Awful Beauty's Arms: Women, Fashion Accessories, and Politics in British Literature, 1688–1832

Kelly Marie Fleming
West Islip, NY

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Emerson College, 2011
Master of Arts, Boston College, 2013

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Department of English

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter One: Madam De Fautmille's Girdle

Chapter Two: Sophia Western's Muff

Chapter Three: Lady Delacour's Cockades and Ribbons

Chapter Four: A Prince's Plume

Conclusion

Introduction

> About the middle of last Winter I went to see an *Opera* at the Theatre in the *Hay-Market*, where I could not but take notice of two Parties of very fine Women, that had placed themselves in the opposite Side-Boxes, and seemed drawn up in a kind of Battel Array one against another. After a short Survey of them, I found they were *Patched* differently; the Faces, on the one hand, being Spotted on the Right side of the Forehead, and those upon the other on the Left…Upon Enquiry, I found that the Body of *Amazons* on my Right Hand were Whigs, and those on my Left, Tories; and that those who had placed themselves in the Middle-Boxes were a Neutral Party, whose Faces had not yet declared themselves. —Joseph Addison, *The Tatler* No. 81, 1711.[1]

> The fine ladies complain that they have lost all their influence in public affairs. When politics were settled in drawing rooms and cabinets, they could do what they liked, but now that ministers must answer to chambers and explain their reasons and conduct to the satisfaction of deputies, the case is wholly altered and ladies become only the ornament of society. —John Henry Temple, Lord Palmerston, 1828. [2]

I begin with the end. Joseph Addison's account of "Party Patches" at the Opera in 1711 is a fictional representation of the political influence exerted by English women adorning themselves with the ornaments of party in the eighteenth century, and Lord Palmerston's 1828 comment is a written account of how women have, in the nineteenth century, lost that political influence and become "only the ornaments of society." Addison announces the birth of what is commonly referred to as "Old Corruption"—extraparliamentary strategies for influencing politics women frequently engaged in, such as patronage, treating, and accessorizing, and a parliamentary system that gave women explicit political rights in the so-called rotten boroughs—and Palmerston celebrates its death.[3] I have not intentionally juxtaposed these

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[1] Joseph Addison, *Spectator* no. 81, in *The Commerce of Everyday Life: Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, ed. Erin Mackie (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1998), 509–512.
[2] According to Judith S. Lewis, whose book is the only source I could find for this epigraph, Palmerston is speaking of French society, "but what Palmerston is describing would have been common to the polities of both societies, and if anything would have been more advanced in Britain where the concept of responsible government was more developed." See Lord Palmerston quoted in *Sacred to Female Patriotism: Gender, Class, and Politics in Late Georgian Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 95,221.
[3] Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754–1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 77; Anna Clark, "Influence or Independence: Women and Elections,

accounts to argue for some kind of chronological narrative, though there are certainly changes in social mores, the electoral system, and the law that make women's political participation more difficult—not nonexistent— in the nineteenth century. Rather, I want to call attention to the reason Addison's "Amazons" needed party patches in the first place. What this commonly cited end of political prerogatives and privileges for English women elides is the fact that women, from the eighteenth century through the twentieth, wore ornaments of party precisely because women were ornaments of society.

The tension between ornaments of party decorating women's bodies and women's bodies decorating society derives from an etymology that is politically charged, evoking the historical conditions that rendered women both person and thing. The noun-form of "ornament" collapses the distinction between woman and thing through competing, and yet often complementary, definitions. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, an ornament is "an accessory or adjunct, primarily functional but often fancy or decorative," "something used to adorn, beautify, or embellish," and "a person who enhances or adds distinction to his or her sphere."[4] While the definition of ornament as thing appeared first in the English language by the fourteenth century, the secondary definition of ornament as person followed in the fifteenth

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1777–1788," in *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 56, 69, 64.

[4] "ornament, n.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/132624?rskey=Zlsp0M&result=1&isAdvanced=false (accessed March 16, 2019); "ornamentally, adv.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/132630?redirectedFrom=ornamentally (accessed March 16, 2019); "ornamentation, n.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/132632?redirectedFrom=ornamentation (accessed March 16, 2019); "ornamentary, adj.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.Virginia.edu/view/Entry/132631?redirectedFrom=ornamentary (accessed March 16, 2019); "ornamenting, n.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/262703?rskey=np8izz&result=2&isAdvanced=false (accessed March 16, 2019); "ornamented, adj.". *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/259089?rskey=r9zFjU&result=2&isAdvanced=false (accessed March 16, 2019).

century. By the eighteenth century, these competing definitions were well established as the introduction of new noun and adjective forms demonstrate: "ornamentally" (1700), "ornamentation" (1706), "ornamentary" (1715), "ornamenting" (1718), and "ornamented" (1730). Eighteenth-century Britain produced an excess of small, supplemental items for decorating the body, the home, and the book, necessitating more forms of the word. At the same time, however, the noun-form of ornament as person continued to be used, suggesting an analogous relationship between these small, supplemental items and persons. It is this analogous relationship that I want to draw attention to in this project. While the word "ornament" encapsulates this relationship, its synonym, "accessory," evokes the nuances of it. The word "accessory" does not describe the decorative items we call fashion accessories until the late nineteenth century; however, it does describe "a subordinate or auxiliary thing," as well as a "person who incites or assists someone to commit an arrestable offense or who knowingly aids someone who has committed such an offence."[5] Accessories are supplemental, subordinate people and things. In fact, one can even exist in a state of "accessoriness": "the quality or condition of being supplementary or subordinate."[6] A person in a state of accessoriness is a person attached to, and inferior to, something else—it is a word that perfectly describes what it is like to be virtually represented by someone else.

Virtual representation is a political concept in which a group of people serves as the part that represents the whole of the nation in government. In eighteenth-century England, men who owned at least a freehold of forty shillings and who were members of the Anglican Church

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[5] "accessory, n. and adj.," *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/1046?redirectedFrom=accessory (accessed March 16, 2019).
[6] "accessoriness, n." *OED Online*. March 2019. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/1044?redirectedFrom=accessoriness (accessed March 16, 2019).

chose men who also fulfilled those requirements to represent the entire nation in Parliament.[7] I'd like to note here that, even though I will be discussing events in Ireland, Scotland, and on the African continent in the chapters that follow, my focus is on English female characters and consequently English law and the English electoral system.[8] While the entire nation was represented virtually, that representation worked differently for men and women. Although most English men were disenfranchised by the property or religious requirements, they were counted as part of the nation through the presence of someone of their gender at the polls and in Parliament. It was a clear-cut case of synecdoche. Women, however, seem to have been represented through a metonymic association to the men who were recognized in this synecdoche. The business of politics largely operated through family units headed usually by a

[7] A freehold of forty shillings was required to vote, limiting the number of electors. It was illegal for Catholics to vote in Great Britain until the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, but in Ireland, Catholics were enfranchised in 1793. Dissenters could vote if they met the property requirements, but they were barred, along with Catholics, from standing for office by the Test and Corporation Acts of the 1660s. Women were only barred from voting by custom. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25, 36; Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, 20; Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 19, 255, 332–333; Brian W. Hill, *The Early Parties and Politics in Britain, 1688–1832* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 31, 64–65; and Mark Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Late Stuart Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 68–69, 167. For a description of the electorate, see Frank O'Gorman, *Voters, Patrons, and Parties: The Unreformed Electoral System of Hanoverian England 1734–1832* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 199–223.

[8] Women's property rights were different in Scotland, the American colonies, and Ireland: Scottish law relied more on Roman legal precedents than English law, many American colonies did not follow a dual common law–equity system like the parent country and passed legislation the English occasionally found intolerable, and Ireland accorded Catholics and Protestants different legal rights. Women's electoral privileges in those countries were different too as a result of differences in property rights and parliamentary oversight. For more on this see, Marylynn Salmon's *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Susan Staves *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1833* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990); Staves, "Resentment or Resignation? Dividing the Spoils among Daughters and Younger Sons" in *Early Modern Conceptions of Property*, ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (New York: Routledge, 1995), 207–209; and Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, 18–22.

man or on behalf of a young man.[9] All women were disenfranchised by a combination of the property requirement, the religious requirement, and the entrenched patriarchal custom that prevented them from voting. Technically, the right to vote was only decided by property and religious requirements until the Reform Act of 1832 specified "male person" as a qualification, but custom enforced by early modern perceptions about women's intellectual, moral, and physical capabilities, as well as family hierarchies, prevented women from exercising this right before that time.[10] Women were also not permitted to sit in the House of Lords, even when they were peeresses in their own right, and custom seems to have also prevented them from standing for the Commons too.[11] This family-unit model of politics results in women's inclusion in political culture, but their exclusion from political institutions. It suggests that women were really counted as part of the nation through their relationship to men— their political presence was, as a result of close association, attached to their father, husband, or son, who was counted as the part in the part-for-whole equation of virtual representation. In this way, women in the long eighteenth century were typically represented by and through the men they were related to. Their presence was acknowledged, but it was figured as a piece or a part that ornamented the male political status. Taking into account the etymological and the political, it is hard to

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[9] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25–27. When women headed these family units, it was frequently due to the minority of a son. For instance, the Duchess of Rutland made all political decisions on behalf of her son for twelve years after his father died in 1787. Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, 14. However, the widowed Sarah Churchill seems to have made decisions unilaterally about her son's and grandson's inheritances and the borough she patronized. See Frances Harris, "The Electioneering of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough," *Parliamentary History* 2 (1983): 71–92.

[10] Although women could not sit in Parliament or vote, they could vote for and hold minor parish offices after 1739. See Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25–27, 31. Interestingly, the same year that saw women excluded from the franchise also saw the first petition for women's suffrage. Mary Smith of Yorkshire petitioned Parliament, through her representative Henry Hunt, for the right to vote on August 3, 1832. "Rights of Women," Parliament, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1832/aug/03/rights-of-women.

[11] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25; Brian W. Hill, *The Early Parties and Politics in Britain*, 4.

view the advent of women wearing ornaments of party when they were already ornaments of society as mere coincidence.

In this project, I argue that accessoriness, like the noun-form of ornament as person, is the primary form of political and literary representation of women in the long eighteenth century. I examine literary representations of women wearing ornaments of party to explore how they are understood as the ornaments of society. I have limited my scope to the novel because it purports to imitate real life in this period. Novelistic representations encapsulate the lived experience of being supplementary to and subordinate to another person's political existence, the position prescribed to women by virtual representation. However, as imitations of real life, they also document women's efforts to speak and act from behind the shadow of the person who represented them politically (and in some cases legally), efforts that were socially sanctioned. I have chosen representations of women who call attention to themselves by wearing fashion accessories in acts of protest, party affiliation, and patriotism to illustrate the difference between history and ideology: women were accepted as a part of a political culture, but they were, over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, largely pushed out of government institutions where they had been key players as a result of reforms and patriarchal ideologies.[12] Following the example of Joan Wallach Scott in *Only Paradoxes to* Offer*: French Feminists and the Rights of Men*, I want to "[attend] to the sources and operations

[12] I am building on the concept of political culture, described by Lois G. Schwoerer, "as a conceptual framework for showing how political participation may take many forms. Among those forms are dispensing patronage, influencing decision makers and elections, petitioning, demonstrating, gift-giving, entertaining, haranguing, reporting seditious conduct, writing and disseminating ideas in printed form." Schwoerer, "Women's public political voice in England: 1640–1740" in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition* ed. Hilda L. Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 57–58. See also Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics: Culture, and Imperialism in England, 1715–1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3–26; and Carole Pateman, "Women's writing, women's standing: theory and politics in the early modern period" in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 370–372.

of paradox," to the contradictions that produced women's simultaneous absence and presence in the political system.[13] As an imitation of a historical reality influenced by ideology, the novel can be a venue and a vehicle that incorporates both the perception of women as political actors and the perception of women as political accessories. For that reason, the novel presents us with an opportunity to find the gaps in ideology, to pinpoint the differences between the ideological urge to render women apolitical in order to cloister them in the home and the historical facts of some women's prerogatives that enabled them to make a difference in the public world of politics. This distinction between women's inclusion in political culture and exclusion from political institutions is one of the reasons women in the twenty-first century are still adorning themselves with accessories to call attention to their accessoriness. Women's historical exclusion created a discrepancy in power, rights, and representation between women and men that still has not been resolved, creating the need for protest. We owe it to the women who have, for three hundred years, been protesting with ornaments of party to investigate the ideological forces that have left us, in many respects, still just the ornaments of society. It is time to show how "awful Beauty [put] on all its arms" for the sake of politics.[14]

Putting the "Historian" back in "Literary Historian"

In the first "Political History of the Novel" about women, Nancy Armstrong writes, "literature devoted to producing the domestic woman thus appeared to ignore the political world run by men."[15] Over the course of the book, Armstrong goes on to dispute that statement, claiming that "stories of courtship and marriage offered their readers a way of

[13] Joan Wallach Scott, *Only Paradoxes to* Offer*: French Feminists and the Rights of Men* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 18.
[14] Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* ed. Cynthia Wall (New York: Bedford Books, 1998), 1:139.
[15] Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 4.

indulging, with a kind of impunity, in fantasies of political power that were the more acceptable because they were played out within a domestic framework where legitimate monogamy—and thus the subordination of female to male—would ultimately be affirmed."[16] While Armstrong's claim that novels make "fantasies of political power" more acceptable to eighteenth-century readers is insightful, her focus in *Desire and Domestic Fiction* is *only* on fantasies. There is no attention paid to the realities of women's political power. Her study considers how the ideology of domesticity makes room for women's political participation without recognition of the historical realities of it in private and public life. Famously in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," Louis Althusser describes ideology as a representation "not of the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the *real relations in which they live*" (my emphasis).[17] To understand ideology, then, one must understand the "real relations" that individuals live in, the historical facts that have been transformed by an imaginative response. Until recently, it was incredibly difficult for feminist literary historians to know what the lived experiences of women were in the long eighteenth century due to a lack of historical sources. In our efforts show that the personal is the political, we studied how eighteenth-century literature attempted to prescribe women's behaviors and actions according to gendered ideologies; we studied the imaginative response of writers to the "real relations in which they [lived]."However, thanks to tireless work by feminist historians over the past thirty years, we now have irrefutable evidence that women were active participants in joint-stock companies, rebellions, party politics, elections, the

[16] Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 29.
[17] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 165.

foundation of new colonies, the abolitionist movement, and revolutions.[18] Despite this wellspring of knowledge, *literary* historians, have, for the most part, not moved far beyond Armstrong's interest in ideology and "fantasies of political power."

There has been an uneven examination of the day-to-day political activities of women in eighteenth-century literature. Restorationists and scholars focused on the literature of the reign of Queen Anne and George I have had much to say about women's political contributions and about how novels record them. Scholars such as Toni Bowers have written of the impact of "Tory feminism" on novels.[19] While "Whig feminism" gets less attention because it is complicit with, rather than resistant to, the status quo, we know from the satirical novels of Delarivier Manley, and Ros Ballaster's commentary on them, just how powerful Sarah Churchill, the

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[18] See, for example, Chalus, "'To Serve my friends': Women and Political Patronage in Eighteenth-Century England" in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, ed. Amanda Vickery (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 57–88; Krista Cowman, *Women in British Politics, c.1689–1979* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire* (New York: Modern Library, 2001); Kathryn Gleadle, "British Women and Radical Politics in the Late Nonconformist Enlightenment, c.1780–1830" in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present* , ed. Amanda Vickery (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 123–152; Judith S. Lewis, "1784 and All That: Aristocratic Women and Electoral Politics" in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present* ed. Amanda Vickery (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 89–122; Lois G. Schwoerer, "The Coronation of William and Mary, April 11, 1689" in *The Revolution of 1688–1689*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 107–130; W.A. Speck, "William— and Mary?" in *The Revolution of 1688–1689*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 131–146; Susan Staves, "Investments, votes, and 'bribes': women as shareholders in the chartered national companies" in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 259–242; Rachel Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and the Political Argument in England 1680–1714* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999); and the edited collection *Women in British Politics, 1760–1860: The Power of the Petticoat*, ed. Kathryn Gleadle and Sarah Richardson (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

[19] See Toni Bowers, "Collusive Resistance: Sexual Agency and Partisan Politics in *Love in Excess*," in *The Passionate Fictions in Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work* ed. Kirsten T. Saxton and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 48–68.

Duchess of Marlborough, was.[20] Thanks to Catherine Ingrassia, we know how women's roles in joint-stock companies, particularly the South Sea Company, get translated into literature.[21] We know, as a result of work by Rivka Swenson and Rachel Carnell, that some women novelists like Jane Barker were involved, or in the case of Eliza Haywood possibly involved, in the Jacobite cause.[22] However, after the publication of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and the advent of the "domestic novel," the little attention paid to women's engagement in "traditional" politics in novels seems to disappear until the end of the century when we acknowledge women's contributions to the abolitionist movement, but not much else.[23]

Instead, following Armstrong, scholars have continued to focus on symbolic methods of political action. They read female bodies represented in novels as a barometer for ideology. Laura Brown and Felicity A. Nussbaum have extensively explored how women's bodies are a site of ideological contestation that produces nationalist and imperialist discourses.[24] Scholars

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[20] In the novels of Manley, who is a Tory, "the Whig female 'politicians' of her age, Sarah Churchill and Barbara Villiers in particular, are virulently attacked as, at best, poor mimics and, at worst, vicious perpetrators of masculine corruption." While she portrays Churchill in particular as Machiavellian and "an abuser and invertor of those sacred powers invested in [women]" in order to undermine the Whig party, her efforts paradoxically serve as evidence of just how powerful Churchill was as the favorite of the Queen, the wife of a war hero, and the owner of extensive properties. Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Fictions: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 137.

[21] Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 17–39.

[22] Rivka Swenson, "Representing Modernity in Jane Barker's *Galesia Trilogy*: Jacobite Allegory and the Patch-Work Aesthetic," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 34 (2005): 55–80, and Rachel Carnell, "Jacobite Ideology and Eliza Haywood's Response to Whig Realism," in *Partisan Politics, Narrative Realism, and the Rise of the British Novel* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 129–161.

[23] For more on women's contributions to the abolitionist movement, see Charlotte Sussman's *Consuming Anxieties: Consumer Protest, Gender, and British Slavery, 1713–1833* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000) and Lynn Festa's *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006). See also E.J. Clery's work on Anna Laetitia Barbauld's critique of the Napoleonic Wars in *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven: Poetry, Protest, and Economic Crisis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[24] Laura Brown, *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993) and *Fables of Modernity: Literature and*

have also read the rhetoric of novels as symbolic critiques of political events because women were always already assumed to be excluded from politics proper. Claudia Johnson, reading the "political ambience" of Austen's novels, tracks the plots, terms, and narrative patterns she inherited from "her more conspicuously political sister-novelists" who write about the figure of "the freakish feminist," or female philosopher.[25] Following in Johnson's footsteps, Andrew McInnes has explored how the figure of the female philosopher disseminates revolutionary or reactionary principles and M.O Grenby has examined how novels by women disseminate anti-Jacobin principles.[26] Deborah Weiss has continued in this tradition, but with an important twist: she examines the "non-parodic female philosophers," "an alternate literary figure that allowed [women writers] to refurbish feminist thought for a more conservative age."[27] Scholars have read women writers and their characters for their resistance to, or complicity with, patriarchal ideologies. While Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace has argued for the patriarchal complicity of Maria Edgeworth, Audrey Bilger has characterized the comedy and satire located in her works as subversive resistance to the patriarchy.[28] Whereas Julia Epstein has marked Frances Burney's resistance to patriarchal ideologies in moments of anger in her works, Jane

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Culture in the English Eighteenth Century (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University of Press, 2001). Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), and *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[25] Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), xxi, xxiv, 20.

[26] Andrew McInnes, *Wollstonecraft's Ghost: The Fate of the Female Philosopher in the Romantic Period* (New York: Routledge, 2017) and M.O Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[27] Deborah Weiss, *The Female Philosopher and Her Afterlives: Mary Wollstonecraft, the British Novel, and the Transformations of Feminism, 1796–1811* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 8.

[28] Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Father's Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991) and Audrey Bilger, *Laughing Feminism: Subversive Comedy in Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1998).

Spencer has suggested that she embraces those same ideologies.[29] Indeed, we have been alternatively arguing for women writers complicity and resistance to patriarchal ideologies for nearly forty years because literary complicity and resistance have been the only ways we could imagine eighteenth-century women engaging in politics.

The absence of women political actors from scholarship about literary texts after 1740 reflects the continued presence of the ideology of separate spheres in scholarship. The ideology of separate spheres—the belief that the private sphere, or the home, was the space of women, and the public sphere, or the world, was the space of men—was promulgated as historical fact by countless writers and scholars until recently. The origin story of separate spheres goes something like this. After the advent of the "economic man," the workplace, companionate marriage, and the nuclear family, middle-class and upper-class women were unceremoniously dropped on the doorsteps of their homes and thrust inside: "A near prisoner in her home, Mrs. Average led a sheltered life drained of economic purpose and public responsibility."[30] At least since the English translation of Jürgen Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), the model of separate spheres has provided a rationale for why women were excluded from political institutions in British literary studies. In the midst of declaring that these spheres are sometimes "caught up" in each other, Habermas doubles down on women's place: "Women and dependents were factually and legally excluded from the political public sphere, whereas female readers as well as apprentices and servants often took a more active part

[29] Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989) and Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1986).
[30] Amanda Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," *Historical Journal 36*, no.2, (1993): 387.

in the literary public sphere than the owners of private property and family heads themselves."[31]

By 1993, historians were finding fault with the separate spheres model, declaring that scholars had been confusing prescription with practice, ideology with history. In her essay "Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," Amanda Vickery writes,

> As a conceptual device, separate spheres has also proved inadequate. The economic chronologies upon which women's exclusion from work and their incarceration in domesticity depend are deeply flawed. At a very general level, eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century women were associated with the home and children, while men controlled public institutions, but this rough division could be applied to almost any century or any culture.[32]

One of the primary reasons for the failure of this conceptual device according to Vickery is that scholars have not taken care to "discover whether our public and private marries with that of the historical actors themselves."[33] In the article, Vickery takes great pains to point out how recent studies of women's manuscripts have contradicted the idea of separate spheres. Women were "obviously severely disabled when it came to institutional power" but "they did not lack access to the public sphere, as *they understood it.*"[34] At least since the publication of Susan Staves's *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1833* in 1990, feminist historians have been publishing evidence of women working in the public sphere as actors in their own

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[31] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of the Public Sphere* trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), 55,56.
[32] Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres," 413.
[33] Vickery, 412.
[34] Vickery, 412.

right.[35] However, in spite of all the lip service we pay to interdisciplinarity, few literary historians have addressed the corrections made by historians to women's history. Even though literary historians acknowledge the separate spheres as an ideological construction of the world, many still reproduce Habermas's claim that women were excluded from the political public sphere.[36] Many continue to assert that the domestic sphere was not political, that women could not own property because they were property, and that women were not permitted to participate in the political system because they were disenfranchised.[37] And it is just not true.

The ideology of separate spheres still operates in eighteenth-century literary criticism through two specific practices, which make it very difficult to spot women political actors in the novels we read. The first is the very idea of the "domestic novel." The term "domestic novel" categorizes the turning inward of the novel in terms of narrative, plot, and space. It is representative of stories about courtship and marriage, told by characters with interiority, and supposedly set in the "domestic" sphere of the home.[38] As I mentioned above, Richardson's *Pamela* is seen as the inauguration of a new type and tradition of the novel. According to Armstrong, the Richardsonian tradition of the novel works to create a cultural fantasy of

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[35] See note 17.

[36] Amanda Vickery ed., introduction to *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 3, 52, and Krista Cowman, *Women in British Politics*, 27–28.

[37] See, for example, Eve Taylor Bannet's comment that "Her person, her property, both real and personal, her earnings, and her children all passed on marriage into the absolute control of her husband" in *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 30.

[38] I do not believe that the novels we call "domestic" are any different from the novels of Fielding, Sterne, or Smollett. The novels of Frances Burney are frequently, and in my opinion illogically, cited as "domestic" even though they all purport to represent a young ladies' entrance into *public* life and are largely set in public spaces. Just like Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett's characters who travel across England or Europe and typically find love or marriage, Evelina travels throughout London and Bristol to find Lord Orville. Even if Lord and Lady Orville go on to build a lovely home, the reader never sees the cultural fantasy of which Armstrong speaks in that novel. I would also question the term on the grounds that it is, with the exception of Richardson, almost exclusively applied to women writers. It makes it seem as if women writers *only* wrote about domestic concerns.

domesticity that consists of a "private domain of culture that was independent of the political world and overseen by a woman."[39] I do not disagree with this characterization of *Pamela* because Richardson certainly promotes an ideology of domesticity and sets the plot largely in the home. However, by describing a "private domain" "independent of the political world" created by the literary text, the term "domestic novel" subscribes to an ideological construction of the home. The term erases all traces of public life from a representation of the so-called feminized space of the home, including the evidence of women's political participation. In fact, the term effectively empties the home of history, as Leila Silvana May points out: "According to her, rhetoric (discourse) historically creates subjectivity and desire as if they were ahistorical, then attributes them to a female domain (which is also historically created while its historicity is ideologically denied), thereby empowering women (partly by making them and others think they are not empowered because they are outside of history)."[40] Literary criticism that analyzes women's political engagement in the "domestic novel" will have difficulty locating examples because it relies exclusively on ideology, even though it does not have to.[41] We write about the home as the site of compelled gender performance, even though that same "domestic woman" may have also performed her gender by writing letters to her lawyer to invest a small portion of her separate estate in a particular joint-stock company or by planning an election parade from her parlor.

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[39] Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, 98.
[40] Leila Silvana May, "The Strong-Arming of Desire: A Reconsideration of Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction*," ELH 68, no.1 (Spring 2001): 274.
[41] I believe the absence of any historical evidence of women's participation in politics weakens, for example, Eve Taylor Bannet's analysis of women's contributions to political thought in *The Domestic Revolution: Enlightenment Feminisms and the Novel* and Helen Thompson's analysis of how women do or do not conform to natural subjection in *Ingenuous Subjection.* While there are valuable, exciting readings presented in these works of criticism, their focus on the domestic novel results in analyses confined not to the home but to the ideology of separate sphere's conception of the home, which elides the ordinariness of women in politics. Bannet, *Domestic Revolution*, 7, 30, 39, 46, and Helen Thompson, *Ingenuous Subjection: Compliance and Power in the Eighteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

In addition to the term "domestic novel," the last remaining corollary of separate spheres ideology in literary scholarship today is the separation between "high" politics and "social" politics. Many literary historians still envisage politics only as "high" politics— the venues at the top of the political hierarchy, such as the parliament, the monarchy, and the courts, that only a small group of propertied, white men had access to in the long eighteenth century.[42] Consequently, the story they tell about women's relationship to the political system is underpinned by a Whig historiography, a narrative focused on acts of resistance that progress toward the fulfillment of a single institutional principle: the franchise.[43] In the same way that we talk about the ever-rising novel and middle class, this historiography focuses on the rise of women, specifically white middle-to-upper class women.[44] For women to rise, they must first be portrayed as a passive victim of the system and/or a damsel in distress. When we last left Mrs. Average, she had been thrust inside her home. Slowly she morphed into the agoraphobic creature known as "the Angel in the House." She had no political or legal rights whatsoever, as she was completely subject to and dependent on her husband, or in the case of single ladies, her father. There she remained, "immured in the private sphere …until feminism released her."[45] If one only focuses on the franchise as the solution to *all* of women's political and legal deficiencies, then surely the conclusion to *The History of Mrs. Average* must have ended, happily, like this: the Pankhursts (Emmeline, Christabel, and even Sylvia) must have thrown open the front doors, invited the home-bound Mrs. Average into the streets, blanketed her with confetti, and given her a complimentary white, purple, and green sash to mark her as the official equal of man. However, as women are well aware today, the franchise has *not*

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[42] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 78.
[43] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 10; Vickery, Golden Age to Separate Spheres," 388; Vickery, "Introduction," 2, 49, 55.
[44] Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres," 412.
[45] Vickery, "Golden Age to Separate Spheres," 387.

brought women full equity in Britain, the United States, and most countries in the world. While the right to vote is one of the most important rights a citizen can have, it does not guarantee equal protection under the law, equitable representation in government, or even the fulfillment of that right in some cases. We have been asking the wrong questions of women's history, as Amanda Vickery argues in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*: "this well rehearsed tale of an ultimately triumphant 60-year battle for political rights should not, however, be allowed to mask the continuous threads and diverse changes in British women's political roles, responsibilities, and preoccupations from the eighteenth century to the present."[46]

In spite of decades of writing that the personal is political, our focus on the franchise has caused us to ignore the quieter ways women participated in politics historically,[47] ways that directly contradict this progressive narrative, as Elaine Chalus explains:

> Indeed, eighteenth-century society drew on traditions and expectations of political involvement for elite women that looked backwards rather than forwards. While their overall political participation was more extensive and well-established than has been previously been imagined, and their activities, as long as they did not threaten the political status quo, were more likely to be accepted and praised than criticized, their motivations, methods, and goals were predominantly familial and/or factional, rather than personal. They accepted the political system as it was and used the avenues that were available to them—openly and effortlessly—to work within its confines.[48]

[46] Amanda Vickery, "Introduction," 2, 5,6, 49, 55.
[47] Vickery, "Introduction," 5–6.
[48] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 10.

While women did not see themselves as acting in politics for their own personal benefit, they did see themselves and were recognized as political actors, serving a country, party, and/or family. They engaged in what is commonly referred to as social politics, "the management of people and social situations for political ends."[49] Women's political patronage, hostessing, organizing, and accessorizing has been separated from "high politics" or "politics proper." However, their actions were no less essential to the causes they served. Just because Georgiana Cavendish, the Duchess of Devonshire, could not stand for Parliament does not mean that she was not a politician in her own right. In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Fox-North Coalition, and the installation of William Pitt as Prime Minister by the King, she had the audacity to ask friends at the French Court not to recognize William Pitt as Prime Minister, an act as brazen as it was political.[50] We ignore social politics "at our peril," Chalus writes.[51] Like the term "domestic novel," the term "high politics" consigns politics in general to specific public venues like Parliament. Thus, because the aforementioned activities do not conform to our expectations of what politics is— voting and running for office— or to the Whiggish narrative of progress that depends on women's incarceration in the private sphere, we overlook them.[52] We conceive the home as space in which politics was absent, and politics as an event or action that only happens in public. Limiting the novel to the private and political history to the public is only is to tell the story by halves. In the hopes of providing a literary history of British women's political participation in the long eighteenth century, "Awful Beauty's Arms" reunites "high politics" and "social politics" by reading women's accessorizing in relation to pivotal political events and ideologies represented in the novel.

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[49] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 78.
[50] Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana*, 136.
[51] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 78.
[52] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 10; Vickery, "Introduction," 2, 49, 55.

Literary scholars have considered the political significance of accessories in eighteenth-century literature, but their focus has largely been on consumerism and imperialism, sentiment and sensibility, or discourse and rhetoric. Terry Castle has illustrated the social power women gain from donning vizards at masquerades.[53] Felicity A. Nussbaum has argued that Arabella also draws social power from her veil's link to the exoticized and sexualized other in *The Female Quixote*.[54] Lynn Festa has shown how Josiah Wedgwood's "Am I not a man and a brother?" medallions, which were turned into brooches and hairclips, were sentimental objects that formed imaginative sentimental communities and reinforced racial difference.[55] Jennie Batchelor has highlighted the role of the handkerchief in the rhetoric of sentiment and sensibility.[56] Joseph Roach has described how parasols, feathers, and turbans served as metonyms for locations the English exoticized and racialized, such as the African continent and the Ottoman Empire, on maps and on the stage.[57] Tracy Hutchings Goetz has examined the glove as a fetish object in the context of eighteenth-century literary texts such as John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*.[58] Andrew Sofer has investigated the role of the fan on the restoration and eighteenth-century stage.[59] Barbara Benedict has studied thing-poems about fans.[60] Chloe Wigston Smith has traced the relationship between fashion and rhetoric in the eighteenth

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[53]Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986), 33,39.
[54] Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*, 126.
[55] Festa, *Sentimental* Figures, 165.
[56] Jennie Batchelor, *Dress, Distress, and Desire: Clothing and the Female Body in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 151–177.
[57] Joseph Roach, "The Global Parasol: Accessorizing the Four Corners of the World" in *The Global Eighteenth Century*, ed. Felicity A. Nussbaum (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 93–106.
[58] Tracy Hutchings-Goetz, "The Glove as Fetish Object in Eighteenth-Century Fiction and Culture," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 31, no.2 (Winter 2019): 317–342.
[59] Andrew Sofer, *The Stage Life of Props* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), 117–166.
[60] Barbara M. Benedict, "Encounters with the Object: Advertisements, Time, and Literary Discourse in the Early Eighteenth-Century Thing-Poem," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40, no.2 (Winter 2007): 193–207.

century by examining Pamela's accessories, her fan and round-eared cap, as well as Juliet's accessories, her white-chip bonnet and blue-striped apron, in Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*.[61] Recently, Wigston Smith has also written on Belinda's use of an accessory, her bodkin, as a weapon in Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*.[62] While this list is by no means exhaustive, these studies, with the exception of Festa's analysis of the accessories of the abolitionist movement, do not account for the ways eighteenth-century Britons also understood accessories as symbols of particular political beliefs and in relation to particular political events.

In addition to the scarcity of historical sources, the ideology of separate spheres, and Whig historiography, the reason we have overlooked examples of women's political participation in novels of the long eighteenth century is because we have focused primarily on consumer culture when analyzing women's relationships to things.[63] Since the 1980s, scholars have largely examined the figure of the female consumer in relation to Marxist conceptions of the commodity and commodity fetishism. They have considered how the female consumer has contributed to gendered and classed nationalist and imperialist discourses through her pursuit of commodities.[64] They have drawn comparisons between commodities and women, which result in female characters embodying abstractions in ways that reinforce the binary between subject and object, even when their materiality is conflated in the space of the representation.[65]

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[61] Chloe Wigston Smith, *Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 38–46, 173–176.
[62] Chloe Wigston Smith, "Bodkin Aesthetics: Small Things in the Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 31, no.2 (Winter 2019): 271–294.
[63] Two notable exceptions are Susan Paterson Glover's *Engendering Legitimacy: Law, Property, and Early Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2006) and Cynthia Sundberg Wall's *The Prose of Things: Transformations of Description in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
[64] See Brown, *Ends of Empire*, 103–134, and Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth-Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
[65] See Brown, *Ends of Empire*, 120, and Jonathan Lamb, "The Rape of the Lock as Still Life" in *The Things Things Say* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 98–126.

Too few complicate the Marxist commonplace that women shop to satisfy a compulsive need to fetishize commodities. While political accessories were consumer objects, frequently constructed with the spoils of imperialism, they also, significantly, spoke to a political culture that included women when political institutions excluded them. In her influential study of women and consumer culture *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century*, Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace writes, that examining representations of women's shopping between 1720 and 1820 is an "opportunity to 'denaturalize' the natural, to ask questions about why *women* shop—in other words, to look at persistent cultural stereotypes in new, historically informed ways."[66] Following Wallace's lead, I ask why women shop for accessories in light of new historical evidence about women's property rights and inclusion in the political culture of the period. I call attention to an additional motivation for purchasing and wearing fashion accessories: political expression.

Women and the Body Politic

Accessorizing as a political act originated in Britain's long history of symbolic visual displays, from religious ceremonies to coronations to civic processions. In addition to the cardinal's zucchetto, the monarch's crown, and the aristocracy's chivalric orders, ordinary women and men "paraded, processed, and perambulated for institutional, vocational, or civic reasons, often wearing specifically coloured clothes, decorated with ribbons and cockades, in order to make personal or collective statements of identity and allegiance."[67] The method of visual display was, in some measure, controlled by sumptuary laws, which specified what classes were permitted to wear certain textiles and accessories, until their collapse under James

[66] Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*, 13.
[67] Elaine Chalus, "Fanning the Flames: Women, Fashion, and Politics," in *Women, Popular Culture, and the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Tiffany Potter (Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 95.

I at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[68] In the wake of the Glorious Revolution (1688–89), the serendipitous rise of an accessible fashion industry and party politics resulted in the partisan accessory.[69] The accessory became the primary method of expressing partisanship in relation to party, religious faction, or rebellious faction for both the enfranchised and disenfranchised. As with Britain's monarchical and religious accessories, partisan accessories depended on a repertoire of political symbolism specific to Britain in the long eighteenth century. Symbols, colors, or images associated with parties or factions emblazoned on these accessories evoked a set of political beliefs. The close association of colors or symbols with particular political parties or causes enabled accessories to metonymically express partisanship.

However, like the partisan accessories of today, this extraparliamentary strategy was usually limited to specific events and times. Few wear campaign buttons outside of an election year, even if campaign stickers remain stuck on car bumpers for years. Eighteenth-century British political culture operated according to a calendar that incorporated events such as civic holidays, political anniversaries, court birthdays or drawing rooms, and elections, which created situations in which both enfranchised and disenfranchised people wanted to make their political views known. Unscheduled events such as rebellions, war, and political crises also prompted

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[68] For specifics on sumptuary laws, see J.R. Planche, *The History of Costume: From the Earliest Period to the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1907).

[69] For specifics on the rise of shopping at the turn of the eighteenth century, see Wallace's *Consuming Subjects*. For the rise of political parties, see Hill, *The Early Parties and Politics in Britain, 1688–1832*, 24–26, and Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Late Stuart Britain*, 3–66. Alexander Maxwell suggests that the Whigs and Tories probably adopted cockades, which had previously been used to distinguish soldiers from civilians through the colors of specific royal houses, for electoral purposes after the Hanoverian Succession. See *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 122–123. Frank O'Gorman contends that ribbons were turned into a partisan accessory around the middle of the century. See Frank O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: The Social meaning of Elections in England 1780–1860," *Past & Present*, no.135 (1992): 95.

Britons to want to make their views known. Whether it was for one day, one week, or one year, the disenfranchised had a voice during these events in the form of their accessories.

Of course, accessorizing as an extraparliamentary strategy was subject to the class dynamics of Britain in this period. Since upper- and middle-class men were most likely enfranchised, depending on their religion, upper- and middle-class women primarily benefited from this strategy because they could afford to purchase accessories. As a result, I focus predominantly on elite women in this project. However, lower-class women and men did take advantage of this strategy and I make an effort to point this out when I can. Unlike patronage or organizing, it was relatively inexpensive to purchase a ribbon, fashion a cockade out of old ribbon, or even abandon the cockade for something like white roses as many Jacobite supporters did.[70] Though it would depend on an individual's circumstances, accessorizing was possibly a method of political participation available across classes, genders, and religions.

For women who were formally—though not officially— excluded from political institutions and did not have someone who looked like them representing them in Parliament, accessories were one of the only means of voicing their beliefs and making themselves visible—representing themselves— in the political system. "By turning their dress and accessories to advantage, women could make discreet or obvious political statements. They became participants, as opposed to spectators, of political life."[71] Not surprisingly, because women effectively forced the political system to recognize them through their ornaments, we hear complaints, from one end of the century to the other, about women's political accessorizing, complaints that both trivialize and chastise them for their involvement. In 1710, in the midst of

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[70] Katrina Navickas, "'That sash will hang you': Political Clothing and Adornment in England, 1780–1840," *Journal of British Studies* 49, no.3 (July 2010): 551; and Paul Kléber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People 1688–1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 210.
[71] Chalus, "Fanning the Flames," 93.

the riots caused by high church Tory Henry Sacheverell's anti-Whig and anti-Dissenter speech, Jonathan Swift wrote, "so the women among us have got distinguishing Marks of *Party* in their Muffs, their Fans, and their Furbelows. The *Whig* ladies put on their patches in a different manner from the *Tories*. They have made Schism in the *Play House*, and each have their particular sides at the *Opera*."[72] In 1789, in the midst of the Regency Crisis, Home Secretary Lord Sydney wrote, "The ladies are as usual at the head of all animosity, and are distinguished by caps, ribands, and other such ensigns of party."[73] Indeed, there are so many complaints, fictional and factual, about women's political accessorizing in eighteenth-century British literature and letters that sometimes it seems like the only representations of this sociopolitical act are men complaining. Ironically, for all their concern about women ruining the Old Boys Club with Old Corruption, all their complaints do is illustrate the sheer normalcy of women's political participation.

Cockades, caps, fans, and handkerchiefs serve as tangible evidence of how women engaged in "high politics" through direct and indirect action. During the second Jacobite rebellion, Lady Anne Macintosh, "Colonel Anne," not only wore the white cockade and hid Bonnie Prince Charlie in her home, she also twice raised armies (300 and 600 men respectively) of clansmen for the Jacobite cause, even though her husband was a Hanoverian soldier.[74] In

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[72] Jonathan Swift, *The Examiner* no. 31, in *Miscellanies The Seventh Volume by Dr. Swift* (London: Printed for C. Davis and C. Bathurst, 1745), 169, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*. For the relationship to the Sacheverell riots, see Chalus, "Fanning the Flames," 92.
[73] Lord Sydney to Earl Cornwallis, 21 February 1789, in *Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis* ed. Charles Ross (London: Charles Murray, 1859), 419, *Hathitrust*.
[74] Lady Macintosh also orchestrated the "Rout of Moy." In April 1746, Bonnie Prince Charlie was hiding at her home of Moy Hall. When an inn-keeper's daughter told Lady Macintosh that Loudon's troops from the garrison at Inverness were planning to attack them, Lady Macintosh sent the Moy blacksmith, Donald Fraser, with four others to the road where they shouted orders and fired guns, which tricked the English troops into believing they were about to face the entire Jacobite army and inspired their retreat. Krista Cowman, *Women in British Politics*, 19; Eirwen E.C. Nicholson, "Mackintosh [née Farquharson], Anne [nicknamed Colonel Anne], Lady Mackintosh (1723–1784), Jacobite campaigner," 2004, *Oxford Dictionary of National*

1780, during the riots against Papist Act of 1778 led by Lord George Gordon, Horace Walpole, who was in London at the time, claimed "the perpetrators of the mischief" were "two-thirds apprentices and women," suggesting that women also destroyed the property of Catholics while wearing the blue ribbons of their cause.[75] In 1798, Irish women wearing green handkerchiefs, garters, and gowns served as "moving magazines," and in some cases, as soldiers on the battlefields: Molly Weston wore a "green riding costume, with gold braid in the manner of a uniform and a green cocked hat with a white plume," armed herself with "sword and pistols," and lead repeated charges against the redcoats at Tara.[76] In 1819, women decked out in white and carrying liberty caps marched and died at Peterloo.[77]

While these examples of women's direct political action were the exception, indirect action was the rule. During contested elections, they canvassed for candidates decked out in party cockades, ribbons, and sashes.[78] On political holidays, especially the opposing celebrations of Restoration Day (May 28th) and the anniversary of William of Orange's arrival in England (November 5th), women adorned themselves with white or orange cockades and probably helped burn effigies of William III or the Pretender, James Edward Stuart, during the first half

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Biography; and John Leonard Roberts, *The Jacobite Wars: Scotland and the Military Campaigns of 1715 and 1745* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2002), 106, 146, 147.

[75] Horace Walpole to Horace Man, 14 June 1780, in *The Yale Editions of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. by W.S. Lewis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 25:62, and Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, 264–266.

[76] Anne Kinsella, "Nineteenth-Century Perspectives: The Women of 1798 in folk memory and ballads" in *The Women of 1798*, ed. Dáire Keogh and Nicholas Furlong (Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 1998), 190–194. See also Chalus, "Fanning the Flames," 99, and Catherine O'Connor, "The Experience of Women in the Rebellion of 1798 in Wexford," *The Past: The Organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, no. 24 (2003): 95–106.

[77] Colley, *Britons*, 283, 343, and M.L. Bush, "The Women at Peterloo: The Impact of Female Reform on the Manchester Meeting of 16 of August 1819," *History* 89, no.2 (August 2004): 209–232.

[78] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 198; Foreman, *Georgiana*, 138–139; Katrina Navickas, "'That sash will hang you,'" 546.

of the century.[79] In times of political crisis, such as the Excise Crisis and the Regency Crisis, they expressed their allegiances through ornaments at court and public venues.[80] During scandalous political trials such as the Bishop Sacheverell's and Warren Hasting's, they unfurled fans that expressed support for or opposition to the event.[81]

By attending to the extraparliamentary strategy of accessorizing in novels of the long eighteenth century, this project spotlights the ordinary actions women performed, regardless of their backgrounds, to serve a political party, a candidate, a king, and a country. I follow the lead of Rachel Carnell who in *Partisan Politics, Narrative Realism, and the Rise of the British Novel* asks us to "revisit the category of formal realism, within which women novelists have always been viewed as second-class citizens."[82] In *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt defined formal realism as a set of narrative conventions that support the premise "that the novel is a full and authentic report of the human experience" by providing "such details of the story as the individuality of the actors concerned, the particular times and places of their actions" in language that refers to real life.[83] A return to formal realism, unencumbered by the ideology of separate spheres and Whig historiography, will result in the discovery of numerous representations that show female characters participating in the political system that excluded them—representations that were often fashioned by women novelists.

Building on recent work by Susan S. Lanser that unearths the ties between literary and political representation in the period, "Awful Beauty's Arms" uses representations of women's political accessorizing to think through the similarities between women's political and literary

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[79] Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, 91, 94, 103, 104, 117.
[80] Chalus, "Fanning the Flames," 103–105; Chalus, *Elite Women*, 100–105.
[81] Chalus, "Fanning the Flames," 103.
[82] Carnell, *Partisan Politics*, 3.
[83] Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1957), 32.

representation.[84] Both forms of representation operate metonymically. In his well-known work on metaphor and metonymy, Roman Jakobson describes metonymy as words that draw a contiguous relationship to each other. Metonyms "combine and contrast the positioned similarity of semantic contiguity."[85] Unlike metaphors that compare two separate, but similar things, metonyms combine and contrast two things that are drawn together. As Christopher Tilley points out, metonymy is an internal relationship— it accomplishes a transfer of meaning on the basis of associations that develop out of specific *contexts* and cultural traditions."[86] Following Jakobson and Tilley, I understand metonymy as one distinct entity standing in for another distinct entity that it is closely related to in the cultural context in which it appears.

In this project, I argue that the literary representation of women in the novel imitates two metonymic forms of political representation in the long eighteenth century. Like in history, women are represented as both a presence and absence simultaneously. Novels routinely describe the female body through fashion objects on the page, particularly accessories. They conflate ornaments with or substitute ornaments for the elided female body, rendering women objects contiguous with a subject, fetishized parts instead of a whole. My purpose is not to objectify these female characters, but to point out how the novel's formal realism replicates the objectification of women produced by the virtual representation in the political system. Armed with the period's repertoire of political symbolism, I also consider how the accessories in question evoke particular political ideologies or partisan beliefs. How novels do use the metonymic power of political accessories, directly or indirectly, to fulfill a political agenda?

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[84] Susan S. Lanser, "The Novel Body Politic" in *A Companion to the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Culture* ed. Paula R. Backscheider and Catherine Ingrassia (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2005), 481—503.
[85] Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles" in *Selected Writings II: Word and Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 2:255.
[86] Christopher Tilley, *Metaphor and Material Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1999), 5.

Bringing both metonymic approaches together, I explore what it means to have political accessories, as metonyms for political ideologies and partisan viewpoints in the plot about a certain historical event, stand in for the female character's body. When they stand in for the female body on the page, these political metonyms contradict the elision of virtual representation and call attention to how women were historically included in political culture, but excluded from political institutions. By way of this contradiction, I explore how individual novels reproduce historical and ideological reactions to women's participation in politics. The relationship between the ornament's metonymic function in the plot—as a symbol of a political belief system—and the ornament's metonymic function in description—as a stand in for the female body—exposes how novels contest or legitimate women's accessoriness. Depending on the novel in question, it may rail against or applaud women's accessoriness. Or in keeping with the political culture/ institution distinction, the novel may accept women as political actors, but only when they are also limited to this accessory form of political representation.

The novels that form part of this project, and the political events they represent, all fall within the early modern heyday of women's public political participation, 1688–1832. The Glorious Revolution of 1688–89 produced the two political parties, Whigs and Tories, and shortly after, the partisan accessories that made women's acceptance in political culture visible. While Parliament's 1827 "Act to make further Regulations for preventing corrupt Practices at Elections of Members in Parliament and for diminishing the Expense of such Elections" is the nominal end of these party accessories, the project discusses events through 1832 because the First Reform Act wrote women's exclusion from the franchise into law and did away with the parts of the electoral system—namely the boroughs— that gave women explicit legal rights to

the vote.[87] Although these events were defined by specific political ideologies, I do not focus on one particular side of the political spectrum because women's contributions served both Whig and Tory, Jacobite and Hanoverian, liberal and conservative, as well as revolutionary and reactionary interests throughout the period. The project moves chronologically, discussing four significant events in British history within this time frame.

