the same inclusively gestures towards the satirical meaning that women can express their subversive affective power. These two opposing meanings interact to convey the further ironic meaning that women cannot directly access power: they must first affirm the existing powers before engaging in acts of abusive cruelty.

When the persona begins giving her instructions in this chapter, she recommends a method of abuse that targets select servants:

To scold at and torment *all* your servants, appears, at first sight to be the desirable thing; but those who study the method of this amusing art, will tell you, that it is much better to select out one or two, at the most, who are proper objects, and who you are sure can feel your strokes; for by this means you may make use of all your bad servants, as instruments to plague the good. (50)

The persona describes an insidious mode of bullying that not only targets a select few, but also makes the “bad servants” into complicit abusers of the selected victims. What secures the suffering servant’s subordination is that she must “feel your strokes.” Of course, when

she mentions “strokes,” Collier alludes to the historical reality of servants suffering physical and sexual abuse from their masters.<sup>189</sup> Furthermore, the sense of “feeling” acquires another meaning when the persona discusses making servants feel “galling” humiliation at every mistake they commit. Later in the text, the persona reiterates an old saying: “*Twice I did well, and that I heard never; / Once I did ill, and that I heard ever,*” to which she adds the “oftener you give your servants an opportunity to apply it to themselves, the oftener do you make them feel your power” (50 emphasis in the original). In this passage, the servants must also *feel* the tyrant’s superior power by virtue of “applying” the self-reproaching saying “to themselves.” Through their own self-reproach, servants re-enact the tormentor-tormented dynamic within themselves. The word “feel,” thus, acquires an ironically inclusive quality. This felt experience of servants refers *both* to the external reality of feeling physical abuse *and* to the internalized reality of servants’ self-tormenting.<sup>190</sup>

By making servants *feel* their social status and pain, female tyrants claim their servants as their property. Feeling becomes the conduit through which employers transform servants into what Sara Ahmed would call “objects of emotion.” In *The Cultural Politics of*

---

<sup>189</sup> On the sexual vulnerability of female servants, see Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* (1996), 44-63, and on the increasing occurrence of servants challenging their masters in court for issues such as physical mistreatment, sexual abuse, and wage neglect through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see R. C. Richardson, *Household Servants in Early Modern England* (2010), 194-218.

<sup>190</sup> There are undoubtedly sadomasochistic undertones in these social dynamics. In her “Introduction” to Collier’s satire, Audrey Bilger herself points out these relationships’ sadomasochistic import. Exploring the sadomasochistic aspects falls far beyond the scope of this conclusion, but it is worth noting these aspects especially when we take into account that the persona recommends that acts of tyranny demand role-playing. Bilger’s discussion of sadomasochism draws from Lynn S. Chancer’s *Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness* (1992), whose insights on the mutual dependence between sadist and masochist are especially relevant when reading Collier’s text. On this latter topic, see Chancer, 1-12.

*Emotion* (2015), Ahmed argues that the circulation of affectively charged rhetoric or discursive “objects of emotion” leads to the “transformation of others into objects of feeling” (11). Emotions acquire affective value, according to Ahmed, through their continuous circulation in repeated discourse; as one of her examples, she discusses the way the repeated circulation of xenophobic rhetoric causes negative affects of hatred and fear to “stick” or “adhere” to immigrants, foreigners, and outsiders. As a result, these persons become “objects” covered with the stickiness of negative sentiments. Ahmed’s theory on emotional objectification has much relevance to my argument concerning the proprietary nature of emotion in Collier’s work. Collier’s imagined social superiors – specifically, married women – express malicious emotions in order to forge an ironically affective “un-amiabile community” with their targets. Instead of making emotions “stick” to these victims as Ahmed would argue, Collier suggests that coverture creates abusive communities in which tyrants’ emotional abuse “covers” and rebrands their targets with self-reproach and humiliation. In these domestic territories, emotions do not just “stick” to their targets; rather, malicious and self-reproaching emotions “cover” these sufferers as coverture legally “covers” women. Tyrants and servants alike, Collier glumly teaches, preserve the cycle of patriarchal erasure. Collier’s satire can be summed up in the aphorism: “tormenters do unto others what coverture has done unto women.” In fact, in the concluding words of *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*, the persona indeed parodies this *New Testament* golden rule: “REMEMBER ALWAYS TO DO UNTO EVERY ONE, WHAT YOU WOULD LEAST WISH TO HAVE DONE UNTO YOUR SELF; for in this contained the whole of our excellent SCIENCE” (129, emphasis in the original). The persona slyly suggests that tormenters perpetuate the violence that they “WOULD LEAST WISH TO HAVE DONE”

unto themselves—that is, the violence of coverture and absolute dominion. And what’s so paradoxically ironic about these female tyrants is that they exert their absolute dominion by transforming their servants into their affectively branded property.

As a consequence of their cruelty, the tormenters create a system in which servants must perform emotional labor. Consider the following directions where the persona suggests this sort of employment:

Remember always to teaze and sooth her so alternately, that she shall be vastly puzzled, whether to be pleased or displeased with her place: but, whenever you have been pretty free with your torments, you must talk of leaving off some old gown, or of some great persons coming to your house; or in some other manner endeavour to awaken her interest, so that she may not leave you.

.....

Your condescension in making her your companion, will greatly elate her spirits; and your kindness will fill her heart with grateful pleasure. You cannot rob her of the joy she will have in the expectation of this promised favour; but the higher that is raised, the greater will be her disappointment, when the next morning, you contrive to keep her so fully employed, till the moment you are setting out, that it will be impossible for her to get herself ready: then fly into the highest rage imaginable with her, for making you wait. (55-56)

The tyrants’ constant abuse causes their passions of ill-will to “cover” and, in effect, shape servants into objects branded with the tyrannical woman’s cruel feelings. As a result, the tyrant objectifies servants into *only* being valued for their affectively stimulated states of being teased, soothed, “pleased or displeased,” “grateful pleasure,” or “disappointment.” In

response, servants perform the emotional labor of attending to their own suffering and appeasing their master's feelings. When Collier's persona advises that the tyrant keep her servants "fully employed," she also ironically includes the just as relevant meaning that servants' employment depends on their emotional employment of constant appeasement. The inclusive ironic meaning emerges: Collier teaches that the household bully (and bullies in general) revel in compelling underlings into *both* emotional *and* physical labor.

Through this emotional exploitation, the tyrant prevents the servants from asserting their own autonomy, as the persona makes clear when she insists, "Don't suffer her, the whole day, to look up, or say her very soul is her own" (56). The servant's "soul" belongs to the tyrant because the servant must constantly appeasing their tyrant's malicious passions. And since the servant's "soul" is also the tyrant's "own," servant and tyrant become one. Perversely, Collier echoes coverture's legal fiction of unity by implying that acts of subjugation marry tormenter and servant together into one "soul."

As Collier's persona concludes her chapter on the lady's mistreatment of servants, she notes that should the servant start feeling indifferent to the torments, the servant becomes unemployable:

But let us suppose the patience of your miserable object [of the servant] quite exhausted, and that she is worked into a proper indifference about pleasing you; so that you should find that she minded very little what you said to her; only (considering yours as a profitable place) that she was resolved to bear all your tricks, for the sake of your money, then part with her directly, and get another: for all the pleasure of Tormenting is lost as soon as your subject is become insensible to your strokes. (56)



This concluding lesson is inclusively ironic. On the one hand, Collier is aware that masters mainly care about their servants' physical labor and are cruelly indifferent towards their emotional pain. On the other, Collier satirically teaches that beyond the "pleasure of Tormenting" is the stark truth that master/mistress-servant relationships are purely transactional arrangements "for the sake of your money." This lesson teaches that emotional exploitation resembles coverture because emotional labor *affectively covers* over the reality that servants also have access to wages, an alternative form of property they acquire from their employers. Beneath the tyrant's absolute dominion, lies the ironic proprietary fact that the workers share in their tyrants' monetary property. Collier's persona is perhaps all too aware of this irony, so she directs the tyrant to let go of this indifferent servant because such servants come to the self-interested realization that their suffering is exchangeable for the tyrant's money. The usage of the second-person possessive in "*your* money" underscores the sense that servants want to dispossess tyrants of their ["your"] moneyed properties.

For the persona, *affective coverture* preserves the fiction of absolute dominion because this kind of coverture distracts servants into emotionally pleasing their employers. Should affective coverture fail, then the illusion falls apart, and the servants will become more cunningly aware of their rights to the tyrant's property and perhaps will want more wages. The servant realizes a new ironic truth: callous employers are indifferent to the servants' suffering, and the "insensible," financially shrewd servants can acquire the wage-based property. For the tyrants, affective coverture functions as an exploitative strategy of preventing servants from having an ironic awareness. In more Marxist terms, affective coverture produces a "false consciousness," in which torment prevents workers from

realizing the exploitative conditions of their existence.<sup>191</sup> Coverture, whether it be marital coverture or the tyrant's affective coverture, enforces the fiction of coercive unity: husband and wife or tyrant and servant unify to serve only the interests of the "exterior" authority. Promoters of this coverture distract "interior" servants from gaining the ironic awareness that would threaten coverture's illusory unity. Irony reveals tension, opposition, and dissonance. Irony, Collier illuminates, empowers. An ironic sensitivity enables the servant to see beneath what affective coverture hides: the household dynamics allows both absolute dominion and shared wage-based properties. In Collier's text, however, she never presents the servants as gaining ironic sensitivity, unfortunately. The true wielders of ironic tormenting, for Collier, are the married women, husbands, masters, and patronesses. Ironic sensitivity is an unrealized potentiality for these servants.

#### 4. The Tormenters' Affective Performances and The Torment of Unmarried Women

For the privileged tormenters of the household, affective tormenting itself becomes a labored performance, rivalling the emotional work of their servants. Collier suggests

---

<sup>191</sup> As the *Marxists Internet Archive Encyclopedia* (1999-2008) summaries, " 'false consciousness' refers to the ideology dominating the consciousness of exploited groups and classes which at the same time justifies and perpetuates their exploitation" ("False Consciousness"). My usage of this term falls in line with Ron Eyeran's distillation of György Lukács's development of the idea: "according to Lukács, false consciousness becomes the normal way of perceiving and acting within capitalist society. The social totality disappears behind a veil of commodity and individual relations" (50). See the *Marxist Internet Archive Encyclopedia* entry, "False Consciousness," and Eyeran's "False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory" (1981).

throughout her satire that abusers must engage in labors of performance in order to cover their subordinates as their affective property. Whether or not the tormentor genuinely feels cruel passions is irrelevant. What matters is that the tormenter ensures that the target continually remains subjugated. The persona's emphasis on performance is apparent in the chapter, "To the Patronesses of an humble Companion," where she instructs the "patroness" how to mistreat her dependents of unmarried women.

Before describing the patroness's performance of cruelty, I must give some background on why Collier focuses on the torment of unmarried women. Firstly, it is worth noting that Jane Collier herself lived as an unmarried woman, who, as Audrey Bilger notes, was "without a settled home and dependent on friends and family for support and lodging" at the time of *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting's* publication (9). Before Collier was born, her family was hampered by financial debt, leaving Collier "without a sizeable dowry" and hence condemning her to a life of spinsterhood and financial dependence.<sup>192</sup> Unmarried women, like Collier, were treated as outcasts in English society because there was a pervasive social pressure that a woman should marry a husband. The historian Bridget Hill (2001) has documented the stigmatized situation of unmarried women in the seventeenth-through mid-nineteenth-centuries.<sup>193</sup> She notes that social values during this period dictated that the purpose of a woman is to marry a husband. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, writes in 1711, "Any woman who died unmarried is looked upon to die in a state of reprobation. To confirm this belief, they reason, that the end of the creation of women is to increase and multiply" (qtd. in Hill 8). Montagu's judgment affirms her society's

---

<sup>192</sup> For more on Collier's life, see Bilger 9-17. See Rizzo, *Companions Without Vows*.

<sup>193</sup> When summarizing eighteenth-century attitudes toward unmarried women, I have consulted Bridget Hill's *Women Slone: Spinsters in England, 1660-1850* (2001).

delimitation of women's proper social roles as persons destined for marriage and reproduction. Because of this ideological construction of the female subject, unmarried women occupied a nearly precarious position in eighteenth-century British society.

Collier herself alludes to unmarried women's economic precarity. In the chapter directed to "Patronesses," Collier's persona herself notes, "[C]onsidering the great number of families there are, whose fortunes are so large, that the addition of one, or even two, would hardly be felt, that they should not more frequently take into their houses, and under their protection, young women who have been well educated; and who, by the misfortune or death of their friends, have been left destitute of all means of subsistence" (56). Collier further points out a double standard: "There are many methods for young men, in the like circumstances, to acquire a genteel maintenance; but for a girl, I know not of one way of support, that does not, by the custom of the world, throw her below the rank of a gentlewoman" (56). The plight of spinsters, Collier reveals, is alleviated mostly by securing another's patronage, and even in this "one way of support," the unmarried are relegated to "below the rank of a gentlewoman." Collier draws attention to the economic immobility of unmarried women, and she criticizes the fact that society affords more opportunities to single men than it does to single women.

Thus, Collier's satire on women's diminished agency is deeply complex because it draws attention to the stratified reality of the domestic household. At the top of privileged social hierarchy are the "exterior" authorities of men; beneath them, are the married women; and beneath them are servants and unmarried women. In this descending order of subordination, the chain of tormenting unfolds in which married women and patronesses torment their social inferiors. Collier emphasizes that coverture's proprietary violence sets

off this chain of tormenting that ends in workers and dependent women becoming their tyrants' affective property.

In order for these more privileged women to treat their subordinates as their property, the persona instructs them to engage in acts of affective performance. This sense of theatricality is evident in the following scenario's instructions:

If your son, Master Jacky, should have cut Miss Lucy [the hypothetical name of the unmarried dependent] across the face with his new knife; or your daughter, Miss Isabella, should have pinched her arms black and blue, or scratched her face and neck, with her pretty nails, so as to have fetched the blood; and poor Lucy, to prevent any farther mischief to her person, should come and make her complaint to you; do you, in the first place, rate her soundly for provoking the poor children...But if by the blood streaming from her face or arms, it appears plainly, that the girl has been very much hurt, you may (to shew your great impartiality) say, that you will send for the children in, and reprimand them. (67)

I will interrupt to make some relevant observations before continuing describing this passage. The persona first sets up an imaginary conflict—the violent situation of abusive children in which one of the children happens to have a “*new knife*”—, where she scripts the addressed patroness to victim-blame the female dependent cruelly by scolding her “for provoking the poor children.” In doing so, the patroness demeans the dependent as of lesser importance than the children while at the same time giving a “shew” of her “great impartiality.” Tormenting is a “shew” of affectation in which the abusive performer externalizes the passion for cruelty into scripted actions.

Collier's persona stresses further this performance when she discusses how the patroness should act if the dependent beseeches the patroness "not to be too severe" in reprimanding the violent children. In this situation, the persona directs,

Now let your countenance grow very fierce; ring the bell most furiously; then sternly order the children to be brought before you; and utter such threats, as will make poor Miss Lucy tremble for the consequence, and heartily repent of her complaint. But how will she be surprised, if you act this scene well! (67-68)

The persona accentuates the importance of external "shew" when she urges the patroness to shape her "countenance" into fury and express physical gestures of ringing the "bell most furiously." Because she notes that these actions are part of a "scene," she frames cruelty as a theatrical performance. This "scene" then concludes with the following twist:

As soon as the children come into the room, begin to rate them most severely.—But for what?—Why for disobeying your commands, and condescending to play, and be familiar, with any thing but their equals! You may conclude also, by threatening them with the greatest punishment, if ever they are again guilty of so high an offense, as that of speaking to a wretch so much beneath them in birth, fortune, and station, as Miss Lucy. (68)

In a devilish feat, the patroness ends up insulting Miss Lucy's social rank as an unmarried dependent. Her taunt itself is ironic in that it incorporates the following nested meanings:

I. Surface-level meanings that revel in tormenting:

- (1) The persona enthusiastically revels in describing the abuse.
- (2) The patroness and children revel in Lucy's suffering.

II. Sub-surface satirical meanings that revolt against the consequences of tormenting:

(3) Collier finds revolting that the patroness causes children to perpetuate the hierarchical prejudice.

(4) Collier laments that unmarried women have limited agency for seeking affective comfort.

III. Further Satiric Ironies that Reveal the Entanglement of Absolute Dominion with Alternative Shared Property:

(5) This patroness asserts her absolute dominion by affectively branding this unmarried woman as her exploited property.

(6) By creating this unamiable community, tormenter and tormented share their affects since the sufferer's pain is also the tyrant's pleasure and vice versa.

Collier includes all these possible meanings, and this irony is indeed relational because all meanings interact with each other to create this complex entanglement. The irony is also affective because these entangled meanings reference the dependent's desire for solace, pain, and humiliation and the persona's, patroness', and children's malice, feelings of superiority, and revelry.

These itemized meanings invite us especially to consider how each of these affects relate to each other. Because the surface-level perspective in this text is the persona's instructional discourse, her affects of revelry become the dominant affective mood throughout *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*. What *covers* the dependent in a manner that echoes *coverture's* legal covering is the persona's enjoyment in giving instructions. If we are

to take the persona's enthusiastic, instructional rhetoric as the text's surface style, then this style superficially conceals both the dependent's affects and the relevant satirical meanings of 3 through 6. This insight on affects' potential to cover suggests that affects can be just as controlling as patriarchal coverture. Coverture lives on, but in the form of the affects. If coverture demands coercive unity in the household, then the uncovered meanings and affects threaten to disunify the instructional unity that the persona's revelry encourages. However, irony's inclusivity (as well as the orderly consistency of instructional rhetoric) contain this affective and semantic disunity.

Collier's irony, it follows, is of two minds. Just as eighteenth-century property paradoxically entails absolute dominion and shared property, her irony not only conveys its own absoluteness through the persona's dominating instruction, but also subversively fragments into the aforementioned satirical meanings. In many ways, Collier's irony emulates the paradoxical inclusiveness of domestic households composed of consenting communities or "un-amiable communities." The creation of these communities, the persona emphasizes, depends on the tyrant's manipulation of her social inferiors. For example, the persona instructs the patroness how to make the orphaned unmarried woman part of her domestic community:

Begin talking to her of her parents; raise all her tender affections; collect every little circumstance that will awaken her grief, and dissolve her into tears, by painting her loss in the liveliest colours. Carry the scene so far, as to mingle tears with her; and utter the strongest professions, of being to her, yourself, a second father, mother, friend, and protectress. The poor girl's heart will be almost melted with tender sorrow for the loss of her parents, and with overflowing gratitude to you for your



goodness. But, as soon as the latter has, by degrees, begun to overspread her mind with a joy, that will in a manner dispel her sorrow; can you, my dear pupil, carry this pleasant sport so high, as in that instant change your kind behavior? To grow in a rage with her for nothing; and to make the girl more sensible than before, of the loss of indulgent parents, by the cruel reverse she now so strongly experiences? If you can do this, you will have the highest seat in my temple. (68-69)

The persona outlines a labor of emotional manipulation where the instructed tyrant puppets the dependent into alternating states of grief and joy. This labor is performative since the tyrant must “carry the scene so far,” performing emotions through scripted stage directions of “mingle[d] tears” and “strongest professions” of companionship and care. Even the word “carry” heightens the physical laboriousness of acting as a tyrant. The performance of emotions secures in turn the dependent’s “overflowing gratitude.” In this respect, the tyrant creates an artificial, amiable community between ironically compassionate tyrant and suffering dependent. It is a community founded on the tyrant’s false kindness that masks the ulterior motive of taming the dependent’s affections. The tyrant performatively constructs a communal household that demands the absolute emotional dependence of the unmarried woman. Yet even though the female tyrant exacts mastery over her subordinates, this tyrant is still a performer who reaffirms coverture’s domination of women. There is then no true freedom for the human actors in these domestic settings, but only the semblance of it.

## 5. Revelry and Revolt in Marriage: Wives against Husbands

In this text's first section addressed to "exterior" authorities whom "law or custom" has granted "visible authority," Collier's persona outlines a series of intricate tactics of how social superiors can performatively entrap their inferiors into cycles of emotional employment. In the second section intended for those with an "interior power, arising from the affections," the persona details more tactics of emotional manipulation. Collier's discussion of "interior" revolt has four chapters: "To Lovers"; "To the Wife"; "To the Friend"; "To your Good Sort of People" (82, 93, and 107). In the first chapter, "To Lovers," which is only two paragraphs long, the persona does not give much direction to lovers because she reasons that readers can find excellent examples of tormenting in Restoration comedies. In the latter three chapters, the persona does provide a more extensive list of recommendations, some of which I will examine here. In "To the Wife," "To the Friend," and "To your Good Sort of People," Collier's persona describes different tactics that wives and female companionate friends can use to gain the upper hand. This chapter will not discuss Collier's directions to female friends because the subject of female friendship, like the topic of childhood education that the first section raises, covers a different sort of power dynamics that is beyond my argument's interest in the relations between women and coverture. Instead, I will devote the remainder of the analysis to her directions to wives. Collier teaches that marriages are affective entanglements and that the only way for "interior" wives to exercise proprietary authority is through emotional abuse.

According to Collier's persona, women's primary means of authority lies in exercising "interior" tormenting, whereas men can exploit the "exterior" authority granted to

them by the law. This asymmetrical binary between “interior” women and “exterior” men indicates that women hold an unequal position in relation to men. Collier earlier alludes to this inequality in the chapter, “*To the Husband*” in her text’s first section on “exterior” tormenters. In this chapter, Collier’s persona acknowledges that the “sport of Tormenting is not the husband’s chief game” because she alludes to the grim realities that “[i]f he grows indifferent to his wife, or comes to hate her, he wishes her dead, or absent; and therefore, if in low life, often takes violent measures, as to break her bones, or to break her heart: and if in high life, he keeps mistresses abroad, and troubles not his head, one way or other, about his wife” (77). Acknowledging that husbands can exact brutal, visible, and scarring forms of abuse, the persona deepens the contrast between the “exterior” husbands and the “interior” wives.

Collier revisits this contrast in her *Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*’s “Conclusion” where she points out a sexist double standard. The persona describes a scenario where the wife’s decision to punish her husband for having a mistress causes the community to rebuke her: “that rustic Jobson [or stereotypical name for a country fellow], when his wife offends him, takes the strap; and where the strength of arm is with the wife, she generally uses it in a manner to excite her neighbours to lampoon her by a Skimmington” (127). In a footnote, Audrey Bilger clarifies via the *Oxford English Dictionary* that the “Skimmington” is a ““ludicrous procession...usually intended to bring ridicule or odium upon a woman or her husband in cases where the one was unfaithful to, or ill-treated, the other” (127). In this spectacle of the “Skimmington,” the community members reinforce patriarchal sexism because their mocking revelry demeans the wife’s physical revolt. Collier demonstrates that

any sign of self-assertion on the wife's part is met with the repressive apparatus of the community's festive humiliation.

Overall, the patriarchal order conditions women into valuing the repression of their passions as the virtue of prudence. In her satire, Collier frames the wife's overall affective experience as involving labors of concealment. After describing the Skimmington scene, the persona discusses how she "once heard a lady declare, that she carefully concealed from her *friends* every thing she disliked, as she knew that to be the only chance she had for not being teased and plagued with every little thing that was disagreeable to her. And can any one, from experience, contradict her prudence, founded, no doubt, on just observation?" (127). The social virtue of prudence is nothing more than another performed labor of concealing one's "interior" affective displeasure. In these examples, Collier demonstrates that in contrast to the husband who can easily resort to physical violence, these wives must performatively conceal their "true" affective interiority. The wife's outward performance of concealment exposes the fact that the logic of coverture veils the wife's legal and emotional identity.

Collier develops this mode of affective concealment more elaborately in *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting's* chapter addressed to wives in the second section. Key to her discussion of this mode is that the persona must describe wifely torment in relation to the husband. For example, when describing marital conflicts and separation, she writes,

The husband may bluster, and rave, and talk of his authority and power, as much as he pleases; but it is very easy to grow into such a perfect disregard of such storms, that, by wrapping one's self up in a proper degree of contempt, they will blow as vainly over our heads, as the wind over our houses. (83)

The persona recommends that wives counteract their husband's irate boasting of his "authority and power" through an exterior affectation of "wrapping one's self up in a proper degree of contempt." The idea of "wrapping" conveys the paradox of both externally bearing hatefulness and yet covering over one's affective interiority. As a tactic of resistance, affective torment brings the wife into visibility and invisibility: it uncovers her emotional resistance but also covers over her interiors. The wife's "authority and power," the persona suggests, remains in a liminal condition of both unveiling and veiling herself. The wife can never extricate her fully from the logic of coverture because to resist its disempowering effects, the wife must embody coverture's trace of being enwrapped and covered.