I begin with Britain's first stock market crash in 1720, the South Sea Bubble, an event that alerted cultural critics to the phenomenon of women investing in joint-stock companies by selling their ornaments. While the first volume of Eliza Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1724–1725) only references this phenomenon in passing, I contend that the novel's allegory of the crash combines the existing political symbolism surrounding the bubble with a fashion accessory to protest the South Sea Company in particular and the unregulated system of mercantile capitalism in general. In the last narrative, Madam De Fautmille strangles herself with a girdle. I read her death as an allegorical protest because the girdle, as a consumer object with a cultural history of policing or arousing sexual desire, is a metonym that combines the method women used to invest in the South Sea Company with the patriarchal ideology that developed in the aftermath of the bubble, which conflated consumer and sexual desire to prevent women from investing.

In 1745, women accessorized according to their political allegiances during Charles Stuart's attempt to reclaim the crown of his grandfather, James II. Even though the novel does not explicitly reference this accessorizing, chapter two explores how Henry Fielding's jokes about Sophia Western's muff transform the accessory into a symbol for the Hanoverian cause in relation to the novel's setting, the Jacobite Rebellion. I trace how the inset "it-narrative" of the

[87] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25, 158; Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, 25–26; and Samuel Warren, *The Law and Practice of Election Committees; being the Completion of A manual of Parliamentary Election Law* (London: Butterworths, 1853), 219, *Hathitrust.*

muff figures Sophia's marriage contract as analogous to the social contract, raising questions about whether government should be decided by paternal authority or consent of the governed. Sophia's muff foregrounds this analogy and the novel's larger political allegory because muffs, as references to female genitalia, metonymize the body part that determined how monarchies, money, and property were transferred. I propose that the muff (as property and slang for female genitalia) stands in for the political and marital rights that comprised the Hanoverian claim to the crown. I contend that when Sophia gives Fielding's Hanoverian hero her muff in marriage, this particular transfer of property celebrates the Hanoverian victory in the '45.

In 1784, women played a vital role in the hotly contested election between Charles Fox, Sir Cecil Wray, and Admiral Samuel Hood in Westminster by dispensing party cockades and ribbons. While Edgeworth does not include these specific Whig and Tory accessories, in *Belinda* (1801), the focus of my third chapter, her anxieties about petticoat government lead her to take up the question of women's influence or interference in a fictional retelling of this election. While I show, more broadly, that cockades and ribbons metonymize women's otherwise invisible presence in the electoral system, Edgeworth uses them to call attention to how Lady Delacour ignores electoral customs, exploits her sexuality to obtain votes, and duels her nemesis, Mrs. Luttridge, who supports the opposing candidate. By implying that Lady Delacour's interference is a result of her display-based education and love of show, I argue Edgeworth makes a case for the deleterious political consequences of women's lack of access to rational education.

I conclude with the moment at the end of the eighteenth century when ladies at court transformed a symbol of the monarchy, the Prince of Wales's feathers, into an accessory: three feathers tied to a bandeau bearing the Prince's motto "Ich Dien." My final chapter examines this accessory, along with the more ordinary ostrich plumes worn by women at court, are used,

ironically, to critique the monarchy in *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality* (1812). With reference to stadial theory and emerging theories of race, I explore the process by which feathers from African ostriches were transported to London by the trans-Saharan Slave trade and transformed into as icons of British royal authority. I consider how Monsieur Feather, the it-narrator, operates as a metonym for its "savage" origin on the African continent and royalty simultaneously in satirical representations of the power women's ostrich plumes give them at court, including a representation of Queen Charlotte in a Prince of Wales's headdress on her husband's birthday. I suggest that the novel deploys the feather's double meaning to critique the monarchy's corruption, luxury, waste, and governance.

"Awful Beauty's Arms" is a work of literary criticism intent on showing women's political action in the novel as an imitation of real life in the eighteenth century, on scrutinizing the relationship between literary representations of women political actors and historical fact. But it is also a study of accessoriness, of how the novel could broadcast ideologies that had real-life consequences for women and reinforced unequal political structures such as virtual representation. I see my project as bridging the gap between the ideological and historical approaches to women's political engagement in eighteenth-century literary studies, hopefully inaugurating a new way of thinking about how representation matters.

Chapter One

Madam De Fautmille's Girdle

In Eliza Haywood's *The Injur'd Husband: Or, the Mistaken Resentment* (1722), the Baroness de Tortillée, one of Haywood's delightfully wicked protagonists, proclaims, "A Topknot tied amiss [would] give me greater pain than the eternal *Damnation* of all Man-kind!"[1] In characteristic hyperbole, the Baroness encapsulates the destruction that accessories can inflict. Her reason for adorning herself with a decorously tied topknot is, as she explains in the sentence that follows, power over men:" Not to be *Ador'd* is, indeed, not to *Live*!"[2] Accessories are weapons of mass seduction, and the Baroness is an accomplished mistress of their powers. A topknot "tied amiss," consequently, is a tragedy on par with the apocalypse—or at least the eradication of the male part of the hyphenated "man-kind"—because it leaves her powerless and ineffectual. Of course, this is something that the Baroness would never allow, exerting, as she does over all her lovers, perfect control over her many weapons. Haywood routinely describes accessories as weapons in her novels, but there is another weapon of mass seduction that she consistently depicts: the glittering articles of commercial and legal promise, whether they are a fortune, a title, or a stock ticket. Even the cold, calculating Baroness cannot save herself from the seductive powers of this weapon, having only married a title in order to fund her extravagant lifestyle, and continuing, after the ceremony, to sell her favors to the highest bidder. Throughout her extensive oeuvre, Eliza Haywood explores how these objects—fashion accessories and articles of wealth—empower or destroy the women who own them. Yet, her amatory fiction, in particular, grapples with the similarities that they share—namely, their

[1] Eliza Haywood, *The Injur'd Husband: Or, the Mistaken Resentment* in *Four Novels of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Mary Anne Schofield (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1983), 132.
[2] Haywood, *The Injur'd Husband*, 132.

ability to seduce people en masse—and experiments with them in the confines of fictional worlds built upon the relationship between sexual and economic exchange.[3]

Haywood's first foray into the amatory genre known as the *chronique scandaleuse*, *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia, Volume I* (1724–1725) is built on the interplay between the seductive weaponry of finance and female beauty.[4] This interplay is sustained by another weapon of mass seduction attached to this particular genre of the novel: a key. Keys revealing the true identities of the persons described were usually published concurrently with the text or shortly thereafter. The keys not only seduced readers with the prospect of dirty little secrets, they also ensured that political critiques of these historical figures were heard by large audiences. By using the key as a bridge between history and fiction, Haywood creates a narrative that allegorizes the economic ruin of the South Sea Bubble as histories of women's sexual ruin. In her groundbreaking biography of Eliza Haywood, Kathryn King contends that "the most significant feature of the narrative, and it has almost gone unexplored, is its demand for justice for men and women in the middling and lower social ranks."[5] Taking King's call as the foundation of my chapter, I examine how Haywood uses two

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[3] See also *Idalia: or, The Unfortunate Mistress* (1723); *The City Jilt: or, The Alderman Turn'd Beau* (1726); *The Distressed Orphan: or, Love in a Madhouse* (1726); *The Double Marriage: or, The Fatal Release* (1726); *Fantomina: or, Love in a Maze* (1726); *The Mercenary Lover: or, the Unfortunate Heiresses* (1726); and *The Perplex'd Dutchess: or, Treachery Rewarded* (1728).

[4] Eliza Haywood, *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*, vol. 1 (London: The Booksellers of Westminster, 1725), *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*. All references are to this edition. In her essay, "The Basis for Attribution in the Canon of Eliza Haywood," Leah Orr challenges Haywood's authorship of *Memoirs* because it was published anonymously and the basis for attribution relies heavily on a footnote from Pope's *The Dunciad*. Leah Orr, "The Basis for Attribution in the Canon of Eliza Haywood," *Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 12, no. 4 (Dec. 2011): 335–375. However, I am inclined to agree with Patrick Spedding whose exhaustive bibliography of Haywood offers additional sources. I see no reason to discount Haywood as the author of *Memoirs*, especially because *Memoirs* shares similarities in form and content with her other novels from the 1720s. See Spedding, *A Bibliography of Eliza Haywood* (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2004), 207–214.

[5] Kathryn R. King, *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), 37.

weapons of mass seduction—the novel's key and a woman's girdle—to critique the financial and moral damage of the third—stock tickets— on women at the height of the unregulated mercantile capitalism during the South Sea Bubble. I argue that the key's satire of specific figures in the South Sea Company and the novel's final narrative, in which a woman named Madam De Fautmille strangles herself with a girdle, are allegorical protests of the South Sea Company in particular and mercantile capitalism in general that place the blame at the feet of the damnable "man-kind" of which the Baroness speaks. Ultimately, Haywood's accessories are instruments of political critique that blend the personal and the political to underscore the harsh legal and economic realities of women's lived experience in eighteenth-century England.

Memoirs of a Certain Island was the first of Haywood's three scandal chronicles.[6] The scandal chronicle was a genre that offered fictional, scandalous histories of political figures as

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[6] The reception of Haywood's first scandal chronicle was exceptionally negative and misogynistic. Three male poets took to their pens to condemn Haywood's scandal chronicle, trashing her reputation in the process. Richard Savage, Haywood's ex-boyfriend, wrote the following stanzas in his poem, "The Authors of the Town" (1725):

> A cast-off Dame, who Intrigues can judge,
> Writes Scandal in Romance—a Printer's Drudge!
> Flush'd with Success, for Stage-Renown she pants,
> And melts, and swells, and pens luxurious rants. (156–160)

Richard Savage, "The Authors of the Town; a Satire: Inscribed to the Author of the Universal Passion " in *The Poetical Works of Richard Savage*, ed. Clarence Tracy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 156–160. Savage wrote in response to Haywood's vicious representation of his new girlfriend, Martha Fowke Sansom, as the "big bon'd, buxom, brown Woman" Gloatitia who sells her body to a bookseller in order to publish "that incoherent Stuff which she calls Verses." Haywood, *Memoirs*, 1:43,47. Savage was not alone in his hatred of the novel. Three years later, Jonathan Swift satirizes Haywood in his poem, "Corrina" (1728). Corinna is, the "authoress" of "the New Utopia" and thus a figure for Haywood (28, 32). Her immoral life is described as follows:

> At twelve, a wit and coquette
> Marries for love, half whore, half wife;
> Cuckolds, elopes, and runs in debt,
> Turns authoress, and is Curll's for life. (25–28)

fact. Unlike the novel as we know it today, or even in the eighteenth century, the scandal chronicle required an accessory for reading: a key.[7] As I explained above, keys allowed the reader to look behind the façade of allegory and to read with a certain person's history in mind. As a result of the knowledge they provided, these little novelistic accessories had an immense impact: they were what made the scandal chronicle so liable to suits of libel and what made this genre of the novel so notorious. When Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, wrote the first scandal chronicle, *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* (1665), he described the genre as a "Satyrical Romance."[8] As a descriptive term, "Satyrical Romance" suggests a work of fiction that satirizes or ridicules the vices of people. When the satire element of the genre was combined with an accessory that exposed the identities of those satirized, the result was an extraordinary public

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Jonathan Swift, "Corinna" in *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems*, ed. Pat Rogers (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983),25–32. Finally, who can forget Alexander Pope's grotesque depiction of Haywood in *The Dunciad* (1728–29)? It was revenge for Haywood's supposed satire of Martha Blount as Marthalia in *Memoirs*. Pope describes a topless Haywood with "two babes of love clinging to her waste," and names her the prize in a pissing contest between two booksellers. Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, ed. James Sutherland (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 2:150. Pope's footnote to this passage explains why he went to such lengths to show his contempt: "those shameless scribblers (for the most part of That sex, which ought least to be capable of such malice or impudence) who in libelous Memoirs and Novels, reveal the faults and misfortunes to both sexes, to the ruin or disturbance, of publick fame or private happiness." Pope, *The Dunciad*, 2:149,149n. All three responses to *Memoirs* fostered Haywood's "author-whore persona," associating her with the relationship between economic and sexual exchange that she depicted in her novels. They are, in my opinion, partially responsible for the negative reputation Haywood held in the British literary canon until recently. Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 14. In spite of these critiques, she went on to write two additional scandal chronicles: *The Secret History of the Present Intrigues of the Court of Caramania* (1727) and *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736). *Caramania* satirizes the illicit affair between Henrietta Howard, the Countess of Suffolk, and the future George II. *Eovaai* satirizes Prime Minister Robert Walpole.

[7] Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684–1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 56–60.

[8] Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, *The Amorous History of the Gauls. Written in French by Roger de Rabutin, Count de Bussy, and now translated into English* (London: Printed for Sam. Illidge,1725), A4, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. It is important to note that the birth of this genre resulted in political backlash. After the publication of his *Histoire Amoureuse*, Bussy-Rabutin was imprisoned in the Bastille for fifteen months because of his portrayal of Louis XIV and his mistress, Louise de la Valliere. Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, 57.

scandal. Some scandal chronicles used their keys to take personal revenge and many more used their keys to take political revenge. The keys created scapegoats for sociopolitical events and stereotypes about political parties because the public knew (or thought they knew) the private vices, shames, and foibles of real political figures. Although the scandal chronicle and its key both purported to be the truth—a "true" memoir or secret history—they often took creative license with the smallest of facts, or they created entirely fictional histories about real people.[9] Even with the key, there remained a titillating air of mystery about them.

What made the scandal chronicle so deliciously scandalous was the fact that, in this genre, "political exposé and pornographic fantasy were happily entwined."[10] Scandal chronicles had, as John Richetti describes in *Popular Fictions Before Richardson*, two major conflicts: social antagonism and sexual antagonism.[11] According to Richetti, these novels rebelled against a corrupt aristocratic society, where the court was a breeding ground for sexual licentiousness and political duplicity.[12] This social critique was achieved partially by the keys which exposed the identities of real-life politicians and partially by the second conflict: sexual antagonism. The sexual antagonism conflict appeared in descriptions of the destruction of a young virtuous female by an aristocratic rake or in descriptions of the seduction of male youths by low-class prostitutes.[13] As a result of these two conflicts, most scandal chronicles operated by a metaphorical scale in which love and virtue suggested good, heroic politicians, while lust and vice suggested conniving, self-interested ones. For example, seducing and jilting a woman—a frequent crime in these texts—was linked to the real-life dishonesty and disloyalty of

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[9] Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, 56–60.
[10] Bradford K. Mudge, *The Whore's Story: Women, Pornography, and the British Novel 1684–1830* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 28.
[11] John J. Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson: Narrative Patterns 1700–1739* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 124.
[12] Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, 124.
[13] Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, 124.

politicians. Even though the public's delight in scandal chronicles was vicarious participation in the thrilling fantasy world of aristocratic vice, scandal chronicles did have a moral foundation in the classical tradition, where vice was used as a tool to instruct and delight.[14]

Haywood's scandal chronicle is specifically modified to fit the literary and historical context of England in the 1720s. Whereas the Baroness D'Aulnoy and Delarivier Manley had been the genre's trailblazers, pioneering the gossip narrator who exposed the secrets of public figures and politicians at court, Haywood viewed the depravities of court life and party politics as less of a threat to society than the new credit-driven mercantile capitalist system.[15] Until very recently, most of the critical scholarship on *Memoirs of a Certain Island* found Haywood's scandal chronicle to be apolitical.[16] However, over the past ten years, scholars have come to the conclusion that the novel is not only political, but probably party-political. In a "Gender of Opposition: Eliza Haywood's Scandal Fiction," Ros Ballaster reverses the position she put forth in *Seductive Forms* and suggests that, in *Memoirs*, Haywood criticizes the way women are

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[14] Richetti, 123.

[15] After Bussy-Rabutin, Catherine La Motte, Baroness D'Aulnoy, became the most famous author of the scandal chronicle with works such as *Mémoires la cour d'Espagne* (1679–1681), *Mémoires sur la cour de France* (1692), and *Mémoires de la cour d'Angleterre* (1695). An English edition of *Mémoires de la cour d'Angleterre* was published in London two years before Delarivier Manley anglicized the genre. Manley's first scandal chronicle, *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality of Both Sexes From the New Atalantis, An Island in the Mediterranean* was published in 1709. Perhaps inspired by D'Aulnoy's representation of the Duke of Monmouth in *Mémoires de la cour d'Angleterre*, Manley's satirical attacks on the Whig party in the novel, particularly the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, were so vicious that Manley and her printer were briefly imprisoned and tried for libel. She was later found innocent of the charge. Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island* is born of this "memoirs" tradition, using the same metaphorical scale of love vs. lust to judge and satirize political figures. See Delarivier Manley, *New Atalantis* ed. Ros Ballaster (New York: Penguin, 1991), Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, 125, and Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, 110.

[16] See George Frisbie Whicher, *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1915), 110; Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson*, 156; and Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 261–262. Before she reversed her opinion, Ros Ballaster failed to acknowledge the South Sea Bubble in *Seductive Forms* (1993), declaring that, "From 1720 onwards women's amatory fiction turned away from employing sexual desire as a substituting metaphor for political interest." Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, 154.

excluded from the entire political process.[17] Marta Kvande has argued that the outsider-status of Haywood's narrator, Cupid, provides him with an authoritative stance on which to critique Walpole's Whig government.[18] In contrast, Kathryn King has pointed out that Robert Walpole receives as "glowing portrait" in the novel as Cleomenes and asserts that the "Whig orientation of her dedications and commendatory passages in the 1720s is too pronounced to be ignored."[19] Following King, Rebecca Bullard has suggested we should take this "praise" of Walpole at "face value" because Haywood may have been writing "in the hope or expectation of reward from the ministry."[20] On a more general scale, John O'Brien writes that Haywood's critique of the bubble is "conducted less in terms of issues of state than those of the genre she was of course most skilled in and identified with—that of amatory romance fiction,"[21] and David Mark Diamond posits that Haywood writes "from a decidedly conservative position vis-à-vis the culture of credit" and "exaggerates the immateriality and groundlessness of South Sea Company stock" to show how speculative desire threatens the Lockean self.[22]

While I am inclined to agree with King and Bullard that *Memoirs* is a pro-Whig text based on my own study of the keys and the fact that the South Sea Company was effectively the Tory response to the Whig's Bank of England, I am still hesitant to declare it so without further evidence.[23] Just prior to this novel, Haywood had broke with the Hillarian circle, "a literary coterie that gathered around the poet Aaron Hill during the early 1720s" because of her

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[17] Ros Ballaster, "A Gender of Opposition: Eliza Haywood's Scandal Fiction" in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work*, ed. Kirsten T. Saxton and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 151.
[18] Marta Kvande, "The Outsider Narrator in Eliza Haywood's Political Novels," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 43, no. 3 (2003): 627, 628.
[19] King, *Political Biography of Haywood, 37, 39.*
[20] Rebecca Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure, 1674–1725* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 168.
[21] John O'Brien, *Literature Incorporated: The Cultural Unconscious of the Business Corporation, 1650–1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 89.
[22] David Mark Diamond, "Eros and Exchange Alley: Speculative Desire in Eliza Haywood's Memoirs of a Certain Island," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 30, no.1 (Fall 2017): 53, 63, 64.
[23] John Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble* (London: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1993), 45.

feud with Martha Fowke Sansom, her ex-lover Richard Savage's new lover. While this break suggests a need for ministerial support, there is still the possibility of ironic interpretations of Cleomenes and other Whig characters—that Haywood intended readers to register the gap between Walpole and this laudatory description —and there are still questions about why the first Irish edition of this novel lists Walpole as the villain Lucitario.[24] Rather than trying to prove the novel as a party-political satire, I will focus in this chapter on how the South Sea Bubble was bipartisan event that saw both Whigs and Tories investing in the company and how Haywood's critique of the South Sea Company forms part of the larger critique of mercantile capitalism in her oeuvre. Haywood's works are always wary of the systems women live under, which is why Paula Backscheider gives Haywood credit for expanding the novel's "understanding of how the personal is the political."[25] In *Memoirs*, Haywood openly, and even vindictively, names the mercantile capitalist system as a threat to ordinary women, their virtue, and their livelihoods.[26]

Memoirs of a Certain Island is intensely concerned with the way the economic system betrays the women who participate in it and the way the law hinders women from controlling their own finances. Both volumes are, as King affirms, "filled with outrage at the injustice that runs rampant in the new financial and socio-economic order where self-interest and the desire for wealth trump all else."[27] In the first volume, Haywood's outrage is part of what I see as a two-pronged political attack in the novel. The first prong uses the key, textual clues, and corporate gossip to expose the supposed vices, shames, and ugliness (sometimes literally) of

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[24] Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure*, 163, 168. For more on the potential ironic interpretations of these figures, see Rachel Carnell, "Eliza Haywood and the Narratological Tropes of Secret History," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 14 no. 4 (2014), 101–121.
[25] Paula Backscheider, "The Story of Eliza Haywood's Novels: Caveats and Questions" in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work*, ed. Kirsten T. Saxton and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 37.
[26] King, *Political Biography of Haywood*, 51.
[27] King , *Political Biography of Haywood*, 37.

certain members of the South Sea Company as punishment for their crimes during the bubble. The second prong is the correlation by which her allegory operates. As I shall show, texts produced during the bubble deployed the correlation between sexual and consumer desire in an effort to undermine women from bettering their financial situations by investment.[28] These texts take stereotypical assumptions about women's innate insatiability and irrationality as fact in order to collapse the distinction between sexual desire and other forms of desire. They render any expression of desire from a woman as always already in opposition to virtue. In *Memoirs*, Haywood uses this representational correlation of sexual and consumer desire as her allegorical formula, but unlike other bubble texts, she directs it against the mercantile capitalist system itself. She argues that the mercantile capitalist system's espousal of unmitigated greed has unleashed a demon named Lust and that said demon, in turn, has either corrupted or destroyed the women of British nation. As the history of Madam De Fautmille and her girdle illustrate, Haywood's allegory asserts that it is not women, but the system of mercantile capitalism and male greed that is ruining the nation.

The South Sea Bubble and Fashion Accessories

In his second defense of himself before the House of Lords, John Aislabie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, declared that the South Sea Company's plan to decrease the national debt through the conversion of annuities into stock was, in effect, "to set up the nation to auction."[29] Unfortunately, the prize of the auction was not English land or English pounds—it was the government annuities that men, women, widows, and orphans depended on for subsistence. The tragedy of the South Sea Bubble is not just that members of the government participated

[28] Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 35–36.
[29] John Aislabie, *Mr. Aislabie's Second Speech on his Defence in the House of Lords, on Thursday, July 20. 1721* (London: J. Roberts and J. Graves, 1721), 11, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*

in a Ponzi scheme; it is the fact that hundreds were seduced by false promises of ever-rising stock and lost everything. In the early decades of the eighteenth century, these appalling acts of corruption were possible because embezzlement and bribery were not yet apart of English law.[30] In fact, business and politics were already intertwined in the creation and operation of joint-stock companies.[31] The government chartered the South Sea Company in 1711, and it was granted "the monopoly of the trade on the east of South America, from the River Orinoco to the South of Tierra del Fuego."[32] Moreover, in 1713, it was granted The Asiento, a contract with Spain to transport 4,800 *piezas de Indias* (healthy, adult male slaves) annually to the Spanish colonies in South America.[33] After failing to make a real profit off the slave trade for some years, the South Sea Company, in the extremely ironic words of James Milner, proposed to help the government "get themselves free from the Slavery of [the] Annuities" comprising a large portion of the National debt.[34] In 1720, the South Sea Company offered to convert roughly £9.5 million of the national debt into South Sea stock by offering individuals with government annuities, such as redeemable annuities (ordinary government stock) and irredeemable annuities (due to expire in 1742, 1792, and 1807), the option to convert them into company stock.[35] There was no fixed rate of exchange, so the annuitants' profit depended entirely on the price of the stock. However, so did the company's profit.

Despite claims that this conversion was for the greater good, the cabal running the company—John Blunt, Robert Knight, and John Grigsby—knew that the more money they

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[30] Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble*, 10.
[31] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 37.
[32] Helen Paul, *The South Sea Bubble: An Economic History of its Origins and Consequences* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 38.
[33] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 40.
[34] James Milner, *Three Letters, relating to the South-Sea Company and the Bank. The first written in March 1719–20. The second in April 1720. The third in Septem. 1720* (London: J. Roberts and A. Dodd, 1720), 10, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*
[35] P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1688-1756* (Aldershot, UK: Gregg Revivals, 1993), 92.

owed to the Exchequer in exchange for the annuities, the higher the market price of the stock had to be for the company to make an actual profit.[36] Accordingly, the company also sold stock to those who could get their names on "money subscription" lists, marketing the stock in such a way to both annuitants and stockjobbers that it promised almost instantaneous wealth. In January 1720, just before the conversion of annuitants began, South Sea Stock was at £129, and by the first week in June, the stock had soared up to£ 1,000.[37] The primary reason South Sea stock swelled in price so quickly in this six-month period was because the company sold stock to the people on the subscription lists before they actually converted the annuities.[38] On April 14, for instance, they issued the first "money subscription" for stock at 300, but waited two more weeks until April 28 to convert the government annuities.[39] The company continued this pattern for each of the four money subscriptions, and in doing so, the company roused the market and investors into what was called, time and time again, a "frenzy." The subscription lists were filled almost instantaneously: the first list on April 14th was filled "' in an Hour's Time,'" the second and third were filled "'in a few hours,'" and the fourth on August 24th had "'had such a great crowding of People, that by one of the Clock the Subscriptions were completed.'"[40] Little did the money subscribers and the annuitants know, though, that the amount of stock issued was usually at least £250,000 more than they claimed in their

[36] Dickson, Financial Revolution, 101. We can see their determination to raise the price of stock in "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme," where it is John Blunt's allegorical alias, Appius's "avow'd Maxim, a thousand times repeated, That the advancing by all means of the price of stock, was the only way to promote the good of the Company." "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme" in *A Collection of Several Pieces of Mr. John Toland, now first Publish'd from his original Manuscripts: with some Memoirs of his Life and Writing*s, (London: J. Peele, 1726), 1:423, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*
[37] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 94,134.
[38] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*,122,123, 129.
[39] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, 124.
[40] *Weekly Journal* quoted in Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, 127.

accounts.[41] This "fictitious stock" was used in bribes, as Helen J. Paul explains: "Holders of fictitious stock would make money on the difference between the current share price and the price when they apparently bought the shares. The company would pay them the difference as they pretended to sell these shares back into the company."[42] The recipients of these bribes were members of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, ministers, and courtiers. Chancellor Aislabie, Postmaster General Craggs, Lord Stanhope, and even King George I's mistresses, the Duchess of Kendal and the Countess von Platen, all received bribes.[43] Given the amount of stock they gave away in bribes, the money subscriptions sold before the conversion of the annuities, and the reality that the company did not actually produce anything, it should come as no surprise that they could not hold the stock up for more than a summer. By October 1st, South Sea stock had sunk back down to 290 and continued to sink still.[44] While some were able to sell their stock in time to actually make a profit, many lost thousands. Those who were seduced into converting their annuities into South Sea stock lost that yearly income forever.

In contrast to the all-male company directors, many of the annuitants who converted their annuities into stock were women and a considerable number of investors were women as well. In the early decades of the eighteenth century, women who would normally have to be represented by men in legal dealings were allowed, as John Carswell explains, to own stocks simply "because the law had never thought of it."[45] While virtual representation is usually only considered in relation to the political system, I contend women's representation in the legal system operates according to the same metonymic association I outlined in the introduction. To prevent "improvident accidents," Sir William Blackstone explains in *Commentaries on the Laws of*

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[41] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, 125.
[42] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 52.
[43] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 95, 96.
[44] Dickson, *Financial Revolution*, 149.
[45] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 119.

England (1765), infants (women under the age of twenty-one) could do "no legal act," such as be sued or dispose of their own property, without the consent of their guardians or without reaffirming that act when they came of age.[46] This was particularly true of female orphans who had their property held in trust for them, most likely by male trustees, until they came of age or were married.[47] Furthermore in Blackstone's famous description, coverture transformed man and wife into one person, with the husband acting as representative for both: "the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband; under whose wing, protection, and *cover* she performs every thing."[48] While there were certain rights she retained during coverture, the wife, for the most part, ceased to exist as a legal person: she was unable to contract, convey property, execute her own will, or sue without her husband's consent.[49] Certain lawsuits, as well as any wills, drafted prior to her marriage were even annulled.[50] Though unmarried women could technically own property, it is important to recognize how many cultural practices raised

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[46] William Blackstone, "The Rights of Persons," ed. David Lemmings, vol.1 of *Commentaries on the Laws of England* ed. Wilfrid Prest (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 301; *A Treatise of Feme Coverts: Or, the Lady's Law Containing All the Laws and Statues Relating to Women, under Several Heads*, Lynne A. Greenberg, ed., vol.2 of *The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works* ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott (New York: Routledge, 2005), 81.

[47] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, 1:298–302

[48] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, 1:284–285. See also J.H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History* (London: Reed Elsevier, 2002), 483–484.

[49] Blackstone, *Commentaries*, 1:284–285; *A Treatise of Feme Coverts*, 2:78–108; Susan Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1830* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 133, 136.

[50] B*aron &Feme: A Treatise of Equity, Concerning Husband and Wife*, ed. Lynne A. Greenberg, vol.3 of *The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works* ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott (New York: Routledge, 2005), 53–60, and *The laws respecting women: as they regard their natural rights or their connections and conduct in which their interests and duties as daughters, wards, heiresses, spinsters, sisters, wives, widows, mothers, legatees, executrixes, &c. are obligations of parent and child and the condition of minors. The whole laid down according to the principles of the common and statute law...and the substance of the trial of Elizabeth, duchess dowager of Kingston on an indictment for bigamy before the House of peers, April 1776* (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1777), 133, Hathitrust.

obstacles and put the property of femme soles in male hands. As Amy Louise Erickson affirms in *Women and Property in Early Modern England*, "the ultimate intended destination of any child's inherited portion was its use as a marriage portion."[51] It was expected that whatever an unmarried woman inherited or owned would ultimately be subsumed into her husband's property. Thus, for the most part, fathers, guardians, and husbands metonymically represented women in court, lawsuits, and marriage settlements because of their close relationship, limiting their ability to own or manage property. Fortunately for women, however, paper stock tickets were much easier to hide from a disgruntled husband or overbearing father than land.[52]

In England, women's property rights were decided at common law and equity courts, meaning precedent rather than statute decided them. For a brief window in the eighteenth century, precedents protected a species of property women could use as capital to invest in joint-stock companies that that not even coverture could not annihilate: the separate estate. Beginning in the seventeenth century, middle-class and upper-class families increasingly had lawyers put a separate piece of property in trust for a woman on the brink of marriage in the hopes of protecting her from a cruel husband, a debauched husband, or her husband's creditors. The property was put in trust, usually to trustees friendly to the wife, "at the time of the prenuptial marriage settlement, an estate which the wife was to possess 'for her sole and separate use,' not subject to the control of her husband and not available to her husband's creditors."[53] It provided a source of financial security for the new wife and her future children and kept the property in the original family.[54] The property could be landed estates, leases, or

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[51] Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 83.
[52] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 67–68.
[53] Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property*, 133.
[54] Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property*, 133.

stocks.[55] Throughout the eighteenth century, courts repeatedly ruled that feme coverts were feme soles in relation to their separate estates. As early as 1725, the courts recognized a wife's right to own separate property without trustees, meaning she owned, out right and in her own right, that estate while under coverture. In 1750, Lord Hardwicke declared that, "the rule of the court is, that where any thing is settled to the wife's separate use, she is considered as a feme sole."[56] Married women had complete control over this species of property, until the end of the century when "allowing married women such powers of alienation with respect to their separate estates was found to be intolerable."[57] In 1791, Lord Thurlow created restraints on anticipation, which were then included in marriage settlements to prevent women from selling this property during marriage.[58]

Within the context of the South Sea Bubble, women's separate estates gave them the capital to invest. Although there are different types of separate estates, I want to zero in on one type that probably enabled women of all classes and backgrounds to own stock: pin money. At common law, a husband had a legal duty to see that his wife received "necessaries" such as "meat, drink, clothing, physic, &c. suitable to his rank and fortune."[59] There were usually two methods to ensuring a wife had her necessaries. The first was allowing the wife to purchase items in the husband's name or under his account, a method that did result in women taking advantage of coverture's legal claims on men.[60] One estranged wife charged £94 for a petticoat and silver fringes for a sidesaddle to her husband and the courts forced him to pay it because it

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[55] Staves, 136.
[56] Griby v Cox (1750), I Ves. Sen. 518.
[57] Staves,152.
[58] Staves, 153.
[59] *The Laws Respecting Women*, 66.
[60] Margot Finn, "Women, Consumption and Coverture in England, c.1760–1860," *Historical Journal* 39, no.3: (1996): 710–711.

was suitable to her station.[61] The other method to fulfill this duty was by agreeing to pay pin money. Pin money was a cash payment that the wife received usually in quarterly installments for clothes, ornaments, amusements, and charities.[62] As Susan Staves explains, pin money was arranged by contract: "Often the contract was the marriage settlement, but sometimes husbands entered into other pre- and postnuptial agreements to pay pin money."[63] Typically, pin money was set up as a separate estate: property was settled as a fund to support the annual payments. It was usually put in the control of trustees who were responsible for paying the wife, but not always.[64] As a third party, trustees were designed to ensure and enforce the husband's pin money payments. The cash payments were also usually intended to be less than the ones she would receive after the death of her husband in her jointure. This maximized the probabilities that pin money would be used just "for the maintenance of the women and children upon whom it was settled" and minimized "the possibilities that women could take property intended for maintenance and use it as capital."[65]

However, the cash was, theoretically, hers to do with what she will because it was a separate estate. Pin money, therefore, enabled women to save cash for the proverbial rainy day and purchase paraphernalia. Paraphernalia is, as Staves describes, the wife's clothes and personal ornaments, which "are 'owned' by the wife in a particular sense."[66] While there were numerous precedents for wives retaining the items of their paraphernalia purchased with pin money as their own property during coverture, the wife's ownership was not absolutely guaranteed. On the one hand, the courts ruled that wife's separate estates were their own

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[61] B*aron &Feme*, 3:285.
[62] Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property*, 132, 136.
[63] Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property*, 132–133.
[64] Staves, 136.
[65] Staves, 135.
[66] Staves, 148.

property.[67] On the other hand, under common law, a husband had a right to alienate any of his wife's property, but he could not bequeath it.[68] If the wife possessed paraphernalia at the time of his death, however, it was hers for life. There were cases, such as Wilson v. Pack (1710) that declared the items of personal adornment purchased with pin money was the wife's own property despite coverture, but there were also cases that did not, such as Lady Tyrell's Case (1674).[69] However, the purpose of both pin money and paraphernalia was to maintain the dignity of the husband through the wife's body by turning her into the husband's ornament as the anonymous author of *The Lawes Resolutions of Women's Rights* (1632) describes: "A wife how gallant soever she be, glittereth but in the riches of her husband, as the moone hath no light, but it is the sunnes."[70] Pin money was also designed to prevent the annoying situation of a wife asking her husband for money every single time she needed a new pair of gloves. It seems likely, then, that women were able to retain their clothes and ornaments purchased with pin money, if not in an official capacity than in an unofficial one, until the death of their husband made them her paraphernalia and property. The anonymous author *Baron and Feme: A Treatise of Equity, Concerning Husbands and Wives* (1738) confirms my theory:

> If a Woman hath Pin-Money, or a Separate Maintenance settled on her, and she by Management or good Housewifery, saves Money out of it, she may dispose of such Money so saved by her, or of any Jewels bought with it, by Writing in Nature of a Will, if she dies before her husband, and shall have it her self, if she survive him, and such Jewels shall not be liable to the Husband's Debts.[71]

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[67] Staves, 152.
[68] Staves, 148.
[69] Wilson v Pack (1710), 2 Eq. Ca. Abr.155 and Lady Tyrell's Case (1674) Freem. Chy.304.
[70] *The Lawes Resolutions of Women's Rights* (London: John More, 1632), 129, *HeinOnline.*
[71] *Baron and Feme*, 82.

From a deck of playing cards to prints and poems, innumerable texts record the popular practice of women buying stock with ornaments purchased with pin money or protected by paraphernalia during the South Sea Bubble. While paraphernalia allowed a widow to sell her ornaments for cash, pin money offered two methods of investment: wives could just use the pin money allowance to buy stock, or they could sell the dress and accessories purchased with pin money to make investments. Theoretically, daughters and female orphans could sell their fashion items for cash to use for capital, or use their allowances in the same manner as pin money, but the latter would depend on patriarchal family dynamics. By 1719–20, women had been investing in joint-stock companies for decades: "From the 1690s through the middle of the eighteenth century, women of diverse social ranks (primarily the middling and upper classes) were an important minority of all owners of stocks, holding, on average, 20 percent."[72] So when South Sea stock began to rise, women flocked to invest in the company, just as they did the East India Company or the Bank of England. As I mentioned earlier, the choice of joint-stock company could be seen as partisan since the Bank of England was a Whig project and the South Sea Company a Tory one; however, reports of the bubble suggest that the "frenzy" was bipartisan.[73] In the pamphlet *A True State of the South-Sea-Scheme,* John Blunt, one of the company's directors, writes, "And those who would be impartial in their Judgment, ought to consider, and make Allowance for the prevailing *Humours* and *Passions* of *all* Degrees of People *at that Time*, which over-run the Bounds of Moderation and Discretion."[74] Thus, along with men, women of different classes and political affiliations went to Exchange Alley and invested

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[72] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 30.
[73] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 45.
[74] John Blunt, *A True State of the South-Sea Scheme, as it was first form'd, &c with the Several Alterations made in it, before the Act of Parliament pass'd. and an examination of the conduct of the Directors in the Execution of that Act; with an Enquiry into some of the Causes of the Losses which have ensued. As also an Abstract of several Clauses of the Acts of Parliament, made against those Directors, and the Grounds of them; with some Remarks on the whole* (London: J. Peele, 1722), 23, 28, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*

on their own behalf, or if they preferred, they gave a male representative cash to invest for them.[75] This male representative could be a relative, a friend, or one of the brokers who met with women in shops near Exchange Alley.[76] Although most women did not make the kind of money that the notable Whig Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough, made from the bubble—£166,855— women's ability to own stock enabled them obtain more political power than their legal status otherwise permitted.[77]

Bubble texts immortalize the moment when British culture at large took notice of female investors, and their use of fashion accessories for investment capital, for the first time.[78] As Staves explains, "Although the South Sea Company was politically and economically less important than the East India Company, it was there that the phenomenon of the woman stockholder first gained widespread notice during the rise in the price of South Sea stock."[79] It was, perhaps, the failure and fraud of the South Sea Company that caused British culture to finally take notice of the women investing. As a result of this, bubble texts also record how alarmed British culture was by the prospect of women gleaning political power from the ownership of stocks. Together, these texts produced a patriarchal ideology designed to shame women out of investing that would underpin the mercantile capitalist system for the next

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[75] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 67.
[76] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 67.
[77] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 32, and Susan Staves, "Investments, Votes, and 'Bribes': Women and Shareholders in the Chartered National Companies" in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 260, 261.
[78] See, for example, *Het Groote Taarfeel Der Dwaasheid* ("The Great Mirror of Folly"), a collection of Dutch Bubble prints from 1720. The South Sea Bubble was apart of a group of international economic bubbles that all burst around 1720. Along with John Law's schemes in France, the South Sea Company was satirized in these prints. According to Catherine Labio, "In England, the print and map seller Thomas Bowles arranged to have a number of *Taarfeel* prints adapted for the English market." See Labio, "Staging Folly in the Dutch Republic, England, and France" in *The Great Mirror of Folly: Finance, Culture, and the Crash of 1720* ed. William N. Goetzmann, Catherine Labio, K. Geert Rouwenhorst, and Timothy G. Young (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 146.
[79] Staves, "Shareholders," 261.

century. In *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England*, Catherine Ingrassia describes this ideology, explaining that representations of the female investor

> were instead part of a larger cultural reaction to the frightening power of joint-stock companies, paper credit, and dematerialized property. The new objects of widespread cultural anxiety were "feminized" men led by their passions and emotions, empowered women diverted from their prescribed interest, and economies determined, in part, by the pursuit of pleasure.[80]

Since female investors combined anxieties about "empowered women" and "dematerialized property," they were seen not just as empowering themselves, but also as a powerful threat to the social order.[81] When ladies turned stockjobber, they were represented not only as shirking their proper roles, but also as a threat that invades the space of men and that undermines the morality of the nation. Ingrassia outlines two methods by which British culture tried to undermine, in representation, the potential political power of the female investor. The female investor is either represented as wrongly replacing sexual pursuits—typically, her wifely duties— with the exhilaration of the stock market, or her pleasure in business is represented as, Ingrassia punningly asserts, "[enabling] the business of pleasure," namely prostitution.[82] In both cases, the female investor's consumer desire for stock tickets is confused with sexual desire. By grounding representations of the female investor in stereotypical ideas about the fragility and the frailty of female virtue, these works conflate consumer and sexual desire in order to make it immoral for women to extricate themselves from financial difficulties or to raise themselves by means of owning stock.

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[80] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 38.
[81] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 38.
[82] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 35–36.

In the song called "The Stock-Jobbing Ladies" (1720) for example, now identified as the work of Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, the poet describes women pawning their jewels to invest. In the process, the poet employs discrediting method number one: the pleasures of investing are described as supplanting the polite pursuits—card games and husband hunting—prescribed for women:

> Ombre and Basset laid aside, new Games employ the Fair: and
> Brokers all those Hours divide, which Lovers us'd to Share
>
> The Court, the Park, the foreign song
> And Harlequin's Grimace,
> Forlorn: amidst the City throng
> Behold each blooming face.
>
> With Jews and Gentiles, undismay'd
> Young, tender virgins mix;
> Of whiskers, nor of Beards afraid,
> Nor all their cousening Tricks.
>
> Bright Jewels, polish'd once to deck
> The fair one's rising breast,
> Or Sparkle round her Ivory Neck,
> Lye pawn'd in Iron chest.
>
> The genuine Passions of the mind
> How avarice controls!
> Even Love does now no longer find

A place in Female souls.[83]

Here, women are shown "[pawning]" their jewels in order to play the "new [Game]" of stockjobbing. Instead of being motivated by self-interest or self-protection, the stock-jobbing lady is described through the female stereotypes of irrationality and insatiability: her mind is under the "[control]" of "avarice." Her mind is so taken up with the idea of stock prices that love cannot find "a place in [her soul]." This suggests that the stock-jobbing lady's virtue, in both senses, has been compromised: that her moral goodness no longer has a place in her soul, and alternatively, that the fluctuations of the stock market are functioning as a substitute for sexual pleasure.[84] She is, after all, "undismay'd" about "[mixing]" with various men in "the City throng." Along the same lines of the stock market providing erotic as well as economic gratification, the jewel is a traditional metaphor for virtue, suggesting that this lady has "pawn'd" her sexual favors for investment capital. In this representation of women pawning accessories for capital, the potential for women's political power is viewed as such a threat that the poet recodes the stockjobbing lady's consumer desire as sexual desire in an effort to discredit her actions on the basis of female virtue.

Similarly, in "A Poem Occasion'd by the Rise and Fall of South-Sea Stock" (1720), the "itch" for stock-jobbing strikes the character Caelia so suddenly that she disrupts her toilet and runs to the Exchange in dishabille, her head "of projects full." The narrator, dismayed by her actions, interjects, and tries to persuade her to "this greedy Passion curb" by telling her the history of Betty's wardrobe, which was hawked for stock tickets. In doing so, the narrator simultaneously highlights the efficacy of pawning accessories to invest and employs discrediting method number two, linking investment to prostitution:

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[83] Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, "Stock-jobbing ladies," 1720, Bancroft Collection, Kress Library of Business and Economics, Baker Library, Harvard Business School.
[84] Ingrassia, *Authorship, Gender, Commerce*, 35.

From *Betty's* Magazine the cast-off Robes

Releas'd, in *Drury* Hundreds seek Abodes;

The sable Velvet Scarf does Quarters take

Upon the Ridge of Mother *T*— —'s Back,

The spreading Petticoat at once does grace,

And cools the Heat of *Daphne's* postern Face;

Whilst all seeming careless, all she strives to show,

And wounds us with the Charms lay hid below;

Th' embroider'd Apron slovenly is plac'd

Around the greasy Mopsa's bulky Waste,

Scarcely can half her Porpoise-Belly hide,

Nor cover her great Paunch from Side to Side;

The silver Trimming is to Ashes burn'd

And tarnish'd Orices to Rhino turn'd

Reverted smocks, by Transformation strange,

To round ear'd caps, on a sudden change;

The curious Wardrobe is completely sold,

And in the Stocks she sinks the glitt'ring Gold.[85]

Here, Betty sells "Robes," a "sable Velvet Scarf," a "silver Trimming," and an "Apron" for cash. She is then able to "[sink] the glitt'ring Gold" she receives in exchange for the robes and accessories into South Sea stock, creating a property separate (and perhaps secret) from any

[85] J. B., *A Poem Occasion'd by the Rise and Fall of South-Sea Stock. Humbly dedicated to the Merchant-Adventurers Trading in the South-Seas* (London: Samuel Chapman and John Williams,1720), 22–23, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*

male relatives she may have to answer to. However, Betty's investment is rendered scandalous, if not grotesque, when she sells her wardrobe to prostitutes with "[ridged]" backs, "postern [Faces]," and "bulky [Wastes]." In order to discredit her actions, the poet inscribes Betty's consumer desire for South Sea stock within the sexual desire of the Hundreds of Drury who wear her fashions. Her investment is literally represented as enabling the business of pleasure. By using the discourses of female virtue to twist a woman's perfectly reasonable desire to build private savings for herself into something depraved and debauched, the poet attempts to prevent future Caelias from becoming stockjobbing ladies.

As these poems show, the patriarchal ideology that resulted from the South Sea Bubble and developed these methods to discredit female investors does so by a kind of "metonymic displacement" in which the body of the female investor becomes associated with the speculative desire of financial exchange enclosed in the stock tickets she buys with her fashion accessories.[86] As Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace explains in *Consuming Subjects*, "the female consumer becomes identified with the products she consumes."[87] Proximity to consumer objects, such as fashion accessories or stock tickets, tarnishes the virtue of women, which in turn persuades women to forgo these kinds of luxuries.[88] The desire for a consumer object is conflated with a hypothetical desire of the body. Sometimes this metonymic displacement verges on a full-fledged metaphor. Famously, bubble cartoons render the company itself as a hyper-sexualized woman. In the cartoon "The South Sea Company [...] laments her loss with a rueful aspect," the company is a woman reclining in dishabille, with one breast exposed and one shoe off, with little cupids at feet holding tickets that say "South Sea." [Fig.1] Economic ruin

[86] Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth-Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 95.
[87] Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*, 95.
[88] Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*, 120.

goes hand-in-hand with sexual ruin, and both were theorized as distinctly feminine traits.[89] Especially because it was made possible by fashion objects, women's presence in Exchange Alley was depicted as feminizing, and consequently, destroying the entire market.