The passage as a whole ironically entangles the following sobering meanings: (1) though women can rival their husbands through affected contempt, they are, nonetheless, legally powerless in comparison to their blustering, privileged husbands; and (2) though women can affect contempt as a means of tactical survival in perhaps abusive or unjust marriages, they access their freedom to feel emotions through artifice and performance. Collier's persona forces the question: can wives have access to authentic feeling, or does most of their emotional laboring produce primarily counterfeit passions? The more we think through these questions the more it becomes clear that women's emotional freedom is tied to legal and economic freedom.

When Collier's persona introduces the financial properties afforded to women, she further alludes to the limited mobility of women. The persona writes,

Besides, if there are not emoluments enough in the husband's house, to make it worth while to bear the ill-humours raised by our own frowardness, separation is the

word; to which if a husband will not consent, a cause of cruelty against him, in Doctors Commons, will soon bring him to; for (as I have heard) the husband there, by paying the expences of both sides, will be obliged, in a manner, to supply his wife with the means of carrying her own point, and will be glad therefore to make any conditions with her. But a woman of prudence will know when she is well; will take no such precipitate steps; but will rejoice in the discovery of her husband's great affection towards her, as a means for pursuing the course of Teazing and Tormenting, which I here recommend. (83)

The ironies resonant in this passage are manifold. On the surface, the persona, with a self-assured tone, tells the wife to pursue "separation" if there are not enough "emoluments" to make his "ill-humour" bearable. These "emoluments" refer to the domestic necessities, such as food and clothing, that the common law of agency entitles the wife to buy in her husband's name, and they can also refer to the wife's pin money, which Susan Staves defines as, "[m]oney paid by a husband to a wife according to the terms of...the marriage settlement" (239).<sup>194</sup> On the one hand, the wife enjoys the alternative proprietary freedom through these "emoluments." However, as Staves has clarified, judges of the eighteenth-century equity courts developed "idiosyncratic protective rules" that "minimize[d] the possibilities that women could take property intended for maintenance and use it as capital" (135).<sup>195</sup> Staves concludes that these legal restrictions were fundamentally due to the patriarchal prejudice that distrusted women's right to manage property and capital. In

---

<sup>194</sup> On the definitions of pin law, see Susan Staves's *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* (1990).

<sup>195</sup> On the legal history surrounding the restrictive legal decisions regarding pin money, see Staves 131-161.

addition, as I already noted, securing necessities is done in the husband's name and requires his consent, so in this respect, women's consumer freedom is still circumscribed. Thus, the "emoluments" that the persona references are not truly "enough." The irony is that necessities and pin money afford the wife an insufficient compensation for enduring her husband's "ill-humour."

To further reinforce the idea that wives have restricted freedom, Collier's persona implies that marital "separation" is just as bad as marriage. If this is the case, then her tone of hopeful optimism that the husband "will be obliged" and "will be glad" to support the wife after divorce is dubious. So it makes sense when the persona notes that the "woman of prudence...will take no such steps" in agreeing to the conditions of divorce. What incites the persona's melancholic suspicion towards a happy ending are the following unencouraging facts surrounding marital separation in eighteenth-century England. In legal proceedings regarding separation, the wife could only secure the return of her property if there was a contractual agreement beforehand. Moreover, grounds for granting true divorce – *divortium a vinculo matrimonio* – in which the spouses could remarry depended on the condition of consanguinity, bigamy, or issues of sexual incapacity such as impotence, sterility, or injury. In contrast, the "separation" alluded to by the persona is properly called *divortium a mensa et thoro*. In this arrangement, the couple is still legally married and could not thus remarry, but they did not need to live together. These kinds of separations were granted on grounds of adultery, desertion, or cruelty (which involves mental or physical abuse and which the persona suggests that the wife could do to force the husband to consent to a separation).<sup>196</sup>

---

<sup>196</sup> I owe this summary on the two types of divorce available in early modern and eighteenth-century England to the following sources: Nancy F. Cott's "Divorce and the Changing Status of Women in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts" (1976), Amy Louise

Aware then of these two kinds of divorce, Collier's persona hints at the ironic reality that should the wife acquire a legal separation or *divortium a mensa et thoro*, she still could not remarry, and she would still need to have a separate contractual agreement to ensure that the husband returns her property. Thus, it is no wonder that the persona can only recommend the "course of Teazing and Tormenting" as the avenue of freedom for the wife. Further deepening the irony is that a wife who pursues this tormenting "course" is a "woman of prudence." Recall the earlier passage where the "prudence" compels the lady to "conceal" her discomfort from her friends. Collier reveals that "prudence" is itself a woman's virtuous performance of repressively covering her disgust towards the legal failings of the marriage institution. In the same manner that servants must emotionally employ themselves to appease their masters, wives also employ themselves to smother their disgust under the cover of "prudence." And for Collier's persona, "prudence" is twisted into cruelty. The wife's malicious affect directed at others at the same time veils over her revolting disgust. In sum, affective torment ironically includes both outward inflicted violence and inward self-inflicted *prudent* repression. It is not only coverture violently erasing the woman's legal identity. The divorce laws also deny women the full freedom to remarry and to access guaranteed compensation for their property. As a consequence of these oppressive laws, the wife asserts her narrow authority through the paradoxical "prudence" of affective torment.

It would be helpful here to review how the ironic meanings I have put forward in the last paragraph are indeed *affective*. To make the ironies in this passage truly affective,

---

Erickson's "Coverture and Capitalism" (2005), George Elliott Howard's *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, Susan Staves' *Married Women's Separate Property in England* (1904), and Sybil Wolfram's "Divorce in England 1700-1857" (1985) For a discussion of sexual incapacity, see Thomas A. Foster's "Deficient Husbands: Manhood, Sexual Incapacity, and Male Marital Sexuality in Seventeenth-Century New England" (1999).



Collier's persona melancholically revolts against the legal system's systematic suppression of women's material and economic autonomy. Yet the persona's self-assured revelry in tormenting ironically covers and uncovers the opposite affect of revolting disgust. Why then couldn't Collier just make an unironic satire that instead points out more explicitly and vehemently the systematic inequalities? Irony enacts coverture's covering of the woman's rights. In these ways, Collier's irony formally conveys that (1) coverture repressively veils the woman and (2) anti-coverture critique must uncover continuously the woman's alternative modes of emoting her freedom. The form of irony marries together the modus operandi of coverture and anti-coverture: concealing and revealing, and repressive revelry and unleashed revolt.

Furthermore, Collier's satire entangles spouses' marital affections with the legal restrictions of women's property rights. This entanglement of affect with law is most suggestive when the persona brings up what happens when spouses acquire property or "fortune" during marriage:

If you [the wife] bring a large fortune to your husband, custom and example will justify you in being as insolent as you please....you should be as insolent as if you had increased his store by thousands....If a man marries you without a fortune, and raises you, perhaps, many degrees from the state to which you was born, is it not for his honour, that you should shew him that your spirit can rise with your fortune? In what can a woman shew her spirit more, than in insolence and opposition? (84)

The implied satiric message here is that the wife's "insolence and opposition" is a justified response to her husband acquiring her "large fortune." The persona then points out the opposite situation where the husband's rank or "honour" helps the wife "without a fortune"

rise socially. To de-emphasize this honourable husband's agency, the persona declares that the wife can "shew" that her "spirit can rise" in equal measure. By "spirit," she refers to the wife's rising spirit of insolence. Because she pairs her rising spirit "with...[her] fortune," Collier's persona intimates that there is a close connection between accumulating insolent passion and accumulating material property. Moreover, "rise" has a latently melancholic valence since the medical model of melancholy theorizes this condition as the vapours, humours, and bodily spirits *rising* from the spleen to create fanciful delusions in the brain. Accordingly, the wife achieves her corporeal property of spirited insolence through a melancholic event of the rising bodily agencies supplanting the law of moderate rationality.

As a result of supplanting reason, the tormenting wife engages in ironic insults to destabilize the husband's understanding. As the persona slyly asks, "are ye not taught from your cradles, that submission and acquiescence is *meanness*, and unbecoming a woman of spirit? Not but you may insult your husband frequently with the words duty and obedience, provided you never are *mean* enough to bring them into your practice" (84, emphasis in the original). This recommendation resonates contradictory, ironic senses in which "submission and acquiescence" and affirming one's "duty and obedience" are not usually "mean" behaviors. However, relative to the tormenting persona, these behaviors are "mean" or perversely unvirtuous because they reinstate the wife as passively subordinate to the law of coverture. It follows then that malicious insolence is what is not "mean." Insolence becomes the "fundamentally stable" shared norm that persona and addressed wives practice. By being insolently mean, the wife pursues an affective subversion of husbands and coverture law.

In addition to disrupting these virtuous norms, the instructed wife challenges the economic and proprietary values underlying marriage. Throughout the first section of this

chapter addressed to wives, Collier's persona repeatedly lingers around the fortune that each marital partner brings to marriage. This obsession with fortune is not without its historical context. Ingrid H. Tague (2001) has noted that the early eighteenth century witnessed a rise of literary works, namely conduct manuals, that express an anxiety towards mercenary models of marriage. These texts, Tague argues, critique the fact that marriage was seen less as a divinely sanctioned Christian institution affording social stability and more as a business arrangement meant to increase wealth.<sup>197</sup> Conduct manuals geared towards women recommended that women love their husbands in order to counteract the mercenary view of marriage. Notable about these conduct books, as Tague makes clear, is the insistence that women assume their submissive role before the husband: "Women were told," Tague writes, "that they must love the man they married in order to obey him" (85). In response to these conduct books' rehearsal of patriarchal views, Collier articulates the opposite: obedience to the husband is "unbecoming" for the "woman of spirit" precisely because this conduct validates the husband's absolute dominion over the wife's fortune. Collier argues that women find alternative agency through affective cruelty. When discussing the idea that women should torment husbands even when the husband brings his fortune into the marriage, the persona exclaims, "There is, besides, another deep malignant pleasure, that must arise in the breast of every woman, that makes a vexatious and tormenting wife, to a man who has generously lifted her from distress and obscurity, into affluence and splendor" (84). The persona declares that marriage does not "make" a woman. Rather, this "deep

---

<sup>197</sup> See Tague, "Love, Honor, and Obedience: Fashionable Women and the Discourse of Marriage in the Early Eighteenth Century" (2001).

malignant pleasure...makes a vexatious and tormenting wife.” A woman’s value depends not on the husband’s emoluments, but rather on the woman’s passionate resistance.

Affects of revelry and revolt become comparable forms of monetary emoluments because these affects acquire economic, quantifiable values. We note this economic valence when she advises, “[Y]ou may confess, to take prejudices, nay, aversions, to those who would endeavour to share with you the least portion of your husband’s affections...you need not fear shewing the highest degree of jealousy towards every woman he speaks to: nay, you may, to shew your extravagant fondness for him,...upbraid him with unkindness, for looking at any woman besides yourself” (87). Collier’s persona equates the wife’s affection to a “least portion” shared with the husband and now his mistress. “Portion” conjures the relevant eighteenth-century meanings of “the part or share of an estate given or passing by law to an heir or other beneficiary” and a marriage “dowry,” as the *OED* tells us (“portion, n.” def. 1c and 1d). Through these extra meanings, the persona idealizes the wife’s affection as equally valid forms of property whose “least portion” can accumulate, be shared, or be withheld. Collier’s lesson is that in a world where they can lose their material property, wives can revolt through excessive affects such as “highest degree of jealousy, “extravagant fondness,” and presumably endless “unkindness.” For wives to resist the system of coverture, they must accumulate their own *portion* of affectively expressed capital.