Figure 1: ***De Zuid zé compagnie door wind in top gerezen beklaagt nu haar verlies met een bekommerd wezen*** **[The South Sea Company, having risen to the top by wind, now laments her loss with a rueful aspect], 1720, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.**

As if she was aware of how fashion accessories could facilitate women's ownership of stock, Haywood unites both of the discrediting methods I have outlined in a fashion accessory in *Memoirs of a Certain Island*, the girdle. Unlike the representations above, however, Haywood uses the girdle to critique the patriarchal ideology that deploys these discrediting methods. Although girdles were used throughout classical antiquity, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries saw a change in dress that lead to the early modern use of the girdle.[90] As Katherine Lester and Bess Viola Oerke explain, women's fashions began to give them a waist: "The fitted bodice,

[89] Other satirical prints which refer to South Sea Company resemble "The South Sea Company [...] laments" in the way they utilize allegorical figures of female fickleness to highlight the volatility of the stock market. For instance, a naked Fortune "makes it rain" South Sea stock tickets in "A monument consecrated to posterity" and "The bedizened shareholders shown during their honor and influence." For more on this, see Catherine Labio, "Staging Folly,"145.
[90] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, "The Girdle and Belt," *Accessories of Dress: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 242.

defining the figure and molding the hips, was now the accepted order."[91] Between the fitted bodice and the long, full skirts, the girdle appeared at its most chastity-belt-like in this period. Girdles were long, twisted strands of silk, wool, or other fabrics placed high on the waist, but low about the hips, as if to emphasize the part of the female body that needed policing.[92] In the fourteenth century, the girdle became part accessory, part jewelry, as Aileen Riberio describes in *Dress and Morality*: " the girdle often richly jeweled and decorated with mottoes and devices, was often a lover's gift, an intimate present from a man to his beloved or his wife."[93] They also became customary wedding gifts at this time.[94] In the early modern period, the multiple layers of women's clothing had an impact on the girdle. The deep-pointed bodice and open skirt combo resulted in narrower girdles.[95] The girdle might have also had a *troussoire*, or long chain, from which additional accessories—purses, fans, rosaries, or mirrors—fell.[96] In the eighteenth century, the girdle remained popular for two decades largely due to the formal dress style in vogue, the mantua, which was a loose fitting open robe, requiring something to hold "flowing garments at the waist."[97] It was frequently made of expensive fabrics like silk or damask so as to match the fabric of the entire dress. If the girdle was not tied into a bow, they were held together with gold or silver buckles, which frequently exhibited ornamental chasing, or were

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[91] Lester and Oerke, "The Girdle and Belt," 242.
[92] Lester and Oerke, "The Girdle and Belt," 242.
[93] Aileen Riberio, *Dress and Morality* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1986), 56–7.
[94] Diana Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain, 1066–1837: A Documentary, Social, Literary, and Artistic Survey* (Norwich, UK: Michael Russell Publishing, 1994), 50.
[95] Lester and Oerke, "The Girdle and Belt," 246.
[96] Lester and Oerke, "The Girdle and Belt," 246.
[97] Women also wore girdles with wrapping gowns in the 1720s, which had a "cross-over or wrapping front" that sometimes needed to be secured at the waist. But since the wrapping gown was at the height of its popularity from 1735–1750, the manteau is more likely. See C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964),116, 121, 143.

encrusted with jewels. While it returned at the end of the nineteenth century as the belt, the eighteenth century was the last time the girdle was a popular women's accessory.[98]

As this brief description of their history suggests, girdles have been implicated in the patriarchal politics of controlling women's bodies since the Middle Ages. The girdle, literally and symbolically, "girded" the body of the wife, which was the husband's property, in its capacity as a symbolic chastity belt. While it was a lover's token or a wedding gift, the girdle could also mark a woman's adultery if or when the lover asked for its removal.[99] In the eighteenth century, the girdle continues to operate as a metonym for the politics of women's sexuality. However, in the context of a Protestant nation enmeshed in capitalist-imperialist networks and free of sumptuary legislation, the girdle was no longer just a chastity belt; it was also used to seduce men. [100] In *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Maxine Berg explains how "in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries heavy investment in new East India trading companies by the Dutch, then the British, the French, the Danes, and the Swedes brought to Europe not only spices and silks, but large cargoes of Chinese porcelain, lacquerware, small furnishing, wallpapers, and fans, Indian calicoes and muslins, brass and bronze ornaments."[101] In the first two decades of the century, these fashion objects, particularly the foreign fabrics that would make up girdles, were understood through a definition of luxury that meant lasciviousness.[102] "Fashion goods provided 'sensual arousal' to the middling and

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[98] For a perfect representation of a woman wearing a girdle with a metal buckle in the eighteenth century, see Charles Phillip's portrait of Lady Elizabeth "Betty" Berkeley, Lady Germain (1731).
[99] Riberio, *Dress and Morality*, 57.
[100] James I abolished centuries of sumptuary legislation, which had regulated the fashions of each class, in 1604. See J.R. Planche, *The History of Costume: From the Earliest Period to the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1907).
[101] Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 24–25.
[102] Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*,76.

lower classes, inducing people to forgo necessities in order to obtain them."[103] Additionally, the accessory's ability to metonymically "locate" and signal a specific "exotic" location to Britons, as I shall show momentarily, frequently linked the girdle to the significantly less regulated sexual politics of that place. [104] Coupled with this connotation of foreign luxury items, the girdle's status as a lover's token or wedding gift took on an explicitly sexual meaning.

Thus, in eighteenth-century literature, girdles frequently signal some kind of seduction plot. In Susanna Centlivre's play, *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1717), the Colonel, who is in love with Mrs. Lovely and needs her four guardians' permission to marry her, seduces the antiquarian Mr. Periwinkle into giving his permission by promising him a magical girdle that makes men invisible and able to travel to a place of sexual excess in the British imagination: "the court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Seignor, and King George in as little time as your cook can poach an egg."[105] Similarly, in Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724), the titular character, wanting to draw connections between herself and harems, "dress'd in the Habit of a *Turkish Princess*" in order to seduce the King of England and retain him as her keeper.[106] This dress includes a girdle "five or six inches wide, after the Turkish mode: and on both Ends where it join'd, or hook'd, was set with Diamonds for eight Inches either way, only they were not true Diamonds; but no-body knew that but myself."[107] I would be remiss if I did not include the girdle in the second volume of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* (1726), where Cupid, the narrator, gives his mother's magical cestus to Placida in order to destroy the cruel and arrogant

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[103] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, 250.
[104] Joseph Roach, "The Global Parasol: Accessorizing the Four Corners of the World" in *The Global Eighteenth Century* ed. Felicity A. Nussbaum (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 98.
[105] Susanna Centlivre, "A Bold Stroke for a Wife" in *The Broadview Anthology of Restoration & Early Eighteenth-Century Drama*, ed. J. Douglas Canfield (Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2001), 3.1.170–172.
[106] Daniel Defoe, *Roxana, Or the Fortunate Mistress* ed. David Blewett (New York: Penguin, 1987), 214.
[107] Defoe, *Roxana*, 215.

politician Lucilius through undying love.[108] Throughout the early modern period, the girdle was also culturally associated with the myth of Venus's magic cestus, which reportedly made any woman wearing it irresistible.[109] As with the magical girdle in *A Bold Stroke*, the Turkish girdle in *Roxana*, and Venus's girdle in volume two, Haywood's use of the girdle in the first volume of *Memoirs* relies on its power to metonymically represent women's sexuality as part of the novel's allegorical correlation between consumer and sexual desire.

"Vengeance and Redress"

The first volume of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* is the story of how a necromancer named Lucitario erected "a place of Worship" in the form of an "Enchanted Well" on the island adjacent to Utopia (1:7). At the well, Lucitario, "by the help of his pernicious Art," makes "common Water" appear like "liquid Gold" igniting the greed of the entire populace (1:7–8). In order to get access to the Enchanted Well and its liquid gold, people have to offer sacrifices at the altars of *Pecunia* and *Fortune*. "The artful Wretch dres'd up Creatures of his Own (O most abominable Prophanation!) in those Vestments which Priest are wont to wear when they officiate at the sacred Altars" and these "pretended holy Men" are "intrusted" with the sacrifices: "Some came loaded with Plate,—others with Jewels, rich Furniture, Pictures, Beds, every one brought according to his Ability; for their Master *Lucitario* had ordered, that nothing should be refused" (1:8). Like in history, women used their jewels to invest in the Enchanted Well. Unlike history, Lucitario's number two is the demon Lust who "drives from their perverted Souls all Sentiments of Honour, Virtue, Truth, and Gratitude" and who instills in

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[108] Eliza Haywood, *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia*, vol. 2, (London: the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1726), 2, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. All references are to this edition.
[109] David H. Brumble, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1998), 345.

them the need for "a blind Gratification of unlicens'd wishes" (1:5). Before Lucitario and Lust bewitched everyone with the Well, Cupid, the god of Love, was the patron deity of the island. Now, ostracized by his former parishioners, an outraged Cupid wanders around the island. The occasion for these memoirs is Cupid's encounter with a noble youth who asks him to narrate the events of the Enchanted Well and to tell him the histories of the people who worship the Well's liquid gold.

While the immaterial nature of paper credit makes black magic a logical allegorical stand in for financial speculation, Haywood's use of necromancy is, I believe, not only born of corporate gossip, but also designed as a satirical attack on particular members of the South Sea Company. The specifics of Haywood's necromancer are so similar to the story of "the necromancer" in "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme" that the text—or the gossip recounted in the text— may have severed as a source of information and inspiration for her. Like Haywood's novel, "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme" is of the secret history/ scandal chronicle genre. This secret history, which was anonymously published with the works of John Toland in 1726 (the year after the first volume of *Memoirs)*, details the treachery of the cabal running the South Sea Company: Appius (John Blunt), the treasurer (Robert Knight), and the chief accountant (John Grigsby).[110] As the text describes, it just so happens that the chief accountant, Grigsby, was nicknamed "the necromancer":

> Appius consulted the Treasurer of the Company, and another person who was vulgarly reputed to have studied the black art, his near relation and bosom friend, and who was then the chief Accountant to the Company. Nor was it absurdly imagin'd of the town, to

[110] As Paul explains, this secret history was found amongst the papers of philosopher John Toland and was published in a collection of his works with a note that it was not written by him. Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 77.

> take a man for a Necromancer, Conjurer, or what you please more artful, who cou'd bring his horses to eat gold when they did not like hay.[111]

Appius is said to have used Grigsby and his powers to "[bewitch] the people with false appearances" and convince them all to invest in the South Sea scheme.[112] Consequently, in this passage, the narrator allegorizes Grigsby's financial acumen and deception as the ability to conjure demons—he is called "this same Mephostophilus"— and to perform alchemical experiments because he can make his horses eat gold.[113] This is a remarkable use of allegory in a bubble text because it satirizes a real player in the South Sea Company. At the height of South Sea success, Grigsby did, in fact, boast that he was so rich that he could feed his horses gold instead of hay.[114] And Grigsby did, in fact, have the nickname "the necromancer" because of his shady professional dealings and "his gnome-like appearance."[115] Haywood could have conceivably heard both of these rumors apart from "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme." As the company's accountant, Grigsby's participation in the crimes of the company is well established because, as this secret history points out, he received fictitious stock to sell for his own profit and was involved in handling fictitious stock used as bribes.[116] Even after the bubble burst, Grigsby was still worth £61, 978.[117]

With the foundational role gossip plays in scandal chronicles in mind, [118] I contend that this corporate gossip about Grigsby and his nickname are the basis for Haywood's allegory and for her villain, Lucitario. Like Grigsby in "The Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme,"

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[111] "Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme," 407.
[112] "Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme," 417.
[113] "Secret History of the South-Sea Scheme," 407.
[114] Paul, *South Sea Bubble*, 73.
[115] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 51.
[116] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 127, 124, 111.
[117] Carswell, 249.
[118] For a full explanation of the role of gossip in scandal chronicles, see Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, 56–60.

Lucitario is skilled in the same black arts: he is able to turn water into gold through alchemy, and to conjure demons like Lust and set them loose in cities. Despite the similarity between Grigsby and Lucitario, Lucitario is listed as Postmaster General James Craggs Senior on the key supplementing Haywood's novel. Although Craggs Senior was heavily involved in the scheme and received bribes,[119] many scholars have been perplexed as to why Craggs Senior is the necromancer, offering arguments instead that Walpole is, or is not, Lucitario based on Haywood's politics. [120] However, most of these arguments forget three important historical facts. First, those who believe Haywood was a Tory forget that the South Sea Company was seen as the Tory response to the Whig's Bank of England. Second, Walpole's real involvement as "the Screen" only occurred after the bubble burst.[121] Third, the real villains of the South Sea Company were John Blunt and his associates, including Knight and Grigsby.[122] Besides, Haywood's choice of for Lucitario on the key does not entirely discount Grigsby as the inspiration for that character. As King asserts, Haywood probably chose Craggs because his suicide after the crash "made him all the more convenient a scapegoat.[123]

In addition to Cragg's suicide, we may be able to account for Haywood's choice of Lucitario through another character in Haywood's *Memoirs*: Marthalia, a woman who marries "an old Servant of the Necromancer's" (1:12). King suggests that the infamous character

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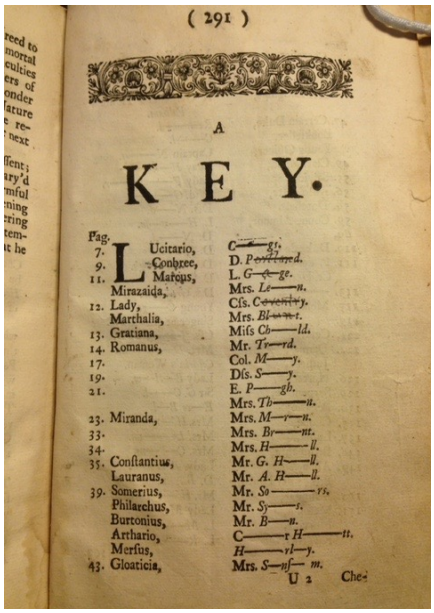
[119] Scholars have also overlooked the quick reference to the untoward work at court performed by *Melanthus*, alias Craggs Jr., and "his father" in favor of the Well, alias the South Sea Company: "as it is neither Virtue nor Bravery which are requisite for Preferment in this Island, his father and himself [Melanthus] found means to wind themselves so far into the favour of the Nobility, as to get Posts, and those not inconsiderable ones at Court." Haywood, *Memoirs*, 1:115. Regardless of who Lucitario is based on, this is clearly an insult pointed at both Craggs.
[120] See Kvande, "The Outsider Narrator," 627–628; King, *Political Biography of* Haywood, 37–39; and Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure*, 168.
[121] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 207–208.
[122] A number of actors in the South Sea Bubble went unpunished because of their place in, or their connections within, the system. The most famous was Robert Knight, the company's cashier, who fled to Belgium. Walpole is said to have "screened" Knight's flight. Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 186–187, 207–218.
[123] King, *Political Biography of Haywood*, 41.

Marthalia, who until recently was believed to be Mrs. Blount, may actually be John Blunt.[124] Despite that I have found 7 keys attached to different editions, I have yet to see one with "Blount" written in. I have, on the other hand, found two keys where Marthalia is named " Mrs. Blunt" in handwritten marginalia. At the British Library, a key to a 1725 edition of *Memoirs* shows "Blunt" written, by hand, next to Marthalia's name [Fig. 2], as does a key to a 1726 edition of *Memoirs* in the Wren Library at Cambridge University [Fig. 3].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7. Ucitario, Conbree, Marcus, Mirazaida,
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12. Lady, Marthalia,
13. Gratiana,
14. Romanus,
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23. Miranda,
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35. Conſtantius, Lauranus,
39. Somerius, Philarchus, Burtonius, Arthario, Merſus,
43. Gloaticia,

C——gi.
D. P——d.
L. G——ge.
Mrs. Li——n.
Cſs. C——y.
Mrs. Bl——t.
Miſs Ch——ld.
Mr. Tr——rd.
Col. M——y.
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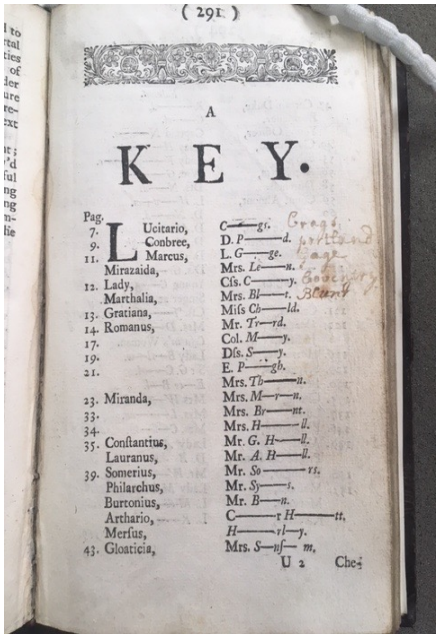
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Figure 2 (left): Key to Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (London: The Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1725), Courtesy of the British Library. Figure 3 (right): Key to Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (London: The Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1726), Courtesy of Wren Library, Cambridge University.

As popular as the feminized image of stock-jobbers was, there is no greater insult to a man in the eighteenth century than to allegorize him as a proud, lascivious, syphilis-riddled woman; except, perhaps, to allegorize his wife that way.[125] I would argue that Marthalia might also be

[124] King, *Political Biography of Haywood*, 42.
[125] Marthalia is described in the following manner: "But look—behold!—where the vain gay *Marthalia* comes… there is scarce one here, that does not remember her in tatters, and know her for the most dissolute and shameless of her sex…she is now caress'd by those, whose

John Blunt's wife who Haywood attacks in order to insult the real mastermind of the scheme.[126] In 1712, John Blunt married Susannah Tudman, her substantial fortune, and her political connections.[127] As the former wife of army clothing contractor Benjamin Tudman, and daughter of Richard Craddocke, a director of the Royal African Company, it is possible that Haywood's satire of Susannah Tudman had political intent as well.[128] Either way, Susannah Tudman would have married "an old Servant of the Necromancer's" by marrying John Blunt, who worked with both Craggs and Grigsby in the scheme. If Lucitario is a combination of Craggs and Grigsby, and Marthalia is John Blunt or Susannah Blunt, Haywood would have effectively satirized the major players of the South Sea Company. By using the idea of "the necromancer" as a foundation for her allegory, Haywood not only explicitly engages with gossip about the South Sea Company, she also punishes, in print, two of the men responsible for the bubble who have gone unpunished, Grigsby and Blunt.

Lucitario's identity aside, the demon Lust he unleashes on the island as part of his master plan to rob innocent citizens of their wealth triggers the histories that make up the entire text of the first volume of *Memoirs*. Each history is shaped by what Cupid calls "the vile Schism which infects this Isle," or the battle between love and lust (1:3). An inheritance from earlier scandal chronicles, this schism between love and lust is, in fact, a metaphorical scale that Haywood uses to criticize the effect of mercantile capitalism at large on nations. By way of the scale, Haywood is able to trace how mercantile capitalism corrupts otherwise virtuous people

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Servants once despised her, and the Footman who could not formerly be prevailed on to take her in his Arms, sees her now in his Master's, and lights him to that Bed, he would not once have ventured himself…But there are some of late who have severely repented trusting themselves in her Embraces, and cursed the artificial sweets and Perfumes, which hindred them from discovering those Scents, that would have been infallible Warnings of what they might expect in such polluted Sheet." Haywood, *Memoirs*, 1:13.

[126] Dickson, Carswell, and Paul all agree that John Blunt was the mastermind.

[127] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 294.

[128] Carswell, *South Sea Bubble*, 294.

through its messaging of self-interest, instant gratification, and incalculable wealth. The heroes (as well as the victims) of *Memoirs* are the men and women who continue to worship the god Love and have denounced the Enchanted Well—the very few who are "unchangeable" in the same manner as the god of Love himself: " 'tis by my *Unchangeableness* alone I am proved the *God*: ——those other Flames may burn as fierce, ——may seem as bright, ——but soon the Blaze goes out" (1:112). The villains are those who worship the Well, are possessed by the Demon Lust, and seek gratification by any means: "The *Rich* were eager to increase their Store, ——the *Indigent* eager to know a better State; —those who had already made their Fortunes, were ambitious of raising them; —those who had not, thought this the only way" (1:9). In the second prong of her attack, Haywood uses the correlation between sexual and consumer desire typically used against women in bubble texts against the mercantile capitalist system itself. Unlike earlier scandal chronicles, Haywood's metaphorical scale registers lust as sexual *and* economic desire. What this broader definition of lust means is that any action or expression of lust will be read as its opposite; that is, sexual desire is read as consumer desire and consumer desire is read as sexual desire. Every expression and action influenced by sexual lust is described as a product of the Enchanted Well's promise of "liquid Gold." Every description of "ruin" is also its opposite. In this way, Cupid's seemingly endless catalogue of private "sexcapades" condemn the economic crash of a public company.

In *Memoir*s, interestedness determines the moral difference between love and lust. Recognizing that men marry rich heiresses or widows in order to steal their fortunes, Haywood has love, not marriage, moralize sex in her amatory works. As Cupid explains in the second volume of *Memoirs*: "So it is certain that tho' the Act is still the same in all, the chastest Matron and the lewdest Prostitute; yet *Love*, as it alone can give a *Sanction* to the rewarded Flame, alone render it's a Joy.—— My Influence is superior to law; where I with mutual Ardor inspire

the mingling Souls, the Bodies cannot sin" (2: 24). The obvious difference between the matron and the prostitute here is self-interest: the prostitute wants to earn money; the matron does not. Because chaste love is about the beloved, it is inherently disinterested, and therefore, love "cannot sin." Sex for the sake of sex, on the other hand, is a sin not only because it frequently falsely uses the name of the love, but also because the pursuit of pleasure is an inherent interest in the self.[129] As Haywood reasons in volume two, when a man gets on his knees and says to a woman that he is "passionately in love with her, [it means that] he [has] a violent inclination to debauch her" (2:251). Of course, women have that "violent inclination" too, but Haywood is acutely aware that sexual relationships have a double standard, that one person usually holds the legal and economic power, and that it is in the interest of men to exert their power over women. In Haywood's allegory then, interestedness aligns sexual and consumer desire under the umbrella term of "lust." Interestedness also flips the script and shows that the correlation between sexual and consumer desires is a result of mercantile capitalism, not the inherent nature of women.

Within this catalogue, the narratives that best exemplify the importance of interest to Haywood's allegorical formula are the narratives where sexual and consumer desire are purposefully confused in the act of prostitution. In them, Haywood calls attention to how gendered the ideological act of representing female desire as double (or multiple) is by showing prostitution as a distinctly feminine activity. There are no men crying "ruin" or men prostituting themselves out of economic necessity (though men do sleep with older women for power occasionally) on the island adjacent to Utopia. Take the "profuse" and "prodigal" Flirtillaria, for example, who physically embodies the excesses associated with lust, from her voracious appetite to the unnumbered children her "pretty prolifick" body produces (1:38, 40).

[129] See also Haywood, *Love in Excess* ed. David Oakleaf (Orchard Park, NY: Broadview Press, 2000), 186.

Flirtillaria was "sent to Earth to charm and bless the Age she liv'd in" (1:34). She was "endu'd by Heaven with a thousand Graces," including liberality, generosity, and open-heartedness (1:34). However, she was " not content with what she received from the bounty of the Gods," and "she enter'd herself a subject to the *infernal* Potentate and from his mischief-teaching Court" (1:3). At Lucitario's court then, she learned "the Venom of the place"—namely lust and its tricks— which she puts to use against Constantius for her own financial benefit (1:34). Blinded by her beauty, Constantius, a wealthy younger son, marries her, completely unaware that she has been corrupted by Lucitario's "infernal" cabal. Flirtillaria is represented as incapable of quenching both sexual and economic lusts. She not only takes on several lovers—*Sommerius*, *Philarcus*, *Burtonius*, *Athario*, *Mersus*, and others—in order to fulfill her sexual desires, but she also spends Constantius and his older brother Lauranus into debt (1:39, 40). Haywood describes the economic ruin of Flirtillaria's husband and his family as directly related to, and a result of, her personal sexual ruin. But that is not all. Once in debt, "she wanted to get rid of [Constantius], and having lost the advantage of his Brother's purse, would gladly have been eased of that Impediment of a husband's Presence" and so she decides that "her Lovers must now pay for those Favours, they had been accustom'd to receive *gratis*" (1:41). Prostitution now appears in her best self-interest, and following it, she satisfies both her economic and sexual needs simultaneously.

As morally corrupt as Flirtillaria is revealed to be, this representation of prostitution is noteworthy because it does *not* use the idea of women's innate insatiability and irrationality. Flirtillaria's newfound profession is described as a result of the Enchanted Well. As Cupid explains it, the sale of her favours is a reflection of the demon Lust's influence on her because she, a woman he declares capable of all virtues, only decides to satisfy her economic and sexual lusts (as well as her pride) by adultery and prostitution after her time at Lucitario's "mischief-

teaching Court." By including examples of women swayed by the self-interested arguments of the Enchanted Well, Haywood uses their histories to show that the representational correlation between a woman's sexual and consumer desire that critics made endlessly after the bubble, is, in fact, a symptom of mercantile capitalism, not that ever-infectious, catchall disease Augustan men traditionally call female vanity. Even more importantly, Haywood's attention to interestedness prompts her to describe the large numbers of women who suffered at the hands of the South Sea Company.

The most often repeated phrase by characters in *Memoirs of a Certain Island* is a call for "vengeance and redress" (1:57; 2:6). The words are sometimes used separately, or connected instead to words like "ruin" and "revenge," but they almost always describe situations women are put in by men and the Enchanted Well. As in eighteenth-century England, women are constantly threatened with both sexual and economic "ruin" on the island adjacent to Utopia. As a result of the law, many women are turned into legal accessories, supplements to their estates, forbidden to control their own finances. Within the context of the South Sea Bubble, women's accessoriness sets them up to be ruined by the self-interest of husbands, lovers, guardians, or directors of the South Sea Company.[130] Unlike England where the cries for vengeance and redress go unheard, they are directed to Astrea, the goddess of Justice, in this romance world. It is Astrea's duty to dole out divine vengeance. Throughout both volumes of *Memoirs*, Astrea is on a mission to avenge the jilted and the destitute by punishing the men who put women in these situations, for it is men who, owing to the economic and legal system, ruin girls sexually and economically. The first volume is split between tales about women who are

[130] See the histories of Graciana and Miranda for examples of how men sinking the property of these young women into the Enchanted Well/ South Sea Company resulted in their double ruin. Their vulnerable situations ultimately result in either their sexual ruin following their economic (Miranda) or their economic following their sexual ruin (Graciana). Haywood, *Memoirs*, 1:14–32.

"ruined" by worshippers of the Enchanted Well and women who are punished by Astrea for their male relatives' self-interest. In addition the key, these narratives try to provide some kind of fictional justice for women impacted by the South Sea Bubble and who would never receive it in reality.

Madam De Fautmille is the last in this long line of women trapped by this economic-legal system and punished for their male relative's self-interest.[131] Prior to the presence of the Enchanted Well, Madam De Fautmille's son, Count Montreville, was thought to be a perfect specimen of man. He was a devoted son and a moral man, who had, thus far, avoided Cupid's influence. However, when Cupid finally strikes him with an arrow, and the young, virtuous Martafinda returns his love, Montreville's recognition of his power over a woman transforms him into a self-interested seducer, no different from the worshippers of the Enchanted Well. Using false words of love, Montreville seduces Martafinda and satisfies his lust. As Cupid declares, Montreville "plainly demonstrated her publick Shame was of less consequence to him, than the disappointment of one intended luxurious hour" (1:267). After a few nights of passion (luxurious enough, it seems, to publicize their relationship), he abandons her. Of course, all the censure falls on Martafinda and Montreville's reputation is untouched. Even after the scandal drives Martafinda to drown herself, Montreville goes unpunished. But Haywood is not about to let justice (and perhaps a little vengeance) go un-served here: Martafinda's appeals to Astrea are heard. Astrea does not think Montreville's guilt about Martafinda's death is "sufficient punishment for the wrong he had done to [her]" (1:270). Astrea sets a series of events in

[131] According to the page number on the key, it appears that Madam De Fautmille's history matches up the history of " Mrs. M- -yt- -n," whose identity I have not yet uncovered. However, I am not sure whether her identity will add to my argument. I think her fictional name and circumstances are much more important to the argument I am making about Haywood's allegorical critique of the South Sea Bubble.

motion that harms Montreville's beloved mother in order to punish him. Madam De Fautmille's girdle resets the scales of justice.

Despite that her French name translates to "woman of a thousand faults," Madam De Fautmille only has one fault: sexual desire outside the bounds of wedlock. It is this one fault that Astrea exposes to the world in order to avenge Martafinda's ruin and death. Astrea instigates an argument between Madam De Fautmille and her supposed husband, which results in him revealing to the world that they had never been married despite living together for two years. Once her sham marriage has been exposed and once her reputation has been destroyed, Madam De Fautmille turns her girdle into a lethal weapon:

> The Lady, who had ever been accounted the most virtuous and reserv'd of her Sex, could not support the shame which this Declaration, too just to be disprov'd, had drawn upon her; and in a raging Fit of Passion, after having attempted every thing to bring him back, finding all her Endeavors vain, flew up to her Chamber, and before any of her Servants had the least guess at her Intentions, taking off her Girdle, and fastening it about her Neck, strangled herself. (1:271)

More disturbing than the act itself is how the girdle stands in for Madam De Fautmille's body in description. The only part of Madam's body described here is her neck, as it is being strangled by the girdle. Haywood's description fuses the materiality of the female body and the materiality of the accessory, literalizing the particular state of person-and-thinghood that women exist in under the British system of mercantile capitalism. Like the women who are metonymically represented in the legal system but make themselves visible by purchasing accessories with pin money in this period, Madame De Fautmille is made visible here by her girdle in a very obvious critique of the mercantile capitalist system and the South Sea

Company. Recalling the women who poured their jewels into the Enchanted Well at the beginning of the novel, Haywood has Madam De Fautmille commit suicide with the same type of object: a fashion accessory, one that might actually be bejeweled. Since her death is a result of her son succumbing to the influence of the Enchanted Well, Haywood seems to equate women's participation in the mercantile capitalist system with death in this representation. In this awful moment, we reach the apex of Haywood's allegory, in which a woman simultaneously dies by, and is described by, a metonym for the novel's allegorical formula: consumer desire written as sexual desire. By having a girdle—a consumer object that symbolizes female sexuality—stand in for the female body, Haywood calls attention to how mercantile capitalism now identifies women with the fashion items they purchase: it connects, or even conflates, consumer and sexual desires in order to shame women out of becoming consumers or investors. In contrast to women like Flirtillaria who are corrupted by the system, others have their sexuality used against them, as is the case with Madam, who feels "shame," about no longer being "the most virtuous and reserv'd of her Sex." In the most poetic way possible then, Haywood has fictionalized the double bind of female desire and made it literally binding.

Madam De Fautmille is not the first Haywood character to commit suicide, though she is the first to use an accessory to do so. Many heroines threaten suicide in Haywood's novels, so much so that Kelly McGuire has argued in her work, *Dying to be English: Suicide Narratives and National Identity, 1721–1814*, that "voluntary death is a defining feature of Haywood's amatory fiction."[132] However, because suicide is a mortal sin, Haywood distinguishes between those who threaten suicide and those who complete it. McGuire suggests, I think correctly, that so many heroines threaten, as the Haywoodian epithet goes, to "lay violent hands" on themselves as a

[132] Kelly McGuire, "Suicide and Spectrality in Eliza Haywood's Amatory Fiction" in *Dying to be English: Suicide Narratives and National Identity, 1721–1814* (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), 24.

way to claim ownership of their bodies, even if just for a moment.[133] Idalia, Glicera, and Fantomina all threaten to lay violent hands, for example, but they never actually use their hands to end their lives. Instead, they take control, at least temporarily: Idalia runs away and begins various love affairs, Glicera decides to get revenge with the help of an alderman-turned-beau, and Fantomina poses as three different women in order to continue her affair with Beauplaisir.[134] Conversely, the heroines and villainesses who end their lives do so because they are already morally corrupt or because they driven to it by an intolerable situation. The Baroness de Tortillée, whose sardonic wish for mankind opened this chapter, drinks poison in order to avoid her sins, which is, as the narrator suggests, the ending she deserves: she "ended her shameful Life by as ignominious a Death."[135] The other two suicides do not necessarily get the ending they deserve, but their deaths speak volumes about the cultural forces that drove them to it. Anadea from *The Fatal Secret* (1723) kills herself after her father-in-law rapes her and Alathia from *The Double Marriage* (1726) kills herself after her husband marries another woman and tries to abandon her.[136] These suicides are a reaction, if not a downright protest, of the unbearable (and sometimes criminal) situations that the sexual double standard and the patriarchal legal system traps women in.

Like Anadea and Alathia, Madam De Fautmille's suicide is designed to protest another unbearable situation for women, the unregulated mercantile capitalist system in eighteenth-

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133 McGuire, "Suicide and Spectrality," 41.
134 Haywood, *Idalia: Or, the Unfortunate Mistress* in *Four Novels of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Mary Anne Schofield (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1983); Haywood, *The City Jilt; Or, the Alderman turn'd Beau* in *Three Novellas*, ed. Earla A. Wilputte (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1996), 67–103; Haywood, *Fantomina and Other Works* ed. Alexander Petit, Margaret Case Croskery, and Anna C. Patchias (Orchard Park, CA: Broadview, 2004).
135 Haywood, *The Injur'd Husband*, 263.
136 Eliza Haywood, *The Fatal Secret: Or, Constancy in Distress* in *The Masquerade Novels of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Mary Anne Schofield (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1986), and *The Double Marriage: Or, the Fatal Release* in *Three Novellas*, ed. Earla A. Wilputte (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1996), 107–141.

century England. Through Madam De Fautmille's death, Haywood shows us the cycles of power and violence that fuel this system. Since her death was designed as a punishment for her son's self-interested seduction of Martafinda, Madam De Fautmille will never receive "vengeance" or "redress." As Cupid explains, "the very Injuries [Montreville] had done Martafinda were retorted on himself in the Person who was nearest and dearest to him"(1:276). Her death is both a component of, and an end to, a cycle of injustice triggered by the black magic of the Enchanted Well. While Madam's death may seem like an act of despair, she is instead a victim of her son's self-interest and the black magic of the Enchanted Well that bewitched him. Astrea only uses Madam's sexuality against her because the demon Lust corrupted her son, who, then, ruined Martafinda under Lust's influence. Furthermore, the only reason she is chosen as the scapegoat for her son's crimes is precisely because she is a woman with desires. Madam De Fautmille is like the female investor whose desire supposedly caused the stock market crash, even though the embezzlement and fraud of male South Sea Company directors was the true cause. After spending the first volume of *Memoirs* trying to provide women with the redress they would never get for the South Sea Bubble, it matters that Haywood allows Madam De Fautmille's death to go unavenged. Her suicide should be read as an act to escape the harmful effects of the Enchanted Well, and allegorically speaking, as an act to escape the harmful effects of the mercantile capitalist system. In this way, her suicide allegorically protests how the patriarchal ideologies underpinning the mercantile capitalist economy use sexuality against women in order to silence and punish them for trying to empower themselves through the accumulation of property or money. Ultimately, because Madam De Fautmille will never get the justice she deserves, the history of her death and her girdle come to serve as a cautionary tale embedded in Haywood's larger allegory of the South Sea Bubble. Madam De Fautmille warns us that when women experience desire in a male-

dominated world their single fault will be multiplied, transforming them into a woman of a thousand faults.

Conclusion

Like other literary texts set during the South Sea Bubble, the first volume of *Memoirs of a Certain Island* spotlights the participation of female investors. Whereas other bubble texts represent the participation of female investors as the ruin of the stock market or as the ruin of the women themselves, Haywood represents the financial and sexual ruin of women as the result of an unregulated mercantile capitalist system. By using the key attached to her scandal chronicle to critique individual members of the South Sea Company and by using Madam De Fautmille's girdle to critique the way critics conflated women's consumer and sexual desire in order to prevent women from becoming investors, Haywood protests the unjust "screening" of company directors, such as Blunt and Grigsby, and the unjust shaming of women who were just trying to own one of the few types of property they had a legal right to. Haywood's use of the girdle in particular foreshadows the way British women in the early twentieth century used similarly shaped and cut swathes of fabric—sashes— to protest the injustice of women's disenfranchisement and lack of legal rights. While their green, white, and purple sashes were not lethal like Madam De Fautmille's allegorical girdle, suffragettes wore them during others acts of violence: breaking windows, throwing stones, smashing mailboxes, starting fires, bombings, cutting telegraph wires, and destroying works of arts in museums and churches.[137] Since the early eighteenth century, accessories have played a role in the often violent spectacles

[137] Wendy Parkins, "'The Epidemic of Purple, White, and Green': Fashion and the Suffragette Movement in Britain 1908–1914" in *Fashioning the Body Politic: Dress, Gender, and Citizenship* ed. Wendy Parkins (New York: Berg, 2002), 97–124, and Fern Riddell, " Suffragettes, violence, and militancy," British Library, 6 February 2018, https://www.bl.uk/votes-for-women/articles/suffragettes-violence-and-militancy.

women, who were compelled by patriarchal ideologies and gender roles to be meek and mild, have used to call for "vengeance and redress" in the street or in print.

Chapter Two

Sophia Western's Muff

Even though Henry Fielding might be the most famous muff joke artist in the British canon, scholars have been dancing around the meaning of Sophia Western's muff in a carefully orchestrated minuet of avoidance for at least one hundred years. We all know what Fielding means when he describes this cylindrical fashion accessory, but we do not—with few exceptions—name it in print. Instead, we euphemize. In the past, scholars have largely described the muff as a "symbol" of the relationship between Tom and Sophia, a word clearly designed to strip the double entendre of its physical referent. In 1959, Maurice Johnson stated that the muff is a "love token" between Sophia and Tom, acting as a substitute for the other person. [1] In 1989, Jones DeRitter argued that the muff was a tool that helped Tom monitor his behavior and "to devote himself more consciously to the woman he betrayed."[2] In 1994, Emily A. Hipchen acknowledged, in a single sentence, that the muff is a slang term for female genitalia before declaring, like the scholars before her, that the muff is a symbol that "underscores the latent sexuality of Tom and Sophia's relationship."[3] In 2010, Sophie Gee described the muff as a metonym, or a "prop," for the absent lover in the text.[4] In 2015, Laura Engel wrote that Sophia's muff "invites sexual analogies—which I won't go into here."[5] To the best of my knowledge, there is no work of printed scholarship that does *not* employ euphemisms

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[1] Maurice Johnson, "The Device of Sophia's Muff in *Tom Jones*," *Modern Language Notes* 74, no. 8 (1959): 690.
[2] DeRitter Jones, "'How Came This Muff Here?' A Note on *Tom Jones*," *English Language Notes* 26, no. 4 (1989): 44.
[3] Emily Hipchen, "Fielding's *Tom Jones*," *Explicator* 53, no. 1 (1994): 17. I would like to clarify that Hipchen is using the phrase "female genitalia" to specify the vagina, even though not all examples of this genitalia belong to female people and not all female people have them.
[4] Sophie Gee, *Making Waste: Leftovers and the Eighteenth-Century Imagination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 141.
[5] Laura Engel, *Austen, Actresses, and Accessories: Much Ado About Muffs* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 11.

or circumlocutions when discussing Sophia's muff. Our fear of openly discussing how Fielding repeatedly makes jokes about the penetration of a woman's vagina in *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (1749) keeps us from seeing that each muff joke has larger political implications.[6]

Although several studies have worked to illuminate the politics of early modern women's bodies in recent years, we have forgotten the powers that "muffs" used to wield over husbands, lawyers, monarchies, and empires.[7] We continue, in the words of Carole Pateman, to "separate sex-right from political right" when we read Fielding's novel.[8] In *The Sexual Contract*, Pateman argues that the social contract is shaped by the sexual contract, a relationship between a man and a woman made possible by "sex-right"— a combination of men's "political right" over women and sexual access to their bodies.[9] She explains the elision of the sexual contract from our historical consciousness: political theorists in the seventeenth century distinguished between the power of the government over a subject and the power of a husband over his wife by arguing that "women's subjection to men was natural."[10] In doing so, they rendered the sexual contract between husband and wife "irrelevant to the continuing controversies and struggles over political power in the state of economy" and were able to defuse the philosophical problem of refusing women the freedoms that would have otherwise be seen as their birthright.[11] The problematic irony of this argument, of course, is that the sexual contract is embedded within the social contract. The governments that contract theorists analyzed were

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[6] Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, ed. Fredson Bowers (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1975). References are to this edition.
[7] See Susan Paterson Glover, *Engendering Legitimacy: Law, Property, and Early Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2006); Eve Keller, *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); and Rachel Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family, and the Political Argument in England 1680–1714* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1999).
[8] Carole Patemen, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 88-89.
[9] Pateman, 2.
[10] Pateman, 91.
[11] Pateman, 91.

dependent on women who produced heirs to the throne; that is, women whose sexual contract with their husbands shaped the larger social contract between the monarchy and the people.[12] The wife's vagina legally determined heirs and organized the transfer of property, money, and the monarchy. Regardless of natural subjection, women were political actors because of their "muffs." By recognizing the political significance of Sophia's muff, both as a body part and an accessory, we can demystify Fielding's infamous muff jokes and appreciate their relationship to the novel's setting, an event grounded in decades of debate about sex right and political right: the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745.

At present, there are a number of political readings of *Tom Jones.*[13] Most critics agree that Fielding is on the Whig side of 1689, 1715, and 1745.[14] Given Sophia's Hanoverian name,[15] some even see an allegory for political *sophia*, or wisdom, in *Tom Jones.*[16] They have suggested that the father-daughter struggle triggered by Squire Western trying to force Sophia to marry Blifil is an allegory for the government of the nation, one that likely refers to the struggle between James II and the English people in 1688. Peter J. Carlton declares: "In her principled resistance to her father's authoritarianism, Sophia becomes an emblem of post-Revolution Settlement England."[17] Homer Obed Brown writes: "in terms of political allegory, Sophia's

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[12] Pateman, 93–96.
[13] See, for example, Jill Campbell, *Natural Masques: Gender Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 160–181; J. Paul Hunter, *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chain of Circumstance* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 184–185; and Anthony Kearney, "*Tom Jones* and the Forty-Five," *Ariel* 4 (1973): 68–78.
[14] Against this consensus, John Allen Stevenson and Ronald Paulson suggest that Tom is a figure for Bonnie Prince Charlie. See Paulson, *The Life of Henry Fielding: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 249, and Stevenson, *The Real History of Tom Jones* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 20.
[15] Sophia shares a name with George II's grandmother, mother, and sister. See Eric Rothstein's "Virtues of Authority in *Tom Jones*," *The Eighteenth Century* 28, no.2 (1987): 113.
[16] For more on Sophia and *sophia*, see Martin C. Battestin "Fielding's Definition of Wisdom: Some Functions of Ambiguity and Emblem in *Tom Jones*," *ELH* 35, no. 2 (1965): 188–217.
[17] Peter J. Carlton, "*Tom Jones* and the '45 Once Again," *Studies in the Novel* 20, no. 4 (1988): 368.

running away is not rebellion, but revolution in the Lockean sense and tradition of the Glorious Revolution, a return to true principles of Nature and Reason."[18] J.A. Downie agrees: "It could be argued that, figuratively, Sophia is placed in much the same position as the English people were in 1688 with regard to James II's attempt to undermine their 'Religion and Liberties' when she resists her father's attempt to force her into marriage with Blifil."[19] Wolfram Schmidgen even suggests Tom is a figure for William of Orange because "Tom's bastardy calls up the revolutionary tradition that Fielding sees reemerge with Monmouth and find fulfillment in William of Orange."[20]

What underpins this link between 1688 and 1745 in *Tom Jones* is an analogy between the marriage contract and the social contract. Fielding inherited this analogy from political works in the seventeenth century (both royalist and parliamentarian) that used the marriage contract as an analogy for the social contract in political discourse.[21] Though the legal complexities of marriage—namely coverture— complicate a woman's ability to consent to the social contract, marriage was, more often than not, the only time a woman's consent was legally recorded in the eighteenth century, and thus, it could serve as an analogy for political consent. In what follows, I argue that Fielding's allegory of government uses the marriage contract to address the fundamental question posed by the Glorious Revolution, the Hanoverian Succession, and the Jacobite Rebellions about the social contract: whether monarchs have the right to govern by divine right, as the Stuarts claim, or by the consent of the governed, as the Hanovers claim. The question put to Sophia—whether she should obey

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[18] Homer Obed Brown, *Institutions of the English Novel: From Defoe to Scott* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 108.
[19] J.A. Downie, *A Political Biography of Henry Fielding* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), 108.
[20] Wolfram Schmidgen, *Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 101.
[21] Mary Lyndon Shanley, "Marriage Contract and Social Contract in Seventeenth-Century Political Thought," in *Feminist Interpretations of John Locke*, ed. Nancy J. Hirschmann and Kirstie M. McClure (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 17–37.

her father and marry the hated Blifil—is a question of whether Western has a right, by paternal authority, to demand such obedience, or whether he needs her consent to govern her. Fielding relies on the double meaning of the word "muff"—slang for genitalia—to place his marriage-as-social contract analogy into the novel. Every vignette in the history of Sophia's muff dramatizes the question of Sophia's consent and engages with these competing theories of government by debating who "owns" Sophia's muff(s): Western the Jacobite, Tom the Hanoverian, or Sophia herself. By using a metonym for sex right to discuss political right, Fielding broadens the contract analogy into an allegory designed to dissuade his readers from what he views as the egregious arguments of Jacobitism.

The Politics of Muffs

Jacobitism was, to review briefly, the conviction that the Catholic sons of James II were the rightful Kings of England, Scotland and Ireland, a belief system that enthralled significant portions of each country for at least fifty-seven years. In 1688, Parliament accused James II of "Popery and Arbitrary Power," pressuring him until he fled to France.[22] Parliament claimed that James had "abdicated the Government" and named Mary, his Protestant daughter, and William, her husband, joint monarchs.[23] What began as a coup continued as a concerted effort by Parliament to prevent James II's Catholic son, James Edward Stuart, from regaining the crown. They enacted the Bill of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701) to ensure a Protestant Stuart line of succession: Mary's heirs, then Anne's, William's if he remarried, and lastly, the heirs of Sophia, the Electress of Hanover, the granddaughter of James I. When Queen Anne died childless in 1714, the crown went to the Electress of Hanover's heir, George

[22] "The Declaration of Rights," Appendix 1 to *The Declarations of Rights, 1689*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 296.
[23] "The Declaration of Rights," 297.

I. Just one year later, James Edward Stuart incited a rebellion in Scotland and returned for his father's crown. Though the rebellion was unsuccessful, the Stuarts continuously tried to invade England for the next thirty years.[24] In July 1745, Charles Edward Stuart, James II's grandson, succeeded in landing on the island of Eriskay and raising an army of loyal Scots.[25] Bonnie Prince Charlie, as he is more famously known, managed to carry his rebels all the way to Derby, the heart of England, by December 1745.[26] After a disastrous decision to return to Scotland for reinforcements, the rebellion folded at the Battle of Culloden on April 16, 1746.[27] It was the last organized effort to return the crown to the Stuart dynasty.

Fielding spent the year of the rebellion in a state of alarmist fascination with the Jacobites, writing three anti-Jacobite pamphlets for the Hanoverian government: *A Serious Address to the People of Great Britain*; *A Dialogue Between the Devil, the Pope, and the Pretender*; and *The History of the Present Rebellion of Scotland*.[28] In the following years, he moved from fear-mongering about Catholics, the French military, and "Scottish banditti" to arguing for the validity of the Hanoverian claim to the crown in pamphlets such as *A Dialogue between a Gentleman of London, Agent for Two Court Candidates, and an Honest Alderman of the Country Party* (1747) and *A Proper Answer to a Late Scurrilous Libel, Entitled, An Apology for the Conduct of a late celebrated Second-rate Minister* (1748).[29] From these pamphlets and his satirical periodical *The*

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[24] For specific plots, see John L. Robert, *The Jacobite Wars: Scotland and the Military Campaigns of 1715 and 1745* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2002) and Daniel Szechi, *The Jacobites: Britain and Europe, 1688–1788* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1994).
[25] Roberts, *The Jacobite Wars*, 77.
[26] Roberts, 104.
[27] Roberts, 165.
[28] Fielding, "A Dialogue between the Devil, the Pope, and the Pretender," in *The True Patriot and Related Writings*, ed. W.B. Coley (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 77–101; Fielding, "The History of the Present Rebellion in Scotland," in *The True Patriot and Related Writings*, 35–73; "A Serious Address to the People of Great Britain," in *The True Patriot and Related Writings*, 3–31.
[29] Fielding, "A Dialogue between A Gentleman of London, Agent for Two Court Candidates, and An Honest Alderman of the Country Party," in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*,

Jacobite's Journal (1747–1748), Fielding developed a repertoire of caricatures of Jacobite figures: Jacobite soldiers, Catholic priests, Charles Edward Stuart, James Edward Stuart, James II, and the Pope.[30] As his pamphleteering days came to an end, Fielding began writing a novel set in the middle of Charles Edward Stuart's march into England. His return to the genre of *Joseph Andrews* allowed him a bigger canvas on which to paint his idealized version of Britain, one that integrated and expanded on his repertoire of satirical caricatures and that called for the eradication of Jacobitism from British culture.[31]

As a political operative, Fielding was highly aware that Jacobites used accessories to express their loyalty to the Stuarts. Jacobitism in England was, for the most part, dependent on a clandestine material culture. As Neil Guthrie explains in *The Material Culture of the Jacobites*, "Material culture seems to have been perceived by Jacobite publicists as being more 'real' than abstractions expressed in mind or print: truth in things reflected truth in kings."[32] Jacobites stored their political truths in tangible things, which could metonymically, and therefore clandestinely, represent their beliefs. Alleged body parts of the Stuarts were turned into relics. Rings and miniatures concealed images of "The King over the Water" and "Bonnie Prince Charlie." The Stuart heraldic symbols of white roses and oak trees were painted on snuff boxes, cosmetic boxes, and fans.[33] There were tartan waistcoats, garters bearing Stuart mottos, and

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ed. W.B. Coley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 3–60 and Fielding, "A Proper Answer To A Late Scurrilous Libel, Entitled *An Apology for the Conduct of a Late Celebrated Second-rate Minister*," in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, 64–88.