However, Collier’s persona contradicts her very directions on affective excess when she at different points also insists that wives be economical in their emotional displays of torment and ill-humours. For example, she cautions wives against “profligate behavior,” “extravagance,” “violent termagancy of temper,” reasoning instead that “delicate strokes” and “pretended fondness” is preferred (85, 86); when speaking of the husband’s adultery,

she demands that “open rage and resentment against him for his inconstancy must be suppressed, as it might drive him from the company of his cross wife to the arms of his mistress” (87). The persona offers conflicting advice on whether to be excessively or economically tormenting, yet she stays true to her “spirit of contradiction” by reveling in being inconsistent. What is truly extravagant about the persona is her refusal to offer a coherent instruction. In this respect, she commits to the inclusive nature of her ironic contradictoriness: she embraces both extravagant and controlled forms of tormenting. The wife’s incoherent affections materialize as an incoherent affective property that the husband’s reasoning can never hope to *own* and *cover*.

However, fulfilling her ironic role, this wife assaults other women. In a disturbing recommendation, the persona notes that the married woman can attack a husband’s mistress:

However, I think you may venture to throw forth as much rage and venom as you please against the hated strumpet who has deprived you of your lawful property. You may excuse your husband, by inveighing against the cunning arts of bad women, who make it their business to draw aside easy-temper’d, unwary men. You may declare your fondness so great for dear Billy, that you can forgive *him* any thing, altho’ you are determined, if possible, to stab or poison the base wanton harlot who has seduced him from your lawful bed. (87-88 emphasis in the original)

The persona sarcastically intones that while the wife should lay blame on the “cunning arts of bad women,” the wife “can forgive *him* any thing.” In these instructions, Collier’s persona intimates that the wife can never extricate herself from discourses of female subordination because she demeans “bad women” and forgives the male wrongdoer.

However, these expressions tactically repurpose the patriarchal discourse for proprietary and

affective ends. The persona reveals that forgiving the husband enables the wife to manipulate him: “[C]asting your fond arms about his [your husband’s] neck, you may utter such a mixture of feigned love, and real reproaches, as will entangle him too strongly to make him break from you, and yet will make him wish himself surrounded with a swarm of hornets, rather than encircled with such tormenting endearments” (88). This torment that the wife accomplishes is just as insidious as the patroness’ torment of her unmarried female dependent. The wife “entangles” her adulterous husband as her property by undermining him through affective tactics of “feigned love” and “real reproaches.” By making him perceive both false love and real blame, the wife confuses the husband’s sense of reality and, in effect, robs him of having a coherent understanding of his wife. Collier demonstrates that performative acts of “feigned love” and “real reproaches” situate the tormenting wife within a liminal role between artifice and reality. Collier’s wife subversively deconstructs the virtue of submissive love as nothing more but a necessary tactic of performative manipulation. To boot, Collier satirically deconstructs coverture and marriage as legal institutions that engender these tactics. There is nothing “natural” about these proprietary arrangements. Rather, coverture scripts spouses into vying for proprietary ownership of each other’s material and affective properties. Because wives are merely actors on coverture’s stage, they are not simply tormenters, but also – ironically – are victims conditioned by coverture’s logic of subordination.

We should note that the wife of coverture has only tentative affective control over her husband. In her conclusion to the chapter directed towards wives, the persona assures her pupils that should the wife “appear so perfectly dejected and low-spirited,” the husband “will find his own spirits depressed; he will be obliged to stifle every chearful incident he

might have collected for your amusement; he must either give himself up to melancholy and discomfort at home...or he must seek relief by flight, and associating with his companions abroad” (92). It is crucial that the final affective state that the persona describes is melancholy, and that this state is one that the wife produces in the husband. Yet if we are to think that the wife secures absolute control over her husband, Collier’s persona is quick to add that the husband can always “seek relief by flight, and associating with his companions abroad,” in order to remind her pupils that the husband still has a greater degree of mobility than the wife. Thus, the art of tormenting yields modest and momentary results. By suggesting that the husband can pursue other avenues of affective relief (not only through his “companions” but also through adulterous affairs), Collier’s persona melancholically revolts against the greater affective freedom of husbands.

In order to critique the exclusion of women’s legal identity, Collier prioritizes inclusiveness. Thus, the wife must internalize coverture’s violence by cruelly subordinating others. Additionally, Collier’s inclusive satire results in the persona’s antithetical thinking. Her persona, for instance, cannot think of directions for wifely torment without thinking of directions for the husband’s torment (which she discusses in a separate, albeit tellingly short, chapter in the first section on exterior authorities). This antithetical thinking reaches its climax in the conclusion of the fourth chapter, titled “*To Your Good Sort of People: being an Appendage to the foregoing Chapter* [directed to female friends],” where she compares the tormenting women to the opposite of a prudent Princess. In the following passage, the persona invokes this counterexample of the “person uniformly cautious, both in words and actions, never to give the least offence,” whom she stresses are the tormenters’ “greatest and most powerful enemy”:

If there should now be a living example of a person, that, with as much exterior power as any one can possess, next to our Sovereign himself, and with as much interior power as the affections of a whole nation can give, never exerts that power, but for the pleasure and benefit, instead of the Torment, of all her dependents? Should we not, my dear pupils, alarmed by the danger of such a shining exemplar, all assemble together, in order, by some envious detraction, to pull down this our greatest enemy? Alas, she is above our reach! Therefore have we no hope left, but in trying to reverse an old general observation, and in arduously endeavouring to shew, that these our precepts will be more forcible towards promoting the love of Tormenting, than the most royal and illustrious example will be, towards inculcating and teaching every Christian virtue. (112)

This “she” whose presumably conciliatory comportment makes her into the tormenting wives’ “greatest enemy” is, as Audrey Bilger identifies in a footnote, Augusta of Saxe-Coburg, Princess of Wales (1719-1772). In the text, the persona earlier alludes to this Princess as a “young lady of title and fortune, who had servants, friends, and dependents, at her command” and “was afflicted with a painful disorder” of never saying a “cross or fretful thing to any one!” (112). According to *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding*, Collier intended this reference as a “Compliment,”<sup>198</sup> yet we might wonder if this compliment is ironic. The persona suggests that without the comforts of her “title and fortune” and her attendants “at her command,” the Princess might not be so generous in her

---

<sup>198</sup> The Princess would not have been a reference to Caroline of Brandenburg-Ansbach (1683-1737), the Queen consort to and wife of King George II (1683-1760). As Collier writes in the *Correspondence*, “[T]he book is in an oblique manner address’d to the Princess of Wales by the Compliment intended for her in the 4<sup>th</sup> Chap: of the second part.” See *Correspondence* (1993), xxxii, n. 38.



demeanor. Only when the female Princess can wield absolute dominion, this woman, Collier insinuates, can be kind. Yet, the persona soon undercuts the Princess' dominion when she compares her "exterior power as any one can possess" to the "Sovereign himself," who could refer both to the political authority of a monarch and the divine authority of God. In many ways, Collier's evokes this Princess and the superior male Sovereign, so that she can contextualize that women's property issues are connected to the wider political context of a "whole nation" giving as tribute its "interior power" of "affections" to royal and divine figures. She satirizes that married women ironically give "tribute" to coverture's sovereignty through their vicious subordination of servants and female dependents.

Ultimately, *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* explores the possibility of female agency in a male-dominated world. In the passage above, the persona suggests that women express themselves through mutiny. Apparently, she is averse to the idea of her pupils submitting to this Princess. She questions if she and her "dear pupils" can "all assemble together...by some envious detraction, to pull down" this "enemy" of the Princess. Should these wives "give" her affections, they would be dispossessing themselves of their storehouse of "interior power." Giving tribute to the Princess is an affective taxation that denies female representation. Further twisting the knife of this satiric lesson is that the persona does name the male Sovereign as the "enemy." It's rather the docile Princess. Her purported benevolent caution turns out to be much more distressing than the male Sovereign's rule. There are two ways to interpret the persona's distaste towards the Princess. One, female resistance remains limited and leads to intra-communal targeting of other women. Two, female resistance must begin by rejecting those who readily emulate the patriarchal virtue of cautious prudence. Neither of these interpretations are to be denied.

Collier's inclusive irony invites readers to recognize the nuanced complexities of female agency.

To better understand why the persona momentarily suggests mutiny, we have to consider the pertinent legal statute that judges wives who murder their husbands have committed an act of petty treason. Frances Dolan (1992) explains that “[s]tatutes of the realm, beginning in 1352 with 25 Edward III and continuing through the following centuries until this statute was repealed in 1858, constructed a wife’s murder of her husband or a servant’s murder of his master as a kind of treason, and thus as analogous to any threat to or assault on the sovereign and his or her government” (317). Dolan argues that these laws viewed these murders treasonous because they “challenged [the] patriarchal, hierarchical social order” (317).<sup>199</sup> In Collier’s text, Collier does not advocate that pupils treasonously murder their husbands or kill the Princess since the punishment for both petty and high treason, as Dolan notes, is the same: burning at the stake.<sup>200</sup> Instead, she recommends that wives turn “towards promoting the love of Tormenting” in domestic spheres, and in this way, emotional abuse becomes an alternative kind of treason against the patriarchy. For Collier, radical change of social values begins at the bottom-up in the home.

Most promising about this bottom-up resistance is that it is shared. By invoking the “we” and “our” and calling her tormenters to “assemble together,” Collier’s persona forges an “un-amiable community” of subversive and affective ironists. The spirit of inclusive irony leads her to educate a semi-inclusive collective of tormenting wives. Even though her

---

<sup>199</sup> See Dolan, “The Subordinate(s) Plot: Petty Treason and the Forms of Domestic Rebellion” (1992).

<sup>200</sup> See also Dolan, “Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture” (2003), 261-273. Dolan explains that the punishment for petty treason became hanging after 1790, and that this crime was eventually abolished as a crime distinct from murder in 1828.

project subjugates persons like servants and unmarried women, she envisions that this select assembly can share together the affects of hope, twisted love, and revolt against misogynist ideologies of dispossession. This social arrangement is far from ideal, but Collier suggests that the first step in challenging one's "exterior" sovereigns requires claiming ownership over the "interiors" of one's affective experiences.

#### 6. Coda to *Melancholic Satires*: Collier's Cats

It is fitting to end this dissertation with Collier. *Melancholic Satires* began with Jonathan Swift who from a privileged position satirizes – among many other things – the bottom-up forces of hack writers overtaking the literary sphere and marketplace. Collier's *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* is modelled after Swift's *Directions to Servants* (1746), a satire that instructs wives on how they can upend the rule of their social superiors. As an unmarried dependent, Jane Collier satirizes from a less than privileged position the affective underpinnings of marital and other domestic relationships. Her satire is undoubtedly distinct from the ironic performances of privileged melancholic satirists like Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, and Tobias Smollett. My study of Collier's satire allows us to establish that melancholic satires fundamentally interrogate the tension between absolute dominion and shared property in the Cartesian self. Seen through the medical lens of melancholy, we can view this tension as the conflict between the absolute dominion of the mind and the shared ownership of the melancholic body's agencies. Vapors, humours, blood, spleen, and the spirits of insolence have as much as proprietary ownership over the self as the dominating faculties of the mind do. These satires uncover the mind as an agent of sovereign coverture

and reveal a fragmentary dispersion of self-ownership among different bodily and mental forces.

What's most important for a melancholic satire, though, is the indulgent ownership of one's passions and affective body. For Collier, owning these passions requires laborious performance. She conveys that one must learn passionate ownership, thus hinting that this ownership is not a "natural" trait. In *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*'s conclusion, the persona leaves it open whether being passionately cruel is natural or learned. To capture this ambiguity, she references Swift's "picture" of the "Yahoos [sic]" and notes that she "remember[s] not" if Swift "supposes him [man] naturally to delight in tormenting; or does he make him guilty of any vices, but following his brutish appetites. Must not this love of Tormenting therefore be cultivated and cherished?" (128-129). Collier's persona further evokes the example of learning to enjoy delicacies: "There are many tastes, as that of the olive, the oyster, with several high sauces, cooked up with *assa foetida* and the like, which at first are disgustful to the palate, but when once a man has so far depraved his natural taste, as to get a relish for those dainties, there is nothing he is half so fond of" (129). By suggesting that the "love of Tormenting" is a "cultivated" activity, the persona implicates the affective passions as a learned artificiality. As her analogy suggests, this cultivation repressively subordinates one's "natural taste" of initially viewing these "dainties" as "disgustful to the palate," so that one's "love of Tormenting" *covers* over these original affects. Cultivating pupils into tormenters entails a *coverture*-like process of repressing disgust and perhaps sympathy. Collier teaches us that owning a passion, like the "love of Tormenting," inevitably requires internal processes of subordination. When she questions if man is only "*following* his brutish appetites," Collier proposes that the self must subordinate

oneself to one's affects. According to Collier, learning and cultivation in general demand self-mastery.