[30] Fielding, "The Jacobite's Journal" in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, 90–426.

[31] Henry Fielding, *Josepha Andrews* in *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. Thomas Keymer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1–303.

[32] Neil Guthrie, *The Material Culture of the Jacobites* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 39.

[33] Guthrie, 44, 125.

white rose cockades.[34] The mythology of the Jacobite cause metamorphosed the rites of fashion into a political act.[35]

In response to this underground material culture, Fielding penned satirical attacks on Jacobites who accessorized according to their cause. Perhaps the most detailed of these satires was his caricature of Peggy Trott-Plaid, Jacobite fashion consultant, in *The Jacobite's Journal* (1747–1748). In this text, Fielding uses his own satirical version of Jacobitism to shore up support for the now unpopular Hanoverian regime by issuing weekly attacks on those who "sought change in the sovereign and the form of government" in the years following Culloden.[36] In the second issue, he introduces Peggy, the eidolon Squire Trott-Plaid's wife, whose responsibility it is to record "any Piece of Wit, Story, Health, Jacobitical Emblem, either in Cloaths, Fans, Nosegays, or otherwise, [exhibited] by the any Lady of the Party."[37] By recording the Jacobite styles for accessorizing, Peggy's interpretations expose, according to the classical rules of satire and his own definition of the ridiculous, what Fielding sees as the rampant hypocrisy within the Jacobite movement.

Take, for instance, Peggy's advice on wearing white roses in the second issue. White roses were a heraldic symbol of the Stuarts (Guthrie 61), frequently worn, either as a flower or a cockade, on the occasions of Restoration Day (May 28) or the Old Pretender's birthday (June 10).[38] In accordance with her role, Peggy discusses how to accessorize with white roses, without comprising one's "Complexion and Principle":

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[34] Paul Kléber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People 1688–1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 210, 289.
[35] According to Paul Kléber Monod, one Stuart supporter, an MP named Sir William Whitlock, took Jacobite material culture so seriously that he dressed in the style of the Restoration every day in order to honor the Stuarts. Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, 288.
[36] Paulson, *The Life of Henry Fielding*, 240.
[37] Fielding, "The Jacobite's Journal no. 2," in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, 102.
[38] Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, 179–185.

> In this Paper, then, it is the Purpose of my *Peggy* to supervise and direct all manner of Female affairs, and to consult at once the Interest of her Sex and of her Party. The better to unite both which, she intends to convey a good deal of Exoteric Jacobitical mystery into Dress, which she proposes as much as possible to adapt both to Complexion and Principle…The same objection, she allows, likes against *White Roses*; for the Colour of White doth greatly misbecome certain Complexions, and certainly those of such Female Votaries as have very devoutly applied themselves to the *Orgia*, or the *Liquid Rites* celebrated in the *Sanctum Sanctorum*.[39]

Here, Fielding presents the excuse Peggy provides for her fellow "Jacobitesses"— "Complexion"— as something that has nothing to do with their "Principles" and everything to do with their appearances. In *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding famously explains that the only true source of the ridiculous is affectation, which proceeds either from vanity or hypocrisy.[40] The excuse Peggy offers her comrades derives from vanity. These "Female Votaries" have been indulging in "*Liquid Rites*" in the "*Sanctum Sanctorum*" and have faces so red from drinking that "the Colour of White doth greatly misbecome [their] Complexions." They have drunk to such excess in toasting their King and Prince that they cannot even wear Stuart symbols. Their focus on accessorizing according to complexion, rather than the political principles they espouse, is presented as affectation born of vanity, rendering them political hypocrites.[41] Thus, their inability to accessorize with Jacobite symbols due to inebriation calls into question not

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[39] Fielding, *The Jacobite's Journal* no. 2., 101.
[40] Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, 6.
[41] Their principles, for the record, are as follows according to issue no. 5: "That King James II was turned out by a Party of Presbyterians, to the great Prejudice of the Church of England, which he zealously maintain'd; and that all the reigning Princes since, except Queen Anne, who desired to restore the Pretender, have been all Presbyterians, and Enemies to the Church of England; and that all Courtiers and Whigs are the same." Fielding, "The Jacobite's Journal no. 5," in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, 117.

only their Jacobite principles, but also the rationality of a cause that allows women to participate in the first place.

Additionally, Fielding implies that these Jacobitesses cannot wear the white rose because they are not chaste. Sober or not, there are Jacobite women who still cannot wear the white rose because of their "complexion." According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "complexion" also means "Constitution or habit of mind, disposition, temperament; 'nature'" in the eighteenth century.[42] If the color of white, the color of chastity, "[misbecomes]" a woman's constitution or nature, it suggests a certain amount of natural prurience. [43] By employing his definition of the ridiculous, Fielding transforms an article about the popularity of Jacobite accessories into a satire on the political energies and involvement of women in the Jacobite cause. For Fielding, Jacobite women are, as he writes in issue no. 38, a "Body of Amazons in Plaid Jackets."[44] As Jill Campbell points out in *Natural Masques: Gender and Identity in Fielding's Plays and Novels*, the political activity of female Jacobites allies them with the "unnatural and unfeminine" figure of the Amazons as well as the "traditional view of women as by nature more

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[42] "complexion, n." *OED Online*. June 2017. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/37678?rskey=LyYnYD&result=1 (accessed June 2016).

[43] In *Amelia* (1751), Fielding similarly associates the Jacobite rose with women who pretend to be feminine and delicate, but who are "Jezebels", "Medeas," "Agrippinas," and "Lady Macbeths" underneath it all: "We desire such critics to remember that it is the same English climate, in which, on the lovely 10th of June, under a serene sky, the amorous Jacobite, kissing the odoriferous zephyr's breath, gathers a nosegay of white roses to deck the whiter breast of Celia; and in which, on the 11th of June, the very next day, the boisterous Boreas, roused by the hollow thunder, rushes horrible through the air, and, driving the wet tempest before him, levels the hope of the husbandman with the earth, dreadful remembrance of the consequences of the Revolution. Again, let it be remembered that this is the selfsame Celia, all tender, soft, and delicate, who with a voice, the sweetness of which the Syrens might envy, warbles the harmonious song in praise of the young adventurer; and again, the next day, or, perhaps the next hour, with fiery eyes, wrinkled brows, and foaming lips, roars forth treason and nonsense." See Fielding, *Amelia*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 45–46.

[44] Fielding, *The Jacobite's Journal* no. 38, in *The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings*, 369.

irrational, passionate, jealous, zealous, unruly, and malicious than men."[45] In Fielding's satire, these unfeminine, yet too feminine, women reveal their questionable moral principles by openly accessorizing their politics.

Fielding's satire of Peggy Trott-Plaid begs the question of whether his views on women's political accessories were a result of partisan feeling or his feelings about the whole sex. Although Williamites and Hanoverians did not need clandestine symbols, they had their own arsenal of accessories.[46] In addition to cockades in Hanoverian black, there were brooches, pendants, rings, and miniatures depicting William III, Mary II, George I, and George II.[47] There were also miniatures, ribbons, and rings explicitly celebrating the triumph of the Duke of Cumberland (Prince William Augustus) at Culloden, including a fan depicting the death of Jacobite soldiers. ⌈Fig. 1⌉ On the left side of the fan, the Jacobite leaders (one in yellow tartan and the other with a yellow tartan sash) kneel to a man in an expensive-looking embroidered waistcoat, presumably the Duke. On the right side, several Jacobite soldiers are already dead and others flee from English bullets, even jumping into a river to avoid them. The fan offers a shockingly detailed view of the destruction of the Jacobite army. Imagine, then, a woman holding this fan closed in her hands, cracking it open at the precise moment. There is no better way of "throwing shade" at former Stuart supporters than fanning oneself with an image of their defeated dead. The late 1740s witnessed a particular fad for Culloden-related accessories, perhaps as a response to Jacobite fashion trends that outlasted Culloden such as tartan, or perhaps merely as a celebration of the Hanoverian Succession. While there is no record of Fielding's thoughts on Hanoverian accessories, Sophia's muff, I contend, is a representation of this Hanoverian material culture in fiction.

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[45] Campbell, *Natural Masques*, 138.
[46] Murray Pittock, *Material Culture and Sedition*, 1688–1760 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 26.
[47] Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, 202.



Figure 1: ***Surrender of the Jacobite Leaders to the Duke of Cumberland after the Battle*** **(ca. 1746), fan, ©Victoria & Albert Museum (T.205-1959).**

Muffs first appeared on the arms of eminent courtesans in Venice in the fifteenth century, and they arrived in England, by way of France, around 1572.[48] They were small, made of silk fabrics, and lined with fur. [49] Muffs became fashionable in the Caroline era, when British women and men adorned themselves, for the most part, with large muffs in a variety of fabrics and furs.[50] In fact, the muff was so fashionable the Stuarts developed new methods of wearing of it: they outfitted the muff with gilt rings so that they could attach cords or ribbons to it and wear it around the neck.[51] Other innovations included the fad of carrying around small animals and the introduction of inner pockets to hold coins, snuff boxes, and pocket books.[52] In the eighteenth century, small muffs—made of fabrics, feathers, or furs— were fashionable until the

[48] Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, "'He is not dressed without a muff': muffs, masculinity, and *la mode* in English satire," in *Seeing Satire in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Elizabeth C. Mansfield and Kelly Malone (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2013), 134.
[49] Katherine Morris Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, "The Muff," in *Accessories of Dress: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2004), 455–456.
[50] Lester and Oerke, 456.
[51] Lester and Oerke, 456.
[52] Valerie Cumming, *The Visual History of Costume Accessories* (New York: Costume & Fashion Press, 1998), 73.

1770s. The rare man who still adorned himself with a muff might choose one made from the fur of predatory animals such as the lynx, fox, otter, and beaver.[53] Women wore muffs made of fabrics, such as velvet, satin, or crape; feathers, such as peacock, parrot, or swan; and the more feminized furs of sable, ermine, marten, and squirrel.[54]As fashion and hair grew in width and height in the last quarter of the century so did the muff.[55] Women also applied ribbons, flowers, and trimmings to the muff into the nineteenth century.[56]

Since their invention, muffs have been political, enmeshed in a nexus of capitalism, nationalism, and gender politics. Their presence on the arms of Britons served as a visual reminder of British politics at home and abroad. The muff's furs and fabrics materialized the breadth and strength of the British empire. In contrast, nationalist perceptions in the eighteenth century suggested that muff-wearing men were effeminate because the muff—like fashion in general— was thought to carry with it enervating, effeminate French or Italian influences.[57] Women's dress, on the other hand, continued to result in the bare arms and décolletage that necessitated a muff, rendering it exclusively a female accessory by the century's close.[58] Another equally notable, but less well known, example of the muff as political statement is when the female supporters of Charles Fox wore fox muffs to support his candidacy for Parliament in the 1780s. [59] [Fig.2]

[53] Chrisman-Campbell, 135.
[54] C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), 177, 398.
[55] Cunnington, 177.
[56] Cunnington, 398.
[57] Chrisman-Campbell, 139–141.
[58] Aileen Riberio, *Dress in Eighteenth-century Europe 1715–1789* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1984), 32, 114.
[59] Cunnington, 398.



Figure 2: *The Fox Muff*, 1787, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

In addition to operating as a visual sign, deploying "muff" as a slang term had political implications. As early as the seventeenth century, the word "muff" was used to refer to the mons veneris and vagina.[60] For example, the author of *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature* (1994) cites a "Muff riddle" from the middle of the seventeenth century: "a pretty thing without a nose: it hath a beard and hath no chin, and I can put two handfulls in."[61] Some years later, in *A New Dictionary of the Terms Ancient and Modern of the Canting Crew* (1699), "Muff" is defined as "a Woman's Secrets," but its definition is more clearly illustrated in the example, "To the well wearing of your Muff, mort" which is translated

[60] The term "mons veneris" was commonly used in the eighteenth century for the mons pubis on a woman. See William Cheselden, *The Anatomy of the Human Body with XXXI Copper Plates* (London: S. Collins, 1713), 166, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online.*
[61] "Muff," in *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature*, ed. Gordon Williams (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone Press, 1994), 920.

as "To the happy consummation of your Marriage Madam, a Health."[62] According to the riddle and the wedding toast, the shape and the materials of the muff replicate the flesh and hair of the genitals.[63] As Chrisman-Campbell explains, "The colloquialism testified to the newfound popularity of fur (as opposed to fabric) muffs as well as the growing association with femininity."[64] Due to this popularity, by 1785, the definition is explicit in Grosse's *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*: "the private parts of a woman."[65] These definitions illustrate the two dominant usages of "muff" as a slang term: "muff" is either used to describe the entire genital area of a woman, or when coupled with other objects (including body parts), it is used to describe the penetration of a vagina. In both, the materiality of the female body and the materiality of the accessory are conflated to produce the double meaning. Since the prevailing political systems of the century (the legal system, mercantile capitalism, and imperialism) were all anxious to preserve this slippage between women's personhood and thinghood in order to maintain male prerogatives and privileges, the muff became one of the most popular metonyms in the period, as seen in Henry Kingsbury's satire on the excesses of female sexuality and fashion in *The Muff* (1787).[66] [Fig.3]

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[62] "Muff," in *A New Dictionary of the Terms Ancient and Modern of the Canting* Crew (London: Printed for W. Hawes and W. Davis, 1699), 57, *Early English Books Online*.
[63] Julia V. Emberley, *Venus And Furs: The Cultural Politics of Fur* (London: I.B Tauris, 1998), 76.
[64] Chrisman-Campbell,139.
[65] Francis Grose, "Muf," in *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (Menston, UK: The Scolar Press, 1968).
[66] See Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 40, 60, 93; Carole Pateman, Pateman, "Women's Writing, Women's Standing: Theory and Politics in the Early Modern Period," in *Women Writers and the Early Modern British Political Tradition*, ed. Hilda L. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 371–2; and Susan Staves, *Married Woman's Separate Property in England, 1660–1830* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 28, 35, 52.



Figure 3: Henry Kingsbury, *The Muff*, 1787, Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library.

Literary muffs embody some of the most important political ideologies of the eighteenth century. What student of the eighteenth century can forget issue No. 69 of *The Spectator* (1711) where Mr. Spectator visits the Royal Exchange and cries tears of "Joy" over the wonders of capitalism, embodied by the movement of women's accessories around the world, including a muff: "The single Dress of a Woman of Quality is often the Product of an hundred Climates. The Muff and the Fan come together from the different Ends of the Earth. The Scarf is sent from the Torrid Zones, and the Tippet from beneath the Poles. The Brocade Petticoat rises out of the Mines of *Peru*, and the Diamond Necklace out of the bowels of *Indostan*."[67] For Mr. Spectator, the muff is not only implicated in English capitalism; it is a symbol for the triumph

[67] Joseph Addison, " *The Spectator* no. 69," in *The Commerce of Everyday Life: Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, ed. Erin Mackie (New York: Bedford/ St. Martin's Press, 1998), 203–206.

of English capitalism across the globe. Similarly, the muff, for Daniel Defoe's Moll Flanders, has monetary value. In the novel (1722), Moll takes a trip to Bartholomew Fair, where she meets "a Gentleman extreamly well Dress'd, and very Rich," who buys her a raffle ticket and presents her with the winnings: "a Feather Muff."[68] The present of the muff results in a carriage ride to a house where she "little by little yielded to everything" and they have sex.[69] As with every scene in this novel, the muff forms part of the repentance narrative structure—Moll is looking back on her past life in order to show her reformation and to encourage others to repent too—underpinned by Defoe's Dissenter ideology. In the novel by Fielding's arch rival that just so happened to make him cry, *Clarissa* (1747–8), Lovelace performs an exhaustive blazon of Clarissa's outfit, which describes "on her arms a pair of black velvet glove-like muffs, of her own inventions; for she makes and gives fashions as she pleases."[70] Clarissa is wearing a pair of muffetees, which had just come into fashion in 1748, but which were obviously not invented by her.[71] Why would Lovelace, and by extension Richardson, want us to believe that Clarissa invented an accessory? I believe the notion that Clarissa "makes and gives fashions as she pleases" is part of Richardson's larger ideological system: the type of bourgeois morality where hard work (i.e. Clarissa's daily schedule of domestic and charitable work) and virtue are rewarded. Clarissa is the paragon who makes the fashions we, the reader, are supposed to follow. In all of these literary examples, the muff is entangled in a specific political ideology. In *Tom Jones*, Fielding draws on the double meaning of the word muff to further his political agenda: he deploys the muff as a metonym for sex right in order to argue for the House of Hanover's political right to the crown.

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[68] Daniel Defoe, *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders*, ed. David Blewett (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 292.
[69] Defoe, *Moll Flanders*, 293.
[70] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady*, ed. by Angus Ross (Penguin Books, 2004), 400.
[71] Cunnington, *English Costume*, 177.

The Legality of Muffs

In *Tom Jones*, Sophia's muff, more often than not, refers to something other than a fashion accessory, and it is the reference to women's genitals that is politically significant. Muff jokes, I argue, carry with them the legal symbolism of property settlements, in which vaginas determined the conveyance of property, money, and on a grander scale, the monarchy. Early modern property settlements (including those written for queens) organized the dispersal of money and property by deploying prepositional phrases that used the female body to name an heir, such as "heirs of the body of" or "on the body of to be begotten." For example, in Orlando Bridgeman's *Conveyances* (1682), the precedent for " A Settlement of Lands upon the Wife upon Marriage" details how the lands of husband J.B and wife J. will go, upon his death, to "the use and behoof of the first Son of the said J.B. on the Body of the said J. begotten, or to be begotten, and the Heirs Male of the Body of such first Son lawfully to be begotten."[72] For default of issue, the lands go to the use of the second son and so on to "the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth [son] of the said J.B. on the body of the said J. to be begotten."[73] The prepositional phrase "on the Body of the said J. begotten" syntactically renders the female body an object. By naming heirs with this grammatical structure, property settlements endorsed and disseminated the idea that the female body was a vehicle to transfer property to the next generation.

Furthermore, these prepositional phrases pinpoint the specific part of the female body that determined the heir. In her work *Engendering Legitimacy*, Susan Paterson Glover explains how "England's common law established very visceral, physical, fleshy connections

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[72] Orlando Bridgman, "A Settlement of Lands upon the Wife upon Marriage, declaring Several Uses," in *Sir Orl. Bridgman's Conveyances Being Select Precedents of Deeds and Instruments Concerning the Most Considerable Estates in England* (London: printed for William Battersby and Thomas Basset, 1682), 358–359, *Early English Books Online.*
[73] Bridgman, 359.

surrounding the transmission of real property and the elaborate regulation of what entered and emerged from the womb."[74] The site where the heir to the throne, or the estate, was determined was the place where, as Glover says, something "entered and emerged." That place was not the uterus or the womb; it was the vagina. The vagina had the legal authority to legitimate political right through sex right. However, in keeping with propriety, settlements needed to deploy elaborate euphemisms for the wife's vagina. These prepositional phrases operated as euphemisms by metonymically evoking the wife's vagina without explicitly naming it. Their meaning was obvious in the case of royal pregnancies, when witnesses could be called upon to testify that they saw the heir come out of the queen, as forty-two witnesses were upon the birth of James II's son, who was rumored to have been smuggled into the delivery room in a warming pan.[75]

Fielding's jokes about Sophia's muff engage with this legal authority to convey property through their double meaning. In the muff's first appearance, Fielding linguistically renders it a vagina. Sophia's vagina, that which cannot be openly referred to according to propriety, is described by her accessory on the page. Mrs. Honour tells Sophia how she caught Tom muff-handed, so to speak:

> 'Why, Ma'am, answered Mrs. Honour, 'he came into the Room, one Day last Week when I was at Work, and there lay your Ladyship's Muff on a Chair, and to be sure he put his Hands into it, that very Muff your Ladyship gave me but yesterday; 'La,' says I, 'Mr. Jones, you will stretch my Lady's Muff and spoil it; but he still kept his Hands in it, and then he kissed it—to be sure I hardly ever saw such a Kiss in my Life as he gave it…He kissed it again and again, and said it was the prettiest Muff in the World.' 'La!

[74] Glover, 31.
[75] Weil, 89.

> Sir,' says I, 'you have seen it a hundred Times.'—'Yes, Mrs. *Honour*,' cry'd he; 'but who can see any thing beautiful in the Presence of your Lady but herself.' (206–207)

Here, Fielding employs the slang usage predicated on hands to turn the accessory into a metonym for Sophia's vagina in description. Sophia is depicted as part thing and her muff as part person when Tom "put his Hands into it" and "kept his Hand in." While this may simply seem like a bawdy joke, Fielding's description of Sophia's muff recalls the prepositional phrases deployed in property settlements, for there is more at stake when the man caught handling and kissing a woman's muff is a bastard. Tom can only, in the words of Blackstone, "acquire, for he can inherit nothing, being looked upon as the son of nobody."[76] As much as these descriptions of Sophia's muff throw her sexuality into high relief, they also call attention to the logical conclusion of Tom's fantasies: Sophia's ability to give birth to heirs and to transfer property to him. No wonder Tom describes Sophia as having "the prettiest Muff in the World": his fascination with Sophia's muff hinges on her body *and* her body's legal power. Indeed, the novel's first muff joke consists of a man who cannot inherit property according to common and ecclesiastical law holding a piece of property in his hands that is a metonym for the very thing that determines the conveyance of property.

The legal valence of Tom's desire is even clearer in the scene where he finally realizes his love for Sophia. Sophia, whose beauty and goodness is so enthralling that the narrator advises male readers "who have any Hearts, to read no farther" in Book IV, could not penetrate Tom's thick skull or his heart (154). The muff, however, does. A few days after Tom's confesses his desire for Sophia's muff, Sophia plays the piano wearing that same muff. Unfortunately, in the midst of playing, the muff "fell over her Fingers" and threw her out of tune, disrupting one

[76] William Blackstone, "The Rights of Persons," ed. David Lemmings, vol.1 of *Commentaries on the Laws of England* ed. Wilfrid Prest (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 296.

of Western's favorite songs (225). Almost as if he understands the muff as responsible for the disruption, Western throws it into the fire. Sophia, knowing that Tom has kissed the muff, feels sentimental value for it, and "with the utmost Eagerness recovered it from the flames" (225). For Tom, this "little Incident" is so powerful that the muff "[conquers]" his heart:

> Thus, not all the Charms of the incomparable *Sophia*; not all the dazzling Brightness, and languishing Softness of her Eyes; the Harmony of her Voice, and of her Person; not all her Wit, good Humour, Greatness of Mind, or Sweetness of Disposition had been able so absolutely to conquer and enslave the Heart of poor *Jones*, as the little Incident of the Muff. (225–226)

It is significant that neither the charms of Sophia's mind or beauty have an impact on Tom but her muff does. While sentiment certainly played a role in the subjugation of Tom's heart, Sophia's muff still metonymizes the legal powers of her body here. Sophia's muff, and its ability to transfer property, is the weapon in her "Artillery of Love" that finally vanquishes Tom (511). Although Tom does not seem to have had designs on Sophia's fortune, it is clear that Fielding designs the riches that accompany Sophia's muff as a reward for Tom because, as a bastard, he cannot be rewarded like legitimately born heroes who inherit property or money at the end of their narratives.

In addition to this narrative purpose, Sophia's muff fulfills a larger political purpose in *Tom Jones*. In her essay, "Corkscrews and Courtesans: Sex and Death in Circulation Novels," Bonnie Blackwell argues that it-novels about shoes, coats, banknotes, and corkscrews represent prostitutes through metonymy.[77] The embedded it-narrative of Sophia's muff achieves the same

[77] Bonnie Blackwell, "Corkscrews and Courtesans: Sex and Death in Circulation Novels," in *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects, and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century* England, ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 289.

metonymic effect. Instead of metonymically representing the circulation and decreased value of courtesans, Fielding uses the muff to represent the value attached to a woman's reproductive capacity and her ability to transfer property to the next generation. Why would Fielding want to construct a narrative about a woman's ability to transfer property? The current rebellion is the result of two Stuart queens failing to live up to their reproductive capacity and an ongoing debate about the relationship between sex right and political right. By including an it-narrative that examines property transfer, Fielding can engage with the core question of the Jacobite Rebellion: who has the best right to inherit the crown, the Stuarts or the Hanovers?

All is Fair in Muffs and War

Of course, the answer to which family had the better right to the crown depended on how one theorized government and monarchical succession in particular. The Stuarts and their supporters maintained their claim with divine right theory, best summarized in Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha* (1680). Filmer argues that the monarchs of the world are the male descendants of Adam, that the people owe kings filial obedience, and that any other form of government "contradicts the doctrine and history of the Holy Scriptures, the constant practice of all ancient monarchies, and the very principles of the law of nature."[78] In this light, kingship is defined by paternity, and no one but a male Stuart descendant could be king. The most famous response to Filmer, John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* (1689), argues that governments depend on a contract between the people and the government, in which the people consent to be governed in exchange for the protection of their liberties and properties. In his specific critique of *Patriarcha* in the first *Treatise*, Locke asserts that primogeniture does not translate into a right to rule because the people give monarchs the crown: "If the Agreement and consent of Men

[78] Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3.

first gave a Scepter into any ones hand, or put a Crown on his Head, that also must direct its descent and conveyance."[79] In this view, the crown is a piece of property that is conveyed according to the consent of those who own it, the people. Although *Two Treatises* was most likely written a decade before the Glorious Revolution, and only published with a preface lauding it in 1689,[80] the Bill of Rights (1689) makes a very similar case, explaining that the crown is conveyed by the consent of the people, that James II broke the social contract with his people, and most importantly, that he "abdicated" and left the throne "vacant" when he fled. By describing James's flight as an "abdication," the Bill of Rights discursively makes the throne into a piece of property whose owner forfeited his right to it, leaving it "vacant" and resulting in the reversion to the original owner, the people. The people's consent, thus, controls the disposal of the crown.

While historians have been hesitant about connecting Locke's theories to the Hanoverian monarchy, Fielding seems to have understood the latter as born of the former, or at least as linked philosophically by the idea of the consent in the Bill of Rights, as J.A. Downie points out in his biography. [81] This is evident from the way he co-opts the language of property in *Two Treatises* and the Bill of Rights and expands it into an analogy that defends Hanoverian monarchy.[82] Fielding creates a legal analogy by which the crown is stripped of its divinity and

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[79] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 211.
[80] See Mark Goldie, "Introduction," in *The Reception of Locke's Politics* (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), 1:xvii–lxxv and John Dunn," The Politics of Locke in England and America in the Eighteenth Century," in *Political Obligation in its Historical Context: Essays in Political Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 53–77.
[81] Downie, *Political Biography*, 175, 178.
[82] Even though Fielding was pro-Hanover, it does not necessarily mean that he unilaterally agreed with them on politics. As a matter of fact, almost every word out of Aunt Western's mouth in *Tom Jones* is a satire on Whigs at the Hanoverian court. I believe that Fielding's fears about having a Catholic King on the throne, particularly one with French backing, are the reasons that he chooses to argue against the Jacobite cause so vociferously.

by which he argues for a kind of monarchical form of possessive individualism.[83] He draws a metaphorical relationship between property rights to a house and property rights to the crown when trying to persuade country party Tories from any lingering anti-Hanover sentiment in *A Dialogue between a Gentleman of London, Agent for two Court Candidates, and an Honest Alderman of the Country Party*. First, Fielding compares a house and the crown of Great Britain to emphasize the crown as piece of property, not a piece of divinity: "What Right have you to your House, Mr. Alderman, for I think it your own?...Doth not your Right consist in its being conveyed to you from those who had the absolute Property?...And is not the King's Right to his Crown as plain?"[84] From a legal point of view, the crown is a piece of property like an estate, which when forfeited, is "conveyed" back to the person "who had absolute Property." Next, Fielding strengthens his metaphorical argument when he declares that the crown is conveyed to a specific family by the people (who have the ultimate right to dispose it) in the same way that the owner of a parcel of land can convey an estate for life to another person: "by the Forfeiture and Abdication of King *James* the Second, the People have most certainly entailed the Crown on the House of *Hanover*, and his Majesty enjoys it in the Right of that Entail."[85] By describing the crown as forfeited by James II, reverting back to the people, and being entailed on the Hanovers, Fielding illustrates the process by which the monarch is given the consent of those he governs, consent made manifest in the tangible object of a crown. In Fielding's view, the ownership of the British crown creates the monarch. If the Lockean notion of possessive

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[83] In *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*, C.B. Macpherson argues that Locke's constitutionalism—that is, his view of the monarchical crisis in 1689— is "a defence of the rights of expanding property rather than of the rights of the individual against the state." While possessive individualism has many flaws—including the assumption of an innate self—it is clear that Fielding believe that political life begins and ends with property. See C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 257.
[84] Fielding, "A Dialogue," 10.
[85] Fielding, "A Dialogue," 12.

individualism is the belief that one can claim proprietorship of his or herself by accumulating property, and thus, participate as a consenting subject in the government, then an analogy in which the monarchy is determined by proprietorship of the British crown is the same ideology applied to monarchs.[86] For Fielding, even the monarch is defined by proprietorship, making the crown an accessory to the contract between the monarch and the people.

In *Tom Jones*, Fielding addresses these competing theories of government and claims to the crown at the level of plot and character. He includes a Jacobite character who espouses the arguments of Filmer, Squire Western, and a Hanoverian character who espouses the arguments of Locke and the Bill of Rights, Tom himself. Western embodies every Jacobite stereotype: he drinks to excess, he hunts constantly, he always toasts "the King over the Water," and his horse is named "The Chevalier" after Bonnie Prince Charlie, who went by the title the Chevalier St. George during his European exile (338, 219). As his raving about "Roundheads" suggests, Western's world is constructed by the hierarchy Filmer outlines in *Patriarcha* (321). At the top of this hierarchy, the monarch is given filial obedience by virtue of being patriarch of the nation, and on a smaller scale, the father is given the same filial obedience by virtue of being patriarch of the family. Following Filmer, Western believes that the act of begetting necessarily entails a right to rule. His famous refrain—"Did I not beget her? Did I not beget her?"—is a satirical reference to *Patriarcha* (884). In fact, Western explicitly states his preference for a Jacobite theory of parenting when he says: "But I believe you will allow me to be her Father, and if I be, am I not to govern my own Child?" (884). Western conceives fatherhood as a type of government by absolute authority: he is monarch of his family, as James Stuart should be monarch of Great Britain.

[86] C.B. Macpherson, *Possessive Individualism*, 255, 258.

In opposition to Western, Tom Jones is habitually associated with "the Glorious Cause of Liberty" (368), an explicit reference to the so-called Glorious Revolution that freed Britain from James II's arbitrary power. In Book VII, Tom's revolutionary sympathies become explicitly Hanoverian sympathies. He volunteers to join the Duke of Cumberland, who is also given the revolutionary adjective "glorious," in his fight against the Jacobites, saying "For my own part, tho' I love my King and Country, I hope, as well as any Man in it, yet the Protestant interest is no small Motive to my becoming a Volunteer in the cause" (367,374). Although Tom never ends up heading north to face Bonnie Prince Charlie because of a head wound he earned defending Sophia's honor, he continues to defend the choices made by Parliament to prevent Catholic Stuart kings from reclaiming the crown. After hearing the crypto-Jacobite Partridge repeat a Jacobite prophecy in Book VIII, Tom declares that "Monsters and prodigies are the proper Arguments to support monstrous and absurd Doctrines. The Cause of King *George* is the Cause of Liberty and true Religion" (440). He also agrees with the Man on the Hill, who fought in the Duke of Monmouth's Rebellion to overthrow James II in 1685, that the expulsion of James II was necessary "for the Preservation of our Religion and Liberties" (477). Tom ardently believes in the Glorious Revolution and the Hanoverian succession as a result of his Protestantism and his Lockean belief that a government built on consent prevents monarchial abuses of power.

In the same manner as the house-crown analogy I just outlined, Fielding has his political mouthpieces do battle over a muff instead of the more obvious metonym of a crown. As a metonym for the body part with the power to combine the sex right and political right, the muff allows for a more expansive discussion of the reasons why a particular person is named monarch, as opposed to the crown, which simply symbolizes the monarchy's power. Because Fielding understands the disposal of the crown through property law, he calls into question the

ownership of the muff in order to explore whether the Stuarts or Hanovers have the best claim to inherit the crown. Whichever political faction "owns" Sophia's muff controls her ability to transfer property, and in terms of Fielding's allegory, this control over sex right translates to the political right to the crown. The adventures of Sophia's muff are, therefore, an integral part of the allegory where the government of Sophia stands in for the government of the nation because the muff metonymizes the body part that joins sex right with political right.

The Adventures of Sophia Western's Muff

The adventures of Sophia's muff begin when she decides to flee her father's house in order to avoid a forced marriage with Blifil. After Aunt Western misinterprets Sophia's lovelorn looks as love for Blifil, Squire Western arranges a match between them. Father and aunt are thrilled by the prospect of this match because Blifil will inherit the estate adjacent to Squire Western's. However, Sophia has had an inveterate dislike of Blifil since childhood. Even if she was not in love with Tom, Sophia would still be the only person in the novel to know Blifil for what he truly is: a selfish, interested man who only wants Sophia for her money and body. Sophia, as we learn later, has made it a point of principle to marry with her father's consent (995). But she also has made it a point of principle not to marry against her inclinations. This is a particular issue for Sophia because she was raised in the Robert Filmer School for Girls and genuinely enjoys fulfilling her filial duty: "I can truly say, I have no Delight equal to that of contributing to my Father's Happiness; and if I value myself, my Dear, it is on having this Power, and not on executing it" (191). In this way, Sophia performs the Lockean "conversion" of Filmerian parental power Helen Thompson describes in *Ingenuous*

Subjection: she reconstitutes "the imperative of filial submission" as her own free decision.[87] She wants to contribute to his happiness freely of her own accord, but she does not want to be arbitrarily forced into marrying a man she hates either. Thus, the usual confrontation between father and daughter arises. Sophia politely asks to be excused; Western demands obedience. Sophia pleads; Western threatens to disinherit her.

Unlike other father-daughter struggles, however, Western's Jacobite politics raise the stakes of this conflict. Western imperiously demands "the most resigned Obedience from his daughter" on his choice of a husband in line with Filmer's philosophy (281). Sophia, however, gently refuses. She is heartbroken over the dispute with her father, but she comes to the conclusion that power based on fatherhood is problematic. When she tells her father that marriage with Bilfil will kill her, Western assumes she is exaggerating, re-appropriates her language about death, and tells her "'Then die and be d—ned" (296).[88] Western's declaration makes him sound rather like a tyrant who just sentenced an innocent to execution. Moreover, his tyrannical pronouncement is accompanied by violence. She falls to her knees in tears, and Western, enraged, accidentally dashes her face against the floor. Here, Sophia begins to understand her father's demands in the light of arbitrary power. She agrees with Tom, who says to her: "He is himself the Cause [of his own Misery] by exacting a Power over you which Nature hath not given him" (299). In all likelihood, Tom is paraphrasing Locke's chapter on "Parental Power" in the second *Treatise*, where he explains that parents are, by nature, always

[87] Helen Thompson, *Ingenuous Subjection: Compliance and Power in the Eighteenth-Century Domestic Novel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 32, 53.
[88] Since a forced marriage seems to have been the untimely end for Sophia's mother, this is a distinct possibility. For more on this, see Earla Willpute's essay, "'Women Buried': Henry Fielding and Feminine Absence" *The Modern Language Review* 95, no.2, (2000): 324–336.

entitled to honor, but not obedience.[89] Western's rhetoric transforms Sophia's consent to this marriage into an analogy for political consent.

If Western was not a paternal tyrant before, he certainly becomes one when he is told by his sister that Sophia is in love with Tom. Furious about Allworthy's "bastard" "poaching after [his] daughter," Western threatens to "turn her out o'doors," leaving her to "beg and starve and rot in the Streets" (305, 306). He then locks her in her bedroom, and sends his sister to lecture her about "prudence," marriage, and obedience (316). Sophia continues to resist and Aunt Western suggests "Surprize" as a strategy (343). Honour, then, reports to her mistress that her father has gone for a license and that the ceremony will be performed the next day (343). Faced with the threat of an impending wedding, Honour and Sophia hatch a plan to run away to London. While Samuel Richardson may snidely refer to her as "the weak, the insipid, the Runaway, the Inn-frequenting Sophia" for this plan, the political agenda of Fielding's novel demands that the heroine free herself from this paternal tyranny and assert her own liberty.[90]

In accordance with this political motive, the muff returns and persuades Sophia to run away from her father's house. Ever dutiful, Sophia contemplates marrying Bilfil just to make her father happy. As she considers sacrificing herself to "filial Love and Duty,"

> *Cupid*, who lay hid in her Muff, suddenly crept out and, like *Punchinello* in a Puppet-shew, kicked out all before him. In Truth, (for we scorn to deceive our Reader, or to vindicate the Character of our Heroine, by ascribing her Actions to supernatural impulse) the Thoughts of her beloved Jones, and some Hopes (however distant) in

[89] Locke, *Two Treatises*, 311.
[90] Samuel Richardson to Frances Grainger, January 22 1750, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Correspondence of Samuel Richardson: Correspondence with Sarah Westcomb, Frances Grainger, and Laetitia Pilkington*, ed. John A. Dussinger (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 298.

> which he was very particularly concerned, immediately destroyed all filial Love, Piety, and Pride had, with their joint Endeavours, been laboring to bring about. (360–361)

For glory only, Sophia considers consenting to her father's government and his choice of a husband. Fortunately, by calling forth the idea of Tom—that is to say, the idea of making her own marital decisions—the muff destroys the "Filial Love, Piety, and Pride" that made her waver. Already infused with the "inalienable value" of her and Tom's shared love thanks to the "little Incident of the Muff," the muff reminds Sophia of her inclinations—the "Hopes" she has concerning Tom.[91] If we consider marriage as a form of government in line with Fielding's social–marriage contract analogy, these hopes are a fundamental expression of the desire to be governed by someone else than Blifil or her father. Sophia's desire is politicized here because if she wants the "Hopes" concerning Tom to become reality, she has to withhold her consent at the expense of her filial piety. In an effort to continue to withhold her consent, Sophia sneaks out of her locked room with Honour's help and flees to London. This first and only act of disobedience is, moreover, fundamentally Lockean, as Brown, Carlton, and Downie have noted.[92] Western's "Force," "Violence," and "Arbitrary Power" are a "Breach of Trust" that give Sophia the "Right to assume [her] original Liberty," which, is simply to freely consent to marry the man of her choice.[93] Western's threats, Aunt Western's lectures, and Blifil's hypocrisy notwithstanding, the muff is what triggers Sophia's flight from her father's house and a rebellion against her Jacobite father's arbitrary power.

During their adventures, Sophia and Honour stop an inn near Upton, where Tom is also in residence. Unfortunately for Sophia, he is already in bed with Mrs. Waters and Partridge

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[91] Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 74.
[92] Brown, *Institutions*, 108; Carlton, "The '45 Once Again," 386; Downie, *Political Biography*, 108.
[93] Locke, *Two Treatises*, 412.

tells her so. Naturally, Sophia is hurt and questions Tom's love. To punish him for his infidelity, Sophia leaves a not-so-subtle reminder of herself in his "empty bed":

> This Muff, ever since the Departure of Mr. *Jones*, had been the constant Companion of *Sophia* by Day and her Bedfellow by Night, and this Muff she had at this very Instant upon her Arm; whence she took it off with great Indignation, and having writ her Name with her Pencil upon a Piece of Paper which she pinned to it, she bribed the Maid to convey it into the empty bed of Mr. *Jones*. (546)

As much as this is an act of "great Indignation," it is also an act of political allegiance. This is Western's worst nightmare. Sophia has transferred the ownership of her muff, literally and figuratively, to a "Hanover Rat"—a man who volunteered to go fight the Jacobite army and who ardently believes in the Hanoverian succession (321). Not only does Tom acquire the fashion accessory, the double entendre here insinuates that Tom will also come into possession of Sophia-as-property and the property her body allocates to her husband.

Sophia's act of political allegiance, moreover, sparks a physical battle between a Jacobite and a Hanoverian, recreating the military skirmishes occurring north of Upton between red coats and highlanders in the same historical moment. After Tom finds Sophia's muff in his bed, he is so upset he runs downstairs to chase after his mistress. However, he runs, muff in hand, right into her father [Fig.4]. With each fighter allied to a different side in the '45, the battle that ensues has larger political implications, as they debate whether the ownership of the muff, and by extension, the government of Sophia, can be decided by paternal authority or by consent of the governed.

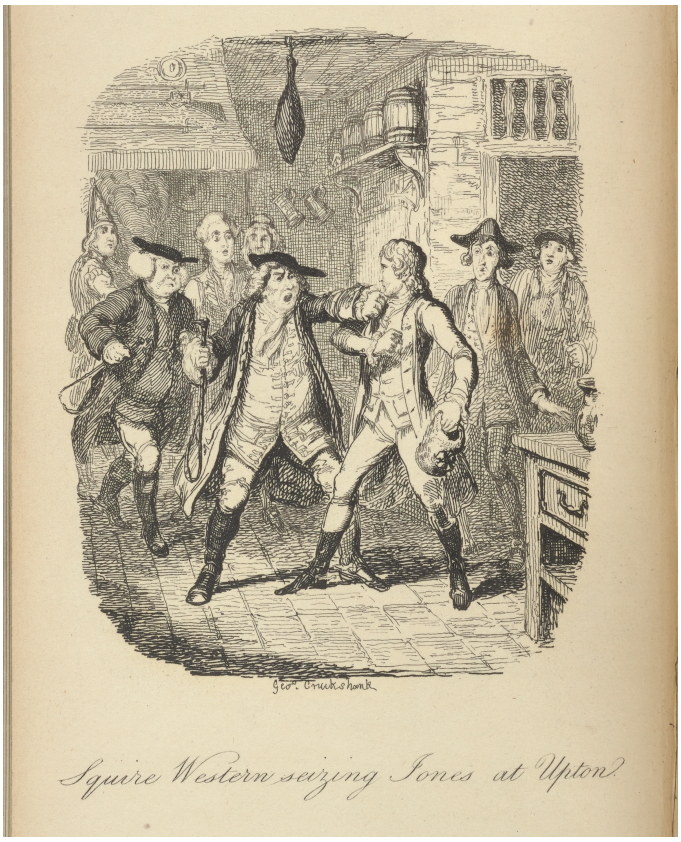

Figure 4: George Cruikshank, *Squire Western Seizing Jones at Upton*, 1832, Courtesy of Albert & Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.

Western believes that fathers own everything belonging to their daughters including their bodies. He is not entirely mistaken because, as the author of *A Treatise of Feme Coverts: Or, The Lady's Law* (1732) explains, "all Women, in the Eye of the Law, are either married or to be married."[94] That is to say; all women are merely vehicles of property transfer. Due to this legal fiction, and his Jacobite principles, Western is convinced, along with Parson Supple, that the muff is *his* property. He asserts his government over Sophia by appealing to paternal authority as the basis for ownership of the muff when he accuses Tom of stealing his property:

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[94] *A Treatise of Feme Coverts: Or, the Lady's Law Containing All the Laws and Statues Relating to Women, under Several Heads*, Lynne A. Greenberg, ed., vol.2 of *The Early Modern Englishwoman: A Facsimile Library of Essential Works* ed. Betty S. Travitsky and Anne Lake Prescott (New York: Routledge, 2005), v.

> 'My Daughter's Muff!' cries the Squire, in a Rage. 'Hath he got my Daughter's Muff! Bear Witness, the Goods are found upon him. I'll have him before a Justice of the Peace this Instant. Where is my Daughter, Villain?'... Mr. Fitzpatrick declared that the Law concerning Daughters was out of the present Case; that stealing a Muff was undoubtedly Felony, and the Goods being found upon the Person, were sufficient Evidence of the Fact...upon viewing the Muff which *Jones* still held in his Hand, and upon the Parson's swearing it to be the Property of Mr. *Western*, he desired Mr. *Fitzpatrick* to draw up a Commitment. (553)

From his repeated exclamatory statement "*my* daughter's Muff!" it is clear that Western considers himself the owner of the daughter and, by extension, of the daughter's muff (emphasis mine). His description of the muff, and by association Sophia, as "Goods" indicates that he values both the accessory and the daughter as property stolen from him. Immediately, Western appeals to a traveling Justice of the Peace on behalf of both articles of property, but the Justice cannot remember the laws "about stealing away daughters," or rape, which Mr. Fitzpatrick decides is "out of the Present case" (553). However, the ability to conflate daughter and daughter's property under law creates a doubling effect where rape and theft collapse into the same legal problem.[95] Sophia and her muff are linguistically rendered one entity as a result of the conflated materialities in the colloquial definition of "muff." The double meaning of "muff" enables Squire Western to assert his right to govern his daughter by prosecuting Tom for theft because in both theft and rape, "Stealing a Muff was undoubtedly Felony." In an unsettling manner, Western conflates his daughter's muff (property) with his daughter (the proof of his

[95] Sandra Macpherson, *Harm's Way: Tragic Responsibility and the Novel Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 92–93.

paternity) in order to claim ownership. Ever true to Jacobite doctrine, Western traces his right to govern his daughter to fatherhood.

In contrast, Tom claims ownership of the muff by appealing to Sophia's consent. When "the Goods [are] found upon the Person," the question of theft hinges on consent (553). Did the owner willingly give the person his or her property? Tom defends himself against the charge of theft by explaining that Sophia "ordered" the muff "[conveyed]" to his chamber: "He then produced the evidence of Mr. *Partridge*, as to the finding it; but what was still more, *Susan* deposed that *Sophia* herself had delivered the Muff to her, and had ordered her to convey it into the Chamber where Mr. *Jones* had found it" (553). Between the testimonies of Partridge and Susan, Tom shows that Sophia was the muff's owner and that it was "[conveyed]" according to her consent, not stolen from her. When Tom earns an innocent verdict by this argument, Western has to acknowledge that his paternity cannot translate into the government of his daughter. Sophia's consent, on the other hand, places her literal and figurative muffs under Tom's control. Since ownership of Sophia's muff(s) determines who will govern her in marriage, and allegorically, who will govern the nation, this battle affirms the novel's investment in the Lockean belief that "Inheritance or Primogeniture, can in its self have no Right, no pretence to [govern], any farther than that Consent, which Established the Form of Government."[96] Tom's victory over Western celebrates the constitutional principle that the people's consent should direct the disposal of the crown, as Fielding believes it did in 1689 and 1714.[97]

Hanover Rats Make the Best Husbands

[96] Locke, 211.
[97] Downie, 178.

In its final appearance in Book XV, the muff is still Sophia's, but the description hints that Tom is about to assume ownership of it by marriage: "he went to his Scrutore, took out Miss *Western's* Muff, kiss'd it several Times, and then strutted some Turns about his Room with More Satisfaction of Mind than ever any Irishman felt in carrying off a Fortune of Fifty Thousand Pounds" (828). Thanks to the double entendre, Tom's "Satisfaction" is also double here. Sophia's "real" muff is not only the focus of his sexual desire; it is nearly worth a fortune of that amount. To be in possession of "Miss *Western's* Muff" is to be in possession of half of Squire Western's estate, £3,000 from Sophia's uncle, and the fortune of her mother (354, 884). It is not a coincidence that Tom, who returns Sophia's pocketbook— another metonym for Sophia's vagina—in Book XIII, forgets to return her muff. While Tom probably did not design it so, he does carry off the prize of Sophia's muff like a fortune hunter.