To further solidify her point on the virtue of tormenting, Collier's persona offers the humorous example of the cat as an exemplum of the tormenter par excellence. *The Art of Ingeniously Tormenting* begins and ends with a reference to this animal. The 1753 edition opens with a frontispiece, whose motto "Celebrare Domestica Facta [Celebrate Domestic Affairs]," as Bilger notes, originates from Horace's *Ars Poetica*. The frontispiece shows a generic image of a cat leering at and possibly preying on a mouse, and it inscribes the following couplet: "The Cat doth play, / And after slay." Katharine Craik (2006) argues that by using Horace's quotation and the accompanying couplet, Collier "find[s] fault with the notion of noble, exalted domesticity."<sup>201</sup> As a framing device for the satire, the cat acts as a potent surrogate for expressing ownership over others. In the conclusion, Collier's persona returns to the cat as the "one kind of brute, that seems to have any notion of this pleasant practice of Tormenting" and describes the cat's delight in playing with a mouse before killing it:

She delays the gratification of her hunger, which prompted her to seek for food, and triumphs in her power over her wretched captive—She not only sticks her claws into it, making it feel the sharpness of her teeth (without touching the vitals enough, to render it insensible to her tricks), but she tosses it over her head in sport, seems in the highest joy imaginable, and is also, to all appearance, at that very time, the sweetest best-humoured animal in the world. Yet should any thing approach her, that she fears

---

<sup>201</sup> See Katharine Craik's "Introduction" (2006) to the text in the Oxford edition. The verse couplet, Craik speculates, could originate from Benjamin Harris' guide for children, *The New English Tutor* (1705) or from T.H.'s *The Child's Guide* (1753).

will rob her of her play-thing (holding her prey fast on her teeth), she swears, she growls, and shews all the savage motions of her heart. As soon as her fears are over, she again resumes her sport; and is, in this one instance only, kinder to her victim, than her imitators man, that by death she at last puts a final end to the poor wretch's torments. (129)

The cat's delaying of "the gratification of her hunger," in one sense, can represent her subordination of her appetites. However, it is hard not to see that the cat relishes torturing the mouse, to the point that she does not hesitate to express fully her heart's "savage motions" when something threatens her pleasure. Collier presents the cat's love of tormenting not as learned, but instead as an unbridled, unconcealed passion.

What further complicates this moment of feline idealization is that in the eighteenth century cats, as Ingrid Tague (2015) observes, were long associated with women and most importantly unmarried women.<sup>202</sup> As Tague argues, cats "were almost universally decried as treacherous, vicious, and self-interested," and "these qualities were easily transferred to their elderly mistresses...[and] to women who lived without the companionship of men" (116). Tague has also noted how pets in general during the period were compared to slaves and, hence, as another form of property. I have no time here of course to meditate at length on these animalistic and pet-related issues as Tague has so insightfully done. Nevertheless, this cultural context lets us appreciate that the unmarried Collier imagines ironically that these owned female cats hold unrestrained affective liberty. The persona at once reaffirms cultural stereotypes of comparing unmarried women to malicious cats and also evokes cats to remind

---

<sup>202</sup> See Tague, *Animal Companions: Pets and Social Change in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (2015), 116-119.

audiences of women's proprietary and *covered* status as comparable to owned pets. The cat surfaces as an ironic mascot standing in for *both* women's affective freedom *and* legal disempowerment.

The conclusions that I offer here regarding Jane Collier's irony are no doubt specific to her concerns over property, ownership, married women, and unmarried female dependents. Yet my conclusions on affective irony more generally speak to the melancholic satires of Jonathan Swift, Anne Finch, Alexander Pope, Matthew Green, and Tobias Smollett. Irony revels in and revolts against their targets, whether it be enthusiastic hack writing, misogynist discourses, or commercial luxury. These satirists' usage of literary devices, such as metaphor, parataxis, apostrophe, heroic couplets, and epistolary narrative, in fact, represents these satirists' enthusiastic love for crafting form. Unlike Collier's cats who eventually slay their playthings, these satirists cannot quite negate their targets. Perhaps because they rely on form, they in the end elevate their satirized targets to a foundational structure comparable to the dominion of coverture. Form uncovers the melancholic satirist's affective response at the cost of diminishing or covering the potential for criticism to improve society. Form, stability, order serve as the affective bedfellows for these writers. Collier's satire on ownership illuminates that the satiric observer is always possessed by some otherly force – an elusive demon – whether it be the ideology of coverture, the rebels of biological passions, the specter of hidden labour, or the indulgence in literary affectation. What the melancholic satirists are perpetually drawn to is form, whose signifying structures impose and yet liberate. Satirists may not save society, since they cannot quite save themselves from their own enthusiasms for the seductive charms of artifice. However, melancholic satirists do reveal that critiquing society is fundamentally an impassioned art.

As we have seen, Swift, Green, Finch, Pope, Smollett, and Collier love *both* resisting *and* affirming oppressive social structures. If satire is ever to *affect* society, satire must confront and embody the ironies of love.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "affectation, n." *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2020. *OED Online*. Web. 9 June 2020.
- Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Aldridge, A. Owen. "Ancients and Moderns in the Eighteenth Century." *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. Ed. Philip Wiener. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968. *Dictionary of the History of Ideas Online*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Altieri, Charles. *The Particulars of Rapture: An Aesthetic of the Affects*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2003. Print.
- Alvarez, David. "The Difference Enlightenment Satire Makes to Religion: Hudibras to Hebdo." *Imagining Religious Toleration: A Literary History of an Idea, 1600–1830*. Eds. David Alvarez and Alison Conway. Toronto; Buffalo; London: Toronto UP, 2019. 136–152. *JSTOR*. Web. 2 May 2020.
- Aristotle. *Problemata Physica. The Works of Aristotle*, vol. VII. Trans. W.D. Ross. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971. Print.
- Arnaud, Sabine. *On Hysteria: The Invention of a Medical Category between 1670 and 1820*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2015. Print.
- Astell, Mary. *Some Reflections Upon Marriage. Astell: Political Writings*. Ed. Patricia Springborg. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 7-80. Print.
- "background, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. December 2019. Accessed 20 December 2019.
- Backscheider, Paula R. *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets and Their Poetry: Inventing Agency, Inventing Genre*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005. Print.

- Bailey, Joanna. "Favoured or oppressed? Married women, property and 'coverture' in England, 1660-1800." *Continuity and Change* 17. 3 (2002): 351–372.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. 1984 ed. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1968. Print.
- Baldick, Chris. "catachresis." *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. *Oxford Reference*. Web. 6 June 2020.
- - - . "malapropism." *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. *Oxford Reference*. Web. 6 June 2020.
- Barash, Carol. *English Women's Poetry, 1649-1714*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. Print.
- Barker-Benfield, G.J. *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1992. Print.
- Baron and Feme. A treatise of law and equity, concerning husbands and wives. ... The third edition; in which are added many cases in law and equity*. London, 1738. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Web. 4 May 2020.
- Baron, Hans. "The Querelle of the Ancients and the Moderns as a Problem for Renaissance Scholarship." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20. 1 (1959): 3–22. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Mar. 2018.
- Battestin, Martin C. *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974. Print.
- Battestin, Martin C., and Clive T. Probyn. *The Correspondence of Henry and Sarah Fielding*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993. Print.
- Baxter, Richard. *The signs and causes of melancholy. With directions suited to the case of those who are afflicted with it. Collected out of the works of Mr. Richard Baxter, For*

- the Sake of Those, who are Wounded in Spirit. By Samuel Clifford, Minister of the Gospel. With a recommendatory preface, Mr. Tong, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Brown, Mr. Evans, Mr. Bradbury, Mr. Harris, Mr. Grosvenor, Mr. Wright. London, 1716. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. UC Santa Barbara. 1 May 2020.*
- Belling, Catherine. *A Condition of Doubt: The Meanings of Hypochondria*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.
- Bending, Stephen. "Literature and Landscape in the Eighteenth Century." Oxford UP, 2015. *Oxford Handbooks Online*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Bilger, Audrey. "Appendix C: On Education and Conduct." *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting. With Proper Rules for the Exercise of that Pleasant Art*. Ed. Audrey Bilger. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Broadview Literary Texts, 2003. 163-177. Print.
- - - . "Introduction." *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting. With Proper Rules for the Exercise of that Pleasant Art*. Ed. Audrey Bilger. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Broadview Literary Texts, 2003. 9-33. Print.
- Blackman, Lisa. *Immaterial Bodies: Affect, Embodiment, Mediation*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012. Print.
- Blackmore, Richard, Sir. *A treatise of the spleen and vapours: or, hypocondriacal and hysterical affections. With three discourses on the nature and cure of the cholick, melancholy, and palsies. Never before Published. Written by Sir Richard Blackmore, Kt. M. D. and Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in London*. London: printed for J. Pemberton at the Buck and Sun over-against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-Street, 1725. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale*. Web. 9 Feb. 2019.

- Blackstone, William. *The commentaries of Sir William Blackstone, Knt. on the laws and constitution of England; carefully abridged, in a new manner, and Continued down to the present Time: with notes, corrective and explanatory. By William Curry, of the Inner Temple.* London, 1796. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.* Gale. 3 June 2020.
- Blackwell, Mark. "Disjecta Membra: Smollett and the Novel in Pieces." *The Eighteenth Century* 52.75 (2011): 423–442. *JSTOR.* Web. 13 May 2020.
- Booth, Wayne C. *A Rhetoric of Irony.* Chicago: U of Chicago, 1974. Print.
- Bricker, Andrew Benjamin. "Libel and Satire: The Problem with Naming." *ELH* 81. 3 (2014): 889–921. *JSTOR.* Web. 2 May 2020.
- Brinkema, Eugenie. *The Forms of the Affects.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. Print.
- Brissenden, R.F. *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade.* New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974. Print.
- Broich, Ulrich. *The Eighteenth-Century Mock-Heroic Poem.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968. Print.
- Brown, Norman O. & Lasch, Christopher. *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History.* Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2012. *Project MUSE.* Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Bruce, Donald. *Radical Doctor Smollett.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965. Print.
- Budge, Gavin. "Tobias Smollett and the Novel of Irritability." *Medicine and Narration in the Eighteenth-Century.* Ed. Sophie Vasset. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2013. 139–159. Print.

- Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. New York: New York Review Books, 2001. Print.
- Bullard, Paddy. "The Scriblerian Mock-Arts: Pseudo-Technical Satire in Swift and His Contemporaries." *Studies in Philology* 110. 3 (2013): 611–636. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 Sept. 2018.
- Burton, Robert. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. New York: New York Review Books, 2001. Print.
- Canavan, Thomas L. "Robert Burton, Jonathan Swift, and the Tradition of Anti-Puritan Invective." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 34.2 (1973): 227-242. *JSTOR*. Web. 11 March 2014.
- Caron, James E. "The Quantum Paradox of Truthiness: Satire, Activism, and the Postmodern Condition." *Studies in American Humor* 2. 2 (2016):153–181. *JSTOR*. Web. Accessed 2 Apr. 2020.
- Castle, Terry J. "Why the Houyhnhnms Don't Write: Swift, Satire and the Fear of the Text." *Critical Essays of Jonathan Swift*. Ed. Frank Palmieri. New York: G.K. Hall & Company, 1993. 57-71. Print.
- Chancer, Lynn S. *Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1992. Print.
- Chapin, Chester. *Personification in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry*. New York: King's Crown Press, 1955. Print.
- Cheyne, George. *An essay of health and long life*. By George Cheyne, M. D. F. R. S. London, 1724. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. UC Santa Barbara. 17 May 2020.