In terms of the novel's plot, the transfer of the muff's ownership is significant because it signals the transfer of additional property—woman and estate—to Tom. As a bastard, he cannot legally inherit property on his own, and, despite Tom's formal recognition as Allworthy's nephew at the novel's end, he was born out of wedlock and remains, legally, a bastard. Neither the author nor Allworthy can reward Tom with an inheritance at the end of the novel. Allworthy can will Paradise Hall to his nephew after his death in order to right wrongs.[98] In the meantime, Sophia can both reward and be the reward. When she consents to marry him, she consents to be governed by him and to transfer her inheritance to him. This inheritance turns out to be more than the half of the estate her father promised to bestow upon her marriage: "*Western* hath resigned his Family seat, and the greater Part of his Estate to his Son-in-law, and hath retired to a lesser House of his, in another Part of the Country, which is better for Hunting" (884, 981). Taking into account Allworthy's will, all three transfers of

[98]Alan Macfarlane, "Illegitimacy and Illegitimates in English History," in *Bastardy and Its Comparative History*, ed. Peter Laslett, Karla Oosterveen, and Richard M. Smith (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 73.

property emphasize the consent of the owner rather than the customs of property law. In keeping with his comic genre, Fielding uses consent to reward his bastard-hero for his newfound wisdom with two substantial, neighbouring estates and punishes Blifil by rendering void his right to the estate by primogeniture.[99]

In terms of the novel's political allegory, the transference of the muff to Tom's government places the property of Sophia and the property of the Western estate in the hands of our Hanoverian hero. Like Schmidgen, Brown, and Hunter, I agree that Fielding's disregard for primogeniture is a validation of the succession of 1689.[100] The consensual transfer of property replicates, on a smaller scale, the property transfer that Fielding believes occurred during Glorious Revolution, when the people conveyed, by their consent, the crown to William and Mary. It is not a coincidence that Western "resigned his family Seat" in the same manner that James II "abdicated" his own. If we agree with these scholars that Western is a figure for James II and if we agree with Schmidgen that Tom is a figure for William of Orange, would not the daughter who ran away from and rebelled against the commands of a Jacobite father be a figure for Mary II? Mary II's acceptance of the crown was construed as an act of rebellion against her father, the original Jacobite.[101] In the same manner that Sophia transfers her muff(s) and estates to Tom, Mary's stronger claim to the crown enabled William of Orange, by marriage, to become monarch over her brother, James Edward Stuart, who had a superior right by primogeniture. Even though Sophia is mistaken for Bonnie Prince Charlie's fictional mistress Jenny Cameron, she does not believe that "the Authority of any Parent can oblige us

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[99] When Fielding skips over the only legal son of Bridget Allworthy, he renders her sex right void. Her contribution to the political system is erased on grounds moral (Blifil is selfish and cruel) and political (primogeniture underpins the Jacobite claim). The expurgation of her right is evidence of how the political fiction of legitimacy was used to control women.
[100] Hunter, Occasional Forms, 184; Brown, Institutions, 93; Schmidgen, *Law of Property*, 101.
[101] Lois G. Schwoerer, "The Coronation of William and Mary, April 11, 1689" in *The Revolution of 1688–1689*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 126.

to marry, in direct Opposition to our Inclinations" (955). Her actions, particularly her flight from her father, are too in sync with Lockean principles for her to be a Jacobite.[102] In addition to her criticism of paternal power and appreciation for consent, Sophia's reluctant agreement to forgo a probationary period and marry Tom immediately strikes me as recognition of Locke's stipulation that rebellion is only necessary when the governor has become a tyrant.[103] Having already rebelled when her father turned violent, Sophia recognizes that his asking her to marry the man she loves sooner rather than later is not tyranny, even if it is an imposition. Almost as if he was referencing his own analogy in *A Dialogue*, Fielding completes his novel-long political allegory by putting the Western house in the hands of a Hanoverian, a believer in "true" religion and liberty, in order to argue for who he believes is the true owner of the British crown. Sophia and her muff(s) ultimately offer readers what Fielding believes is political sophia by fictionalizing the very real triumph of the Hanoverian dynasty over the Jacobites.

Conclusion

Like so many representations of the feminine in literary history, muff jokes have been misunderstood. Their physiological referent distracts and deflects, resulting in readings at the surface level of their basic generic function, or readings that euphemize them into definitional oblivion. Yet, the linguistic gymnastics they perform to elicit laughter are indicative of a culture that understands women as simultaneously person and thing. Particularly in the

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[102] In *Natural Masques*, Campbell suggests that Sophia is a Jacobite because of her mistaken association with Jenny Cameron and her "spirit," a word applied to Jacobite women in anti-Jacobite publications (171). I read Sophia's "spirit" as part of Fielding's anti-Jacobite agenda because it enables her to rebel against a Jacobite father. As for the innkeeper's mistake, I believe this mistake has much more to do with the fact that men were predisposed to assume women traveling alone in gold-laced riding dresses were sex workers than with Jacobitism.
[103] Locke, *Two Treatises*, 402.

eighteenth century, muff jokes are only funny when they consciously display and play with two different types of property: woman-as-property and accessory-as-property. Their comedy speaks to a legal system that shifted between viewing women as person or things, as proprietors or as vehicles of property transfer, depending on what was best for the court, the estate, or the monarchy. Fielding's famous muff jokes certainly illustrate this broader political significance, as they rely on the muff's ability to metonymize both types of property—woman and accessory—in order to stand in for House of Hanover's political right to the crown in his allegory. It is only to our modern perspective, a perspective shaped by the philosophers who separated sex right and political right, that muff jokes are not inherently political, not suggestive of the tangled relationship between women's bodies, property law, and politics that was a fundamental part of women's lived experience in the early modern period. However, this tangled relationship still informs the lived experience of women today. The divide between sex right and political right has obscured the historical origins of modern legislation that, like its early modern antecedents, tries to regulate women's control over their own bodies in the event of pregnancy and sexual assault. Enter the pussyhat. Like the muff, the world's newest political accessory aims to make visible the union of sex right and political right through the double entendre signaled by bright pink knitted cat ears.

Chapter Three

Lady Delacour's Cockades and Ribbons

> Without meddling with politics, in which no amiable or sensible woman can wish to interfere, the influence of ladies in higher ranks may always be exerted with perfect propriety, and with essential advantage to the public, in conciliating the inferior classes of society, explaining to them their duties and their interests, and impressing upon the minds of the children of the poor, sentiments of just subordination and honest independence. — *Madam Fleury* (1809).[1]

In her tale of fashionable life set during the French Revolution *Madam Fleury* (1809), Maria Edgeworth launches into a brief digression on one of her favorite subjects for moral tales: women meddling in politics.[2] No "amiable or sensible woman can wish to interfere" in what she calls "the intrigues of party."[3] However, she denounces these un-amiable women meddling in party politics in the same breath that she urges landowning women to play the politician and enact conservative policies on their estates. The verbs that Edgeworth deploys here—conciliate, explain, and impress—are verbs of governance. They suggest that "ladies of high rank" use "their influence" to direct servants, manage tenants, oversee charities, "[explain] the duties" of tenants (possibly obligations to owner, possibly game and labor they owe the owner), and "[explain]" the "interests" of tenants, which likely refers to their political interest.[4] For Edgeworth, there is a difference between what she calls "politics" and the

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[1] Maria Edgeworth, *Madam Fleury*, ed. Helen Van de Veire, Kim Walker, and Marilyn Butler, vol.5 of *The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Marilyn Butler and Mitzi Meyers (New York: Routledge, 2019), 230.

[2] There are references to women meddling in politics in *Letters for Literary Ladies* (1795), *Castle Rackrent* (1800), *Belinda* (1801), *The Modern Griselda* (1805), *Madam Fleury* (1809), and *Helen* (1834).

[3] Edgeworth, *Madam Fleury*, 292.

[4] While duty may mean obligations in a hierarchical sense in this passage, it may also mean feudal dues that tenants pay landowners. In her glossary attached to *Castle Rackrent*, Edgeworth describes duty fowl as "an inordinate quantity of poultry" "tenants were f*ormerly* bound to supply" to landlords (127) and duty work required "tenants to furnish their landlords with

"influence" exerted by this ideal aristocratic landlady. "Politics" incites a rage for party that encourages women to part with propriety in service of party, whether it be kissing for votes, or adopting what Edgeworth called in this tale "the disgusting, indecent extreme" fashion of women during the French Revolution.[5] In contrast, "influence" was perfectly in sync with her view of propriety because the "conciliating," "explaining," and "impressing" were performed in the name of land and family. In spite of her condemnation of women's participation in politics, the actions Edgeworth lists here are still political in the proper sense of the word because they uphold the interconnected system of class, property, and electoral politics from which the British landowning class derived its power. Her issue was not women meddling in politics so much as what she perceived as their defiance of gender and class roles in the name of party.

One of the many ideological souvenirs historiography has inherited from the Romantic period is the false dichotomy between "politics" and "influence" that Edgeworth sets up in this passage. Edgeworth's "influence" is what modern historians would term "social politics."[6] In opposition to the "hard" politics of parliament, party, and policy, "social politics" is a term that genders the "soft" political work, namely "the management of people and social situations for political ends," female in order to limit or obstruct women's political participation.[7] Edgeworth's unwavering support for the gendered distinction between "influence" and "politics" originates, I believe, in her anxieties about women's political participation in the wake of the French Revolution and the Irish Rebellion of 1798, events that upended the property and class systems of which this fictional landlady, and Edgeworth herself, formed part. While they

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labourers and horses for several days in the year" (128). Maria Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent* in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, ed. Marilyn Butler (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 127–128.

[5] Edgeworth, *Madam Fleury*, 314.

[6] Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754–1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 5.

[7] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 5, 78.

followed the events of the French Revolution closely from afar,[8] the Anglo-Irish Edgeworths witnessed the rising of the United Irishmen in 1798, who destroyed the homes of Anglo-Irish landlords, clashed with the English military in battle, and committed myriad acts of violence and theft against their imperial overlords.[9] When the French invaded to support their fellow Irish revolutionaries, the Catholic peasants of County Longford, where the Edgeworth estate was located, took up arms.[10] On September 5, 1798, she wrote her Aunt Ruxton, "Yesterday we heard about ten o'clock in the morning that a large body of rebels armed with pikes were within a few miles of Edgeworthtown," and by the end of the day, they "were obliged to flee" because "the pikemen, 300 in number,… were within a mile of the town."[11] When they returned, Edgeworth saw a "deserted or rather shattered village."[12] Edgeworth's home, however, survived the rebellion unscathed because her father was known to be tolerant of Catholics, and even went so far as to publicly advocate for Catholic emancipation.[13] As in France, women formed part of this rebellion. They held roles in intelligence networks that planned the rising.[14] They hung up banners and wore dresses, hats, and garters in the color of their cause: green.[15] After looting the homes of the Anglo-Irish, they put on the expensive fashions and accessories

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[8] Marilyn Butler, *Maria Edgeworth: A Literary Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 111.
[9] Butler, *Maria Edgeworth*, 138; Susan B. Egenolf, "'Our Fellow Creatures': Women Narrating Political Violence in the 1798 Irish Rebellion," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42, no.2 (Winter 2009): 220–222; Catherine O'Connor, "The Experience of Women in the Rebellion of 1798 in Wexford," *The Past: The Organ of the Uí Cinsealaigh Historical Society*, no. 24 (2003): 95–106; and Thomas Pakenham, *The Year of Liberty: The Story of the Great Irish Rebellion of 1798* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1969), 13, 149, 150, 167,180, 189,199, 204, 209.
[10] Butler, *Edgeworth*, 138.
[11] Maria Edgeworth to Aunt Ruxton, 5 September 1798, in *Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland*, ed. Valerie Pakenham (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2018), 58–59.
[12] Maria Edgeworth to Sophy Ruxton, 9 September 1798, in *Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland*, 59.
[13] Butler, *Maria Edgeworth*, 136–140.
[14] O'Connor, "The Experience of Women in the Rebellion of 1798 in Wexford," 96–97.
[15] O'Connor, "The Experience of the Women in the Rebellion of 1978 in Wexford," 95–96, and Pakenham, *The Year of Liberty*, 188.

of Protestant ladies over their rags.[16] They served as "moving magazines," reloading and dispensing weapons, or as soldiers in their own right.[17] To Edgeworth, who would have heard about these female soldiers in ballads if she had not seen them in real life, women's increasing participation in radical political action that threatened class, property, and life—such as burning down Anglo-Irish estates and guillotining French aristocrats—at the end of the eighteenth century suggested that politics was becoming increasingly irrational and that the "polite" political participation of women was possibly at an end.[18] Women, with their limited and superficial educations, could not help but succumb to some kind of frenzy that would cause them to neglect their gender and class roles if they moved beyond "influence" to the increasingly revolutionary arguments of "politics."

Many believed that the combination of revolutionary politics and irrational action would culminate in "petticoat government," particularly after the woman famously styled "a

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[16] O'Connor, "The Experience of the Women in the Rebellion of 1978 in Wexford," 97. Men also adorned themselves with looted women's fashion accessories, such as ostrich plumes. See Pakenham, *The Year of Liberty*, 179.

[17] Anne Kinsella, "Nineteenth-Century Perspectives: The Women of 1798 in folk memory and ballads" in *The Women of 1798*, ed. Dáire Keogh and Nicholas Furlong (Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 1998), 190–194.

[18] In addition to Molly Weston who I described in my introduction, Molly Doyle of Castleboro was a female combatant immortalized in ballads. She reportedly cut ammunition belts off of dead British soldiers and handed them to her comrades (O'Connor 96). According to one of the ballads that immortalizes her, "The Heroine of Ross," she also urged the rebels forward brandishing a scythe in a moment of hesitation:

> But a figure rose before us, 'twas a girl's fragile frame,
> And among the fallen soldiers there she walked with eyes aflame
> And her voice rang o'er the clamour like a trumpet o'er the sea:
> Whoso dares to die for Ireland, let him come and follow me!'
> Then against the line of soldiers with a gleaming scythe on high,
> Lo! She strode, and though their bullets whistled round they passed her by,
> And, a thousand bosoms throbbing, one wild, surging shout we gave,
> And we swept them from our pathway like the sane before the wave. (143)

William Rooney, "The Heroine of Ross" in *Gil's Irish Reciter: A Selection of Gems from Ireland's Modern Literature* ed J.J O' Kelly (Dublin: M.H. Gill & Son, 1905), 142–144, *Hathitrust.*

hyena in petticoats" published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792).[19] According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, petticoat government is "rule by, or undue predominance or influence of women in domestic, political, or public life."[20] As a term, petticoat government encompasses every type of female involvement in politics from electioneering and rights to the rule of queens and matriarchies. The petticoat has been a favored metaphor for women's authority over men in journalism, literature, and political theory since the end of the seventeenth century.[21] As a fashion object that also functions as a symbol of biological essentialism, the petticoat metonymically conveys anxieties about the fluidity of the supposedly entrenched hierarchies of gender and rank in a political context— what if petticoats make the decisions and give orders instead of the breeches? In this way, the petticoat conveys the paradoxical belief that equity for everyone is not possible. According to this line of thinking, allowing women access to the political rights that are their birth right as citizens and facilitating their participation in government results in the domination of men by women. In a manner still familiar to us two hundred years in the future, they confuse power with equity. They mistakenly understand the loss of absolute power given to them by patriarchal institutions as a loss of equity. While this perception that more rights for women means fewer rights for men is both inane and inaccurate, it resulted in (and continues to result in) delusions of educated women who, medusa-like, will emasculate men if they are not silenced and stopped from throwing open the doors of government.

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[19] Horace Walpole to Hannah More, 24 January 1795, in *The Yale Editions of Horace Walpole's Correspondence* ed. by W.S. Lewis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 31:397.
[20] "petticoat government, n." *OED Online*. June 2018. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com.proxy01.its.virginia.edu/view/Entry/242337?redirectedFrom=petticoat+government (accessed June 2018).
[21] Kathryn Gleaddle and Sarah Richardson, "The Petticoat in Politics: Women and Authority" in *Women in British Politics, 1760–1860* ed. by Kathryn Gleaddle and Sarah Richardson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 1.

In response to these cultural anxieties about petticoat government and women's irrational political participation, several Edgeworth novels and tales link women's education to the subject of party politics in ways that scholars have largely overlooked.[22] In this chapter, I suggest Maria Edgeworth develops arguments for women's rational political participation—what she calls "influence"— in her moral tale *Belinda* (1801), where she explores women's limited education in the context of a parliamentary election. While Edgeworth is famous for her program promoting good landlords in all her works, her system, as the passage from *Madame Fleury* makes clear, also depended on the presence of good landladies who were trained in subjects such as political economy and who could "[protect] and [develop] the political value of the land" through sociopolitical relationships.[23] When good landownership meant managing the family's interest during an election, a rationally educated woman became indispensable, as Lady Delacour makes all too clear. With the exception of David Francis Taylor's essay, "Edgeworth's *Belinda* and the Gendering of Caricature," scholarship has largely glossed over Lady Delacour's experience "meddling" in a parliamentary election, including accounts that specifically examine the duel the election produces. [24] This chapter reads the election scene in *Belinda* as a site where Edgeworth's arguments for women's rational education and paternalistic landownership culminate in a suggestion that women could and should take an active part in public life, so long as they conformed to contemporary gender and class roles. As the wife of a landowner, Lady Delacour is expected to canvass tenants and to dispense cockades and ribbons in the candidate's chosen colors. However, Lady Delacour's education has only taught her to seek attention and praise and it leads her beyond the distribution of

[22] See note 2 for a list of texts.
[23] Judith S. Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism: Gender, Class, and Politics in Late Georgian Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2003),14.
[24] David Francis Taylor, "Edgeworth's *Belinda* and the Gendering of Caricature," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 26, no.4 (Summer 2014): 593–624.

accessories to the masculine political antics of cartoons, duels, and gunshot wounds. While I will suggest more generally in this chapter that electoral ribbons and cockades make visible women's invisible role in the electoral system, I argue that, in the hands of Lady Delacour, these accessories illustrate the threat Edgeworth believed women's education posed to the political fabric of the nation in the wake of late eighteenth-century rebellions and revolutions.

The Problem of the Two Edgeworths

Political readings of *Belinda* have largely centered on Edgeworth's engagement with the "war of ideas" in the 1790s. While recent studies have explored the relationship between Edgeworth's works, race, and empire through the figure of the Creole landowner Mr. Vincent,[25] scholars have predominantly focused on Harriet Freke, the figure of the female philosopher, to explore Edgeworth's relationship to the French Revolution and the debate about women's rights triggered by Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication.* For example, Claudia Johnson suggests that Freke, who appears as "proof perfect that her creator is innocent of any radical intent," "actually frees the author to advance reformist positions about women through the back door."[26] Colin B. and Jo Atkinson argue that Harriet Freke represents "an amalgam of radical views" designed to discredit both feminism and French revolutionary principles.[27]

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[25] See Susan C. Greenfield, "'Abroad and at Home': Sexual Ambiguity, Miscegenation, and Colonial Boundaries in Edgeworth's *Belinda*." *PMLA* 112.2 (1997) 214-48; Kathryn Kirkpatrick's "'Gentleman Have Horrors Upon This Subject': West Indian Suitors in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 5, no. 4 (1993): 331–348; Kirkpatrick, "The Limits of Liberal Feminism in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*" in *Jane Austen and Mary Shelley and Their Sisters*, ed. Laura Dabundo (New York: University Press of America, 2000), 73–82; and Jessica Richards, "'Games of Chance': *Belinda*, Education, and Empire" in *An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her Contexts*, ed. Chris Fauske and Heidi Kaufman (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 192–211.

[26] Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 20.

[27] Colin B. Atkinson and Jo Atkinson, "Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*, and Women's Rights," *Eire-Ireland*: A Journal of Irish Studies 19, no. 4 (1984): 108, 112.

Similarly, Eleanor Ty writes, "by having Freke recapitulate Wollstonecraft's ideas, Edgeworth ridicules but at the same time accentuates the feminist theories."[28] Deborah Weiss argues that Edgeworth uses Freke to "create a paradigmatic middle ground between Burke's reverence for social custom and Wollstonecraft's desire to entirely eliminate behaviours that trade on sexual distinctions."[29] Andrew McInnes contends that Freke is a stand in for Mary Hays, not Wollstonecraft, and that she serves as critique of French revolutionary principles because she depends on "repeated slogans" rather than "genuine understanding" in her debate with Mr. Percival.[30] What this brief survey of scholarship illustrates is a focus on ideology rather than the historical activities that constituted women's political activity. Along with many others, these readings fail to consider how Edgeworth's status as an Anglo-Irish landlady, particularly after the rebellion of '98, impacts her political views and shapes her understanding of the intersection between class, gender, and politics in *all* her works.

Over the years since her recovery, scholars have created two Edgeworths, the educational theorist and the Anglo-Irish landlady, by sustaining an arbitrary division between the Irish works and everything else. The first Edgeworth is a champion of women's rational education—not rights.[31] She is early liberalism's ideal woman, following the gender split it

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[28] Eleanor Ty, "Freke in Men's Clothes: Transgression and the Carnivalesque in Edgeworth's *Belinda*" in *The Clothes That Wear Us* ed. Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Newark: Delaware University Press, 1999), 167.
[29] Deborah Weiss, "The Extraordinary Ordinary Belinda: Maria Edgeworth's Female Philosopher," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 19, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 452.
[30] Andrew McInnes, *Wollstonecraft's Ghost: The Fate of the Female Philosopher in the Romantic Period* (New York: Routledge, 2017) 61, 89.
[31] For more on Edgeworth as an advocate for women's rational education, see Heather Macfadyen, "Lady Delacour's Library: Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* and Fashionable Reading," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 48, no. 4 (1994): 423–39; Julie Nash, "'Standing in Distress Between Tragedy and Comedy': Servants in Maria Edgeworth's English Domestic Fiction" in *Servants and Paternalism in the Works of Maria Edgeworth and Elizabeth Gaskell* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 31–51; Mitzi Myers, "My Art Belongs to Daddy? Thomas Day, Maria Edgeworth, and the Pre-Texts of *Belinda*: Women Writers and Patriarchal Authority" in *Revising Women*: *Eighteenth-Century "Women's Fiction" and Social Engagement*, ed. by Paula R.

prescribed in the seventeenth century, to a T: men are political subjects; women are, by nature, subject to them. The educational and philosophical activities she advocates for women on the basis of equity in her works are not problematic because they are in service to men and the family, even when they require women's energies in public. The second Edgeworth pines nostalgically for what E.P. Thompson calls the "paternalism-deference equilibrium"—a "mutually-assenting" reciprocal relationship between the landowners and tenants based on custom where each group is "conscious of duties and responsibilities" to the other which may, or may not, have actually existed in Ireland—and holds conservative attitudes toward servants, tenants, and slaves that are nevertheless underpinned by feelings of obligation.[32] She is a Burkean conservative who clings to the customs of the past and creates saccharine fictional representations of them.[33] There is, however, only one Maria Edgeworth, and while her views

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Backscheider (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 104–146; Catherine Toal, "Control Experiment: Edgeworth's Critique of Rousseau's Educational Theory" in *An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her Contexts*, ed. Chris Fauske and Heidi Kaufman (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 212–229.

[32] E.P. Thompson, "Eighteenth-century English Society: Class struggle without class?" *Social History 3*, no. 2 (1978): 150, 136. The paternalism-deference equilibrium is a specific component of paternalism with which Edgeworth was preoccupied. I follow EP Thompson's definition of paternalism as nostalgic yearning for "a recently passed, golden age from which present modes and manners are a degeneration." Thompson, "Eighteenth-Century English Society," 136.

[33] For more on Edgeworth as Anglo-Irish landlady, see Katey Castellano's "Conservation or Catastrophe: Reflexive regionalism in Maria Edgeworth's Irish Tales" in *The Ecology of British Romantic Conservatism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 91–111; Joanne Cordon "Revising Stereotypes of Nationality and Gender: Why Maria Edgeworth Did Not Write *Castle Belinda*" in *New Essays on Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Julie Nash (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 131–160; Susan Manly, "Maria Edgeworth and the 'Genius of the People,'" *Language, Custom, and Nation in the 1790s: Locke, Tooke, Wordsworth, Edgeworth* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 137–185; Sara L. Maurer, "Disowning to Own: Maria Edgeworth's Irish Fiction and the Illegitimacy of National Ownership" in *The Dispossessed State: Narratives of Ownership in Nineteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 19–54; Julian Moynahan, "Maria Edgeworth: Origination and a Checklist" in *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 12–42; Clíona Ó Gallchoir, *Maria Edgeworth: Women, Enlightenment, Nation* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005); Cassidy Picken, "Maria Edgeworth's Poetics of Rent," *ELH* 83 (2016): 181–209; Heidi Thomson, "'The Fashion Not To Be An Absentee': Fashion and Moral Authority in Edgeworth's Tales" in *An Uncomfortable Authority: Maria Edgeworth and Her*

may seem incompatible, her reverence for property unites the liberal ideas she espouses and the paternalistic fantasies she embraces in her works.

After she moved to Ireland in 1782, Edgeworth was taught to regard her property like another member of the family. Through her family's *Black Book*, Edgeworth learned the history of her father's estate back to 1619 when James I granted Francis Edgeworth 600 acres of land in accordance with his policy of settling Protestants of English descent on confiscated lands of Irish Catholics.[34] She also learned the importance of good stewardship on the estate thanks to her forefathers failed efforts at landlording and absenteeism. This historical lesson was enhanced by personal experience: Richard Lovell Edgeworth named her his assistant and accountant for all matters relating to the family estate when she was fourteen.[35] She would ride out with her father to visit the tenants in September and March, take notes of his interactions with tenants, and record all transactions in the rent book.[36] During these early experiences with the tenantry, she learned and adopted her father's paternalist understanding of landlording: "the first duty of both landlord and tenant was to fulfill their mutual contract, after which there would be plenty of opportunity for favors."[37]As she grew up and mastered the finer points of political economy, she became an agent in her own right. As Butler explains, she imitated her father's landlording exactly, not allowing a late payment beyond what was customary, even during the Famine.[38] After her father's death in 1817, and after her brother

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Contexts, ed. Chris Fauske and Heidi Kaufman (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004),165–191.

[34] Butler, *Edgeworth*,13.

[35] Butler, *Edgeworth*, 88.

[36] Butler, 87–88.

[37] Butler, 85.

[38] Butler writes, "At the time of the Famine, for example, we find her approving a regulation that barley for sowing should be doled out only to those who could produce a receipt for the last half year's rent." Butler, *Edgeworth*, 87.

Lovell had nearly ruined the estate's finances, she became landlady, ultimately clearing the estate of debt by following her father's system.[39]

Edgeworth's successful landladying is, arguably, the result of her father's liberal attitude toward women, which prompted him to give her a rational education in order to prepare her for this career on the family estate. The contemporary system of female education had marriage, rather than reason, as its aims, instructing young women in display-based accomplishments such as drawing and music. In contrast, Richard Lovell taught his daughter the liberal philosophical principle (via Locke and Wollstonecraft) that gendered behavior was culturally constructed and that intellect was not gendered, as well as Whig conceptions of liberty.[40] As a result, Edgeworth was told to read texts on Irish history, the British constitution, political economy, law (such as Blackstone's *Commentaries*), and politics.[41] She translated French texts, studied botany, and helped her father conduct science experiments. This experience facilitated her own career as an educational theorist. In spite of the argument that women's education was a slippery slope into rights, Edgeworth—along with her father—believed women could and should be taught to reason through an empirical and experimental system of education. Their system is best summed up by the conclusion to the chapter on "Sympathy and Sensibility" in *Practical Education* (1798):

> Women, who cultivate their reasoning powers, and who acquire tastes for science and literature, find sufficient variety in life, and do not require the *stimulus* of dissipation, or of romance. Their sympathy and sensibility are engrossed by proper objects, and

[39] Moynahan, *Anglo-Irish*, 14.
[40] Weiss, "The Extraordinary Ordinary Belinda," 449.
[41] Butler, *Edgeworth*, 90.

> connected with the habits of useful exertion: they usually feel the affection which others profess, and actually enjoy the happiness which others describe.[42]

The Edgeworths believed the educations hinted at here taught women the worst kinds of female behaviors: vanity, excessive sensibility, selfishness, and indolence. Women who cultivated their understanding and read widely tended, on the other hand, to be more virtuous ("they do not require the stimulus of dissipation or romance"), more industrious (they develop "habits of useful exertion"), and more sympathetic to their fellow creatures ("their sympathy and sensibility are engrossed by proper objects"). By teaching women how to reason, the Edgeworths believed they would create more effective wives, mothers, and homemakers, who would, as a consequence, contribute to the happiness and industry of society. Even more importantly, they believed a rational education would help mold women into active (but not rights-bearing) citizens, prepared to serve their country, family, and property.

What emerges from this brief biographical sketch, I believe, is the sense that the Edgeworth family's liberal politics and educational policies were underpinned by what Katey Castellano calls conservatism's intergenerational imagination—an understanding of how past and future generations were tethered to an estate.[43] Their liberal educational policies prepared women to serve the property of the future and their liberal politics prepared Catholics and disenfranchised men to do the same. As Clíona Ó Gallchoir explains, the estate is Maria Edgeworth's "ideal" space: "the ideal of a space neither fully private nor fully public, neither exclusively male nor exclusively female, was located in the estate, a space in which men and

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[42] Edgeworth, *Practical Education*, ed. Susan Manly, vol. 11 of *The Novels and Selected Works of Maria Edgeworth*, ed. Marilyn Butler and Mitzi Myers (New York: Routledge, 2019), 73.
[43] Castellano, "Conservatism and the Intergenerational Imagination" in *The Ecology of British Romantic Conservatism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 4.

women could exercise socially useful roles and communicate freely with one another."[44] She understood estates as multi-part communities that could only function as an organic whole when both men and women, landlords and tenants, fulfilled their obligations. In this way, the Edgeworths' intergenerational imagination leads them to have a very capacious definition of absenteeism, one that shapes Maria's educational and literary projects. To her, absenteeism was not just the kind of poor estate management performed by landlords from afar, it was also the failure to perform the customs, no matter how small, that the family—not just the landlord—was supposed to fulfill. Anything that the estate owners did to disrupt the paternalism-deference equilibrium—the niceties and obligations performed by property owners and tenants—was a form of absenteeism. [45] These obligations included the acts that constituted women's political "influence," or sociopolitical participation, such as public days, electioneering, and hosting balls. As Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace notes, "For Edgeworth…a chance for authority and for limited empowerment was to be found in the tasks and assignments given to women under a patriarchal rubric, in this case, under the program for the reform of Ireland under Anglo-Irish rule."[46] The ritual inversion of an election was an opportunity for women's "authority" and "limited empowerment," which sometimes, in Edgeworth's view, turned their heads and made them forget the customs they were meant to fulfill.

Women and Electioneering Rage in the Long Eighteenth Century

At least five of Maria Edgeworth's works reference or represent elections. In addition to *Belinda*, *Castle Rackrent* (1801) represents Sir Condy Rackrent's election to the newly formed Irish Parliament and includes a description of the election ball his wife organized and his

[44] Ó Gallchoir, *Maria Edgeworth*, 11.
[45] Thompson, "Eighteenth-century English Society," 150, 136.
[46] Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 98.

chairing.[47] In *Rosanna*, one of Edgeworth's *Popular Tales* (1804), Sir Hyacinth O'Brien knocks on the door of the Gray family and canvasses for votes.[48] *Ennui* (1809) includes Lord Glenthorn's suspicions that his agent Mr. M'Leod has an "underhand design upon [his] boroughs," which are cured by his behavior during an election.[49] In *Helen* (1834), Lord and Lady Davenant try to persuade Beauclerc to apply his genius to Parliament by standing for the county. Instead, he spends his money and his energies trying to help save the Forrester family who were ruined, in part, by a wife encouraging her husband to stand for the county.[50]

Edgeworth's representations of elections were likely born of her own experience with her father's campaigns. Between 1782 and 1798, Richard Lovell immersed himself in Irish politics. A liberal Whig, he stood for the briefly extant Irish Parliament twice (once successfully) and was involved in the campaigns for electoral reform and Catholic emancipation. He wrote a pamphlet, *An Address to the Electors of Longford*, urging the extension of the franchise in 1782, attended a congress on parliamentary reform in 1784–5, secretly supported the activities of French Revolutionaries, and participated in debates about the Act of Union at the turn of the century.[51] Richard Lovell accomplished all of this with the help and support of his amanuensis and daughter, Maria. In a letter to her cousin Sophy Ruxton in February 1796, Edgeworth admits to participating in her father's parliamentary campaign: "and though my father had done me the honour to let me copy his Election letters for him, I am not in the least

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[47] Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*, 95–97.
[48]Edgeworth, *Rosanna* in *Tales and Novels* (New York: AMS Press, 1967), 2:221–225.
[49] Edgeworth, *Ennui* in *Castle Rackrent and Ennui*, ed. Marilyn Butler (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 249–250.
[50] Edgeworth, *Helen* (New York: Pandora Press, 1987), 39, 86.
[51] In a letter to Erasmus Darwin in 1795, Robert Lovell wrote, "When peace permits if it ever will permit everybody who can speak French & who loves Freedom will go there." Quoted in Butler, *Edgeworth*, 111.

infected with electioneering rage."[52] In all likelihood, "Election letters" refers to one of three important documents: additional copies of her father's candidate statement that need to be disseminated; letters asking local electors for support; or letters to agents in the county who have been reporting news and canvassing numbers. Regardless of the exact document meant by "Election letters," it is clear that Maria Edgeworth was part of her father's election committee. Election committees were frequently run from the homes of the candidate and women were likely to be the operatives who received and dispatched information, managed correspondence networks, and organized events.[53] In spite of her scorn-filled comment about women "infected with electioneering rage," Edgeworth was part of a long line of them who, behind the scenes, quietly moved heaven and earth to get men elected.

Before the Reform Act of 1832, women were a vital part of the electoral system and electioneering despite not being able to sit in the Commons or Lords.[54] Since the electoral system was based on property rights, women were able to participate if they met the property criteria and/or by supporting male candidates for their family's seat or borough. The number of women who had the property rights to participate in the unreformed electoral system is larger than one imagines. Without counting the women who managed estates for their children, "evidence suggests that women's ownership of land peaked in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, when women probably inherited between 15 and 20 percent of the land."[55] While women who met the property criteria were not technically excluded from the franchise,[56]

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[52] Maria Edgeworth to Sophy Ruxton, 27 February 1796, in *Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland*, 48–49.
[53] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 194.
[54] The Lords was off limits to women entirely. Even women who were peeresses in their own right would not be seated in the House of Lords. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 25.
[55] Lewis, *Female Patriotism*, 13.
[56] Women in England and Wales officially lost the right to vote in the Reform Act of 1832, which, for the first time, listed "Male Person" as a qualification for the franchise. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 abolished women's other electoral privileges, such as turning a

there is very little evidence to suggest they took advantage of their right.[57] "Suffrage was not yet," as Elaine Chalus explains in *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754–1790*, " the kind of issue for eighteenth-century women that it would become for women a hundred years later" because the overwhelming majority of the population could *not* vote.[58] Since ballots were no secret anyway, women were content to maintain their family's interest—"the control landlords exercised over the votes of their dependents"— or to advocate for a specific candidate's fitness for parliament.[59] When elections were contested—when three or four candidates vied for one of the two seats available— their voices, support, enthusiasm, property, and money were particularly needed. Despite the different roles women and men played in elections, "As with men, [women's] political power was roughly proportional to the depth of their pockets and the extent of their acreage."[60] Telling tenants whom to vote for and canvassing were no consolation prize, as Judith S. Lewis explains in *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, because female landowners, noble or common, had "practical access to the politics of the House of Commons."[61]

Women's participation in the electoral system, depended on what type of constituency they (or their family) held property in, borough or county. For the purposes of this chapter, I will focus on the county, the type of constituency in which the Delacours hold property and Edgeworth herself, as a resident of county Longford, was most familiar. While counties did not give women explicit legal rights to parliamentary seats like boroughs did, they required the

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husband into a voter or owning the right to vote. Women continued to be prevented by custom from voting in Ireland and Scotland. Both countries had weightier property requirements for the franchise, which inhibited women's participation, and significantly fewer members sent to the Commons and the Lords. Chalus, *Elite Women* 22, 31, and Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism*, 18–21.

[57] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 35.

[58] Chalus specifies that "between 1754 and 1790, hereditary peers could not vote, and overall, only 17.2 per cent of adult males, or 4 per cent of the total population of England and Wales, were enfranchised." Chalus, *Elite Women* 31, 32.

[59] Lewis, *Female Patriotism*, 41.

[60] Lewis,18.

[61] Lewis, 18.

finesse and support of landowning women in relations with the tenantry, whose vote they hoped to direct in favor of the family's candidate.[62] Typically, an enfranchised tenant would reserve one of their two votes for their landlord, though the landlord could command both votes in accordance with instructions.[63] However, all that depended on the treatment they received from the family, as Judith S. Lewis explains:

> County elections were the political reflection of the personal. The responsibility of owning a large landed estate included maintaining the kind of neighborly relations that would result in a friendly tenantry come election time. Ideally, the relations between the two were supposed to be such that the tenantry *chose* to vote according to the wishes of their landowner, not that they were forced to.[64]

While landlords gave freehold voters favorable leases, landladies preserved the "neighborly relations" by keeping up the relationship of "mutual obligation and reciprocal display" that existed between landowners and tenants.[65] Women would attend social functions held by the tenants and invite tenants to family events such as coming of age parties and marriages.[66] They would have tea with and visit with important ladies of the county such as the lady mayoress or aldermaness.[67] They would hold public days—days when the local elite were invited for food,

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[62] Women had explicit legal rights to the vote in boroughs. In a burbage borough, the right to vote inhered in specific types of property. If women owned that property, and it could be so little as a barn, they could use a male proxy to vote in their stead and at their direction. In a freeman's borough, the right to vote was granted to any man declared to be a freeman. This title could be transferred to his widow or daughter who were then called "derivatives." Women sold these rights for cash and/or used them as dowries. Chalus, *Elite Women* 159, and Lewis, *Female Patriotism* 25, 28.
[63] Lewis, 41.
[64] Lewis,22.
[65] Lewis, 22.
[66] Lewis, 22.
[67] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 207.

drink, and entertainment— when in residence.[68] In addition to these offers of hospitality, women had to charm defectors and vacillators, bestow charity, act as patrons, and attend the political events around the assizes and races.[69] And if they were landowners like the Edgeworths, this relationship may have been promoted by religious toleration, affordable leases, and the elimination of duty work and duty fowl.[70] As Edgeworth must have known from her father's campaigns, elections could turn on a landlady's dedication to preserving this friendly relationship between the family and the tenantry.

In fact, the efforts of women during elections in the long eighteenth century determined the outcome of many races. Contested elections were complex events that turned the influence of the aristocracy and the crown into ritualized social inversion.[71] Women formed an integral part of this ritualized social inversion by serving as visible members of a political family or faction that would normally be represented by men. While mostly women from the aristocracy participated in elections, landowning and middle-class women who were involved in a particular party's politics, such as Mrs. Albinia Hobart who is perpetually satirized as "Madam Blubber" in prints, or who were married to a candidate for a seat, such as Richard Brinsley Sheridan's wife, participated as well. Sometimes wives were literal stand-ins for their husbands because peers were forbidden from interfering with elections and candidates could not canvass until their candidacy was announced.[72] If a family was involved in multiple elections around the country, a woman might also be sent to represent the family in a borough or seat that needed

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[68] Chalus, 174.
[69] Chalus,172.
[70] Butler, *Edgeworth*, 85,86.
[71] Frank O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies: The Social meaning of Elections in England 1780–1860," Past & Present, no.135 (1992): 79–115, 109.
[72] Anna Clark, "Influence or Independence: Women and Elections, 1777–1788" in *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 53–83.

attention while her husband or her brother went to another.[73] Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough, and her great-great granddaughter Georgiana Cavendish, the Duchess of Devonshire famously performed these activities for the Whig party.[74]

Once a writ of election was sent to the appropriate constituency and the candidate's statements were disseminated, awful beauty put on all its arms: party uniforms, party favors, cosmetics, smiles. In canvassing teams, they went door-to-door on a chosen route, keeping records of which voters were engaged to their candidate, engaged to their opponent, or still undecided.[75] While many women canvassed in carriages as a result of moral and safety concerns, many female canvassers believed their presence was more persuasive when they were among the people on the street. Along their canvass route, they placed entertainments, such as musicians, and dispensed party favors in the form of specific colored cockades, ribbons, or sashes to pledged voters. After a first canvass, they returned to unengaged voters and tried to persuade them to vote for their candidate, whether by bribery, [76] speeches,[77] kisses,[78]

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[73] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 194.
[74] Sarah Harris, "The Electioneering of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough," *Parliamentary History* 2 (1983): 71–89.
[75] Lewis, *Female Patriotism*, 45.
[76] Lady Strathmore is rumored to have taken an ingenious approach to bribery, which kept her literally above the lower classes: she sat in a window of a public house and dropped jewels down. If the voters returned the jewels, she would give them a cash reward. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 210.
[77] The Duchess of Northumberland's electioneering tactics during the Westminster election of 1774 consisted of making speeches for her son, one of the candidates, from a hotel window in Covent Garden. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 210.
[78] In "'Kisses for votes': The kiss and corruption in eighteenth-century English elections," Chalus explains that a woman who refused a kiss from a voter would be thought arrogant and impolite. This put the vote at risk and was a dangerous gamble in a really competitive contest. It was probably a successful strategy for female canvassers until the press campaign against the Duchess of Devonshire during the Westminster election of 1784 linked electoral kisses to sexual licentiousness. Chalus, "'Kisses for votes': The kiss and corruption in Eighteenth-Century English Elections" in *The Kiss in History* ed. by Karen Harvey (New York: Manchester University Press, 2005), 122–147.

shopping,[79] or even standing godmother to their children.[80] The more elite women that canvassed, the more it looked like the upper classes condescending to the lower classes, perpetuating the ritual social inversion and the likelihood that a vote would be earned.

Women, moreover, put the party in party politics. They hosted a number of election-related events and participated in the pageantry that voters expected of elections, such as processions and parades. They were largely responsible for the time-honored tradition of treating, which required knowledge of the local people, their families, their rivals, and their idiosyncrasies.[81] Treats for freeholders usually took the form of an election feast or breakfast, the latter of which was considered more polite.[82] At feasts, there was food, ale, liquor, and entertainment. In keeping with the ritualized social inversion, there was a tendency to overindulge in drink, even when the freeholder's wives were invited.[83] The breakfast and ball were a little less bacchanalian. The balls, in particular, provided additional opportunities to charm voters and their families and to canvass for votes.[84] They allowed the candidate, the party, or the political family an opportunity to showcase their generosity and hospitality by getting to know the local people better, dancing with freeholder's wives and daughters, and treating them to an expensive meal.[85] Even if the festivity was more regulated at the balls and

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[79] According to Amanda Foreman, the Duchess of Devonshire went into shops during the Westminster election of 1784, made extravagant purchases, overpaid, and hinted at the promise of more shopping ladies if the proprietors voted for Fox. Once the duchess, her sister Lady Duncannon (later Countess of Bessborough), and the Ladies Waldegrave went into a milliner's shop and were so persuasive that they placed fox skin muffs over their doors as a sign of support. Foreman, *Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 145.
[80] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 145.
[81] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 207.
[82] Chalus, 203.
[83] Chalus, 205.
[84] Chalus, 197.
[85] Chalus, 197.

breakfasts, the events still inverted the so-called natural order in a way that reinforced gender and class hierarchies in the aftermath of the election. [86]

These events were also an opportunity for the party and the family to appear as a united force, with everyone decked out in party colors. Better still, they wore party gowns. After a Windsor election marked by "bruises and fractures" in 1757, Elizabeth Montagu wrote, "The ladies wore party gowns, Fox's is party yellow and green, and the others blue; our sex have a wise way of expressing their political principles."[87] Women were largely in charge of "this wise way of expressing [political] principles." They were responsible for the manufacture and distribution of party favors, whether at a parade, the hustings, or a polling station.[88] Party favors were accessories that used a specific color or symbol to publicize political allegiance to a particular party or candidate. Whigs, for example, had been associated with the color orange since William of Orange's arrival in 1688 and Tories were associated with "true" blue until Charles Fox changed the Whig colors to buff and blue, in honor of George Washington, in 1782.[89] Some candidates chose to have a cockade in their party's color or the color of their aristocratic patron's family. Others picked a color and made it their own, giving rise to the colloquialism "colors" for party favors. As Lynn Hunt suggests of revolutionary fashion in *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, "By making a political position manifest," party favors make "adherence, opposition, and indifference possible."[90] In doing so, they opened a space for both nonvoters and voters to participate in the extraparliamentary political

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[86] O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies,"109.
[87] Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu to Mr. Montagu, June 1757, in *Elizabeth Montagu: Queen of the Blue Stockings, Her Correspondence from 1720 to 176*1, ed. by Emily Climenson (London: John Murray, 1906), 2:103.
[88] Lewis, *Female Patriotism*, 52.
[89] Katrina Navickas, "'That sash will hang you': Political Clothing and Adornment in England, 1780–1840," *Journal of British Studies* 49, no.3 (July 2010): 544–545.
[90] Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 53.

process.[91] Since women were nonvoters, party favors were extremely important for their election activities, whether they were actively canvassing for a candidate or just the wife of a freeholder enjoying herself at an election ball. The list of party favors varied depending on the level of creativity—the Duchess of Devonshire famously wore foxtails in her hat and a fox muff to support Charles Fox's candidacy in the 1780s—but the standard electoral accessories were cockades, ribbons, sashes, and bandeaux.[92] Lady Delacour distributes the two most popular—cockades and ribbons— in *Belinda.*

Cockades are, as Alexander Maxwell describes in *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions*, "a strip of cloth folded into a decorative shape, typically a circle."[93] They serve as "a decorative embellishment to hats, jackets, lapels, and scarves."[94] Before the invention of military uniforms in late seventeenth–century France, cockades distinguished soldiers from civilians in Europe.[95] Later, they were subsumed into the military uniform itself. Military cockades took their colors from the royal house they served.[96] After the Hanoverian succession, Britain adopted the House of Hanover's color, black, which as I discussed in the last chapter, was the opposite of Stuart white.[97] The dominant political parties, Whigs and Tories, probably adopted cockades for electoral purposes at this time as well.[98] At the very least, the abundance of white and black cockades worn during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715 made an easy transition into Tory blue and Whig orange by midcentury, as immortalized in William Hogarth's *The Humors of an Election.* Cockades typically adorned

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[91] Navickas, "That sash will hang you," 546.
[92] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 139; Chalus, *Elite Women*,102.
[93] Alexander Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 122.
[94] Richard Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearance: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (New York: Berg, 2002,) 97.
[95] Maxwell , *Patriots Against Fashion*, 64, 122.
[96] Maxwell, *Patriots Against Fashion*, 123.
[97] Maxwell, 123.
[98] Maxwell, 123.

three-cornered (or "tricorne") hats, which were popular from the 1690s until the end of the eighteenth century.[99] Women's fashion, ever inspired by the Duchess of Devonshire, adopted the "dress *en militare*" that she had created while accompanying the duke on his inspection of troops at Coxheath during the American Revolution.[100] As Amanda Foreman explains in her superb biography, "She had soon designed a smart uniform that combined elegance with masculinity, using a tailored version of a man's riding coat over a close-fitting dress.[101] In their observance of this new military style, women started wearing tricorne hats adorned with cockades if they had not already done so when riding.

Ribbons have a much longer fashion history than political history. Ribbons, as we know them, first appeared in the sixteenth century. They were strips of cloth with two selvages and they were worn by both genders as elegant finishing touches to outfits.[102] In the early seventeenth century, ribbons were all the rage. For men and women, "every portion of the attire was decorated with bows, bands, and loops of ribbon."[103] Men trimmed their trousers, doublets, sleeves, and knees with ribbon.[104] Women trimmed their bodice, sleeves, and hair with ribbons.[105] While the seventeenth century introduced the idea of women wearing ribbons in their hair, the eighteenth century certainly perfected it. From topknots and *pompons* in the beginning to *poufs* at the end, women's hair, in effect, required ribbons in this period to be fashionable.[106] Women also continued to wear ribbons in loops and bows on their stomachers

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[99] Valerie Cumming, C.W. Cunnington, and P.E. Cunnington, *The Dictionary of Fashion History* (New York: Berg, 2010), 209.
[100] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 64.
[101] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 64.
[102] Katherine Lester and Bess Viola Oerke, *Accessories of Dress: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 556–557.
[103] Lester and Oerke, *Accessories of Dress*, 557.
[104] Lester and Oerke, 557–558.
[105] Lester and Oerke, 558.
[106] C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), 168, 377, 386.

and sleeves, while men used black ribbons for their Ramile and bag wigs.[107] Unlike cockades, which were associated with royal houses and the military, ribbons "were an entirely familiar part of working-class dress, sold cheaply in chandler's shops and general stores."[108] Given their availability, it makes sense that ribbons were turned into an electoral accessory around the middle of the century, as Frank O'Gorman contends.[109] Women, of course, also wore party-colored ribbons in their hair and on their gowns, in accordance with the style of the moment.

Taken together, ribbons and cockades were easily made and displayed party favors for both voters and nonvoters, which made everyone feel part of the system regardless of gender and class.[110] However, the gender dynamics of virtual representation raises the question of who was really part of the system. As I discussed in my introduction, virtual representation is a system in which a group of enfranchised people—in this case propertied white men— represent the people who cannot or do not vote in a legislature. In spite of their shared disenfranchised status, there is a fundamental difference in the way men and women were virtually represented in Parliament. While most men were virtually represented in parliament in eighteenth-century England because property requirements disenfranchised them, disenfranchised men still had someone who looked like them represent them in Parliament. Virtual representation represented women in Parliament through the men they were related to: women were theorized as pieces of their father's or husband's person thanks to the legal states of infancy and coverture. In this way, the small pieces of fabric that make up cockades and ribbons metonymized the quite literal accessory presence of women in the electoral system. However, in 1827, cockades and ribbons became the subject of reform legislation. Parliament passed "An Act to make further Regulations for preventing corrupt Practices at Elections of Members in

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[107] Lester and Oerke, *Accessories of Dress*, 559, 556.
[108] Navickas, "That sash will hang you," 551.
[109] O'Gorman, "Campaign Rituals and Ceremonies," 95.
[110] Navickas, "That sash will hang you," 546.