- - - . *The English Malady (1733)*. Ed. Roy Porter. London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1991. Print.
- Chilton, Leslie A. "Smollett, the Picaresque, and Two Medical Satires." *New Contexts in Eighteenth-Century Fiction: Essays in Honor on Jerry C. Beasley*. Ed. C. D. Johnson. Newark, N.J.: Delaware UP, 2011. 219-230. Print.
- Clough, Patricia Ticineto. "Introduction." *The Affective Turn : Theorizing the Social*. Eds. Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean O'Malley Halley. Durham: Duke UP, 2007. 1-33. Print.
- Colebrook, Claire. *Irony*. London ; New York: Routledge, 2004. Print. New Critical Idiom.
- Colombetti, Giovanna. *The Feeling Body: Affective Science Meets the Enactive Mind*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014. Print.
- Collier, Jane. *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting. With Proper Rules for the Exercise of that Pleasant Art*. Ed. Audrey Bilger. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Broadview Literary Texts, 2003. 39-130. Print.
- - - . *An essay on the art of ingeniously tormenting; with proper rules for the exercise of that pleasant art. Humbly addressed, In the First Part, To the Master, Husband, &c. In the Second Part, To the Wife, Friend, &c. With some general instructions for plaguing all your acquaintance*. The second edition, corrected. London, M.DCC.LVII. [1757]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. UC Santa Barbara. 18 Mar. 2020.
- Cook, Elizabeth Heckendorn. *Epistolary Bodies: Gender and Genre in the Eighteenth-Century Republic of Letters*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996. Print.

- - - . “Epistolary Novel.” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of British Literature*. Ed. Davis Scott Kastan. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006. *Oxford Reference*. Web. 17 May 2020.
- Cott, Nancy F. “Divorce and the Changing Status of Women in Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 33.4 (1976): 586–614. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Feb. 2020.
- Cowley, Abraham. *To The Royal Society. Ben Jonson and the Cavalier Poets: Authoritative Texts and Criticism*. Ed. Hugh Maclean. New York: Norton, 1974. 343-347. Print.
- Craik, Katharine. “Introduction.” Collier, Craik, and Craik, Katharine A. *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford UP, 2006. xi-xviii. Print.
- Csengei, Ildiko. “Sensibility in Dissection: Affect, Aesthetics, and the Eighteenth-Century Body in Pain.” *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 9.2 (2003): 155-180. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 Jul. 2018.
- - - . *Sympathy, Sensibility, and The Literature of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.
- Damasio, Antonio R. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. New York: G.P. Putnam, 1994. Print.
- Daniel Drew. *The Melancholy Assemblage: Affect and Epistemology in the English Renaissance*. New York: Fordham UP, 2013. Print.
- Delacy, Margaret. “Nosology, Mortality, and Disease Theory in the Eighteenth Century.” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 54.2 (1999): 261–284. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.

- Descartes, René. *A Treatise on the Passions of the Soul. The Passions of the Soul and Other Late Philosophical Writings*. Trans. Michael Moriarty. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015. 191-280. Print.
- - - . *Discourse on the Method for Guiding One's Reason and Searching for Truth in the Sciences. Discourse on Method and Related Writings*. Trans. Desmond M. Clarke. London: Penguin Books, 1999. 1-54. Print.
- - - . *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.
- - - . *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Trans. Jonathan Bennett. *Early Modern Texts*, 2007. Web. 10 June 2020.
- Dickie, Simon. *Cruelty and Laughter : Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century*. Chicago: U of Chicago, 2011. Print.
- Dixon, Thomas. *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2003. Print.
- Dolan, Frances E. "Battered Women, Petty Traitors, and the Legacy of Coverture." *Feminist Studies* 29.2 (2003): 249–277. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Mar. 2020.
- - - . "The Subordinate('s) Plot: Petty Treason and the Forms of Domestic Rebellion." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43.3 (1992): 317-340. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 June 2020.
- Donoghue, Denis. *Swift: A Critical Introduction*. London: Cambridge UP, 1969. Print.
- Donoghue, Daniel, and Bruce Mitchell. "PARATAXIS AND HYPOTAXIS: A Review of Some Terms Used for Old English Syntax." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* vol. 93, no. 2/4 (1992): 163–183. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 May 2020.



- Doody, Margaret Anne. "Sensuousness in the Poetry of Eighteenth-Century Women Poets." *Women's Poetry in the Enlightenment*. Eds. Isobel Armstrong and Virginia Blain. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999. 3-32. Print.
- Doughty, Oswald. "The English Malady of the Eighteenth Century." *The Review of English Studies* 2.7 (1926): 257-269. *JSTOR*. Web. 22 Dec. 2019.
- Douglas, Aileen. *Uneasy Sensations: Smollett and the Body*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1995. Print.
- Dowling, William C. *The Epistolary Moment: The Poetics of the Eighteenth-Century Verse Epistle*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991. Print.
- Duhaime, Douglas. "Between Inanition and Excess: Tobias Smollett's Medical Model of the State" *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 26.4 (2014): 565-591. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.
- "ecstasy, n." *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2020. *OED Online*. Web. 9 June 2020.
- Eden, Rick. "Master Tropes in Satire." *Style* 21.4 (1987): 589-606. *JSTOR*. Web. 2 Apr. 2020.
- Ehrenpreis, Irvin. "Personae." *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Ed. Carroll Camden. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1963. 25-37. Print.
- . *Swift: The Man, His Works, and The Age*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1962. Print.
- Elliott, Robert C. *The Literary Persona*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1982. Print.
- . "Swift's Satire: Rules of the Game." *Jonathan Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Claude Rawson. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995. 50-62. Print.

- Ellis, Markman. *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender, and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. Print.
- Ender, Evelyne, and Deidre Shauna Lynch. "Introduction: Reading Spaces." *Cultures of Reading*. Spec. issue of *PMLA* 134.1 (2019): 9-17. Print.
- . *Cultures of Reading*. Spec. issue of *PMLA* 134.1 (2019): 9-200. Print.
- Erickson, Amy Louise. "Coverture and Capitalism." *History Workshop Journal* 59 (2005): 1-16. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Feb. 2020.
- Ewald, William. *The Masks of Jonathan Swift*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1954. Print.
- Eyerman, Ron. "False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory." *Acta Sociologica* 24.5 (1981): 43-56. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 Feb. 2020.
- Fabricant, Carole. "Defining Self and Others: Pope and Eighteenth-Century Gender Ideology." *Criticism* 39.4 (1997): 503-529. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Fairer, David. *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789*. London: Longman, An imprint of Pearson Education, 2003. Print.
- "False Consciousness." *Marxist Internet Archive Encyclopedia*, 1999-2018.
- Finch, Anne Kingsmill. *The Introduction. The Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea, From the Original Edition of 1713 and From Unpublished Manuscripts*. Ed. Myra Reynolds. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1903. 4-6. Print.
- . *The Spleen: A Pindaric Poem. The Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea, From the Original Edition of 1713 and From Unpublished Manuscripts*. Ed. Myra Reynolds. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1903. 248-252. Print.
- Finn, Margot. "Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, c. 1760-1860." *The Historical Journal* 39.3 (1996): 703-722. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Mar. 2020.

- Fisher, Philip. *The Vehement Passions*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 2002. Print.
- Flynn, Carol Houlihan. *The Body in Swift and Defoe*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.
- Foster, Thomas A. "Deficient Husbands: Manhood, Sexual Incapacity, and Male Marital Sexuality in Seventeenth-Century New England." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56.4 (1999): 723–744. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Feb. 2020.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Vintage Books, 1988. Print.
- Fouke, Daniel. *The Enthusiastical Concerns of Dr. Henry More*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997. Print.
- Freedman, William. "The Grotesque Body in the Hollow Tub: Swift's *Tale*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 51. 3 (2009): 294–316. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Freud, Sigmund. "Mourning and Melancholia." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*. 237-258.
- Frey, Christopher, and Leonore Lieblein. "'My breasts sear'd': The Self-Starved Female Body and 'A Woman Killed with Kindness.'" *Early Theatre* 7.1 (2004):45-66. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Oct 2018.
- Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957. Print.
- Fryer, Peter. "The Black Community Takes Shape." *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain*. London: Pluto Press, 2018. 69–90. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 June 2020.

- Gassman, Byron. "Religious Attitudes in the World of Humphry Clinker." *Brigham Young University Studies* 6.2 (1965): 65–72. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Mar. 2019.
- Gavin, Michael. "Critics and Criticism in the Poetry of Anne Finch." *ELH* 78. 3 (2011): 633–655. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 May 2020.
- Goldstein, Jan. "Enthusiasm or Imagination? Eighteenth-Century Smear Words in Comparative National Context." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Eds. Lawrence E. Klein and Anthony K. La Vopa. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1998. Print. 29-49.
- Gordon, Robert W. "Paradoxical property." *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*. Eds. John Brewer and Susan Staves. London: Routledge, 1995. Print. 95-110.
- Gowland, Angus. "The Problem of Early Modern Melancholy." *Past & Present*, 191 (2006): 77–120. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Apr. 2020.
- Green, Matthew. *THE SPLEEN. AN EPISTLE TO MR. C[uthbert]. JACKSON*. Boston: Printed by H. Sprague, West-Street. 1804. Print.
- Greenberg, Jonathan. *The Cambridge Introduction to Satire*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2019. Print.
- Greene, Donald. *The Age of Exuberance: Backgrounds to Eighteenth-Century English Literature*. New York: Random House, 1970. Print.
- Griffin, Dustin H. *Satire : A Critical Reintroduction*. Lexington, Ky.: U of Kentucky, 1994. Print.
- Greene, Marjorie. "Descartes and Skepticism." *The Review of Metaphysics* 52.3 (1999): 553–571. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 June 2020.

- Gregg, Melissa, and Gregory J. Seigworth. "An Inventory of Shimmers." *The Affect Theory Reader*. Eds. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth. Durham [N.C.]: Duke UP, 2010. 1-28. Print.
- Gubar, Susan. "The Female Monster in Augustan Satire." *Signs* 3.2 (1977): 380–394. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Guerolt, Martial. *Descartes' Philosophy Interpreted According to the Order of Reasons, Volume I: The Soul and God*. trans. Roger Ariew. Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989. Print.
- Harris, Ron. "Government and the Economy, 1688–1850." *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*. Eds. Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. 204–237. Print.
- Hartley, David. *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty, and His Expectations. In Two Parts. Reprinted from the author's edition in 1749. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online Print Editions*. London: printed for J. Johnson, 1791. Print.
- Harth, Phillip. *Swift and Anglican Rationalism: The Religious Background of A Tale of a Tub*. Chicago and London: U of Chicago Press, 1961. Print.
- Hawes, Clement. *Mania and Literary Style: The Rhetoric of Enthusiasm from the Ranters to Christopher Smart*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. Print.
- Hawthorne, Sian Melvill and Adriaan S. Van Kinken's "Catachresis: Religion, Gender, and Postcoloniality." *Religion & Gender* 3.2 (2013): 159-167. *ResearchGate*. Web. 14 June 2020.

- Hellegers, Desiree. *Handmaid to Divinity: Natural Philosophy, Poetry, and Gender in Seventeenth-Century England*. Norman, OK: Oklahoma UP, 2000. Print.
- Heyd, Michael. “Be Sober and Reasonable”: *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries*. Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1995. Print.
- . “The New Experimental Philosophy: A Manifestation of ‘Enthusiasm’ or an Antidote to It?” *Minerva* 25.4 (1987): 423–440. *JSTOR*. Web. 8 June 2020.
- Hill, Bridget. *Servants : English Domestic in the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford : Oxford ; New York: Clarendon ; Oxford UP, 1996. Print.
- . *Women Alone : Spinsters in England, 1660-1850*. New Haven, Conn : London: Yale UP, 2001. Print.
- Hill, John. *The young secretary's guide: or, a speedy help to learning, in writing of letters, &c. In two parts. ... By J. Hill*. The seven and twentieth edition, with additions. London, 1764. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Web. 14 June 2020.
- Howard, George Elliott. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions: Chiefly in England and the United States with an Introductory Analysis of the Literature and the Theories of Primitive Marriage and the Family*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1904. Print.
- Hudson, Nicholas. “From ‘Nation to ‘Race’: The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29.3 (1996): 247–264. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 June 2020.
- . “Literature and Social Class in the Eighteenth Century.” *Oxford Handbooks Online*. Web. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015. 7 June 2020.