Parliament and for diminishing the Expense of such Elections." This act forbade the distribution of ribbons, cockades, and other party favors on pain of a £10 fine.[111] Despite its valid claims about corruption in some quarters, this act nearly erased the only physical presence of women in the electoral system. In spite of this effort to curb partisan accessorizing, custom, for the most part, prevailed, allowing women to participate in elections. However, in 1832, when the first of many Reform Acts was passed, the new specification of sex for the franchise and the reformation of so-called rotten boroughs combined with other cultural trends to make canvassing less socially acceptable for women, eradicating these last material traces of women on and in the body politic.

Petticoat Government in *Belinda*

As advantageous to party and family as I have made women's participation in elections seem thus far, there was a limit to "the twin arguments of land and family."[112] This limit was the "electioneering rage" of which Edgeworth personally claimed to be immune in the 1796 letter to her cousin Sophy. A charge aimed at women involved in politics since the reign of Queen Anne, "electioneering rage" described an irrational form of political participation in which women were so enthralled by the canvassing, treating, and competing in contested elections that they breached the bounds of morality and law. The heady mixture of competition and ritualized festivity prevailed over the limited reasoning powers they imbibed from superficial educations and caused them to forget their accessory role under the direction of men. In the words of Elaine Chalus: "Woe betide the women whose activities over-stepped the mark, however, by either making too blatant a use of her sexuality to secure votes or by

[111] Samuel Warren, *The Law and Practice of Election Committees; being the Completion of A manual of Parliamentary Election Law* (London: Butterworths, 1853), 219.
[112] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 166, 170.

descending to any of the other eighteenth-century voting ploys that could lead to charges of corruption and bribery."[113] As Chalus's statement suggests, women's influence was acceptable, but it was feared there was a slippery slope between "influence" and more pronounced forms of "interference" due to stereotypical notions about women's supposedly weaker emotional, intellectual, and moral capabilities. Interference meant publicly engaging with the electoral process outside of male-directed activities. It was expected that women's electioneering rage would result in two types of interference— corrupting the voters or effecting campaign policy change on their own—and these actions, as I will discuss shortly with Lady Delacour, often had negative ramifications for the woman and candidate.[114]

This first type of interference—corrupting voters—was known as "the influence of female beauty," which was denounced from the 1760s onward.[115] It was theorized, in its most expansive definition, as a quid pro quo in which women allowed their beauty to be seen (or even touched) and then the men, bewitched, voted according to the women's wishes. It also included women coquetting men out of their votes. *The History of the Westminster Election* (1784), for example, claimed women "exercised the arts of never-failing beauty against the unsuspecting hearts of Englishmen."[116] It complained women were "employing all the fascinating attractions of female beauty, to cause [voters] to vote contrary to their judgment, and in opposition to what they conceive to be the public welfare" (230). Supposedly women, captivated by the ritual

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[113] Chalus,170.
[114] Chalus,170
[115] Clark, "Influence or Independence," 56, 64.
[116] James Hartley, *History of Westminster Election, Containing the Material Occurrence, on the First of April to the Final Close of the Poll, on the 17th of May. To Which is Added A Summary Account of the Proceedings of the Late Parliament, So far as they appear connected with the East India Business, and the Dissolution of the Portland Administration, With Other Select and Interesting Occurrences at the Westminster Meetings, Previous to its Dissolution on the 25th Day of March 1784. By Lovers of Truth and Justice* (London: Printed for the Editors, and Sold by J. Debrett, opposite Burlington-house, Piccadilly, and all other Booksellers, 1784), 313, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.* All references are to this edition.

inversion of the election and the spirit of competition, ignored social mores and used their wiles to inspire men to change their votes, thereby interfering with the integrity of the election.

The second type of interference that resulted from electioneering rage was the interference of the "female politician." "Female politicians" were women who used their station, beauty, and/or relationship to male political appointees to try to interfere in politics, whether in an election, diplomatic affairs, or the monarchy. The term seems to be an extension of "boudoir politicians," royal mistresses from the seventeenth century who were used their influence on monarchs to attain their own ends. In *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (1797), Thomas Gisborne describes female politicians as women who

> omit neither address nor importunity towards men in power, when there is a hope that the one or the other may affect the distribution of a preferment. To obtain a living, an appointment, or a step in naval or military promotion, for a relation or a dependent, affords them the double delight of conferring an obligation on a person whom they are desirous to serve and of displaying their interest with rulers of the state.[117]

In eighteenth-century pamphlets and prints, the term was directed at women who electioneered, operated party networks, chose candidates, and either elicited favors from, or ordered around, the male politicians in their life. They were described as using whatever their influence may be—sexual, financial, class-related, or family-related—to serve self-interest rather than national interest. Specifically, they were said to only effect policy change in order to flatter their own vanity and/or display their power over men. They were women who, for whatever reason, entered the Old Boys Club of high politics and "cast doubt on the 'natural' subordination of women to men and also challenged the assumptions which were used to define

[117] Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* ed. Gina Luria (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 323.

women as politically incompetent and the polity as male."[118] To be sure, the female politician is a composition of trite stereotypes about women. Unfortunately, the term effectively trivialized the work performed by politically active women on behalf of party or family in order to throw into question the morality and integrity of the political event itself.

Perhaps more than any other figure in the cultural repertoire, Maria Edgeworth despised the figure of the female politician. Like Gisborne, she believed that they acted out vanity, pride, and love of power. She believed that their self interest lead them to forget their gender roles and to interfere in situations in which they had no right, business, or expertise. In the same letter about women's electioneering rage, Edgeworth writes of a famous female politician, Madame Roland, who was a leading member of the Girodin faction during the French Revolution: "she was a great woman and died heroically, but I do not think she became more *amiable* and certainly not more happy by meddling with politics—for her head is cut off and her husband has shot himself."[119] Her bluntness in this letter to her cousin leaves no doubt as to her feelings about the efforts of Madam Roland, and other female politicians, to be political figures in their own right.

In spite of her aversion to female politicians, Edgeworth's views on women's political behavior at large are more nuanced than one would expect. Her views, however, are closely aligned to this dichotomy between influence and interference that I have been outlining, which, for her, is the difference between rational and irrational participation in politics. Her final novel, *Helen*, clearly illustrates this. Lady Davenant, a retired female politician, tells the protagonist Helen her history. She explains how her "female pride was dreadfully mortified" by Madam De Stael's declaration that there were no English ladies who had political influence.[120] As a result

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[118] Chalus, *Elite Women*, 170, 218.
[119] Edgeworth to Ruxton, February 1796, 49.
[120] Edgeworth, *Helen* ,67.

of this pride, she adopts "the character of a female politician."[121] She advises her husband, sets up a salon, gets a rival, and uses her influence to satisfy her newly developed "love of power."[122] When she discovers that she is being mocked for her politicking, she ends her career. She spends the rest of the novel excoriating female politicians and issuing warnings about the dangers of women in politics. One passage, in particular, outlines her (and Edgeworth's) idea of acceptable female political behavior. In a discussion of French "lady politicians," the rigorously moral General Clarendon and Lady Davenant have the following exchange:

> 'Female *influence* is and ought to be potent,' said the General, with an emphasis on influence, contradistinguishing it from power, and reducing the exaggeration of omnipotent by the short process of lopping off two syllables. 'So long as ladies keep in their own proper character, said Lady Davenant, 'all is well; but if they once cease to act as women, that instant they lose their privilege—their charm: they forfeit their exorcising power; they can no longer command the demon of party nor themselves, and he transforms them directly, as you say,' said she to the French Gentleman, 'into actual furies.'[123]

Edgeworth makes two moves to clarify her position on female political behavior here. First, in the narrator's description of the General's comments, influence is "[contradistinguished] from power." For Edgeworth, there is difference between female influence and female power, and that difference is sustained rhetorically by the narrator's guillotining of the first two syllables of "omnipotent," a word rights of woman champion Mary Robinson used, not coincidentally, to describe "enlightened" women in *A Letter to the Women of England on the Injustice of Mental*

[121] Edgeworth, *Helen*, 68.
[122] Edgeworth, 70.
[123] Edgeworth, 248.

Subordination (1799).[124] Women's influence is acceptable so long as it is "potent," but not omnipotent. That is, it should be considered in the same manner as all other advice. It should not be actual interference. Secondly, female political behavior must conform to the customs and duties of the female gender role: "if they once cease to act as women, that instant they lose their privilege—their charm." Once women neglect their gender role, they cease to be effective counselors and instead become "actual furies," possessed by the demon of party. Like the radical women of France, English women would not be able withstand the rage of party politics: they would "no longer [be able to] command the demon of party nor themselves." They would lose the ability to make rational decisions, which would put their virtue and reputations at risk in the name of party spirit. From this example and the epigraph to this chapter, it is clear that Edgeworth believed the irrationality of party politics posed a threat to gender and class systems. However, she also believed that if women conformed to the requirements of their roles, and merely influenced, rather than interfered in, politics, there was no reason they should not participate. Like Lady Davenant, Edgeworth, "would mark and keep the line between female influence and interference. Female influence must, will, and ought to exist on political subjects as on all others; but this influence should always be domestic, not public—the customs of society have ruled it so."[125]

In *Belinda*, Edgeworth's strong feelings about female influence and interference result in a work obsessed by the idea of petticoat government. Lady Delacour is said to "govern" her

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[124] "Prejudice (or policy) has endeavoured and indeed too successfully, to cast an odium on what is called a *masculine* woman; or, to explain the meaning of the word, a woman of enlightened understanding. Such a being is too formidable in the circle of society to be endured, much less sanctioned. Man is a despot by nature; he can bear no equal, he dreads the power of woman; because he knows that already half the felicities of life depend on her; and that if she be permitted to demand an equal share in the regulations of social order, she will become omnipotent." Mary Robinson, *A Letter to the Women of England, on the Injustice of Mental Subordination. With anecdotes. By Anne Frances Randall* (London: Printed for T.N Longman and O. Rees, 1799), 72–73, *Eighteenth-century Collections Online.*

[125] Edgeworth, *Helen*, 254.

husband (12, 37, 38).[126] Marriott the maid is said to "govern" Lady Delacour (20). A cross-dressed Harriet Freke attends Sheridan's speech at the House of Commons despite that women were banned from the gallery in 1778 (46).[127] Lady Delacour dresses up as Queen Elizabeth I (114).[128] Harriet declares herself "a champion for the Rights of Women" (229). Lady Delacour is perpetually associated with the female government of the Amazons because of her breast wound, satirically describing herself as "The Reformed Amazon," even before she acquiesces to undergoing the Amazonian surgery of a mastectomy (293). Belinda is described as Lady Delacour's "proper sovereign" (340). The words "govern," "rule," "politician," "sovereign," and "tyrant" appear over twenty times in the text and they almost always apply to women. The eight references to elections in the text depict Mrs. Luttridge, Harriet Freke, and Lady Delacour taking an active, and what's worse, public role in party politics. Although the tale is ostensibly about Belinda's entrance into the world and Lady Delacour's reformation, the surprising number of references to women engaging in political activities suggest that *Belinda* is a reaction to cultural anxieties about women's irrational political participation.

One of the time-tested methods for combating women's political participation has been (and continues to be) suggesting that women are incapable of solidarity with one another. They

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[126] Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda* ed. by Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). All references are to this edition.

[127] Like Harriet Freke, many women used creative methods to hear political debates. In March 1788, Lady Wallace is recorded as dressing in "brown scratch wig, coat, waistcoat, breeches, and boots" in order to sit in the front row of the gallery. Noble women continued to attend debates in the House of Lords, but they too had to resort to creative methods. Six years after Lady Wallace's breeches part, her sister, the Duchess of Gordon, was found by George Canning sitting under the throne in the House of Lords listening to a debate. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 51.

[128] In addition to female politicians, Edgeworth does not seem to have been a fan of sovereign queens. She calls Catherine the Great "as brutally profligate as the worst of Roman emperors" in a letter to her stepmother in September 1804. And this representation of Lady Delacour-as-the-Virgin-Queen is not positive, nor is it indicative of that queen's political prowess either: it consists of an historical reenactment of the love affair between Elizabeth and Essex. See Maria Edgeworth to Mrs. Edgeworth, 4 September 1804, in in *Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland*, 85. Edgeworth, *Belinda*, 114.

cannot be friends, only rivals. In the eighteenth century, it was widely believed that women were incapable of lasting friendships with other women. Women's supposed natural disposition toward vanity, jealousy, competitiveness, and revenge made true intimacy among women impossible. Moreover, women were expected to choose their lovers or husbands over their friends, either as a result of love or the legal state of coverture.[129] Men, worried about the threat the female friendship would pose for male supremacy, went out of their way to invent rivalries between women in the hopes of breaking up friendships or at the very least distracting them from their state of subjugation. This was especially true in political contexts. Throughout the century, prominent women from opposing political parties were positioned as rivals. [Fig.1] They were figured as a particularly ruthless kind of female politician, depicted as vying for the best parties, outfits, and candidates for parliament. The press also represented their political participation as acts of interference that not only disrupted the electoral process, but also trivialized it and corrupted it. In addition to the other figures in the pantheon of petticoat government in *Belinda* (the queens, amazons, female philosophers, and cross-dressing women), Edgeworth includes two rival female politicians in the figures of Lady Delacour and Mrs. Luttridge. This representation of petticoat government follows the rights of woman to its logical conclusion by imagining what women's entrance into the political system—in parliament, at the polls, and on the campaign trail— might look like. In keeping with Edgeworth's anxieties about women's irrational political participation, however, Lady Delacour's superficial education allows her to get so swept up in the spirit of rivalry that she neglects her gender and class roles and commits the two types of interference I described above, which cost her candidate the election.

[129] Penelope Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows: Women's Friendship and the Politics of Betrayal in England, 1640-1705* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 12.



Figure 1: *The Rival Canvassers*, 1784, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

The Rival Canvassers

The rivalry between Lady Delacour and Mrs. Luttridge is figured as a symptom of women's superficial educations early on in the tale. Although there is no overt description of how she was educated, Edgeworth makes it clear that Lady Delacour's education emphasized marriage, beauty, and display-based accomplishments in the chapters entitled "Lady Delacour's History." She achieves this by instilling Lady Delacour with the vices she believes result from this type of education: capriciousness, pride, self-interestedness, and indolence. Lady Delacour is described as "a beauty and *a bel spirit*" with "twice as many caprices" as her fortune (36). One of her many caprices was to marry Lord Delacour. When Henry Percival refused to love her faults, she is "provoked, and [marries] in the hopes of provoking the man she loves" (37). In addition to caprices, her education taught her pride, vanity, and self-interestedness. She was under the impression that because Lord Delacour was a fool she "should find no trouble in

governing him" (37). However, when Lord Delacour's servant accuses him of being "governed" by his wife, he begins to refuse her everything, saying, "I am not a man to be governed by a wife" (38). Her pride is raised by his obstinacy: she complains that she has been kept "in leading-strings, by a husband," and launches into "a fresh career of extravagance" in order to assert her independence (39). In addition to these plot points, Lady Delacour's indolence is conveyed through little details such as the fact that she does not know for sure how much she is worth, which is highly irregular for wealthy women on the marriage market (36). Even more alarmingly, she signs away her dower without a thought, leaving herself without an income in the event of her husband's death. Ambition is added to Lady Delacour's repertoire of vice when her rivalry with the odious Mrs. Luttridge is born. Former friends, they "come to a resolution to never speak to one another" after Mrs. Luttridge broadcasts the rumor of Lady Delacour's supposed affair with Colonel Lawless and after this gossip results in Lawless's death at the hand of Lord Delacour (63). Out of this resolution their vicious cycle of vanity, ambition, and pride develops, as Lady Delacour explains to Belinda: 'Yes! I certainly hate Mrs. Luttridge the most—I cannot count the number of extravagant things I have done on purpose to eclipse her. We have had rival routs, rival concerts, rival theatres—she has cost me more than *she's* worth. But then I have certainly mortified her once a month at least' (62).

Lady Delacour sees a contested election in a county that both the Delacours and Luttridges hold property in as the "first opportunity" for "retaliation" after the Lawless incident (52). According to Lady Delacour, Mrs. Luttridge is a female politician. She is a "great dabbler in politics" who had "partly by intriguing, partly by relationship, connected herself with some of the leading men in parliament" (53). As a consequence, Lady Delacour plots to "eclipse" Mrs. Luttridge once again by being the more effective canvasser, as she explains to Belinda: "At the first news of an election, out comes a flaming advertisement from Mr. Luttridge; away posted

Mrs. Luttridge to begin her canvas; and away posted Lady Delacour to canvas for a cousin of Harriet Freke's" (53). In his essay, "Edgeworth's *Belinda* and the Gendering of Caricature," Taylor suggests that this representation of an election is a "fictional recasting" of the Westminster election of the 1784.[130] While I agree with Taylor, his reasons for this "fictional recasting" —party uniforms; the "suggestive assertion" that Lady Delacour, like the Duchess of Devonshire, used her wiles to obtain votes; the distribution of cockades and ribbons; and a misogynistic satire of the female body — neglect the significance of rivalry to Edgeworth's retelling.[131] In the wake of the demise of the Fox-North Coalition and Sir William Pitt's rise to Prime Minister, the Westminster Election of 1784 was a contest between Charles Fox, a Whig, Sir Cecil Wray, a Pittite Whig, and Admiral Hood, a Tory. Since Admiral Hood was a well-respected naval hero from the war with the American colonies, his election was assumed.[132] Fox and Wray, who was effectively a stand in for Pitt, fought it out over the second seat in what was known "Britain's largest and most prestigious borough, with an estimated 18,000 voters."[133] Both the Fox and Wray campaigns had female canvassers, but the ones that Edgeworth was almost certainly familiar with thanks to her father's political career and her extensive reading were the rival political hostesses in each camp: the Duchess of Devonshire and the Duchess of Rutland, Mary Isabella Manners.[134] The Duchess of Devonshire, who had been "weaned on Whiggery," supported Charles James Fox and the opposition, while the

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[130] Taylor, "The Gendering of Caricature," 601.
[131] Taylor, "The Gendering of Caricature," 601–602.
[132] Clark, "Influence or Independence," 71.
[133] Judith S. Lewis, "1784 and All That: Aristocratic Women and Electoral Politics" in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, ed. by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 100.
[134] The Foxite ladies were: the Duchesses of Devonshire and Portland; the Ladies Duncannon, Willoughby, Archer, Grosvenor, Dornhoff, Worsley, Beauchamp, Carlisle, Derby, and Waldegrave; the Miss Keppels, Mrs Crewe, Mrs. Bouverie, and Mrs. Sheridan; and last but not least, Mary "Perdita" Robinson. The Wray or Pittite women were: the Duchesses of Rutland, Argyll, and Ancaster; the Ladies Salisbury, Buckinghamshire, and Talbot; and Mrs. Hobart. Chalus, *Elite Women*, 213.

Duchess of Rutland supported William Pitt and his administration, which included her husband.[135] Devonshire and Rutland were two beautiful political hostesses who had grown up together and who held rival salons and fetes, but whom no one would have mistaken for friends.[136] Even though the Duke of Rutland was named the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the Duchess was absent for most of the election, the press acted as if the "rival duchesses," as they were called, were in the throes of a fierce fight in the streets of Covent Garden.[137] Since Edgeworth's representation of an election also emphasizes rival salons and galas in addition to candidates for parliament, I suspect that the rivalry between Lady Delacour and Mrs. Luttridge was inspired by portrayals of the rivalry between Devonshire and Rutland during the 1780s.[138]

The significance of this rivalry to the election in *Belinda* is evident, first and foremost, in Lady Delacour's description of her motivations for canvassing in the first place. Lady Delacour's description alludes to representations of the Duchess of Devonshire's canvass in 1784, which have been overlooked by Taylor and other scholars. Lady Delacour applies these texts, which explicitly refer to the Duchess's beauty and political prowess, to herself. In this way, the allusions succinctly illustrate the relationship between Lady Delacour's education and her electoral participation, as vanity and pride prompt her to move from influencing voters to interfering with the integrity of an election.

Not surprisingly, the first allusion to the Duchess of Devonshire reveals that what underpins Lady Delacour's desire to be a female politician is an ambition to be the most

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[135] Lewis, "1784 and All That," 95, 103.
[136] Lewis, "1784 and All That," 104.
[137] Foreman dates this press-created rift to 1781. Foreman, *Georgiana*, 88.
[138] By suggesting that Lady Delacour and Mrs. Luttridge were "inspired" by the Duchesses of Devonshire and Rutland, I am not arguing for a one-to-one relation between these events and the novel. I do not think it is an allegory, for there are many events later in the novel that seem to be inspired by famous social events of the 1790s, particularly Mrs. Luttridge's faro table and the arrest of ladies for corrupt faro tables in 1796. But I still think Edgeworth used texts about this rivalry as the foundation for her fictional rivals.

beautiful canvasser. She declares, "I was ambitious to have it said of me 'that I was the finest figure that ever appeared on canvass'. O ye—shireians, how hard did I work to obtain your praise!" (53). Surrounding this declaration is a pair of neglected quotation marks, which to the best of my knowledge, have never been used to identify the quote. [Fig.2] Lady Delacour's ambition is derived, I believe, from a text I referenced earlier called *The History of the Westminster Election.* Published under James Hartley *et al* in London in 1784, *The History of the Westminster Election* is a miscellany, what the editors called a "book of VARIATIONS," a "medley" of "occurrences recorded" (IX). It includes detailed descriptions, some fictional and some historical, of almost every polling day under the headings of each candidate.[139] The history was dedicated to the Duchess of Devonshire—thereby betraying a bias in Fox's favor—and incorporated sixteen of Rowlandson's famous prints about the election.[140] In her biography of Edgeworth, Butler describes a young Maria "[immersing herself] in politics among old newspapers, older pamphlets."[141] If we consider this anecdote in light of the fact that her father was a Whig who would have been interested in this particular election, and that she references political prints in other writings, there is a strong case for Edgeworth reading and finding inspiration for *Belinda* in this history.[142] I contend that the quotation marks originate in pro-

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[139] The miscellany, as the editors describe it, is comprised of accounts from newspapers, epigrams, notes, fictional satires (particularly of female canvassers), prints, and poems. Hartley, *The History of the Westminster Election*, xi.

[140] The Duchess is positioned as a rival of the Duchess of Rutland and Mrs. Hobart in this miscellany. I still suspect, as I mentioned earlier, that Mrs. Luttridge was inspired by the Duchess of Rutland because Mrs. Hobart did not hold salons or galas.

[141] Butler, *Edgeworth*, 90.

[142] As a result of the quotation marks, there is a strong case for her familiarity with prints from this election and miscellany. While "The Apotheosis" does not appear in this miscellany, Edgeworth would have become familiar with other prints of the Duchess by Rowlandson, including "Liberty and Fame Introducing Female Patriotism to Britannia" and "Procession to the Hustings After a Successful Canvass." This makes it more likely that she looked at others, including "The Apotheosis." Additionally, in her novel *Helen*, Lady Bearcroft puts a book of prints on the table, including a "print of the minister rat-catcher in the Westminster election" (250). This is likely a reference to a print by Rowlandson that appeared in March 1784, which

Fox sections of *The History of the Westminster Election.* On page 232, for instance, we find the following description: "It was observed of the *Duchess of Devonshire* and *Lady Duncannon* [her sister], while they were soliciting votes in favour of Mr. Fox, on Saturday last, that they were the most *perfect pieces* that ever appeared upon a canvass" (232). About one hundred pages later, we find almost exactly the same description with a different adjective and noun: "they were the most *lovely portraits* that ever appeared on a canvass" (314). Because Lady Delacour's ambition is printed within a set of quotation marks and so clearly resembles the description of the Duchess, I have to imagine that Edgeworth intentionally paraphrased this text with her own adjective and noun combination, or she misremembered the exact phrasing when drafting this passage. Regardless of what happened, the pun on "canvass" as a material on which to print and as a necessary electoral activity attests to Lady Delacour's vanity. Her use of the word "ever" illuminates the extreme heights of her vain imagination. To be "the finest figure that *ever* appeared upon a canvass" is to be the most beautiful person that was "ever" represented in a print. She does not just want to be recognized as the most beautiful canvasser in this election, she wants to be immortalized as "the finest" woman in the history of print. In spite of the absurdity of this ambition, it is significant. While Edgeworth's goal is for readers to recognize the problems with women's educations, she also wishes to highlight the dangerous consequences of those educations in an arena in which "personal animosities" and vanities "masquerade as civic virtues."[143]

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was published in the miscellany. Edgeworth also references a print of Hibernia in a 1799 letter to her Aunt. Maria Edgeworth to Charlotte Sneyd, 2 April 1799, in *Maria Edgeworth's Letters from Ireland*, 65.

[143] Taylor, "The Gendering of Caricature," 598.

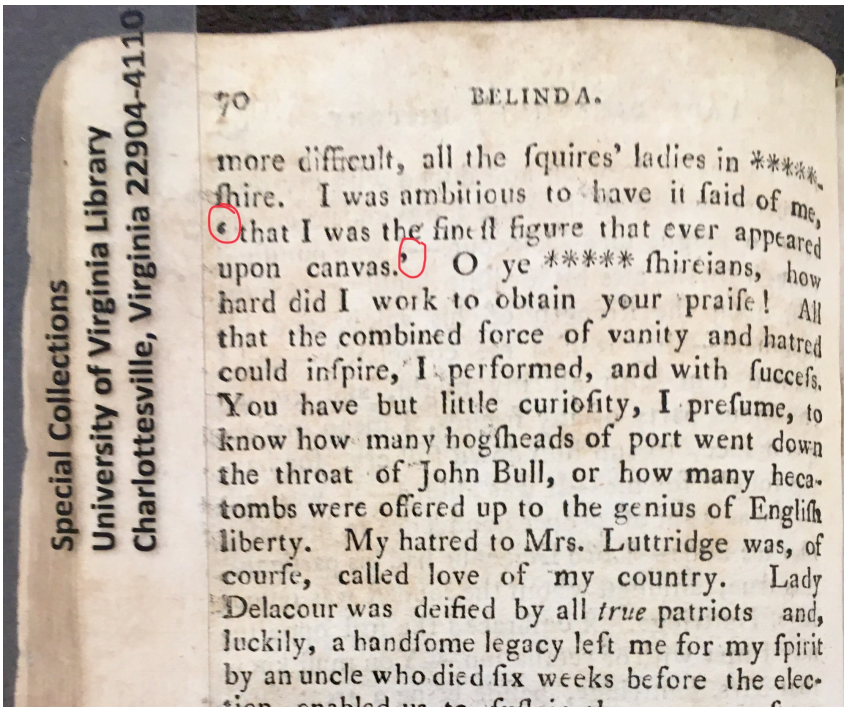

Figure 2: Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda* (Dublin: Printed for H. Colbert and J. Stockdale, 1801), Courtesy of the Albert & Shirley Small Special Collections Library.

The second allusion to the Duchess of Devonshire shows Lady Delacour's pride rising still higher. She explains to Belinda that "Lady Delacour was deified by all *true* patriots—and, luckily, a handsome legacy left me for my spirit, by an uncle who died six weeks before the election, enabled us to sustain the expense of my apotheosis" (53–54). The last word of this statement is an explicit allusion to a text representing the Duchess of Devonshire during the Westminster election of 1784, a print titled "The Apotheosis of the Dutchess." [Fig.3] After the Duchess—and the Duchess alone—suffered weeks of severe critique from the Pittite press for her canvassing "method, which was too free and easy, too masculine,"[144] the Foxite Whigs attempted to put a positive, virtuous spin on women's electioneering through a propaganda campaign that appealed to classical ideas of female patriotism and made the Duchess of

[144] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 143, 146.

Devonshire its living emblem.[145] In "The Apotheosis of the Dutchess," Devonshire is raised up by Truth and Virtue, allowing her to step on or above Scandal who holds the Pro-Pitt newspaper that published scathing satires of her, the *Morning Post*. Lady Delacour, too, describes her experience on the hustings as an "apotheosis," in which she was "deified" (53). Whereas this print shows the Duchess of Devonshire apotheosizing into an allegorical figure, Lady Delacour's apotheosis is something altogether more human and more self-interested. She sees herself as transforming into a female politician on the hustings, one who captivates the county with her beauty and her wit, and who ought to be immortalized in prints, ballads, and newspapers. Though they may be from political prints, Lady Delacour's conscious application of words that describe the process of becoming a god to herself is indicative of hubris— of the pride she gleaned from a system of education that emphasized display-based accomplishments. Despite its appearance in dozens of Foxite Whig prints, even the simple designation "true" in "*true* patriots" exemplifies Lady Delacour's narcissistic view of politics because the patriots are only true when they are true to her.

[145] Prints and papers accused the Duchess of Devonshire of activities that betrayed her rank and gender: selling kisses to butchers for votes, "canvassing" the "members" of voters, sleeping with Fox, cuckolding her husband, neglecting her children, drinking too much gin, and bribery. In spite of these criticisms, her canvassing was never the motivation for the attack. After all, the Pittite Whigs had their own team of canvassing women, who largely escaped these satires. She was, however, what Frances Burney called "the head of the opposition public." She also was more willing than any of her other counterparts to interact with the lower classes. These two facts gave the ministry reason to her abuse her and to make her seem not only unfeminine but unpatriotic. See Foreman, *Georgiana*, 145, 152.



Figure 3: ***The Apotheosis of the Dutchess,*** **1784, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.**

In addition to these references to the Duchess of Devonshire, Edgeworth calls attention to the dangers of poorly educated women entering and engaging with the political system through Lady Delacour's panniers of cockades and ribbons. Within the context of my earlier discussion of the metonymic powers of cockades and ribbons, Lady Delacour's metonymize the presence of women in the electoral system by virtue of their distribution and manufacture. Cockades and ribbons typically metonymize acceptable forms of female political behavior. The distribution of electoral accessories would have been placed squarely under Edgeworth's category of "influence," or social politics, because dispensing brightly colored ribbons and cockades to voters was not an act of persuasion so much as an affirmation of the voter's intended choice of candidate. Even if persuasion was involved prior to the distribution, it still fits in the context of Edgeworth's three verbs of influence—"conciliate," "explain," and "impress." Moreover, in the eyes of the very male public and polity, the distribution of fashion objects as party favors is an acceptable political activity for women because, thanks to

stereotypes of women's vanity entrenched in British culture for centuries, they already associate women with baubles. However, as I described earlier, women who distribute electoral accessories in a manner that put men under the spell of "the influence of female beauty" or who tread beyond the distribution of electoral accessories into that he-man woman haters club, high politics, would defy class and gender roles. They would be "female politicians" who use their "influence" for the wrong reasons, such as corruption, bribery, and black mail, and interfere with affairs of state. It is these latter unacceptable and irrational forms of female political behavior that Edgeworth marks with cockades and ribbons in her tale.

By way of these electoral accessories, Lady Delacour's superficial education is reevaluated in the context of national politics. Lady Delacour engages in the time-honored traditions of treating, dispensing party favors, and canvassing for votes, but the description of her canvass illustrates the problematic nature of it from the start:

> All that the combined forces of vanity and hatred could inspire, I performed, and with success. You have but little curiosity, I presume, to know how many hogsheads of port went down the throat of John Bull, or how many hecatombs were offered up to the genius of English liberty. My hatred to Mrs. Luttridge was, of course, called love of my country… The day of election came. Harriet Freke and I made our appearance on the hustings, dressed in splendid party uniforms; and before us, our knights and squires held two enormous panniers full of ribands and cockades; which we distributed with a grace that won all hearts, if not all votes. (53)

Here, Edgeworth deviates from traditional representations of female canvassers by only emphasizing Lady Delacour's problematic character traits, not her physical appearance. She reveals that every "[hogshead] of port," "hecatomb," "cockade," and "riband" was dispensed in

the name of hatred, not patriotism. Her "vanity and hatred" for Mrs. Luttridge were the underlying cause for her canvass, but she never let John Bull know it. Having been educated to perform, Lady Delacour "performed" her role in the ritual inversion of election, the part of being a generous, patriotic benefactress, "with success." This deception, coupled with the fact that this rivalry is presented as "love for [her] country," speaks to what Edgeworth sees as the shallowness and self-interestedness of party politics. By placing Lady Delacour in this context, Edgeworth makes the dangerous consequences of a limited education clear: women so educated will always put self interest in front of national interest because they have been taught to serve their own vanity and pride. In the aftermath of the French Revolution and the Irish Rebellion, this fact is a cause for national concern.

Edgeworth's attention to Lady Delacour's vices in this passage, moreover, leaves us with a vague and half-formed idea of her appearance. A party uniform, cockades, and ribbons stand in for Lady Delacour's body on the page. Her outstretched hand is not even mentioned, even though she "distributes" the cockades and ribbons. Edgeworth's description fuses the materiality of the female body and the materiality of party favors, literalizing the particular state of person-and-thinghood that women occupied in the British political system before 1832. In this way, Lady Delacour embodies the precarity of women's status in the electoral system. On the one hand, her body is constructed by objects that showcase her acceptable political behavior—she is merely distributing electoral accessories as requested. On the other hand, the problem with being metonymically represented in anything as a woman is that it leads to objectification, not just elision and fragmentation. Lady Delacour's representation as a bright constellation of party favors results in another stereotypical depiction of female canvassers as sexual playthings for male voters. She is represented, at the very least, as coquetting men out of their votes when she distributes cockades. But it may be worse. As Taylor points out,

Edgeworth hints that Lady Delacour, like the Duchess of Devonshire who was accused of kissing butchers and "canvassing members" for votes, uses her sexuality to obtain votes in the line "a grace that won all hearts, if not all votes."[146] Whatever this "grace" is, it was acquired from an education focused on seducing the opposite sex into marriage. Lady Delacour comes to embody the pernicious "influence of female beauty," as she "[lays] herself out to please all the squires" (53). Lady Delacour triumphs over her nemesis by getting all the male attention and all the votes. Her "[graces]" are rendered a form of political corruption, interfering with her responsibility to dispense accessories.

Cockades and ribbons continue to signal Lady Delacour's interference, and what is worse, her apotheosis into a female politician. She becomes a female politician when the ritual inversion of the election leads her to depart from the feminine gender role and imitate male political satirists. Lady Delacour cannot resist turning to political satire in the hopes of solidifying her position as the finest figure that ever appeared on canvass by making her nemesis the ugliest. After witnessing Mrs. Luttridge's obsession with the panniers of cockades and ribbons—she "thought the panniers would carry the election"—Lady Delacour draws Mrs. Luttridge on a canvass in the figure of an ass in a print titled "*The Ass and Her Panniers*" (53, 54). By reducing Mrs. Luttridge to such an animal, she casts her rival as ugly and foolish.[147] Although we do not know the text of the included epigram, we can imagine it continued to direct epithets at Mrs. Luttridge's odiousness, ugliness, and foolishness in order to confirm Lady Delacour's status as most beautiful canvasser in the election by contrast. In spite of the fact that no one comments on her beauty, Lady Delacour feels herself victorious because "never was more praised bestowed upon the pen of Burke, or the pencil of Reynolds, than was lavished upon [her] by my honest friends" (54). She succeeded in obtaining the praise and flattery her

[146] Taylor, "The Gendering of Caricature," 601–602.
[147] Taylor, "The Gendering of Caricature," 599.

vanity so desired. Like their real-life counterparts, these cartoon ribbons and cockades call attention to Lady Delacour's interference, as she impersonates masculine political behavior, ironically, in the name of her own female beauty. As Taylor confirms, women were excluded from caricature as form of political engagement, and so, "Lady Delacour is guilty of precisely the 'unfeminine' conduct for which her satire publicly castigates Mrs. Luttridge."[148]

Unfortunately, this public victory over her rival is too small of a triumph for Lady Delacour. Her foray into the realm of masculinized political antics does not end with satire. The print she drew was "soon in the hands of half ——shire" and "Mrs. Luttridge was beyond measure enraged" (54). In fact, Lady Delacour learns that Mrs. Luttridge wished "to be a man, that she might be qualified to take proper notice of my conduct" (54). At first, Lady Delacour thought Mrs. Luttridge spoke in jest, but Harriet Freke offers to "take any *message* [she] thought proper" to Mrs. Luttridge, declaring that "the only way left, nowadays, for a woman to distinguish herself, was by spirit; as everything else was grown cheap and vulgar in the eyes of men"(54). This statement provokes Lady Delacour's vanity, and she writes a challenge, which is written in a sort of mock-heroic style imitating the system of male honor, "Lady Delacour begs leave to assure Mrs. Luttridge, that though she has the misfortune to be a woman, she is willing to account for conduct, in any manner Mrs. L —— may think proper—and at any hour and place she may appoint" (55). Lady Delacour is drawn so far beyond the boundary of the feminine gender role and her aristocratic class role by her vanity and pride that she ends up in men's clothes with a pistol in her hand. The rivals adorn themselves with breeches, present themselves in a field by a barn, and shoot in the air for the sake of honor. Lady Delacour suffers personal and political consequences for forsaking the election for a duel. Her pistol was "overcharged" and when she "fired, it recoiled, and [she] received a blow on my breast," which

[148] Taylor, 601, 599.

leads to an infected bruise she believes is cancer, an addiction to laudanum, and feelings of remorse (58). After a mob witnesses this duel, both the Delacour and Luttridge candidates lose the election to a candidate whose female supporters did not shirk their class or gender roles.

The results of the election in *Belinda* illustrate not only Edgeworth's anxieties about petticoat government, but also her ardent participation in the larger cultural campaign to reinforce gender and class roles in the wake of Wollstonecraft, the French Revolution, and the Irish Rebellion. As the radical forms of women's political participation in this tale prove, Edgeworth certainly believed women would better serve the nation as wives and mothers than as rights-bearing citizens. However, they also call attention Edgeworth's concern for women who have political responsibilities as landowners. In addition to marking Lady Delacour's interference, her ribbons also mark her political absenteeism:

> The news of our duel, which had spread in town, raised such an uproar as had never been heard, even at the noisiest election. The fate of the election turned upon this duel. The common people, one and all, declared, that they would not vote either for Mr Luttridge or Mr Freke, because *as how*—but I need not repeat all the *platitudes* that they said. In short, neither ribands nor brandy could bring them to reason. With true English pig-headedness, they went every man of them and polled for an independent candidate of their own choosing, whose wife, forsooth, was a proper behaved woman. (60)

Here, Lady Delacour is described distributing "ribands" after the duel in order to undo the "uproar" it caused. However, her distribution of ribbons after the fact further illustrates her interference in the election, and what is worse in Edgeworth's view, her disregard for her responsibilities as a landlady. While she may have already interfered with the voter's choice

during her canvass, the female duel caused all the men in the county to "[poll] for an independent candidate of their own choosing." In addition to the misogynistic anger over the cross-dressing, the voters did not vote for Lady Delacour's candidate because the duel disrupted the paternalism-deference equilibrium. Rather than continuing to show the tenantry the respect which is their due by hosting a breakfast or visiting their homes, Lady Delacour was focused on sporting a pair of breeches and pistols in a field, consumed with the thoughts of her own vanity and pride. She was an absentee landlady, focusing on herself, not the local community. Lady Delacour's lament that "neither ribands nor brandy could bring them to reason" dispels the illusion of the ritual inversion of the election and reveals Lady Delacour's deference to be a sham. These particular ribbons epitomize the local relationship between tenants and landowners on which elections so much depend and which Lady Delacour has destabilized. The voters may have voted for Mr. Luttridge or Mr. Freke if it had not been for the duel. Lady Delacour's dueling is, thus, a dereliction of class, gender, and electoral custom.

As a foil to Lady Delacour, Edgeworth includes the nameless "proper behaved woman" whose husband wins the election because of her rational political participation. This nameless woman is a stand in for what Edgeworth believes women's political participation should be: influence. I would suggest that the word "proper" in the phrase "proper behaved women" includes not only her commitment to her gender and class roles, but also her commitment to electoral custom because "proper" landladying is about being present, not absent. In this way, the word "proper" signals the women's rational political participation: she did not let the social inversion of the election distract her from her electoral responsibilities. Edgeworth leaves readers with a representation of acceptable female political behavior, an indication that women can and should participate, but be limited to the activities for which a rational education prepares them and to the activities suitable for their gender and class.

Apotheosis

While she does "eclipse" her rival on the hustings, Lady Delacour does not emerge victorious from this battle with Mrs. Luttridge. In fact, Mrs. Luttridge manages things so effectively that she benefits, politically and personally, from this disaster of an election:

> She [Freke] has gone over at last to odious Mrs. Luttridge—actually gone down with the Luttridges to ——shire. The independent member has taken the Chiltern Hundreds, vacates his seat—a new election comes on directly—the Luttridges are to bring in Freke—not Harriet's cousin, they have cut him—but her husband, who is now to commence senator—he is to come in for the county, upon condition that Luttridge shall have Freke's borough. Lord Delacour, without saying a syllable, has gone and promised his interest to this precious junto, and lady Delacour is left a miserable cypher. My lord's motives I can clearly understand; he lost a thousand guineas to Mrs Luttridge this winter, and this is a convenient way of paying her. (66)

Freke breaks with Lady Delacour to make her husband an MP, Lord Delacour pays his gambling debt of a "thousand guineas" with his political interest in the county, and Mrs. Luttridge gets to see her husband become a borough patron all while triumphing over her rival. Thus, the only trophies Lady Delacour takes away from the field of battle are a breast abscess she thinks is cancer, an addiction to laudanum that puts her at the mercy of her servant, and feelings of regret and shame. In this way, the election is responsible for Lady Delacour's rift with her husband, her feeling lonely and "miserable" until Belinda is placed under her protection, and the gunshot wound that makes her ill. It is for this reason that I argue that the election is the moment when Lady Delacour embarks on her own apotheosis—like the Duchess

of Devonshire print she refers to—into a good wife and mother. While there are many incidents that show Lady Delacour clinging to her vices after the duel (particularly Lady Delacour's using Belinda's money to buy a carriage and the conspiracy theory she invents about Belinda trying to marry her husband), Lady Delacour does reform as the emotional and physical wounds from the election are healed.

In contrast to the rule of Harriet Freke or Marriott, Belinda's rational female government produces Lady Delacour's reformation, which also resolves the problems caused by women's political interference (especially Mrs. Luttridge's) in this tale. At first, Lady Delacour is humbled by the gunshot wound to the breast. She is "governed by" Marriott who is the only one who knows her secret and who does not make rational suggestions (20). Marriott brings a quack doctor to see her in secret who tells her she is dying of breast cancer as a result of the wound. Faced with her own impending demise, Lady Delacour is forced to reflect on her life and choices. This reflection, which is encouraged by her "proper sovereign" Belinda, compels Lady Delacour to see the error of her ways (340). After Belinda persuades Lady Delacour to tell her husband about her injury and to show him the cabinet with her medicines, Lord Delacour immediately "promises to break with the odious Mrs. Luttridge"; that is, he promises to withdraw his political support (269). When he breaks his political alliance with the Luttridges, Lady Delacour is reconciled to her husband. In fact, she begins to treat him with fondness and respect. While Lady Delacour's relationship with her daughter was fraught years before her canvass, she is also reconciled to her when Helena rescues the key to her boudoir from Champfort, Lord Delacour's servant, who is Mrs. Luttridge's spy (297). Champfort is, then, dismissed, and her family's political ties to her rival are severed. Although Lady Delacour and Harriet Freke never reconcile because Harriet is still in thrall to "Mr. Luttridge's electioneering interest," Lady Delacour makes it clear that she has filled the void in her heart

with someone better, "her best friend Miss Portman," someone who, notably, has no interest in party politics whatsoever (223, 298). At the urging of her best friend, Lady Delacour agrees to finally allow someone more qualified than the quack who gave her laudanum to examine the injury, declaring: "If I survive *this business* …it is my firm intention to appear in a new character, or rather to assert my real character. I will break through the spell of dissipation—I will at once cast off all acquaintance that are unworthy of me…" (292). Lady Delacour resolves to reform and effectively give up her rivalry with (though not her hatred of) Mrs. Luttridge. To the pleasant surprise of everyone, rather than dying in an Amazonian surgery, Lady Delacour lives. Doctor X informs Lady Delacour's family and friends that she has a bruise, not cancer, and that her "dictatorship" will continue for many years, just as Lord Delacour hoped (292).

The influence of Belinda's rational government of Lady Delacour—which soon turns into her own rational education— forces her to reflect on rational thought, humility, sympathy, and her political participation. After her wounds have been cured, Lady Delacour conforms to her gender role, becoming a good wife and mother, but not a "tame" or "domesticated" one (314). The tableau vivant on the last page of this tale exemplifies Lady Delacour's new and improved approach to her gender role, and in my opinion, to politics. She takes control of the narration and description in an effort to authorize her reformed self, declaring "Now I think of it, let me place you all in proper attitudes for stage effect. What signifies being happy, unless we appear so?" (478) She places Captain Sunderland and Virginia at her father's feet; Clarence Hervey holding Belinda's hand; Lord Delacour holding Helena's hand. She remains aloof in order "to show that she is reformed" and "to address the audience with a moral" (478). This management of people and message is a representation of the influence Edgeworth believes women can and should exercise in social and political situations. Even though a tableau vivant is not an election, Lady Delacour embodies here the domestic advising, organizing, and

ordering that Edgeworth believes comprises women's political role. It is a physical representation of Edgeworth's three verbs of influence: "conciliate," "explain," and "impress." By showing Lady Delacour organizing this tableau, Edgeworth signals that her protagonist has abandoned interference for a life of influence. And while it may seem as if she is disrupting the domestic structure of the tableau by remaining apart from her family, she is, in fact, controlling the social situation as any capable wife and hostess would do.[149] In this way, Edgeworth gives her character the same apotheosis as the Duchess of Devonshire: she raises Lady Delacour above scandal, with the help of truth and virtue.

Conclusion

In the original sketch for *Belinda* that Edgeworth drafted in May 1800, Lady Delacour is described as a "politician, an electioneerer, a woman of spirit" whose political activity includes a duel that leads to cancer, a mastectomy, and death (481–482). In that version, Lady Delacour is punished for political participation with death. In the moral tale that was published the following June, Lady Delacour reforms after the election and lives. This revision is part of a number of changes Edgeworth made when her work moved from tragedy to comedy, and perhaps more than all the others, this revision transformed the representation of female canvassers. In the former sketch, we can assume that female canvassers would be depicted in a manner similar to the way printmakers and newspapers represented them: in the throes of electioneering rage or in the pangs of punishment for it. But in the final draft, the comic genre gives Lady Delacour a chance to reflect on her irrational political behavior when canvassing, the "proper behaved women" who was present to fulfill electoral custom, and Belinda's rational

[149] While Susan B. Egenolf argues that Lady Delacour "unsettles the familial stability of this *tableau vivant*," I see it as Lady Delacour taking her proper place in the home. See Egenolf, *The Art of Political Fiction in Hamilton, Edgeworth, and Owenson* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 102.

government. Through Lady Delacour's negative example, Edgeworth calls for a rational form of women's political participation, one that includes women's distribution of cockades and ribbons. Today, in the aftermath of the revolutions and rebellions that made her so uneasy, women have heeded Edgeworth's call and followed this rational form of political participation— distributing and wearing campaign buttons—even after receiving the rights Mary Wollstonecraft championed. They have even been able to wear buttons with women's names.

Chapter Four

A Prince's Plume

In 1912, the Lord Chamberlain officially added one of the British court's oldest unofficial accessories to the "Dress Regulations for Ladies Attending Their Majesties' Court," the "Prince of Wales's Plume."[1] For roughly one hundred and fifty years prior to this addition, women of their own volition had been wearing ostrich plumes on their heads when they attended events at court. Depending on the mode of the moment, many women also had chosen to wear plumes specifically in the Princes of Wales's style after the Duchess of Devonshire transformed the Prince of Wales's heraldic badge into a headdress in 1789. Following the Prince of Wales's Plume's official incorporation to the dress regulations, women continued to wear plumes to court events, especially debutante presentations (now immortalized on the television show *Downton Abbey*), with wartime exceptions until 1937, which was the last coronation to feature these feather accessories.[2] The accessory's origin in the eighteenth century, at a moment of great change in the monarchy and imperial expansion, and its end in the twentieth century, a decade prior to decolonizing movements in Asia and Africa, speaks to the ostrich plume's status as one of the most politically charged objects in Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In those centuries, ostrich plumes carried competing perceptions. On the one hand, they were distinguished for their association with wealth, court politics, and the monarchy.[3] In addition to serving as the heraldic symbol of English princes, [4]

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[1] *Dress Worn at his Majesty's Court: Issued with the Authority of the Lord Chamberlain* ed. Herbert A.P. Trendell (London: Harrison's & Sons, 1912), 121, *Hathitrust.*
[2] Alan Mansfield, *Ceremonial Costume: Court, Civil, and Civic Costume from 1660 to the present day* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1980), 134.
[3] Caitlin Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright': The Emblem of the Feather in Graphic Satire" *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36, no.3 (2013): 355; Robin Doughty, *Feather Fashions and Bird Preservation: A Study in Nature Protection* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1975), 10.

they were associated with the eminent figures who made them fashionable: Queen Marie Antoinette and the Duchess of Devonshire.[5] On the other, they were also associated with the so-called savage societies in which they were found. Ostrich plumes became prominent in a moment when Britons began to reconceptualize their ideas of "civilization" and "race," resulting in the luxurious plumes also embodying a new threat of cultural contamination.

In this chapter, I situate the it-narrative *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality* (1812) at this intersection of the almost simultaneous rise of the ostrich plume accessory, polygenetic thought, and anti-monarchical politics in the last twenty-five years of the eighteenth century in order to show how these competing perceptions were sometimes made complementary for political purposes. I examine how the it-narrator, a talking ostrich feather, which recounts its history from its plucking to its present as the property of two sisters on the brink of marriage, is represented as the symbol of both an African prince and the Prince of Wales's royal authority. Building on Robbie Richardson's *The Savage and the Modern Self: North American Indians in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture*, I suggest that the two political connotations of the ostrich plume that I have outlined above and which I will explore in what follows—royalty and savagery—are joined together in the African ostrich plume to critique the idea and practice of monarchy.[6] In this period, the concept of the savage was an unstable and fluid signifier, and not yet a fully modern racialized category. It could be applied to anyone, even British kings, as Richardson shows.[7] I contend that the novel applies this concept to the women political actors at the British court by way of the feathers on their heads. Since ostrich plumes were royal symbols that women wore and signifiers of a savage fondness

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[4] Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair,'" 357; Michael Powell Siddons, *Heraldic Badges in England and Wales, Royal Badges* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2009), 2:178–190.
[5] Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair,'" 355.
[6] Robbie Richardson, *The Savage and the Modern Self: North American Indians in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 39–82.
[7] See Richardson, *The Savage and the Modern Self*, 46–47.

for ornamentation at the end of the eighteenth century, women's presence and participation in court politics could speak to what many viewed as the problem of the monarchy's use of extraparliamentary strategies, such as accessorizing and hosting events, which were often associated with waste and corruption (bribery and undue influence). By depicting unnamed women courtiers and Queen Charlotte wearing a metonym for royalty and savagery on their heads and comparing them to the African prince, the novel uses the bodies of women to connect savage behavior to the monarchy. In this way, the novel satirizes the great influence of women's accessorizing at court to critique the monarchy. The novel's satire, thus, paradoxically acknowledges the power of women's political accessories in its effort to trivialize them.

"Race," Gender, and Representation

Over the past four decades, scholarship on race and empire in eighteenth-century studies and Romanticism has endeavoured to understand the myriad ways race underpins Enlightenment and Romantic conceptions of the self and the nation as represented in literature.[8] Following the publication of Srinivas Arvamudan's "ironic and parodic" contrast to Linda Colley's *Britons, Tropicopolitans*, these fields have attempted to shift the perspective from which we view empire.[9] In the past two decades particularly, there has been a noticeable turn toward reconceptualizing race and the global. Work by Roxann Wheeler, Kathleen Wilson,

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[8] See, for example, Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturaion* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry* 12, no.1 (Autumn 1985): 243–261.

[9] Srinivas Arvamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688–1804* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 10. See also Victoria Baugh, "Mixed-Race Heiresses in Early-Nineteenth-Century Literature," *European Romantic Review* 29, no. 4 (August 2018):449–458; Manu Samriti Chander, *Brown Romantics: Poetry and Nationalism in the Global Nineteenth Century* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2017); and Saree Makdisi, *Making England Western: Occidentalism, Race, and Imperial Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

George Boulukos, and Peter J. Kitson has shown us that the concept of race as we know it was not exclusively produced by slavery and was not widely used until sometime around the 1770s when monogenesis—the belief that all humans descended from Adam and Eve and were therefore one "race"—began to gradually be replaced by polygenesis—the belief that different "races" have different origins and biological differences.[10] This reconceptualization of race has enabled scholars such as Boulukos, Saree Makdisi, and Lynn Festa to reassess how this unstable category underpins British political movements and events in the long eighteenth century.[11] In tandem with this reconceptualization of race has been a reconceptualization of the global, which is just starting to, in Felicity Nussbaum's words, "widen" the eighteenth century beyond Europe.[12] In the same way, Lynn Festa and Daniel Carey have also called for a widening of the Enlightenment: "The Enlightenment made plural has remained curiously parochial, bound to its European origins, and contained within these contexts."[13] Scholars are

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[10] Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Wilson, "Empire, Gender, and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century," in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14–45; George Boulkos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[11] Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave*, 95–140; Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 2006); and Saree Makdisi, *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 2003), 214–232. For earlier examples of scholars looking at race within political movements, see Moira Ferguson, "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Problematic of Slavery," *Feminist Review* 42 (Autumn 1992): 82–102; Anne K. Mellor " 'Am I Not a Woman, and a Sister?': Slavery, Romanticism, and Gender" in *Romanticism, Race, and Imperial Culture, 1780–1834*, ed. Alan Richardson and Sonia Hofkosh (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press,1996), 311–329; Joyce Zonana on Wollstonecraft in "The Sultan and the Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of *Jane Eyre*," *Signs* 18, no.3 (Spring 1993):598–604.

[12] Felicity A. Nussbaum, ed., introduction to *The Global Eighteenth Century The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 1.

[13] Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa, "Some Answers to the Question: What is Postcolonial Enlightenment?" in *The Postcolonial Enlightenment: Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and*

working to revise "the model of metropole-to-colony diffusion traditionally used by historians"[14] by looking away from the Atlantic and considering how "histories of colonialism look distinctly different if interpreted from the non-European perspective of the Americas, India, China, Japan, Oceania, or the Arab World."[15] Two notable examples I would like to call attention to are Nussbaum's essay, "Between 'Oriental' and 'Blacks so called,' 1688–1788" and Rebekah Mitsein's essay, "Trans-Saharan Worlds and World Views in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," which both situate Aphra Behn's most famous novel within the confines of the trans-Saharan slave trade.[16] Following their examples, this chapter moves from periphery—Saharan African—to metropole—London—at the turn of the nineteenth century. It situates *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality* within the scope of the trans-Saharan trade, which historically brought these feathers to Europe, and considers how the representations of the African continent in the text were influenced by the proto-racial category of the savage and how such representations could be used to question the authority of the British monarchy. In doing so, this chapter contributes to the ongoing reconceptualizing of "race" and the global in eighteenth-century studies and Romanticism.

The novel's representations of women wearing ostrich plumes and Prince of Wales's feather headdresses at court are part of a long line of literary and historical representations of

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Postcolonial Theory, ed. Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3–4.

[14] Kathleen Wilson, ed., "Introduction: histories, empires, modernities" in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 6.

[15] Nussbaum, *Global Eighteenth Century*, 8.

[16] Felicity A. Nussbaum, "Between 'Oriental' and 'Blacks so Called', 1688–1788," in *The Postcolonial Enlightenment: Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory*, ed. Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 137–166, and Rebekah Mitsein, Trans-Saharan Worlds and World Views in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 30, no. 3 (Spring 2018): 339–368.

women that use the condition of women as a gauge for civilization.[17] In her introduction to *The Global Eighteenth Century*, Nussbaum describes how the four corners of the world, which were "an act of the colonial imagination, as were many of the conventional assumptions about them," were frequently "represented iconographically as female figures in ornamental frescoes" or "as naked, veiled, or feathered figures in the cartouches of eighteenth-century maps" (2). Depending on their location, these female figures produced or announced a Eurocentric "global consciousness" (2). Like the frescoes and maps, these figures were also invented by "the colonial imagination," one that used animals and things associated with particular geographic regions as metonyms for those places in the world.[18] "In a characteristic figuration," Nussbaum writes,

> America was represented as barebreasted, with a feathered headdress, carrying arrows and a bow; Asia bore incense and was veiled against a backdrop of desert and camel, or the harem; Africa, naked except for an elephant headdress, sat on a lion, and was flanked by a cornucopia signifying its natural riches; and Europe was represented as a muse surrounded by arts and letters as well as the signs of military victory.[19]

A woman adorned with feathers conjures a slippage between the human and animal that results in the epithets such as the "feathered people" and the "feathered race."[20] As a result of the origin of heron and egret feathers, the "feathered race" was typically associated with the Americas.[21]

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[17] Wilson, *The Island Race*, 25.
[18] See also Joseph Roach, "The Global Parasol: Accessorizing the Four Corners of the World," in *The Global Eighteenth Century*, ed. Felicity A. Nussbaum (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 98.
[19] Nussbaum, *Global Eighteenth Century*, 2.
[20] For more on feathered people, see Laura Brown's "The Orangutang, the Lap Dog, and the Parrot: The Fable of the Nonhuman Being," in *Fables of Modernity Fables of Modernity: Literature and Culture in the English Eighteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University of Press, 2001), 250–251.
[21] As Doughty explains, the habitat of herons ranged from the future United States to Patagonia, and while egrets inhabit most of the world, "the best quality feathers came from

However, in the last three decades of the eighteenth century, I believe there was a change: ostrich plumes from Saharan Africa began to overshadow these smaller plumes from the Americas, eventually culminating in the ostrich plume boom of the late nineteenth century and the movement of the feather trade from Livorno to London.[22] The popularity of this accessory, I contend, transformed the ostrich plume into a metonym for its origin, which most Britons knew was the African continent. It was reported in *The Middlesex Journal and Evening Advertiser*, for example, that a masquerader at the Pantheon in 1775 dressed as an ostrich

> sent as an Ambassador from his Distressed Brethren in Africa to [ask] the Ladies of Great Britain for their pity (Capt. Turner of the Guards) in order to represent his sufferings more strongly, his tail was picked clean of all his flowing plumes so that he cut the most deplorable figure imaginable; to show his resentment to the ladies who were the cause of his and his brethren's misfortunes, he run violently at and pecked at the nodding crest of those ladies who were adorned with the borrowed spoils of his country.[23]

Mexico, central America, and northern South America." Consequently, there would have been a strong association between the Americas and these two feathers. Peacocks originated on the Indian subcontinent, but were carried to Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas well before the eighteenth century. They might have been associated with the Americas just because other feathers were. Doughty, *Feather Fashions*, 7, 10–11.

[22] Doughty, *Feather Fashions*, 8, 18; Stein, *Plumes*, 91; Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 141–142. The rarity and the fluffiness of ostrich plumes is key to their success in displacing other feathers. The Barbary plume, which has a "double fluff," resulted in the government of the Union of South Africa sending a secret mission to French Sudan in 1911 to find the plumes. According to Sarah Abrevaya Stein, these government officials, without the permission of the government of Sudan and possibly chased by French and American spies, first purchased decoy birds, split up, reconvened in Timbuktu where they purchased 156 Barbary birds, and shipped them to Capetown for breeding. Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Plumes: Ostrich Feathers, Jews, and a Lost World of Global Commerce* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 3–5.

[23] "Some Further Account of the Humorous Character of the Ostrich, represented at the Pantheon Masquerade Thursday Last," *Middlesex Journal and Evening Advertiser*, May 23, 1775, *17th–18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers.*

While they were not metonyms for the African continent on maps, ostrich plumes were endlessly satirized in prints and became a metonym for their origin in the process. Phillip Dawe's "Can You Forbear Laughing?" (1776) [Fig.1] satirizes women's decision to adorn themselves with the feathers of three birds: peacock, rooster, and ostrich. The ostrich's tail has been picked clear and looks almost as if it was crying out in pain. By bringing the ostrich to the scene of adornment, the print brings part of the African continent to view for British audiences and strengthens the metonymic connection between ostrich plumes and that region. The sense that the feather is a metonym for the African continent is amplified, moreover, by the fact that there is an African boy, another kind of accessory, in the foreground handing the woman of quality feathers.[24] Similarly, Carrington Bowle's mezzotint of John Collet's *The Feather'd Fair in a Fright* (1777) [Fig. 2] forces viewers to acknowledge the metonymic relationship between women's accessories and the African ostriches they were plucked from. While the wilderness in the background is non-specific, the bird signals the Sahara. A feather's ability to metonymically evoke a region in representation thus depended on the type of bird. This is because, as Nussbaum explains in *The Limits of the Human*, material objects "substitute for a more refined geographical knowledge. Their lack of specificity in relation to geographic regions is another indicator of the mobility of objects in representing one area or another area before scientific racism was more coherently and more rigidly organized."[25]

[24] Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright,'" 366.
[25] Felicity A. Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 140.





Figure1 (left): Can You Forbear Laughing, 1776, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library. Figure 2 (right): Carrington Bowles, The Feather'd Fair in a Fright, [1777?], Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

As a colonial invention in a time before scientific racism was the norm, these figures were influenced by discourses of civilization from the mid-to-late eighteenth century. In contrast to the three female figures decorated with or surrounded by animals in Nussbaum's example, Europe is surrounded by arts, letters, and signs of military victory. Only Europe is represented through arts and letters, characteristics typically associated with civilization. While all four would be recognized as part of the same "race," there are clear political, economic, and intellectual differences that mark the first three figures as inferior to Europe. It is this tension between sameness and difference that interests me. As Saree Makdisi explains in *Making England Western*, the tension between sameness and difference exhibited by these figures became "a matter of both cultural and political urgency" at the end of the century:

> "the 'us'/ 'them' distinction that began to emerge in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century did not operate simply along native/foreigner or native/immigrant axes: it cut across and among native, indigenous English people as well, some of whom came to be seen from a certain privileged standpoint as culturally and racially separate and inferior, as not fit members of the race or nation, as alien and other (savage, Arab, both unsettled and settled) compared to an emergent notion of 'us' who were seen to be more appropriately at home in England. Under such circumstances, distinguishing where exactly 'our' domain and our population begin and end, and who exactly 'we' are, became matters of both cultural and political urgency. (xi)

One of the ways this distinction between "us/them" was worked out was the concept of the savage in stadial theory and emerging theories of race.[26] I believe the concept of the savage was, in particular, the site where this was worked out because it was a term applied to natives and foreigners, indigenous Britons like the Highlanders and nonindigenous Africans.[27]

Although the sentiments and stereotypes of stadial theory existed as early as ancient Rome, stadial theory as a model of historical development emerged in the 1750s.[28] While acknowledging the sameness of human beings, it tried to account for the vast differences

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[26] Stadial theory's conception of "the savage" is different from the "noble savage" of philosophers such as J.J. Rousseau. Whereas ideas of "the noble savage" concern morality, sentiment, and equality, stadial theory is about how certain nations are inferior to others in their historical developments as a result of various political, economic, and climactic factors. Stadial theory is also different from scientific racism, as Roxann Wheeler explains: "national characteristics that had been considered *effects* of climate or differing stages of civilization during the eighteenth century became *causes* of European superiority and other races' inferiority by the mid-nineteenth century." Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 299.
[27] H.M. Hopfl, "From Savage to Scotsman: Conjectural History in the Scottish Enlightenment," *Journal of British Studies* 17, no. 2 (1978): 24, 29, and Joseph S. Lucas, "The Course of Empire and the Long Road to Civilization: North American Indians and Scottish Enlightenment Historians," *Explorations in Early American Culture* 4 (2000): 170.
[28] Alix Cohen, "Philosophy and History: The Paradoxes of History," in *The Routledge Companion to Eighteenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Aaron Garrett (New York: Routledge, 2014), 763.

between societies that Britons encountered as a result of exploration, trade, and colonization. How did people across the globe end up with different complexions, manners, religions, and modes of government if they all originated from the same two people?[29] It also tried to account for why, as Joseph S. Lucas explains, "the recent expansion of European influence throughout the world had failed to spread civility among the savage peoples whom Europeans had encountered, and in some cases, conquered."[30] "Why was it that ancient Romans had successfully civilized northern European savages yet modern Europeans were unable to replicate this feat in the Americas?"[31] How could savage and civilized peoples coexist in the same society?[32] To answer these questions raised by the European failure to civilize non-European savages, Scottish historians developed what H.M. Hopfl characterizes as a "conjectural history" that resulted in the creation of a hierarchy of development organized around a Eurocentric view of subsistence and settlement.[33]

In his *Lectures on Jurisprudence* (1763), Adam Smith, one of stadial theory's most prominent propagators, offers an early and exceptionally lucid account of this hierarchy.[34] He writes "There are four distinct states which mankind pass thro:—1st, the Age of the Hunters; 2dly, the age of the Shepherds; 3dly, the Age of Agriculture; and 4thly, the Age of

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[29] While I am going to focus on climate, political economy, and gender in this chapter, religion was the primary creator of difference in the early modern period. Christianity, and Protestantism in particular, became essential to the concept of civilization because it typically distinguished Europeans from indigenous people and enslaved people in the periphery and the metropole. It also continued to differentiate Britons from their centuries old "enemy," the Ottoman Empire. For more on this see, Boulkos, *The Grateful Slave*, 13; Makdisi, *William Blake*, 215, 221; and Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 23, 35.
[30] Lucas, The Long Road to Civilization," 166.
[31] Lucas, "The Long Road to Civilization," 166.
[32] Hopfl, "From Savage to Scotsman," 24.
[33] Adam Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, ed. R.L Meek, D.D. Raphael, and P.G. Stein (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 14–16; Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, ed. Duncan Forbes (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), 81–107, 188–203; Lucas, "The Load Road to Civilization,"168, 174, 179.
[34] Lucas, "The Long Road to Civilization," 183, and Nathan Wolloch, "The Civilizing Process, Nature, and Stadial Theory," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no.2 (Winter 2011): 253.

Commerce."[35] In the age of the hunters, "their sole business would be hunting the wild beasts or catching the fishes."[36] In the age of shepherds, they would "tame some of those wild animalls they caught, and by affording them better food than what they could get elsewhere they would enduce them to continue about their land themselves and multiply their kind."[37] In the age of agriculture, "they turn themselves to the cultivation of the land and the raising of such plants and trees as produced nourishment fit for them."[38] Finally, in the age of commerce, humans would develop specific skills and trades, "exchange with one an other what they produced more than was necessary, and get in exchange for them the commodities they stood in need of and did not produce themselves."[39] Eventually, they would exchange commodities with different nations. According to Smith and the historians who would follow him, the reason Europeans were different from these non-European societies was not skin color or ethnicity; it was economic and political development. They had not yet progressed toward commerce like the Europeans had after Roman control. Sailors, merchants, missionaries, and soldiers could not teach civility—it was something that had to be earned. "Savage peoples, rather, needed to first progress naturally to barbarism, then to a life of settled farming, before finally joining the ranks of commercially-oriented, civilized Europeans."[40] Smith's hunter and shepherd societies are more often labeled "primitive" and "barbaric" respectively. The term "savage" encompassed those primitive and barbaric societies, who might have cultivated the land but had not yet developed institutions or an economy organized around agriculture or commerce. The term "civilized" encompassed those who had settled the land, cultivated it, formed institutions to instill social order, and developed a commercial economy.

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[35] Smith, *Lectures*,1:14.
[36] Smith, *Lectures*, 1:14.
[37] Smith,1:15.
[38] Smith, 1:15.
[39] Smith,1:16.
[40] Lucas, "The Long Road to Civilization," 168.

Climate also factored into these questions of development and progress.[41] Writers analyzed factors such as "exposure to the sun, the absence of winds, elevation of land above sea level, proximity to large bodies of water, fertility of the soil, and diet of inhabitants."[42] They considered how these climates related to progress: in concert with early modern humoral theory, excessively hot and cold climates were thought to enervate the body, mind, and morals.[43] Typically, primitive and barbaric societies were understood to be located in the torrid zones of the southern hemisphere or frozen zones like the northern poles, while civilized societies were located, specifically, in the temperate northern zone.[44]

In addition to political economy and climate, gender also played a role in a society's stage of civilization.[45] As Kathleen Wilson explains in her essay "Empire, Gender, and Modernity," a nation's stage was determined, in part, by "by specific gender relations, running from the treatment of women as drudges and packhorses in the first, to the respect and esteem accorded to women in the last."[46] Britons compared the condition of women in their own nation to the condition of women in the places they were exploring in the second half of the century: India, Australia, parts of the Pacific, and parts of the African continent. Upon reflection on their own society, male Britons congratulated themselves because, as William Russell pointed out, there were female Britons who could "have reasoned with Locke, who might have disputed the

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[41] See Smith, *Lectures*, 1:14–56; Ferguson, *An Essay*, 75–261; Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Sketches of the History of Man* (Edinburgh: W. Creech, W. Strahan, and T. Cadell, 1774), *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*; and William Robertson, *The History of America* (Dublin:1777), *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*.
[42] Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 15, 22.
[43] Ferguson, *Essay*, 108–121; Robertson, *The History of America*, 287–300; Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 24; Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter*, 23.
[44] Wilson, "Empire," 21.
[45] For more on how women's bodies played a role in defining British civilization, see Laura Brown, *Fables of Modernity*, 95–132, and *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993). See also Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
[46] Wilson, "Empire," 21.

laurel with Pope, and to whom Addison might have listened with pleasure."[47] British women's conduct and chastity were understood as empirical evidence that Britain was more civilized than the rest of the world. They believed, as William Robertson asserted in *The History of America* (1777), "That women are indebted to refinements of polished manners for a happy change in their state is a point which can admit of no doubt. To despise and degrade the female sex is the characteristic of the savage state in every part of the globe."[48] After limited exploration of the places mentioned above, they found these societies to be primitive or barbaric because women looked, dressed, and acted differently as a result of cultural practices and religious traditions they did not understand.[49] Men, not bound by Christian ideas of chastity and monogamy, treated women differently, in ways that British men thought were too free.[50] Even their labor fell short of civilization as Smith explains using Native American women: "Their women plant a few stalks of Indian corn at the back of their huts. But this can hardly be called agriculture."[51]

In the 1770s, some writers also began considering the role biological, and thus "racial," differences played in a society's stage of civilization.[52] In *The Grateful Slave*, Boulukos makes a convincing argument for the Somerset Case (1772) marking a turning point in the understanding of racial difference, as the pamphlet war that followed the case shows evidence, in some quarters, of polygenetic thought.[53] Two years after this case, Henry Home, Lord Kames, distinguished himself as the historian who entertained the possibility of different human

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[47] William Russell, *Essay on the Characters, Manners, and Genius of Women in Different* Ages. *Enlarged from the French of M. Thomas.* (Philadelphia, 1774), 2:114. *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.*
[48]Robertson, *The History of America*, 1:319.
[49] Wilson, "Empire," 40–41.
[50] Wilson, "Empire," 40–41.
[51] Smith, *Lectures on Jurisprudence*, 1:15.
[52] See also Robertson, *The History of America*, 1:305–322.
[53] Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave*, 100–116. Wheeler also marks "the third quarter of the eighteenth century" as a turning point. Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 9, 301.

races.[54] In *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774), Kames questions the arguments for difference based on climate. He does not believe "any operation of climate, or of accidental cause, can account for" the differences in complexion, manners, progress, and even body type across the globe.[55] Like many other stadial theorists, Kames relies on ethnographic accounts of savage peoples rather than English-language contacts in those communities.[56] However, Kames uses them to argue for racial differences.[57] His critique of climate culminates in a description of the distinctive difference of Africans from every other group: "The black colour of negroes, thick lips, flat nose, crisped wooly hair, and rank smell distinguish them from every race of men."[58] Even though this polygenetic description is indicative of a minority position in this period, Kames's *History* illustrates how Africans were perceived to be different from "every race of men," including other indigenous peoples, suggesting that Africans were the lowest on the stadial scale and consequently more associated with "savagery."[59] His work suggests that the

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[54] Lucas, "The Long Road to Civilization," 180.
[55] Kames, *Sketches*, 1:12.
[56] Lucas, "The Long Road to Civilization," 177.
[57] For extended comparisons that result in arguments about racial difference, see Kames, *Sketches*, 1–43.
[58] Kames, *Sketches*, 1:12.
[59] Famously in *The History of Jamaica* (1774), Long also suggests that Africans are the lowest on the stadial scale because of their skin color and intellectual faculty: "When we reflect on the nature of these men, and their dissimilarity to the rest of mankind, must we not conclude that they are different species in the same *genus*? [...5] Having now compleated this tour, we are struck with one very pertinent remark; the natives of the whole tract, comprised under the name of Negro-land, are all black, and have wool instead of hair; whereas the people in the most torrid regions of Libya and America, who have the fun vertical over them, have neither the fame tincture of skin, nor woolly covering. As we recede from Negro-land, this blackness gradually decreases, and the wool as gradually changes to lank hair, which at first is of a short staple, but is found longer, the further we advance. We observe the like gradations of the intellectual faculty, from the more advanced stages of it in apes, in the oran-outang, that type of man, and the Guiney Negroe; and ascending from the varieties of this class to the lighter casts, until we mark its utmost limit of perfection in the pure White." Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica* (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 2: 356, 374, 375, *Hathitrus*t. Thomas Jefferson's views are similar to, though less hostile than, Kames's and Long's. In *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1794), he writes, "I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the

concept of the savage at the end of the eighteenth century encompassed stadial theory's arguments for difference based economic and political development, as well as the arguments of emerging racial theories.

By the end of the century, the political, economic, climactic, and biological differences attached to this concept make their way into British culture and other forms of literature. Mungo Park was the first European to see the Niger River (after several Europeans died trying) and his *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa* (1799) deploys both stadial and polygenetic thought.[60] For example, Park's description of King Jatta of Medina who, presumably through a combination of biological and climactic factors, has a body that is more sensitive to temperature changes than a European: "I found his majesty seated upon a bullock's hide, warming himself before a large fire: for the Africans are sensible of the smallest variation in the temperature of the air, and frequently complain of cold when a European is oppressed with heat."[61] Park refers to the shared human experience of reacting to temperature changes, while also stressing the differences between their bodies' ability to regulate temperature. He marks their common humanity, but also their difference.

What Smith, Kames, and Park's texts all shows is that the concept of the savage was in transition at the end of the eighteenth century. It was caught between what Ashton Nichols calls a "Romantic ideology"—Africans and Europeans share a common humanity, nature is a

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endowments both of body and mind. It is not against experience to suppose, that different species of the same genus, or varieties of the same species, may possess different qualifications. Will not a lover of natural history then, one who views the gradations in all the races of animals with the eye of philosophy, excuse an effort to keep those in the department of man as distinct as nature has formed them?" Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1794), 209, *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online.*

[60] See Philip J. Stern, "Rescuing the age from a charge of ignorance": gentility, knowledge, and the British exploration of Africa in the later eighteenth century," in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840,* ed. Kathleen Wilson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 115–135.

[61] Mungo Park, *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa* (London: W. Bulmer & Co, 1799), 37, *Hathitrust.*

kind of freedom, and primitive people are childlike and in need of instruction— and the "Victorian forms of cultural imperialism"— Europeans and Africans do not share a common humanity, nature must be tamed, and European knowledge in the arts and sciences marks their superiority.[62] It was in a liminal space between monogenesis and polygenesis, a model of historical development and scientific racism. While it was in transition, the concept of the savage carried with it ideas about the sameness and the difference of different human beings. It is for that reason that I believe it could be mobilized in the name of satire to point out the similarities royalty has with savages, but also the great political and economic differences between the two.

By way of example, consider the 1776 print, "The Female Combatants Or Who Shall." [Fig.3] Britannia is dressed like a lady of quality in a lustrous gown with her hair in toupée, which is ornamented with jewels and ostrich plumes.[63] America is barebreasted and wearing a skirt of feathers (likely heron or egret because of the origin) with a crown of peacock feathers. Putting the actual politics of the American Revolution aside for a moment, this appears, at first glance, to be representation of a civilized nation at war with a savage one. It appears to be a representation dependent on the idea of difference. The contrast in dress speaks to a great disparity in economic power. Their banners "for obedience" and "for liberty" speak to a contrast in their ability to discipline themselves according to organized political and moral codes as well. However, both female figures have gone into battle adorned with feathers, "indicators of the slippage between human and beast."[64] They are both wearing metonyms associated with

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[62] Ashton Nichols, "Mumbo Jumbo: Mungo Park and the Rhetoric of Romantic Africa," in *Romanticism, Race, and Imperial Culture, 1780–1834*, ed. Alan Richardson and Sonia Hofkosh (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1996), 95.
[63] I believe the feathers are ostrich plumes because this print was published just one year after the Duchess of Devonshire made ostrich plumes the most fashionable accessory in England and because of their shape.
[64] Nussbaum, *Limits of the Human*, 140.

savage places. Britannia's feather in 1776 would be a metonym for the African continent and America's feather would be a metonym for her homeland. Britannia's plumes are what interest me here. On the one hand, she is associated with Britain's increasing colonial presence and power on the African continent. On the other, she is associated with the so-called savagery of the inhabitants of Saharan Africa where this feather is found. She exudes authority and power, but she is also boxing with another woman in keeping with behavior of "savages."



Figure 3: ***The Female Combatants Or Who Shall,*** **1776, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.**

The print, I would suggest, hinges on the way the concept of the savage encompasses both barbaric and primitive societies. As the stage in between primitive and civilized, barbarism

was a boogeyman for Britons who were so high up and could easily fall down. In his *Essay*, Ferguson labels nations with a loosely defined "public council" form of government that has "only to bestow a permanent authority for repressing disorders, and to enact a few rules in favour of that justice they have already acknowledged" to advance to civilization as barbaric.[65] One of the things that prevents them from establishing a more solid form of government is the kind of accessorizing and gratuitous violence depicted in the print: "they are fond of fantastic ornaments in their dress, and endeavour to fill up the listless intervals of a life addicted to violence, with hazardous sports and games of chance."[66] Later in the *Essay* when speaking about the corruption commercialized nations are exposed to, which can cause them to degenerate back into barbarism, Ferguson writes: "Nations are most exposed to corruption from this quarter, when the mechanical arts, being greatly advanced, furnish numberless articles, to be applied in ornament to the person."[67] This is certainly the case for Britain, which is a nation bombarded with fabulous new fashion accessories for women and men almost every day, whether in shop windows, the playhouse, or periodicals.[68] In this way, women's stereotypical fondness for ornamentation makes the concept of the savage applicable to both British and Native American women. Britannia's feather is a sign of Britain's possible luxurious degeneration into barbarism. Her violence against her "daughter" America is a kind of parental despotism that characterizes the "despotism" and "the stubborn heart of the barbarian… in the

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[65] Ferguson, *Essay*, 99.
[66] Ferguson, *Essay*, 98. Kames also notes the savage interest in ornaments, declaring that men in California are "fond of feathers and shells." Kames, *Sketches*, 1:18.
[67] Ferguson, *Essay*, 251.
[68] While many Britons saw moral consequences for the importation of imperial commodities as items of luxury, I am focusing on how stadial theory, rather than the luxury debates, understood that relationship because it allows me to talk about luxury within the confines of government, which is necessary for the satirical comparison I am calling attention to in the novel. For more on the luxury debates, see Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth-Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) and Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

low state of the commercial arts."[69] Conversely, America's feathers signify the limited economic and political development of a primitive place that is "conscious of equality and tenacious of its rights," but "addicted to war."[70] A place that fails "in those apprehensions, which in the intervals of passion, produce ingenuous shame, compassion, remorse of a command of appetite."[71] The print's satire of the American Revolution, therefore, is really a satire of both combatants.

While Britannia and America are allegorical figures, the way the print's critique turns on stereotypical ideas about women's fondness for ornamentation suggests that the bodies of real women could be mobilized for a similar purpose. Even though women's motivations for adorning their heads with ostrich plumes could have political intent, it was the most popular accessory of the last three decades of the eighteenth century, blurring the line between political activism and fashion even at the Court of St. James. As a result of this ambiguity, women's political accessorizing could be trivialized under the same terms as women's fashion and categorized as savage behavior. Ostrich plumes, in particular, heighten this ambiguity because they are also a metonym for a savage place of the African continent. In the section that follows I attend to the accessory's history and explore how the ostrich plume is a metonym for both royalty and the savage African continent in order to foreground my readings of how the novel exploits this ambiguity between fashion and activism in *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*.

The Feathered Fair and The Trans-Saharan Trade

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[69] Ferguson, *Essay*, 102.
[70] Ferguson, 84, 95. In his *Sketches of the History of Man*, Lord Kames responds directly to Ferguson's arguments about the "equality and independence" of savage peoples and condemns them. Through numerous comparisons of Europeans and non-Europeans, he argues that "North American savages differ indeed so widely from those formerly in Europe that it is difficult to conceive them to be of the same race." Kames, *Sketches*, 23–25.
[71] Ferguson, *Essay*, 90.

The British demand for ostrich feathers at the end of the eighteenth century was inspired by no other than the British minister of fashion herself: Georgiana Cavendish, the Duchess of Devonshire. While women had been adorning themselves with a variety of feathers since at least the sixteenth century, women in the 1760s began consistently styling their hair and hats, such as riding hats and turbans, with feathers.[72] The 1760s also saw the rise of the toupée, a hairstyle that used pads, cushions, or rolls to raise the hair above the forehead, which prompted the use of feathers for full dress for the first time.[73] Initially toupées and their feather ornaments were a modest undertaking; however, in the 1770s they grew in extravagance, whimsy, and size. Queen Marie Antoinette seems to have been the first in Europe to take the ostrich feather fashion accessory to new heights with her magnificent *poufs*.[74] Shortly after, however, the British ambassador, Lord Stormont, carried a four-foot long plume across the English Channel and presented it to the Duchess of Devonshire in 1775.[75] The Duchess, who was already wearing her hair high—including in a three-foot tower—attached the feather to the front of her hair and "overnight it became the most important accessory in a lady's wardrobe."[76] Excessively large plumes, such as the one from Stormont, were popular only in the 1770s, but smaller plumes remained an essential ornament through the close of the century.

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[72] C. Willett Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 1964), 349, 366, 272; Joanna Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers: Dressing the Head For Presentation at the English Court, 1700–1939," in *Birds of Paradise: Plumes & Feathers in Fashion* (Tielt, BE: Lannoo Publishing, 2014), 133.
[73] Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume*, 372.
[74] For more on Marie Antoinette's use of ostrich plumes, see Will Bashor's *Marie Antoinette's Head* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2013) and Desmond Hosford, "The Queen's Hair: Marie-Antoinette, Politics, and DNA," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 38, no. 1 (Fall 2004):183–200.
[75] Amanda Foreman, *Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire* (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 36; Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers," 134.
[76] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 36.

They were dyed different colors: red, black, blue, yellow, violet, and green.[77] They were worn as the sole ornament, attached to a bandeau of ribbon, in a stylish array of three or four, or as part of a larger tableau with other ornaments such as ribbons, jewels, flowers, fruits, stuffed animals, ships, and trees depending on the theme.[78] As feathers continued to adorn riding hats and turbans through the 1790s, they also adorned other hats, such as hats with tall crowns and the so-called picture hats—straw hats with ribbons— after the Duchess's famous Gainsborough portrait.[79] Ostrich plumes, in particular, were an exotic rarity. They could "cost as much as a guinea a piece."[80] As a result, they largely were an accessory for aristocratic and middle-class women. There does, however, seem to have been recycling warehouses and pawnshops where lower-class women could purchase used feathers.[81]

In addition to the fact that ostrich feathers were de rigueur for the last four decades of the eighteenth century, there were political reasons necessitating women's purchasing and wearing them beginning in 1788. As early as the late 1760s, ostrich feathers were seen at court.[82] However, Queen Charlotte banned what she called the "funeral plumes"—a reference to the fact that feathers also decorated hearses— from court after the Duchess made her debut with her four-foot feather in 1775.[83] Women continued to adorn themselves with feathers elsewhere, provoking speculation about why the Queen hated this accessory so much. Perhaps,

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[77] Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers,"134.
[78] Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers,"135. Foreman notes that the Duchess of Devonshire wore stuffed bids and waxed fruit, a ship in full sail, and even a pastoral tableau with little wooden trees and sheep. Foreman, *Georgiana*, 36. Marie Antoinette is famous for doing the same with the myriad *poufs* she wore: *sentimental*, *à la hérisson* (hedgehog), *à la l'Iphigenie*, à *la Belle Poule*, *à la Victoire*, and *jolie femme*. Bashor, *Marie Antoinette's Head*, 65–69.
[79] Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume*, 360.
[80] Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers," 134.
[81] I have yet to find any historical sources to confirm the recycling warehouse that appears in the novel, but pawnshops always offered the lower classes the opportunity to dress up.
[82] Cunnington, *The Handbook of English Costume*, 377–378; Marschner, "A Weaving Field of Feathers,"133.
[83] "Harlequin, No. XXVI," *The London Magazine*, *Or the Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer*, October 1775, *Hathitrust*.

as Caitlin Blackwell has suggested in "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright': The Emblem of the Feather in Graphic Satire of 1776," she wanted to avoid the fire hazard that accompanied this accessory, as a woman in Bath allegedly died after her headdress hit a chandelier and went up in flames.[84] Perhaps she simply wanted to save women from having to crouch in carriages and dodge doorframes for the sake of style. The most persuasive argument for her distaste for plumes is the fact that ostrich feathers— associated with the British royal authority—had been usurped by mere aristocracy and gentry. As Michael Powell Siddons explains, "the ostrich feather has been a royal badge since the reign of Edward III."[85] After decades of Edward's descendants using this symbol on stained-glass windows, plates, and tapestries, the badge of three ostrich feathers encircling a coronet with a scroll bearing the motto *Ich Dien* ("I serve") "became the royal badge of the heir apparent" in the sixteenth century, thus creating what we now call the Prince of Wales's feathers.[86] Although women were not wearing their plumes in Princes of Wales's style yet, British women of different stations but with plentiful purses still "effectively usurped a royal—and a male—sign of distinction"—the ostrich feather— which could have, possibly, vexed the Queen.[87] The ban on plumes seems to have lasted until 1788, when the Duchess of Devonshire managed to make them even more offensive to the Queen, inciting what I call the Battle of the Caps of 1789.

The Regency Crisis, which ensued when George III fell ill in October 1788 of what we now know is porphyria was a parade of political accessorizing.[88] While the King was ill from October to February, the months of January, February, and March saw both women and men adorning themselves with monarchical symbols. Men wore "constitutional coats" of blue and

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[84] Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright,'" 357.
[85] Siddons, *Heraldic Badges*, 178.
[86] Siddons, *Heraldic Badges*, 188.
[87] Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright," 357.
[88] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 205.

red, while women wore two headdresses with ostrich feathers.[89] The Duchess of Devonshire, having learned how successful accessorizing could be as political tactic in the Westminster election of 1784, designed a headdress for women called a "Regency Cap" based on the Prince of Wales's heraldic badge with three ostrich feathers and the motto "Ich Dien." As the description in *The Morning Post* shows, she made the heraldic badge into a tangible accessory: "three large white feathers connected by a band, on which was inscribed the motto of the Principality—Ich Dien."[90] [Fig.4] For the most part, women who identified with the Whig party, of which the Prince was an avid supporter, adorned themselves in this manner in order to show their support for his Regency. Despite the cost of seven guineas, Whig women and some Tory women wore this headdress at all social functions, from the theater to the court, particularly while the Regency Bill, which would give the Prince of Wales power to rule, was working its way through Parliament.[91] Regency Caps effectively argued for the early retirement of a living monarch, a fact that was not lost upon the Queen or the Tory party. The Duchess of Gordon, the preeminent Tory political hostess of the moment and one of the Duchess of



Figure 4: Detail of Isaac Cruikshank's The pot calling the kettle black A [...], or, Two of a trade can never agree, 1791, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

[89] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 211.
[90] "The Opera," *The Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, Feb 9 1789, *17th–18th Century Burney Collection Newspapers.*
[91] Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754–1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005),102; Madame Huber to Mrs. Eden, 21 February 1789, in *The Journal and Correspondence of William, Lord of Auckland* (London: Richard Bentley, 1861), 2: 292. *Hathitrust.*

Devonshire's rivals, told the Prince "she would sooner be hang'd" than accessorize in such a manner.[92] In late February, the King recovered. In a direct response to the Duchess of Devonshire's latest fashionable invention, the Queen ordered the creation of what I call "Restoration Caps" for the Drawing Room held on March 26th to celebrate the King's recovery. Women were required to wear, as Lady Louisa Stuart told Lady Portarlington four days later, a cap of "plain *crepe* with a bandeau of white *sattin*, and 'God Save the King' written upon it in gold spangles, and four very high feathers on the side."[93] While the princesses wore the uniform cap, the Queen wore a bandeau with "God Save the King" written in diamonds, as well a gown of Whig orange and Tory blue.[94] The women of the Whig party, however, flouted this royal mandate. According to Lady Duncannon (the Duchess of Devonshire's sister), the Duke of Portland, another Whig grandee, "forebid [their] wearing the bandeaus in our caps at Court."[95] Thus, the female Whigs attended the Drawing Room with bare heads, a fashion choice that resulted in the Queen refusing to speak to anyone in the Opposition and engaging in fashion brawls with them for the next month.[96] While the mottos on the bandeaux varied from "God Save the King," "Long life to the King," "Vive le Roi, "Dieu nous l'a rendu," as Henry Kingsbury's print "Restoration Dresses" immortalizes, these Restoration Caps continued to be

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[92] Lady Stafford to Granville Leveson Gower, 12 February 1789, in *Lord Granville Leveson Gower (First Earl Granville): Private Correspondence, 1781 to 1821*, ed. Castalia Countess Granville (London: John Murray, 1916), https://archive.org/stream/cu31924088004159/cu31924088004159_djvu.txt.
[93] Lady Louisa Stuart to Lady Portarlington, 30 March 1789, in *Gleanings from an old portfolio, containing some correspondence between Lady Louisa Stuart and her sister Caroline, Countess of Portarlington, and other friends and relations*, ed. Alice Clark (Edinburgh, 1896), 118. *Hathitrust.*
[94] Lady Louisa Stuart to Lady Portarlington, *Gleanings from an old portfolio*, 119.
[95] Harriet Ponsoby, Countess of Bessborough (formerly Lady Duncannon), "Lady Duncannon's Diary, 1789," in *Lady Bessborough and her Family Circle*, ed. the Earl of Bessborough and A. Aspinall (London: John Murray, 1940), 46.
[96] Foreman, *Georgiana*, 215.

required at events celebrating the King's recovery, costing up to six guineas. [97] [Fig.5] Regardless of party, "loyalty was," as Lady Louisa declared, "a most expensive virtue at present" in large part due to the feathers in Regency and Restoration Caps.[98] By making ostrich plumes a matter of patriotism, the Duchess of Devonshire and the Queen necessarily amplified the already high consumer demand for these imperial accessories.



Figure 5: Henry Kingsbury, *Restoration Dresses*, 1789, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

The ostrich plumes on the Queen and Duchess's heads were plucked from ostriches in Saharan Africa and transported via the trans-Saharan slave trade. Ostriches were hunted, as Sarah Abrevaya Stein explains, "by settled and nomadic farmers in the semi-arid Sahel and along the southern edge of the Sahara."[99] Merchants from the main Saharan markets, Fezzan and Ghadames, would travel south to purchase enslaved Africans and commodities, including feathers. Feather transactions were calculated with *ratl* (500 grams), the specific measurement

[97] Lady Louisa Stuart to Lady Portarlington, *Gleanings from an old portfolio*, 119; Ponsoby, "Lady Duncannon's Diary," 48.
[98] Lady Louisa Stuart to Lady Portarlington, *Gleanings from an old portfolio*, 117.
[99] She also points out that "lesser quantities of plumes from East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula reached North Africa via Aden." Stein, *Plumes*, 86.

for trans-Saharan lightweight goods.[100] The feathers were then placed in caravans with enslaved Africans, senna, gold dust, ivory, gum arabic, glass beads, and other commodities.[101] Large and small camel caravans travelled across the desert in spring and early summer to three North African cities on the Mediterranean coast: Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis. In *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, Ghislaine Lydon writes that "ostrich feathers were a regular export item out of Algiers from the 1760s onward."[102] In a report to Lord Shelbourne from 1767, the Consul of Tripoli, the Hon. Archibald Fraser, wrote that caravans from Fezzan and Ghadames arrived every six months in Tripoli and sold their "slaves, sena, iron, dates, & ostrich feathers (for ready money) to Tripoli merchants trading to the Levant."[103] In a report to Home Secretary Lord Sydney from 1789, the Consul of Tunis, Robert Traill, estimated that there were 5 or 6 yearly caravans of Ghadesmi merchants a year and one caravan from Ghat bringing feathers to Tunis.[104]

In these North African port cities, a portion of the commodities would be separated from the enslaved Africans and transported to European cities rather than the Ottoman empire.[105] As John Wright explains, "With increased traffic in the seventeenth century, the Sahara still accounted for nearly one-quarter of all African slave exports (65 percent for the Atlantic), falling bellow 10 per cent only in the face of monstrous movement of slaves across the Atlantic (82 per cent of all exports) in the eighteenth century."[106] As a result of these numbers, British abolitionists focused exclusively on the Atlantic trade until the 1840s.[107]

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[100] Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 259.
[101] Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 108;Fraser to Shelbourne, 27 August 1767, enclosed, *Some Account of the Trade Carried on by the Tripoline Moors to the Interior Parts of Africa*, NA, F0 76/2.
[102] Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails*, 141.
[103] Fraser, *Some Account*, FO 76/2.
[104] Robert Traill to Lord Sydney, February 1789, NA F0 /773.
[105] John Wright, *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 56, 114.
[106] Wright, *The-Trans-Saharan Slave Trade*, 46.
[107] Wright, 62.

However, while they campaigned for abolition, they purchased commodities like senna (an early modern laxative), ivory, and ostrich plumes that funded the trans-Saharan slave trade, which possibly transported 6,000 slaves a year through the Maghreb (North Africa) between 1700 and 1799.[108] As scholars continue to study the history of slavery in the British empire, we need to recognize how women championed abolition while adorned in feathers that funded the other branch of the slave trade.

Furthermore, British politicians contemplated how they might get a cut of the trans-Saharan trade and how they might expand their control beyond the colonies of Senegambia and Sierra Leone.[109] Five years before the Somerset Case, Consul Fraser assessed the British chances of cashing in on this lucrative trade. Since the "Mediterranean Slave Trade can never be carried on by a Christian power on account of Mahodeman Law," Fraser advised setting up a "Mart" in British-controlled Menorca for the commodities and transporting the enslaved Africans on British ships from Tripoli to Constantinople.[110] Although the British did not establish such a market or ship enslaved Africans to Constantinople, they did ultimately figure out a way to cash in on one trans-Saharan commodity: they founded the Cape Colony in 1806, domesticated ostriches, and over the course of the nineteenth century when the region was absorbed into the Union of South Africa, exported so many plumes to London that, without the advent of ostrich farming, the bird would probably be extinct today.[111]

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[108] Wright, 52.
[109] According to Philip D. Morgan, "In eighteenth-century Africa, blacks lived in the forts and factories under British control and increasingly others came under British jurisdiction—in the Crown colony of Senegambia between 1765 and 1783, in Sierra Leone from 1787 onward, and in the Cape Colony from 1795 onward (except for a brief return to Dutch rule between 1803 and 1806)." Philip D. Morgan, "The Black Experience in the British Empire, 1680–1810" in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, edited by P.J. Marshall (New York: Oxford University Press,1998), 2:466.
[110] Fraser, *Some Account*, FO 76/2.
[111] Doughty, *Feather Fashions*, 7; Stein, *Plumes*, 2, 30–32.

Ostrich plumes and other commodities were transported in ships from Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli to Livorno (which the British call Leghorn) and Venice.[112] For the most part, Jewish merchants (usually of Livornese extraction) controlled the transportation of feathers, because "foreign merchants living under the Ottoman territory were under the protection of foreign consuls—principally those of France—and were consequently subject to reduced taxes and custom duties."[113] French and Italian ships usually set sail in the months of April to October, coinciding with the arrival of caravans and good weather.[114] While Venice certainly oversaw its fair importation of feathers, Livorno was the early modern feather capital of the world. According to Stein, "75 percent of ostrich feathers exported from North Africa travelled first to Livorno."[115] Four or five feather firms in Livorno then transported their commodities across Europe, particularly to London and Paris which would become the feather capitals of the late nineteenth century.[116] When the feathers arrived in London, they were sold out of shops to women who adorned their heads and hats with them. Whether worn for the sake of fashion or politics, these accessories brought the politics of the trans-Saharan slave trade and imperial expansion on the African continent home.