- Hume, Kathryn. "Diffused Satire in Contemporary American Fiction." *Modern Philology* 105.2 (2007): 300–325. *JSTOR*. Web. 4 Apr. 2020.
- Hunter, J. Paul. "Form as Meaning: Pope and the Ideology of the Couplet." *The Eighteenth Century* 37.3 (1996): 257-270. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 Nov. 2019.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *Irony's Edge : The Theory and Politics of Irony*. London ; New York: Routledge, 1994. Print.
- Hutcheson, Francis. *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections. With Illustrations On the Moral Sense. By the Author of the Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online Print Editions*. London: printed, and Dublin re-printed by S. Powell, for P. Crampton, and T. Benson, 1728. Print.
- Ingram, Allan. "Dear Dick: Matthew Bramble and the Case of the Silent Doctor." Tobias Smollett, Scotland's First Novelist: New Essays in Memory of Paul-Gabriel Bouc . Ed. O. M. Brack, Jr. Newark: Delaware UP, 2007. 115-129. Print.
- Ingram, Allan, Stuart Sim, Clark Lawlor, Richard terry, John Baker, Leigh Wetherall-Dickson. *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. Print.
- Irlam, Shaun. *Elations: The Poetics of Enthusiasm in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999. Print.
- Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978. Print.

- Jackson, Ian. "Approaches to the History of Readers and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Britain." *The Historical Journal* 47.4 (2004): 1041–1054. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Mar. 2019.
- James, Susan. *Passion and Action : The Emotions in Seventeenth-century Philosophy*. Oxford : Oxford ; New York: Clarendon ; Oxford UP, 1997. Print.
- Jamison, Kay Redfield. *An Unquiet Mind: A Memoir of Moods and Madness*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. Print.
- Johnson, Samuel. *The Rambler*. London: *Harrison, 1792*. *Hathi Trust Digital Library*. Web. 2 June 2020.
- Jones, Richard Foster. *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Background of The Battle of the Books*. St. Louis: Washington University Studies, 1936. Print.
- Jones, Richard J. *Tobias Smollett in the Enlightenment: Travels through France, Italy, and Scotland*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2011. Print.
- Jouanna, Jacques, and Neil Allies. *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen: Selected Papers*. Ed. Philip Van der Eijk, Brill, 2012. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Apr. 2018.
- Kernan, Alvin B. *The Cankered Muse; Satire of the English Renaissance*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1959. Print.
- - - . *The Plot of Satire*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1965. Print.
- Kinahan, Frank. "The Melancholy of Anatomy: Voice and Theme in 'A Tale of a Tub.'" *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 69.2 (Apr., 1970): 278-291. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Mar. 2018.
- King, Lester S. "George Cheyne, Mirror of Eighteenth-Century Medicine." *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 48.4 (1974): 517–539. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.



- - - . “Rationalism in Early Eighteenth Century Medicine.” *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 18.3 (1963): 257–271. *JSTOR* Web. 9 Mar. 2019.
- Koehler, Margaret. *Poetry of Attention in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.
- Kramnick, Jonathan and Anahid Nersessian. “Form and Explanation.” *Critical Inquiry* 43 (2017): 650-669. Web. 7 May 2020.
- Kropf, C. R. “Libel and Satire in the Eighteenth Century.” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8.2 (1974): 153–168. *JSTOR*. Web. 2 May 2020.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Philosophy In The Flesh: The Embodied Mind And Its Challenge To Western Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 1999. Print.
- Langer, Suzanne. *Feeling and Form*. New York: Scribner, 1953. Print.
- Langford, Paul. “The Uses of Eighteenth-Century Politeness.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 311–331. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 June 2020.
- Lara, Ali, Wen Liu, Colin Patrick Ashley, Akemi Nishida, Rachel Jane Liebert, and Michelle Billies. “Affect and Subjectivity.” *Subjectivity* 10.1 (2017): 30-43. *SpringerLink*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Lawlor, Clark. “Fashionable Melancholy.” *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660-1800*. Eds. Allan Ingram et. al. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 25-53. Print.
- Levinson, Marjorie. “What Is New Formalism?” *PMLA* 122. 2 (2007): 558–569. *JSTOR*. Web. 23 Apr. 2020.
- Lewis, Jayne. “Compositions of Ill Nature: Women’s Place in a Satiric Tradition.” *Critical Matrix* 2.2 (1986): 31-69.

- Leys, Ruth. "The Turn to Affect: A Critique." *Critical Inquiry* 37.3 (2011): 434-472. *JSTOR*. Web. 30 Nov. 2018.
- Louis, Frances Deutsch. *Swift's Anatomy of Misunderstanding: A Study of Swift's Epistemological Imagination in "A Tale of a Tub" and "Gulliver's Travels."* Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1982. Print.
- Lynall, Gregory. *Swift and Science: The Satire, Politics, and Theology of Natural Knowledge, 1690-1730*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. Print.
- Machamer, Peter, and J. E. McGuire. "Mind-Body Causality and the Mind-Body Union: The Case of Sensation." *Descartes's Changing Mind*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009. 198–242. *JSTOR*. Web. 4 June 2020.
- Mandeville, Bernard. *A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Passions, Vulgarly Call'd the Hypo in Men and Vapour in Women; ... In three dialogues. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online Print Editions*. London: D. Leach, W. Taylor, and J. Woodward, 1711. Print.
- Mann, Annika. *Reading Contagion: The Hazards of Reading in the Age of Print*. Charlottesville: Virginia UP, 2018.
- Marshall, Ashley. *The Practice of Satire in England, 1658-1770*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2013. Print.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. Volume One*. Trans. Ben Fowkes. London: Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1976. Print.
- Massumi, Brian. "The Autonomy of Affect." *Cultural Critique* 31 (1995): 83–109. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.

- - - . "The Autonomy of Affect." *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Durham: Duke UP, 2002. 23-45. Print.
- Markidou, Vassiliki. "Gender and Space in Tobias Smollett's 'The Expedition of Humphry Clinker.'" *Critical Survey* 22.1 (2010): 58–73. *JSTOR*. Web. 2 Apr. 2019.
- Mateo, Marla. "Translating *Humphry Clinker*'s Verbal Humour." Translation, Humour, and Literature: Translation and Humour. Volume I. Ed. Delia Chiaro. New York: Continuum, 2010. 171-195. Print.
- McGovern, Barbara. *Anne Finch and Her Poetry: A Critical Biography*. Athens: Georgia UP, 1992. Print.
- Mee, Jon. *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation: Poetics and the Policing of Culture in the Romantic Period*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.
- Meek, Heather. "Medical Discourse, Women's Writing, and the 'Perplexing Form' of Eighteenth-Century Hysteria." *Early Modern Women* 11. 1 (2016): 177–186. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 May 2020.
- Mentzer, Raymond A. "Fasting, Piety, and Political Anxiety among French Reformed Protestants." *Church History* 76.2 (Jun., 2007): 330-362. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Oct 2018.
- Mitchell, Bruce. *Old English Syntax*. Oxford [Oxfordshire] : New York: Clarendon ; Oxford UP, 1985. Print.
- Moore, Lindsay R. "The Varieties of Anglo-American Law: Property, Patriarchy and Women's Legal Status in England and America." *Women before the Court: Law and Patriarchy in the Anglo-American World, 1600–1800*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2019. 21–38. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 June 2020.

- More, Henry. *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus; Or, A BRIEF DISCOURSE OF The Nature, Causes, Kinds, and Cure of Enthusiasm*. Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1966. Print.
- Mullan, John. *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988. Print.
- Murfin, Ross C., and Supryia M. Ray. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. Fourth ed. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018. Print.
- Myers, Victoria. "Model Letters, Moral Living: Letter-Writing Manuals by Daniel Defoe and Samuel Richardson." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 66, no. 3/4 (2003): 373–391. *JSTOR*. Web. 8 June 2020.
- Ngai, Sianne. *Ugly Feelings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2005. Print.
- Nickel, Terri. "'Ingenious Torment': Incest, Family, and the Structure of Community in the Structure of Community in the Work of Sarah Fielding." *The Eighteenth Century* 36.3 (1995): 234–247. *JSTOR*. Web. 15 Feb. 2020.
- Nisbet, Stuart M. "Early Scottish Sugar Planters in the Leeward Islands, c. 1660–1740." *Recovering Scotland's Slavery Past: The Caribbean Connection*. Ed. T. M. Devine. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2015. 62–81. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 June 2020.
- Ober, William. "Eighteenth-Century Spleen." *Psychology and Literature in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Christopher Fox. New York: AMS Press, 1987. 225-255. Print.
- Overton, Bill. *The Eighteenth-Century British Verse Epistle*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.
- - - . "The Verse Epistle." *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Ed. Christine Gerrard. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. 417-428. Print.

- Payne, Deborah C. "Pope and the War Against Coquettes; Or, Feminism, and the 'Rape of the Lock' Reconsidered—Yet Again." *The Eighteenth Century* 32.1 (1991): 3–24. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Patey, Douglass Lane. "Swift's Satire on 'Science' and the Structure of *Gulliver's Travels*." *Jonathan Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Claude Rawson. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995. 217-218. Print.
- Paulson, Ronald. *Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1967. Print.
- . *The Fictions of Satire*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1967. Print.
- . *Theme and Structure in Swift's Tale of a Tub*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1960. Print.
- Pearlston, Karen. "Married Women Bankrupts in the Age of Coverture." *Law & Social Inquiry* 34.2 (2009): 265–299. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Feb. 2020.
- Perry, Charles. *A mechanical account and explication of the hysteric passion, under all its various symptoms and appearances. And likewise of all such other diseases as are peculiarly incident to the sex. Comprehending A general Account and Explication of all other nervous Diseases, as well those which are incident to the male Sex, as to the female. With the best and most efficacious Methods of treating them, under all their various Shapes and Symptoms. To which is added, an appendix. Being a dissertation on cancers in general; but more especially such as happen in the breasts of women. In which, First, the true Cause, Nature, and Essence of that dreadful Disease are clearly explained and stated. Secondly, the Errors and Mistakes of Practitioners in general are obviated and rectified; and the best Methods of treating them (as well with Regard to externals as internals) are laid down. The*

- whole written, in some measure, occasionally; and deduced chiefly from a late Case of that Kind, which came under the Author's Inspection and Treatment. By Charles Perry, M.D. London, MDCCLV. [1755]. Eighteenth Century Collections Online. Gale. 30 Apr. 2020.*
- Phiddian, Robert. *Swift's Parody*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Print.
- Plimpton, Pamela S. "Inconstant Constancy": *A Poetics of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century British Women Poets, 1620-1825*. Diss. U. of Oregon, 1998. Print.
- Pocock, J. G. A. "Enthusiasm: The Antiself of Enlightenment." *Enthusiasm and Enlightenment in Europe, 1650-1850*. Eds. Lawrence E. Klein and Anthony K. La Vopa. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1998. 7-28. Print.
- Pollak, Ellen. *The Poetics of Sexual Myth: Gender and Ideology in the Verse of Swift and Pope*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1985. Print.
- Pope, Alexander. *An Essay on Criticism. The Major Works*. Ed. Pat Rogers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993. 17-39. Print.
- - - . *The Rape of the Lock. The Major Works*. Ed. Pat Rogers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993. 77-100. Print.
- Porter, Dorothy, and Porter, Roy. *Patient's Progress : Doctors and Doctoring in Eighteenth-century England*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford UP, 1989. Print.
- Porter, Roy, and George S. Rousseau. *Gout: The Patrician Malady*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998. Print.
- "portion, n." *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. *OED Online*. Web. 28 February 2020.

- Preston, Thomas R. "The 'Stage Passions' and Smollett's Characterization." *Studies in Philology* 71.1 (1974): 105–125. JSTOR. Web. 15 Mar. 2019.
- Price, Martin. *Swift's Rhetorical Art: A Study in Structure and Meaning*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1953. Print.
- Probyn, Clive T. "Preface: Swift and the Reader's Role." *The Art of Jonathan Swift*. Ed. Clive T. Probyn. London: Vision Press, 1978. 7-14. Print.
- Radden, Jennifer. *Melancholic Habits: Burton's Anatomy & the Mind Sciences*. New York: Oxford UP, 2017. Print.
- . *Moody Minds Distempered: Essays on Melancholy and Depression*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.
- Rawson, Claude. "Order and Cruelty." *Jonathan Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Claude Rawson. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995. 29-49. Print.
- "reason, n.1." *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2020. *OED Online*. Web. 8 June 2020.
- Reid, B. L. "Smollett's Healing Journey." *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 41.4 (1965): 549–570. JSTOR. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.
- Richardson, R. C. *Household Servants in Early Modern England*. Manchester ; New York : New York: Manchester UP ; Distributed in the U.S. Exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Print.
- Richardson, Samuel. *Letters written to and for particular friends, on the most important occasions. Directing not only the requisite style and forms to be observed in writing familiar letters; but how to think and act justly and prudently, in the common concerns of human life. Containing One Hundred and Seventy-Three Letters, None*

- of which were ever before Published.* London, M.DCC.XLI. [1741]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. UC Santa Barbara. 11 May 2020.
- Rizzo, Betty. *Companions without Vows: Relationships Among Eighteenth-Century British Women*. Athens, Georgia: Georgia UP, 1994. Print.
- Robinson, Nicholas. "Of the Hypp." *Gentleman's Magazine* 2 (November 1732): 1062-1064. Print.
- Rogers, Katharine M. "Finch's 'Candid Account' vs. Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Spleen." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 22. 1 (1989): 17-27. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Rogers, Pat. "Notes to *The Rape of the Lock*." *The Major Works*. Ed. Pat Rogers. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993. 597-608. Print.
- - - . "Faery Lore and the Rape of the Lock." *The Review of English Studies* 25.97 (1974): 25-38. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- - - . *Grub Street: Studies in a Subculture*. London: Methuen & CO LTD, 1972. Print.
- Rose, Mark. "The Author as Proprietor: "Donaldson v. Becket" and the Genealogy of Modern Authorship." *Representations* 23 (1988): 51-85. *JSTOR*. Web. 5 May 2020.
- Rosenheim, Jr., Edward W. *Swift and the Satirist's Art*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1963. Print.
- Ross, Angus and David Wooley. "Introduction." *A Tale of a Tub. A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*. Eds. Angus Ross and David Woolley. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1986. xv-xvii. Print.
- Rousseau, George S. "Matt Bramble and the Sulphur Controversy in the XVIIIth Century: Medical Background of Humphry Clinker." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28.4 (1967): 577-589. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.



- Rushdy, Ashraf H. A. "A New Emetics of Interpretation: Swift, His Critics and the Alimentary Canal." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 24. ¾ (1991): 1–32. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Sacks, Sheldon. "From: Toward a Grammar of the Types of Fiction." *Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. Ronald Paulson. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1971. 330–339. Print.
- Salvaggio, Ruth. *Enlightened Absence: Neoclassical Configurations of the Feminine*. Urbana: Illinois UP, 1988. Print.
- Sena, John F. "Belinda's Hysteria: The Medical Context of *The Rape of the Lock*." *Psychology and Literature in the Eighteenth Century*. Ed. Christopher Fox. New York: AMS Press, 1987. 129–147. Print.
- - - . "Melancholy in Anne Finch and Elizabeth Carter: The Ambivalence of an Idea." *The Yearbook of English Studies* 1 (1971): 108–119. *JSTOR*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- - - . "Melancholic Madness and the Puritans." *The Harvard Theological Review* 66.3 (1973): 293–309. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- - - . "Smollett's Matthew Bramble and the Tradition of the Physician-Satirist." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 1. 4 (1968): 353–369. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 Mar. 2019.
- Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, and Lawrence E. Klein. *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, times*. Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge UP, 1999. Print. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Print.
- Shields, Juliet. "Tobias Smollett, Novelist: Brutish or British?." *Oxford Handbooks Online*. Web. March 04, 2015. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015. 7 Jun. 2020.

- Shouse, Eric. "Feeling, Emotion, Affect." *M/C Journal* 8.6 (2005). <<http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php>>. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- Shumaker, Walter A. *The Cyclopedic Law Dictionary : Comprising the Terms and Phrases of American Jurisprudence, including Ancient and Modern Common Law, International Law, and Numerous Select Titles from the Civil Law ... : With an Exhaustive Collection of Legal Maxims*. New Jersey: Lawbook Exchange, 2001, 2001. Web.
- Siebert, Donald T. "Swift's Fiat Odor: The Excremental Re-Vision." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 19.1 (1985): 21–38. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Sept. 2018.
- - -. "The Role of the Senses in *Humphry Clinker*." *Studies in the Novel* 6.1 (1974): 17–26. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 March 2019.
- Sitter, John. *Arguments of Augustan Wit*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991. Print.
- - -. *The Cambridge Introduction to Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2011. Print.
- Smith, Courtney Weiss. "Anne Finch's Descriptive Turn." *The Eighteenth Century* 57.2 (2016): 251–265. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 May 2020.
- Smollett, Tobias. *An essay on the external use of water. In a letter to Dr. \*\*\*\* with Particular Remarks upon the present Method of using the Mineral Waters at Bath in Somersetshire, and a Plan for rendering them more safe, agreeable, and efficacious. By T. Smollett, M. D.* London printed for M. Cooper, in Pater-Noster-Row; and sold by D. Wilson in the Strand, and by Mess. Leake, and Frederick at Bath, 1752. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Web. 16 Mar. 2019.

- - - . *The Adventures of Roderick Random*. eBooks@Adelaide. The University of Adelaide Library. Web. 9 March 2019.
- - - . *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. Ed. James L Thorson. New York: Norton, 1983. Print.
- - - . *The expedition of Humphry Clinker. By the author of Roderick Random. In two volumes. ...* Vol. Volume 1, 2, and 3. Dublin, M,DCC,LXXI. [1771]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. Web. UC Santa Barbara. 10 June 2020.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. "Oscillations of Sensibility." *New Literary History*, vol. 25, no. 3, 1994, pp. 505–520. *JSTOR*. Web. 29 Apr. 2020.
- - - . *Reading Eighteenth-Century Poetry*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Print.
- - - . "Some Reflections on Satire." *Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. Ronald Paulson. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice Hall, 1971. 360-378. Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Outside in the Teaching Machine*. New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- - - . "Responsibility." *boundary 2* 21.3 (1994): 19-64. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 June 2020.
- Starkman, Miriam Kosh. *Swift's Satire on Learning in A Tale of a Tub*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1950. Print.
- St. Clair, William. "The Political Economy of Reading." *John Coffin Memorial Lecture in the History of the Book*. London: University of London School of Advanced Study, 2005. Web.
- Staves, Susan. *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1990. Print.

- Steintrager, James A. *Cruel Delight : Enlightenment Culture and the Inhuman*.  
 Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2004. Print.
- Stout, Jr. Gardner D. "Speaker and Satiric Vision in Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 3.2 (1969): 175-199. *JSTOR*. Web. 18 Apr. 2018.
- "strain, n.1." *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2020. *OED Online*. Web. 9 June 2020.
- Stukeley, William. *Of the spleen, its description and history, uses and diseases, particularly the vapors, with their remedy. Being a Lecture read at the Royal College of Physicians, London, 1722. To which is Added Some Anatomical Observations in the Dissection of an Elephant. By William Stukeley, M.D. Cml. & Srs.* London: MDCCXXIII. [1723][1724]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Web. 20 Dec. 2019.
- Sturm, Hertha. *Emotional Effects of Media: The Work of Hertha Sturm*. Ed. Gertrude Joch Robinson. Working Papers in Communications. Montreal: McGill U Graduate Program in Communications, 1987. 25-37. Print.
- Suleiman, Susan Rubin and Inge Crosman Wimmers. *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980. Print.
- Sussman, Charlotte. "Lismahago's Captivity: Transculturation in Humphry Clinker." *ELH* 61.3 (1994): 597-618. *JSTOR*. Web. 9 June 2020.
- Suzuki, Mihoko. "Daughters of Coke: Women's Legal Discourse in England, 1642-1689." *English Articles and Papers* 12 (2014): 165-191. *University of Miami Scholarly Repository*. Web. 4 May 2020.

- Sydenham, Thomas. *A Treatise of the Gout and Dropsie. The Whole Works of that Excellent Practical Physician, Dr. Thomas Sydenham. Wherein not the history and cures of acute diseases are treated of, after a new and accurate method; The fourth edition. Eighteenth-Century Collections Online Print Editions*. London: R. Wellington, 1706. 340-412. Print.
- Swift, Jonathan. *A Tale of a Tub. A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*. Eds. Angus Ross and David Woolley. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1986. 1-104. Print.
- . *A Tale of a Tub. The Victorian Literary Studies Archive*. Web. 8 June 2020.
- . *Gulliver's Travels*. London: Penguin Books, 2001. Print.
- . *The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit. A Fragment. A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*. Eds. Angus Ross and David Woolley. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1986. 126-141. Print.
- Tague, Ingrid H. *Animal Companions : Pets and Social Change in Eighteenth-century Britain*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State UP, 2015. Print.
- Animalibus; v. 5.
- . "Love, Honor, and Obedience: Fashionable Women and the Discourse of Marriage in the Early Eighteenth Century." *Journal of British Studies* 40.1 (2001): 76–106. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Feb. 2020.
- Terry, Richard. *Mock-Heroic from Butler to Cowper: An English Genre and Discourse*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005. Print.
- . "'P.S.': The Dangerous Logic of the Postscript in Eighteenth-Century Literature." *The Modern Language Review* 109.1 (2014): 35–53. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 June 2020.

*The Complete letter-writer: or, Polite English secretary. Containing letters on the most common occasions in life. Also a variety of more elegant letters for examples, and improvement of style, from the best modern authors, together with some originals, on business, duty, amusement, affection, courtship, love, marriage, friendship, &c. To which are prefix'd, directions for writing letters, in an easy and proper manner. Also a plain and compendious grammar of the English tongue. With instructions how to address persons of all ranks, either in writing or discourse; and some necessary orthographical directions. And at the end of the prose, some elegant poetical epistles, and various forms of polite messages for cards.* The eighth edition, improved. London, M.DCC.LXII. [1762]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Gale. UC Santa Barbara. 17 May 2020.

Thompson, E. P. "Eighteenth-Century Society: Class Struggle without Class?" *Social History* 3.2 (1978): 133-165. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 June 2020.

Tomkins, Sylvan. *Shame and Its Sisters: A Sylvan Tomkins Reader*. Eds. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank. Durham: Duke UP, 1995. Print.

Turco, Luigi. "Moral sense and the foundation of morals." *The Cambridge Companion to The Scottish Enlightenment*. Ed. Alexander Broadie. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003. 136-156. Print.

Vila, Anne C. *Enlightenment and Pathology: Sensibility in the Literature and Medicine of Eighteenth-Century France*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998. Print.

Viner, Charles. *A General Abridgment of Law and Equity Alphabetically Digested under Proper Titles; with Notes and References to the Whole*. By Charles Viner, Esq. . The

- Second ed. London: Printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, T. Payne, E. and R. Brooke, T. Whieldon and J. Butterworth; and L. White, Dublin, 1791. Web.
- Walsh, Marcus. "Swift and Religion." *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift*. Ed. Christopher Fox. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010. 161-176. Print.
- Warminski, Andrzej. "Spectre Shapes: "The Body of Descartes?"" *Material Inscriptions: Rhetorical Reading in Practice and Theory*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2013, pp. 63–78. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Apr. 2020.
- Warner, John M. "Smollett's Development as a Novelist." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 5.2 (1972): 148–161. *JSTOR*. Web. 12 June 2020.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel : Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*. Berkeley: U of California, 1957. Print.
- Weinbrot, Howard. "Horace and Juvenal in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." *Alexander Pope and the Traditions of Formal Verse Satire*, by Howard D. Weinbrot, Princeton University Press, PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY, 1982, pp. 3–44. *JSTOR*. Web. 3 Apr. 2020.
- - - . *Menippean Satire Reconsidered. From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005. Print.
- Wetmore, Alex. *Men of Feeling in Eighteenth-Century Literature: Touching Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Print.
- Whyte, Iain. "The Lords and the Profits – West Indian Commerce and the Scottish Enlightenment." *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery, 1756-1838*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006. 41–69. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 June 2020.
- Wilson, Elizabeth A. *Gut Feminism*. Durham: Duke UP, 2015. Print.

Wilson, Penelope. "Pindar and English Eighteenth-Century Poetry." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement* 112 (2012): 157–168. *JSTOR*. Web. 1 October 2019.

Wimsatt Jr., William K. and Monroe C. Beardsley. "The Affective Fallacy." *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2001. 1387-1403. Print.

Wolfram, Sybil. "Divorce in England 1700-1857." *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 5.2 (1985): 155–186. *JSTOR*. Web. 25 Feb. 2020.

Young, Kay. *Imagining Minds: The Neuro-Aesthetics of Austen, Eliot, and Hardy*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State UP, 2010. Print.