As the ostrich plume's fashion and trade histories suggest, this accessory could alternatively serve as a metonym for royalty and savagery when it appeared on women's heads at the turn of the nineteenth century. When these competing metonyms were combined with stereotypical ideas of women's commodity fetishism, the feathered heads of women political actors were transformed into a kind of focal point for critique. Women's accessorizing with monarchical symbols could be categorized as savage behavior in a way that was indicative of a

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[112] Fraser, *Some Account*, FO 76/2; Blackwell, "'The Feather'd Fair in a Fright,'" 355.
[113] Stein, *Plumes*, 89.
[114] Wright, *The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade*, 133.
[115] Stein, *Plumes*, 91.
[116] Stein, *Plumes*, 91.

larger problematic political system. During the Regency Crisis, the partisan "acrimony" between supporters of the king and supporters of the prince astonished Home Secretary Lord Sydney.[117] Even though men (William Pitt and Charles Fox) created this partisan divide on behalf of other men, Lord Sydney wrote, "The ladies are as usual at the head of all animosity, and are distinguished by caps, ribands, and other such ensigns of party."[118] While politicians such as the Duke of Portland recognized the power of such caps, Lord Sydney, operating under the stereotypical assumption that women have some kind of innate fondness for ornamentation, suggests that women's accessorizing is responsible for the "animosity" that has contaminated the entire government. The hostility women are supposedly stoking by wearing royal symbols in their caps is, ironically, reminiscent of the warlike and uncontrollable passions Ferguson ascribes to the actual savages who live where the prime feature of these caps, feathers, is located.[119] In this way, Sydney uses women's feathered heads to call attention to what he calls a "filthy subject": the improper behavior exhibited by political parties during the crisis.[120] *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, I contend, mobilizes the metonymic meanings of the ostrich plumes, royalty and savagery, on women's heads in a fictional context for a similar, though ultimately more radical, purpose: to satirize the corruption, waste, and poor governance of the monarchy.

Sovereignty, Sway, and Satire

The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality is the history of an ostrich plume whose purpose in "life" is to decorate heads, both royal and common, at the turn of the nineteenth

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[117] Lord Sydney to Earl Cornwallis, 21 February 1789, in *Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis* ed. Charles Ross (London: Charles Murray, 1859), 419, *Hathitrust.*
[118] Lord Sydney to Earl Cornwallis, 21 February 1789, 419.
[119] Ferguson, *Essay*, 90.
[120] Lord Sydney to Earl Cornwallis, 21 February 1789, 420.

century.[121] It was published anonymously in 1812. According to the editor of the modern edition, it was published again in 1819 by T. and J. Allman who also published the anonymously written *The Intriguing Beauty and the Beauty without Intrigue, a Novel.* "This latter work was named in the second edition of the *Ostrich Feather*, which was announced as being 'by the author of 'Intriguing Beauty."[122] In its only review, *The Monthly Review* wrote of *Ostrich Feather*, "this ingenious little story contains moral lessons enlivened by a variety of anecdotes, though some of them are not in the most refined taste."[123] As Lynn Festa, who is—to the best of my knowledge—the only scholar to publish on this text, describes, the anecdotes "recount the scandalous secret history behind the respectable surface, unveiling the pocked moral visage behind the unblemished public mask."[124]

With the exception of the feather's first owner, who is an African prince, the narrative is structured by representations of European female owners that adorn their heads and hair with the eidolon, Monsieur Feather, in keeping with fashion. One of the female owners whose public mask is exposed is Queen Charlotte. She receives the feather directly after the African prince and wears it in a Prince of Wales's headdress at her husband's birthday celebration. In this way, the feather acts as a direct link between the African savagery and British civilization. In fact, as Aileen Douglas points out in "Britannia's Rule and the It-Narrator," there is a notable exclusion of the third agricultural stage in it-narratives, which further contrasts commercial civilization

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[121] *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, ed. Christina Lupton, vol.3 of *British It-Narratives, 1750–1830*, ed. Mark Blackwell (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2012). All references are to this edition.
[122] Christina Lupton, ed., introduction to *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 3:360.
[122] Lupton, *British It-Narratives, 1750–1830*, 3:267.
[123] "The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality," *The Monthly Review* (London: Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode, 1819), 215, *Hathitrust.*
[124] Lynn Festa, "The Moral Ends of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Object Narratives," in *The Secret Life of Things*, ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 311.

and the two savage stages of primitive and barbaric.[125] I contend the novel makes a blind leap from the primitive place where Monsieur Feather was plucked to civilized London, noticeably eliding the larger trade network that carried these plumes to Europe, so as to draw a direct comparison between the African Prince and Queen Charlotte.

In keeping with generic requirements, the novel opens on the feather's "birth," or "plucking" from its "mother bird" in Saharan Africa.[126] This story includes small references to the trans-Saharan trade, particularly the Saharan desert and the figure of an Arab ostrich hunter. However, the feather's "birth" story is full of contradictions and competing tensions, which leads to me believe that this representation is influenced more by stadial accounts of history than factual accounts of history. The feather's "birth" showcases the fluidity and instability of the stadial category of the savage and how the feather embodies it:

> My mother and father lived in the utmost harmony and connubial comfort; my mother was a pattern of fidelity to her husband, and (I wish I could say the same of many married ladies I have decorated,) was careful and indulgent to her offspring. I am, as you may know, an inhabitant of the torrid regions of Africa; and our delight is to live in the most unfrequented of deserts. My dear parent, who was a very stately bird, was hunted down and killed by an Arab, who was in pursuit of her, for that part of *her person* which is so esteemed in medicine…I was plucked in haste from the extremity of the right wing

[125] Aileen Douglas, "Britannia's Rule and the It-Narrator," in *The Secret Life of Things*, ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 151.
[126] For more on the characteristics of this genre, see Mark Blackwell, "Introduction: The It-Narrative and Eighteenth-Century Thing Theory" in *The Secret Life of Things* ,ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 9–14; Liz Bellamy, "It-narrators and Circulation: Defining a Subgenre," in *The Secret Life of Things*, ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007),117–146, and Christopher Flint, "Speaking Objects: The Circulation of Stories in Eighteenth-Century Prose Fiction," in *The Secret Life of Things*, ed. Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2007), 162–186; and Jonathan Lamb's *The Things Things Say* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

> of my parent before she was cold, for we come out more easily in that state and with less injury to our beauty. (273–274)

On the one hand, the feather is "an inhabitant of the torrid regions of Africa" who "[delights] to live in the most unfrequented deserts." According to the stadial theorists I have referenced—Smith, Ferguson, Robertson, and Kames— this society would be categorized as savage because they are in a torrid climate and there is no organized government or commercial economy. On the other, the feathers attempts to differentiate itself from this savage environment by appealing to British gendered conceptions of morality and behavior, particularly social expectations for women. Mother and Father Ostrich are said to live in "connubial comfort," presumably because the mother bird was a "pattern of fidelity to her husband." Its mother bird was "careful and indulgent to her offspring," which apparently includes the feathers attached to her body. The feather is careful to note prior to this particular description of his mother bird that "Professor— has very ably defended the parental sensibilities of the genus of Ostrich, and proved the falsity of females leaving their eggs in the sand to be hatched by the sun" (273). The climactic conditions of intense sun exposure in the "torrid regions of Africa" result in humors that produced characters predisposed to excess, indolence, sexual immorality, and tyranny.[127] In the feather's view, the mother bird's shielding her eggs from the sun is a significant sign of maternal love because it could possibly prevent its offspring from developing these savage traits. While the slipperiness of all the categories in this passage suggests a possible satire of companionate marriage and the moralizing discourses of the 1790s working to reinforce gender roles in the wake of the French Revolution—a satire in which the nuclear family is savage—the important point for my purposes is that the feather both is and is not savage here. Savagery can coexist with civilized traits like domesticity because it is not yet a hardened racial category.

[127] Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*, 24.

This instability allows the novel to position savagery and a civilized category, royalty, side by side later in its critique of the British monarchy.

Beyond the feather's birth, the feather's circulation on the African continent leaves much to be imagined. The quick reference to the Saharan desert and the Arab ostrich hunter is nearly all we get of the trans-Saharan trade.[128] After the feather is ripped from its mother bird and thrown aside bleeding from the quill, it is then picked up by a tribe of the Nimiquois. According to the notes to this edition of the novel, the Nimiquois are tribe located in "southern" Africa.[129] As editor Christina Lupton points out, the author likely took the name of the tribe from travel narratives such as Benjamin Stout's *Narrative of the Loss of the Ship Hercules* (1798).[130] I suspect this tribe, as opposed to a Saharan or Northern one, was chosen because the British understanding of the African continent was prejudiced by the locations of the slave trade and British colonies (Senegambia, Sierra Leone, and the Cape Colony) in the west and south at the time of this novel's publication, 1812. Although Mungo Park's narrative of his trip to the Niger provided the British with more geographical knowledge than they had before, what a 1782 geography primer told children was still largely true: "The interior parts of [Africa] … are very little known by Europeans, so that they may almost be ranked with undiscovered countries."[131] The major projects of exploration and colonization occur later in

[128] Later on in the novel, there is a Jewish character named Levi Levi who is a "Tripoli merchant and moneylender." *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 293. As Stein points out, Livornese Jewish merchants largely ran the feather trade, suggesting, perhaps, that Levi Levi was involved in the feather trade in Tripoli. Stein, *Plumes*, 89. At any rate, Levi Levi's contact with the Barbary results in behavior that is characterized as "thoughtless barbarity." When his daughter converts to Christianity, he strikes her with rage, disowns her, and refuses to reconcile with her on his deathbed. *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 295.
[129] Christina Lupton, ed., introduction to *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 3:267.
[130] Christina Lupton, ed., introduction to *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 3:267.
[131] Quoted in Stern, "Rescuing the age," 115.

the nineteenth century.[132] Since the African continent was still largely unknown to most Britons, it is not surprising that this novel deploys what Laura Brown in *Fables of Modernity* calls the "fable of the native prince."[133] Brown defines this fable as the following: "The 'native prince' is an individual from a traditional, unurbanized, non-European culture, who enters the purview of European experience by visiting the British metropolis and thereby producing a visible and public occasion of culture contact." [134]Although the native prince in *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality* does not go to London, he is the only "native" the reader learns particular details about because his nobility "explicitly differentiates him from other natives whom he governs."[135]

The Nimiquois tribe gives the feather to their prince who sticks Monsieur Feather in his nose and his fellows in his ears. In this passage, the novel starts to draw a comparison between the African prince and the British monarchy. While there is no specific monarchical figure yet, the court and the feathers decorating aristocratic women's heads there are referenced. As with the figure of Britannia in "Who Shall" print, the ostrich plume conjures a savage place, in this case the land of the Nimiquois, and a savage fondness for ornamentation. By comparing the feather in the African prince's nose to the feathers adorning women's heads at the Court of St. James, the novel criticizes the frivolousness of the institution of the monarchy through its court:

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[132] See Stern, "Rescuing the age,"132–33. The only published account (i.e. not the foreign office reports I referenced earlier) of the trans-Saharan trade that I could find at the turn of the nineteenth century, *Letters Written During a Ten Years' Residence at the Court of Tripoli, 1783–1795*, was not published until 1816. Miss Tully, *Letters Written During a Ten Years' Residence at the Court of Tripoli, 1783–1795*, ed. Caroline Stone (Kilkerran, Scotland: Hardinge Simpole, 2009). Lady Mary Wortley Montagu visits and writes about the city of Tunis, but she does not describe the trade. See Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, ed. Malcolm Jack (London: Virago Press, 2014), 149–151.
[133] Brown, *Fables of Modernity*, 181.
[134] Brown, *Fables of Modernity*, 180.
[135] Brown, *Fables of Modernity*, 207.

> The prince made such a respectable figure with the feather in his nose, and it added so much wisdom to his appearance, that he carried his point and shut up the council for the season to prepare for the hostilities …you must allow that the elegance of *the feather* carries *great sway*; it adds wisdom to the look of the head that was never was troubled with a thought; and dignity and respectability to those who are very widely separated from either.—If *feathers* are so important, and carry so much sway in a court like the English,—think what an impression it must have made, when the prince of the Nimiquois appeared at his council with one as white as the Alpine snow stuck through his nose;—and how wise he must have appeared—and what force and depth his counsels must have acquired by the two of equal length placed in his ears! (274)

The satirical comparison in this passage hinges on the phrase "If *feathers* are so important, and carry so much sway in a court like the English." By 1775, the ostrich plume was an essential court accessory thanks to the Duchess of Devonshire. This was especially true during the Regency Crisis when women wore ostrich plumes in Regency and Restoration Caps throughout London for several months. While these accessories were important political statements, the author of this it-narrative clearly does not think so. The novel uses these accessories to suggest that the court and the monarchy are focused on the wrong subjects. Accessories should *not* carry sway, ideas and policies should. The Nimiquois prince's feather ironizes the idea of feathers as symbols of royal power and draws a comparison between the women at the British court and this African prince. Because the prince is the ruler of a primitive society, he is figured as a "head that was never was troubled with a thought," as a person without "dignity and respectability," and as an ineffectual political leader. He is a savage. However, this feather gives him "sway" as well as thoughts, dignity, and respectability. When

the feather accompanies the prince to a meeting with this neighboring tribe, the feather says, "*My* dignity through his nose crowned him conqueror and extended his sway" (275, my emphasis). Here, the "dignity" embodied in the feather enables the prince to succeed, not a military or political strategy. The idea that a feather could somehow change the course of a negotiation or a war suggests how ridiculous the monarchy's obsession with dress and accessorizing was according to our anonymous author. As Richardson describes, these "savages" bring new "modern values and rationality" to bear "on the older institution, values which frequently found voice in literature on the peripheries of empire, and were troubled and also reinforced by indeterminate figures."[136] The African prince's feather calls the reader's attention to how the British monarchy, instead of governing, is focused on show and luxury as a result of their dress codes regulations. The women adorned with ostrich plumes at court are, thus, no different than the savages who, in Ferguson's words, are "fond of fantastic ornaments" like this prince with a feather in his nose.[137] By using the instability and fluidity of savage and applying it to the British court, the novel forces the reader to question why Britain still has a monarchical government when republican governments were forming in Europe and Europe's former colonies in this period.

In between the foil representations of the Nimiquois prince and Queen Charlotte, the sale of our it-narrator to a British sailor further complicates the already complicated category of savage by bringing in a strand of polygenetic ideas that speaks to the dangers of using "fantastic ornaments" from foreign lands as symbols of the British monarchy. At first, the narrator continues to assess the Nimiquois as British sailors historically did in the first half of the eighteenth century: "in terms of civility, religion, and willingness to trade."[138] The British

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[136] Richardson, *The Savage and the Modern Self*, 47.
[137] Ferguson, *Essay*, 98.
[138] Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave*, 45.

sailor, Captain Dorville, arrives on the coast nearby the village of the Nimiquois "whilst waiting the arrival of a fleet they were to convoy" (275). A tribal council is called to "determine what assistance they could give to the English captain" (275). At this council, Dorville is suddenly possessed with the idea that the feathers in the prince's nose and ears "shall grace my Caroline's head" (275). The prince agrees to an exchange: Dorville gives the Prince "a most excellent hatchet," "a knife, some glass beads, and a bill for lopping branches" for Monsieur feather and his "brethren" (275). Religion and region aside, this so-called savage was willing to trade and help its fellow man and to trade. However, the passage takes a turn when the captain then wraps the it-narrator in dried paper and puts it inside his dress coat against his skin. "In Captain Dorville's chest," the feather continues, "I reposed, and in a great measure recovered my whiteness, which had been a good deal soiled by my attendance on the prince of the Nimiquois' public and *private councils*; for, ladies, there is a good deal of dirt in a council-room" (275). Here the novel starts to deploy some polygenetic thinking. By using the word "recovered," the feather portrays itself as always already white, and appeals to fears about the threat of racial contamination by suggesting that physical proximity to the Nimiquois "soiled" its whiteness. While the Nimiquois's skin color is never mentioned, this passage uses the topography of their climate to identify it— like the heat and sun supposedly responsible for darker complexions, the Nimiquois have "dirt" in their council-rooms, which makes it easy for anyone or anything to become "soiled," including the color of one's skin. Of course, the word "soiled" has larger implications that suggest that physical proximity to the Nimiquois and their "dirty" behaviors puts the feather's virtue in jeopardy too. This second sense of "soiled" appears in the double entendre of "*private councils*" and in the fact that, as a form of government, private councils were considered barbaric. Luckily for Monsieur Feather, Captain Dorville's shirt

cleanses it of the physical traces of the torrid climate of its birth— African dirt— and protects it from the climates of other uncivilized regions during their three years voyage to London. By being "spoiled" by the Nimiquois, if only temporarily, the feather shows how the torrid climate of the African continent, the barbarism of public councils, and the different bodies of the Africans can contaminate other things. This representation of the feather suggests that the importation of imperial commodities could threaten the British sense of the "us" in the us/them paradigm I referred to earlier.[139] Of course, this is particularly worrisome when imperial commodities are transformed into material symbols of British sovereignty, but that kind of instability in the monarchy seems to be exactly what our anonymous authors wants to invoke in this novel.

Although Captain Dorville intends to ornament his fiancé's head with this now bright white feather, this feather instead crowns the head of Queen Charlotte in a profoundly significant plot twist. By placing this feather on the Queen's head, the novel compares her, and through her the British monarchy, to the African prince in a satire that uses the unstable concept of the savage to critique monarchy. When Captain Dorville arrives in London, the Queen requests an inspection of his cargo, which is full of exotic plumes, because he is of a noble family and well known at court. Dorville "laid his treasures at the feet of her majesty" (278). Without being offered the contents, the Queen "graciously" accepts everything in the box as the property of the crown, reflecting not only the manner in which empire operated, but also perhaps the manner in which the monarchy taxed its citizens. Princess Elizabeth finds Monsieur Feather at the bottom: "She condescendingly put her lovely hand into the box, and drew me forth.—Ah! Mine Gote! Exclaimed her majesty, what a superb feader!" (278). The

[139] Makdisi, *Making England Western*, xi.

Queen, whom the author gives a German accent to mark her own foreign birth, promises to wear the "vray pretty tings" at the next drawing room (278).

The next drawing room turns out to be the King's birthday, a day which required attendees to deck out their best clothes with monarchical symbols. The Queen places this "superb feader" in "a prince's plume," or a Regency Cap:

> At length the day arrived when, in honour of his majesty's birth-day, the queen dresses more superbly than usual: I was placed in the middle, with my two brethren on each side, and formed a most splendid prince's plume, ornamented at bottom with a costly bandeau of diamonds. We were the admiration of the drawing-room; and when the captain approached, to have the honour of kissing her majesty's hand, she condescendingly said,—'I hope you admire my vray pretty feaders; I am vray proud of dem.'(278)

Here, the Queen is represented, with an almost ekphrastic quality, on the British throne in a headdress that imitates the centuries-old heraldic badge of English princes. Her accessory is a material manifestation of the monarchy's magnificence and sway, but one that specifies that full-bodied British sovereignty is male.[140] Saree Makdisi suggests that 1790s radicals developed sets of binary oppositions in order to advance their anti-monarchical arguments and distance themselves from conservative evangelicals who critiqued the monarchy for the same reasons: aristocratic luxury and indolence.[141] One of the most important binary oppositions was of the manly citizen and the feminized despot, which pivots on the association between rationality and masculinity: "for Wollstonecraft the seraglio is not just a kind of prison for women, but rather

[140] Unlike the crown, a Regency Cap/Prince of Wales's Plume is gendered because it is a heraldic badge for English Princes, and in this case, refers specifically to the future George IV.
[141] Makdisi, *Blake*, 214–215.

the most appropriate synecdoche for the Orient as a locus of despotism, idleness, femininity, and luxury, those scourges of the decent, virtuous, sober, and 'manly' citizens—male and female—whose rights she aims to vindicate."[142] In a way that recalls Ferguson's description of barbarism, despotism was figured feminine precisely because of its association with luxury, idleness, and show.[143] It was contrasted with the "self awareness, self-knowledge, and self-control" required of the rational "manly" citizenship writers such as Wollstonecraft and Thomas Paine advocated.[144] In conjunction with the category of the savage, I believe that the novel deploys this radical binary here by depicting Queen Charlotte and not her son or husband as the monarchy's representative.

Like the female characters I discuss in earlier chapters, the Queen body's is invisible except for her Prince of Wales's headdress. The Queen's body is metonymically rendered on the page through this male, monarchical symbol because it is a representation of the monarchy that, as a result of its female body, also a representation of despotism. The feathers on her head receive the only spatial descriptors—"I was placed in the middle, with my two brethren on each side"—because the feather is a metonym for both the savage place it came from and also from the savage behavior associated with luxury and despotism. Like the earlier passage in which aristocratic women's heads decorated with ostrich plumes were satirized, this representation of Queen Charlotte emphasizes the frivolousness, luxury, and waste of court events because, to paraphrase Pope, "the various Off'rings of the World appear" on her head.[145] The accessory joins together incredibly expensive imperial objects (diamonds, ostrich plumes, and silk) culled from savage places and indicative of luxury. However, in this passage, the savage behavior is

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[142] Makdisi, *Blake*, 215.
[143] Makdisi, 225.
[144] Makdisi, 226.
[145] Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* ed. Cynthia Wall (New York: Bedford Books, 1998), 1:130.

also despotism. Like its more tedious counterpart the regular drawing room, the birthday drawing room is an arbitrary exercise of power over the lives of citizens by virtue of the fact that it is mandatory for aristocrats, ministers, and courtiers. It is a party ordered by royal decree. The feather's status as a double metonym for royalty and savagery collapses the distinction between the two categories and instead calls attention to how Queen Charlotte is no different than the feather's previous owner, the prince of the Nimiquois, because they both share the savage fondness for "vray pretty feaders." By representing Queen Charlotte as just as savage as the prince of the Nimiquois, the novel critiques the British monarchy's luxury and despotism.

In addition to satirizing the monarchy for their savagery, this representation either makes an ironic or a satiric commentary on Queen's Charlotte's political participation. Since the newspapers recorded Queen Charlotte's hatred for Regency Caps in particular and ostrich plumes in general, this representation of her is exceptionally strange. The Regency Cap expresses support for the Prince of Wales's claims to be Regent in light of his father's illness. So, unless Queen Charlotte is adorning herself with the exact bandeau from the March 1789 Restoration drawing room that spelled out "God Save the King" in diamonds, the Queen is sporting an accessory that supports her son's claims to the crown on his living father's birthday. Considering that the Queen waged war against the Whig ladies for wearing the same accessory, I have to imagine that the anonymous author of this novel thought it would be funny to immortalize the Queen in print in the accessory she hated or that he/she wanted to fictionally punish her for ordering Restoration Caps worn at court—that is, for luxurious and despotic behavior. It is possible the author also wanted to signal his or her support for the Prince Regent specifically. Even though this novel is set before the Regency, George, Prince of

Wales, was named Prince Regent the year before this novel's publication, 1811.[146] Regardless of the author's intent, this representation evokes the Queen's invention of the Restoration Cap and shows her as a political actor in her own right. It illuminates her otherwise overlooked roles in the Regency Crisis, as well as the consumer demand that sustained the trans-Saharan slave trade. It speaks to how women's participation in the British imperial project was often the result of internalizing the gendered codes of conduct that supposedly made Britain the greatest civilization on earth, that expected women to adorn themselves with symbols and spoils.

While adorning the Queen's head, our it-narrator learns secrets of state and sex at court. In fact, Monsieur Feather, almost as if aware of its ability to metonymically represent the Queen's body and support for the Prince Regent simultaneously, begins to see itself as part of the royal body. By transforming a metonym for the African continent into a piece of the royal body, the novel critiques the basis for monarchy, divine right theory:

> It so happened that I was left at St. James's, with some dresses of the queen's where her wardrobe was broken open, and I was stolen, with various articles of wearing appeal—I cannot tell who it was that perpetrated the horrid deed; for it was little short of sacrilege. It was *touching*, and *taking*, from sacred royalty; therefore it was sacrilege; for, who will be bold enough to affirm, that kings and queens are not *holy*, or are not sacred? They can do no wrong; and therefore approach pretty near to the Great Being who

[146] Lupton, the editor, acknowledging some anachronisms, dates the plot of the novel to 1810–11. However, after the feather leaves the Court of St. James, it ends up in the possession of a nameless duchess who is almost certainly the Duchess of Devonshire. The Duchess of Devonshire had been immortalized in endless visual and written satires as a gambling, drinking, flirting, feather-wearing Duchess by 1812 so that I cannot imagine that this character could be anyone else. Additionally, the novel seems to makes reference to the Duke and Duchess's scandalous marriage, so it seems likely that this unnamed Duchess is her. Because the Duchess of Devonshire died in 1806, the novel has to be set before that event and after the turn of the century, which is when the feather claims to have arrived in London. Lupton, ed., introduction to *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather of Quality*, 3:273.

> never does wrong, but who is *all* right: therefore, with your leave, ladies, I call it sacrilege to touch unbidden, any thing appertaining to the divine right of kings and queens—even so much as a *flannel dickey*. (279)

Building on the description of the queen in her Regency Cap, the feather figures itself as part of her royal body: it sees itself as "any thing appertaining to the divine right of kings and queens." The feather feels it has been divinely consecrated by physical contact with the Queen. This is because, as the feather declares, the Queen "[approaches] pretty near to the Great Being who never does wrong, but who is *all* right." She can "do no wrong" because she is a god on earth. As a result, this theft was no mere theft; it was equivalent to "*touching*" the Queen's royal body. Drawing on and possibly also satirizing Edmund Burke's fictional representation of Marie Antoinette's empty bed being "pierced" by "bayonets and poinards" during the 1789 Women's March in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), [147] the theft of the feather is portrayed as a violation, a rape of sorts: "It was *touching*, and *taking*" something without consent. It is "sacrilege." Like Burke, our it-narrator ironically "pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird."[148] Unlike Burke, however, our it-narrator's hysterical reaction to this theft is meant to signal the absurdity of this theory. The reaction of the Douglas sisters, the audience of the feather's history, to this rant insinuates how insignificant this theory has become to some by the turn of the nineteenth century: "The ladies bow assent to the feather; for though they had attended *many* lectures, they did not remember ever hearing any on the divine right of kings and queens" (279). Moreover, by making a metonym for savagery a part of the royal body, the novel makes royalty seem all too human. As an "indicator for the slippage between human and

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[147] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 164.
[148] Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man," in *The Thomas Paine Reader* ed. Michael Foot and Isaac Kramnick (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), 213.

beast," the feather materializes a comparison between human bodies and animals that contradicts the idea of divinity. How could something that evokes a place with an economy based on hunting or shepherding, unorganized government, and a climate that drives its inhabitants alternatively to excess and indolence be the physical manifestation of a divine right to rule? This representation literalizes the novel's earlier critiques. The feather's association with the African continent and savage behavior of despotism contaminates the supposedly divine royal body, collapsing the difference between the king's two bodies. By showing the royal body as something that can be violated and that can become despotic, this critique of monarchy prompts questions about why Britain relies on one body to rule in the first place.[149]

Conclusion

The movement from the periphery to the metropole in *The Adventures of an Ostrich Feather* highlights the ways that the Regency Cap, or the Prince of Wales's Plume, unites imperial and court politics, showing how British imperial expansion underpinned and would continue to underpin the policies and institutions of the nation, the British "us," into the nineteenth century. It illustrates the ways that the category of the savage could be used against existing political institutions and the emerging conception of Britishness: the figure of the African savage, like Richardson's Native Americans, "[provides] fundamental and specific challenges to British subjectivity, rather than a reinforcement of imperial fantasy."[150] While they are used for the purposes of satire in this novel, the Regency Cap, and the specter of its foil the Restoration Cap, are evidence of women's political participation at the turn of the nineteenth century, as it allowed women like the Duchess of Devonshire and Queen Charlotte to contribute, and in some ways, to lead public discussion of political events. All three of these

[149] Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*, 140.
[150] Richardson, *The Savage and the Modern Self*, 82.

points are part of a history that lead to Camilla Parker Bowles Windsor, Duchess of Cornwall, owning and wearing two different Prince of Wales's Plume brooches to signify, perhaps in her own critique of the monarchy's antiquated rules, that although she is not the Princess of Wales, she is married to the Prince: one with diamond feathers held together at the bottom with a gray pearl and a diamond cluster that she has held since the 1990s and an heirloom with gold feathers surrounded by diamonds and an emerald drop that was given to Queen Alexandra in 1863 as a wedding gift.[151] While the accessory is no longer fashionable, this potent political symbol lives on.

[151]"Bejeweled Prince of Wales Feathers," The Court Jeweler, November 14, 2018, http://www.thecourtjeweller.com/2018/11/bejeweled-prince-of-wales-feathers.html

Conclusion

The eighteenth-century political accessory noticeably absent from the previous pages is the *bonnet rouge* or liberty cap. In 1792, the *bonnet rouge* became a national republican emblem and accessory in France, particularly in the aftermath of it being forced on the heads of the captive king and queen at the Tuileries Palace on June 20th.[1] While it was never instituted as a mandatory accessory for citizens like the tricolor cockade, it appeared on the heads of citizens, citizenesses, political officials, and civic officials across France until the fall of Robespierre and the Jacobins.[2] As a symbol, the liberty cap is said to originate in the red Phrygian caps Roman slaves were given as a sign of their liberty, though historians question the cap's classical origins now.[3] Even though the cap of liberty was a "badge and piece of political vocabulary subscribed to by a heterogeneous set of people for different reasons," it became a metonym for Jacobinism worldwide.[4] The red cap was transported across the Channel and worn by women and men in English political demonstrations, particularly the reform meeting in Manchester on August 16th, 1819 that became the massacre known as Peterloo.[5]

In spite of its ubiquity in late eighteenth-and early nineteenth-century British political prints, liberty caps are, to the best of my knowledge, rare in novels. In fact, the most evocative literary representation of a liberty cap I could find is from 1859:

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[1] James A. Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 78, and Richard Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (New York: Berg, 2002), 150.
[2] Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 59, and Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances*, 158–160, 163–164.
[3] Wrigley questions the relationship between liberty caps and Phrygian caps because he has yet to find "an eighteenth-century source which identifies the Phrygian cap as signifying liberty." For more on this question, see Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances*, 136–142.
[4] Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances*, 163.
[5] Epstein, *Radical Expression*, 72, 85–92, and M.L. Bush, "The Women at Peterloo: The Impact of Female Reform on the Manchester Meeting of 16 of August 1819," *History* 89, no.2 (August 2004): 209–232.

> Such a heart Madam Defarge carried under her rough robe. Carelessly worn, it was a becoming enough robe, in a certain weird way, and her dark hair looked rich under her coarse red cap. Lying hidden in her bosom, was a loaded pistol. Lying hidden in her waist, was a sharpened dagger. Thus accoutered, and walking with the confident tread of such a character, and with the supple freedom of a woman who had habitually walked in her girlhood, bare-foot and bare-legged, on the brown sea-sand, Madame Defarge took her way along the streets.[6]

Here, in the chapter of *A Tale of Two Cities* entitled, "The Knitting Done," Charles Dickens represents the most infamous knitter in British literature, Madame Defarge, in a *bonnet rouge* on her way to capture the wife and daughter of Charles Darnay and to introduce the entire family to *Madame La Guillotine*. In this passage, Dickens clearly presents the liberty cap as an "ensign of French anarchy" and "the sign under which the Jacobins had orchestrated the Terror of 1793."[7] It is a symbol of the radical upheaval of political, class, and gender hierarchies. Madame Defarge is ornamented with the essential accessories of that upheaval: a red liberty cap, a loaded pistol, and a sharpened dagger. She is not only entitled but expected to use the pistol and dagger against "her natural enemies and her prey": aristocrats and monarchists.[8] Her cap is, of course, "coarse" to signify that it is made of wool and not a bourgeois fabric like silk.[9] She is described as a woman "absolutely without pity," practically thirsting for the blood she wants to see spilled as a form of entertainment. She asks her friend, a woman known as The Vengeance, to save her "usual seat" near the guillotine until she arrives with the descendants of

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[6] Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, ed. Andrew Sanders (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 347.
[7] Epstein, *Radical Expression*, 72–73, 85.
[8] Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 347.
[9] Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, 75.

Evrémonde whose family line she is hell-bent on wiping out.[10] Significantly, she also leaves her famous knitting needles with her friend, presumably so she can knit during the execution.

Dickens's representation of a liberty cap illustrates the changes in literary and political representation between the Augustan and the Victorian periods, particularly for women. Over the course of this project, I have argued that the novel imitates the metonymic political representation of women as a result of the requirements of formal realism. While the style of literary representation changed from the early eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth as a result of description moving from something that asks readers to "fill out" spaces "with particular meaning" to something that asks readers to see familiar things, there is still a close relationship between the two forms.[11] It is, however, a different relationship. As a result of these changes in description, a single object no longer metonymically describes the bodies of female characters on the page. Literature makes women more visible with more details and more things. Conversely, women, as I will explain shortly, were even more hidden in the nineteenth-century political system than they were before. However, the novel still speaks to women's metonymic political representation through its description of accessories. Unlike the female characters I discussed in earlier chapters, Defarge has a "heart," "hair," "bosom," "waist," as well as legs and feet. However, the accessories that decorate these body parts—a liberty cap, dagger, and pistol—still metonymically evoke particular political ideologies as well as historical situations in which women used such accessories to participate because they were, or were not, formally recognized as part of an institution or system. As a working-class woman, these accessories conjure the struggles for equity that prompted the Revolution. However, they also speak to how, for all her service in the Revolution, Defarge would still be considered a "passive citizen"

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[10] Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, 346.
[11] Cynthia Sundberg Wall's *The Prose of Things: Transformations of Description in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 7–12.

under French law.[12] The novel's continued dedication to formal realism in the nineteenth century results in women's accessories still metonymically signaling their accessoriness.

Madame Defarge in a liberty cap also offers a different perspective on women as political actors. Whereas the first three novels I discussed were largely accepting of the idea of women as political actors so long as they conformed to gender and class roles, the fourth marked a turning point in this project by satirizing women for wearing ostrich plumes as part of their class roles at court. Forty-seven years later, Dickens' novel presents women as political actors in an exceptionally unflattering light. Defarge is the literary embodiment of "French Liberty" in Thomas Rowlandson's "The Contrast 1792": a murderous Medusa with two liberty caps, and one head, on a pike. [Fig.1] Her friend proudly bears a name that is effectively the opposite of the ideological construction of Victorian women as Angels in the House: "The Vengeance." While it is an extreme example, Dickens's representation insinuates that women's entrance into the political system will inevitably and permanently unsex, declass, and degrade them. Between Madam De Fautmille and Madame Defarge, the novel— in keeping with formal realism—shows signs of moving from the acceptance and/or satire of women political actors who operate *in public* to the critique of them.[13] Whereas eighteenth-



Figure 1: Detail of Thomas Rowlandson's The Contrast 1792, 1792, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library.

[12] Joan Wallach Scott, *Only Paradoxes to* Offer*: French Feminists and the Rights of Men* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 33, 43, and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Citizens All? Citizens Some! The Making of the Citizen," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 4 (2003): 651–654.

[13]While I certainly have not read every novel after 1832, I have only been able to come up with three British novels that actually depict women *publicly* engaging in traditional politics before

century Britons believed women were capable of performing the roles the political system needed them to fill without too much damage to the system or themselves, Dickens's novel reflects how women's *public* participation in politics had become significantly less acceptable by 1859.

While Dickens' critique is partially due to the twin revolutionary specters of the Terror and Peterloo—events that both involved women— it is also partially due to the fact that the question of women's participation in politics was no longer just a question of "should"; it was also a question of "how." Prior to and concurrent with women's formal exclusion from the franchise in 1832, there were changes to women's property rights, reforms to the electoral system, a move from a political model based on family units to individuals, and new

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1900: Maria Edgeworth's *Helen* (1834), Margaret Oliphant's *Miss Majoribanks* (1866), and Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South* (1854). Although they are not as extreme as Dicken's *A Tale of Two Cities*, these novels do not find women's *public* participation in politics acceptable. As I discussed in chapter three, Edgeworth insisted on the line between women's private influence and public interference in politics, calling women who wander into inference a word that suits Madam Defarge: "furies." The novel's female politician, Lady Davenant, works to advance her husband's political career from home. In *Miss Majoribanks*, the titular character runs an electoral campaign by herself and even wears party accessories. However, the campaign operates as part of the novel's female Quixote satire, in which Miss Majoribanks's need to control everything is lovingly satirized. Her participation is not unacceptable, but it's not acceptable either. She also gives it up after her marriage. In Gaskell's *North and South* (1854), Margaret Hale's attempts at public political action—preventing a strike at a Northern English cotton mill—backfire when a striking worker throws a rock at her and draws blood. Precisely because of the threat of moral reprimand and violence, I've found, in my reading experience, that Victorian novels with female protagonists engage with political ideologies more than actions or events. While Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) includes the arguments of Chartists and imperialists, Jane does not act on them. Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) includes discussions, but no representations, of the Chartist movement, in which women had a role. Like the women I discuss in chapter one, Lizzie Eustace in Anthony Trollope's *The Eustace Diamonds* (1871) uses a woman's right to paraphernalia in her favor; however, it is very clear from the beginning that readers are not supposed to find the behavior of this vain woman acceptable. George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (1872) is built on Dorothea's "vague yearning" for a higher calling, which she tries to fulfill by community planning rather than traditional political action. In fact, Eliot's argument is that women struggle because they do not have access to the kind of public positions that could serve as vehicles of fulfillment for their vague yearnings. I have no doubt that there are other Victorian representations of women political actors out there, but I suspect that the Victorian novel's interest in domesticity either positions that participation in the home or critiques it on the basis of stricter gender roles if it's in public.

expectations for the female gender role that made it difficult for women to be overt political actors as they were in the previous century.[14] Even more so than before, they were relegated to political culture, as these changes pushed women out of the small roles they held in political institutions. Whether the cause was an election or universal male suffrage, women's political efforts were determined by stricter gender and class roles, which were conceived and enforced by the ideology of domesticity I discussed in the introduction, and relied heavily on the rhetoric of republican motherhood developed at the turn of the nineteenth century by writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft.[15] They had to move their work on the hustings behind checked curtains. They were no longer able to serve as *public* political actors without possibly incurring moral reprimands or inciting violence.[16] However, they were still able to express their politics in

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[14] See Staves's *Married Women's Separate Property* for a detailed exploration of the transition from dowers to jointures and the negative impact of conveyancers on women's property rights. As I discussed in chapter one, women's rights to separate estates were also hampered by restraints on anticipation, which were created in the 1790s. Staves *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660–1833* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 27–130, 153. See Chalus's *Elite Women in English Political Life* for an explanation of how English women lost their electoral privileges in the Reform Act of 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835. Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754–1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 25, 36. See Lewis's *Sacred to Female Patriotism* for an explanation of how women were gradually transitioned out of the social political roles they held in relation to elections and Parliament and how politics transitioned from a family model to an individual model. Lewis, *Sacred to Female Patriotism: Gender, Class, and Politics in Late Georgian Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 95–126.

[15] Women were very active in the Chartist movement that fought for universal male suffrage. They usually declared their motives were motherhood (particularly the education of children) and working-class oppression that prevented women from fulfilling their maternal and domestic duties, but they also pointed toward historical woman political figures and their female monarch as evidence of their capability to participate. While they tried to present themselves as republican mothers in public, they also participated in riots, which harmed their cause and individual reputations. See Julia Schwarzkopf's *Women in the Chartist Movement* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 89–122, 182–186.

[16] Suffragettes turned this very real threat of violence into an effective strategy. Before the movement took a militant turn, Emmeline Pankhurst reputedly advised women "to use no violence, but rather to offer ourselves to the violence of others." See Emmeline Pankhurst quoted in Jon Lawrence, "Contesting the Male Polity: The Suffragettes and the Politics of Disruption in Edwardian Britain" in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, ed. Amanda Vickery (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 215.

public by way of the visual economy of political symbolism that the previous century had developed into the appropriately feminized objects of caps, cockades, sashes, and ribbons.

The advent of experimental styles in the modernist and postmodernist novel signifies a turn away from the formal realism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and make it less likely that novels would record the minute details of women's political accessorizing. In Virginia Woolf's *The Years* (1937), for example, we get second-hand sarcastic references to, rather than full representations of, women's political activity in the figure of Rose as a result of the novel's experiments with time and consciousness. Rose, a suffragette, is allegedly force-fed in prison after throwing a brick through a window and she later earns a "decoration" for her efforts—which are never specified— during the Great War. [17] In spite of the novel's departure from formal realism, women continued to wear accessories to call attention to their various forms of accessoriness in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The contradiction I have been exploring in this project, women's inclusion in political culture and historical exclusion from political institutions, has produced a centuries-old tradition of women's political accessorizing. At the turn of the twentieth century, women used the visual economy of political accessories they inherited to demand access to political institutions, as well as to free political institutions from colonization. In both cases, accessories allowed women to protest their status as second-class citizens. Accessories were essential to the spectacular guerilla tactics of the suffrage movement. In addition to the sashes of their cause that I discussed in my conclusion to chapter one, accessories also "enabled and abetted their protest" as the story of Mrs. G.C. attests:

> 'Mrs. G.C., dressed like a fashion plate, stepped out of her car at the side gate that leads to [Westminster] Abbey. She entered with superb dignity and mingled with the

[17] Virginia Woolf, *The Years* (New York: Harcourt, 1969), 232, 359.

> sightseers who were there…Well, she stood round admiring the architecture until the tourists had moved off; and then she took a tiny bomb from her muff, tossed it with rather poor aim in the direction of the Coronation Chair—and the Stone of Scone has lost one its corners. With an air of quiet self-possession she left the chapel and the Abbey and approached the gate. Here she was greeted by a polite policeman who offered to call her a car. She smiled agreeably, tipped the bobbie handsomely, and drove off quite unruffled.'[18]

Precisely because Mrs. G.C. was "dressed like a fashion plate," no one questioned her motives for being in the Abbey. She looked like a proper lady, not one who is intent on destroying two of Great Britain's oldest symbols. The muff's cylindrical shape, moreover, enabled her to hide the bomb that she used to damage the Stone of Scone. Accessories were also essential to the Easter Rising, in which Irish women fought to free their country from English colonization. The auxiliary group of the Irish Republican Army, *Cumann na mBann*, wore brooches with the initials of their organization intertwined with a rifle on their green uniforms while they served as snipers, carried dispatches, and nursed male soldiers Easter week 1916.[19] One of the women wearing the green uniform and rifle brooch Easter week was Countess Constance Markievicz: a sniper in charge of 120 men who surrendered by kissing her revolver and handing it over to a

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[18] Wendy Parkins, "'The Epidemic of Purple, White, and Green': Fashion and the Suffragette Movement in Britain 1908–1914," in *Fashioning the Body Politic: Dress, Gender, and Citizenship*, ed. Wendy Parkins (New York: Berg, 2002), 107; and Annie Kenney quoted in Parkins, " 'The Epidemic of Purple, White, and Green,'" 114.

[19] Sinéad McCoole, *No Ordinary Women: Irish Female Activists in the Revolutionary Years 1900–1923* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 28–56.

British officer, and who would go on to be the first woman elected to British Parliament after campaigning from her cell in Holloway Prison.[20]

After women were enfranchised and elected to legislatures in the United Kingdom and the United States, accessories became essential to feminist movements that explicitly advocated for reforms to fix the imbalance of power, rights, and representation that resulted from women's historical exclusion from political institutions. In the 1970s, American women distributed and wore bright green buttons with "ERA YES" in white letters. These buttons supported an amendment suffragette Alice Paul drafted in 1923 known as the Equal Rights Amendment—which intends to rectify women's absence from the Constitution and the legal double standards that result from it by writing equal rights into the country's legal framework—that Congress had passed in 1972. The amendment needed 38 states to ratify it into law; however, attempts at state ratification failed.[21] It is the dearest wish of famed feminist lawyer and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (affectionately known as "Notorious RBG") to "take out her pocket constitution" and point to the ERA, but for now she settles on accessorizing her decisions.[22] Justice Ginsburg wears a specific studded black velvet jabot, or

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[20] After her election, Markievicz refused to take her seat or recognize the authority of the British government in keeping with Sinn Féin policy. See Christina McSorley, "First woman MP Markievicz honoured in Parliament," *BBC News*, July 18, 2018, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43176232, and Louise Ryan, "'Furies' and 'Die-hards': Women and Irish Republicanism in the Early Twentieth Century," *Gender & History* 11, no.2 (July 1999): 260–261.

[21] Susan Chira, "Do American Women Still Need an Equal Rights Amendment?" *New York Times*, February 16, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/sunday-review/women-equal-rights-amendment.html; Anna North, "Why women are wearing 'ERA Yes' buttons at the State of the Union," *Vox*, February 5, 2019, https://www.vox.com/2019/2/5/18213072/era-yes-state-of-the-union-equal-rights-amendment; Maya Salam, "What Is the Equal Rights Amendment, and Why Are We Talking About It Now?" *New York Times*, February 22, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/22/us/equal-rights-amendment-what-is-it.html; "Chronology of the Equal Rights Amendment, 1923-1996, National Organization of Women, https://now.org/resource/chronology-of-the-equal-rights-amendment-1923-1996/.

[22] Ginsburg quoted in Chira, "Do American Women Still Need an Equal Rights Amendment?" *New York Times*.

collar, when she delivers or signs on to a dissenting opinion.[23] Justice Ginsburg, along with the first woman Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, invented the collar because it was "something typical of a woman" that would fill the place for a shirt and tie in a justice's robes.[24] In her book, *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box*, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright explains why she adopted political accessorizing for reasons similar to Ginsburg and O'Connor: "Because many of my predecessors had beards and none was to known to wear a skirt, my use of pins to send a message was something new in American diplomacy."[25] While her accessorizing was not new in the history of politics, the glittering gold and glass pin Albright wore at the Democratic National Convention in July 2016 certainly was, as it illustrated her support for then Democratic nominee for President, Hillary Clinton, who she hoped would shatter the glass ceiling by becoming the nation's first woman president. [26] As the nation's first woman nominee for a major U.S. political party, she certainly put a dent in it. At present, there are six women running for President of the United States in this election cycle.

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[23] Chloe Fouissanes, "Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Collars Decoded: What Each Neckpiece Means," *Town and Country*, November 30, 2018,https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/politics/a25362496/ruth-bader-ginsburg-collar-meaning/; "Justice Ginsburg Exhibits Her Famous Collar Collection," Interview by Katie Couric, Yahoo! News, July 31, 2014, video, https://www.yahoo.com/news/video/justice-ginsburg-exhibits-her-famous-194517521.html?ref=gs.

[24] Chloe Fouissanes, "Ruth Bader Ginsburg's Collars Decoded," *Town and Country.*

[25] Madeleine Albright, *Read My Pins: Stories from a Diplomat's Jewel Box* (New York: Melcher Media, 2009), 23.

[26] Jamie Feldman, "Madeleine Albright's Glass Ceiling Brooch Just Shattered The Internet," *Huffington Post*, July 28, 2016, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/madeleine-albright-brooch-glass-ceiling-pin_n_579aa5d0e4b0e2e15eb5476a.

Despite living in a world where feminism is so mainstream that Beyoncé performs in front of the term at a concert and it appears on t-shirts in stores worldwide, women are still in need of accessories to call attention to how legal and political systems place them in a position of accessoriness.[27] Though it has been shifted toward equity, the discrepancy in power, rights, and representation between women and men remains. In the past three years, the "ERA YES" buttons have returned in the United States as two more states have ratified the amendment. Across the world, women have refashioned the sashes of first-wave feminism to bear the intersectional messages of what must be fourth-wave feminism—the Women's March and #MeToo movements—such as "Against Hate" and "Believe Women." Since January 21, 2017, women have adorned their heads with the pussyhats I described in my conclusion to chapter two. [Fig.2] While this accessory is fraught for good reason, the way it conveys its message—women deserve full control over their bodies—in knit incorporates the historical tradition of "women's work," in which women sewed, knitted, and embroidered alongside each other and passed these skills to their daughters.[28] It harkens back to the accessories I discussed in the introduction: the hand-



Figure 2: Personal Photograph of Women's March, January 21, 2017.

[27] For more on "Beyoncé feminism" or "marketplace feminism" and how it distracts from feminist causes, see Andi Zeisler, *We Were Feminists Once: From Riot GRRRL to Covergirl, the Buying and Selling of a Political Movement* (New York: Public Affairs, 2016).

[28] Although the Pussyhat Project's website suggests that all women can wear pussyhats and that the color pink was chosen for its stereotypical association for femininity, some women have

made cockades and sashes of political parties, rebellions, and reform movements in the long eighteenth century. All three of these new, contemporary accessories derive from the visual economy developed by women political actors in history.

As this brief catalogue of women's historical and contemporary political accessories suggests, women have resorted to this sociopolitical strategy as a result of their inclusion in political culture and historical exclusion from political institutions. While in many ways women have progressed, women will continue to use this strategy until the effects of women's historical exclusion—underrepresentation in and under protection by political institutions—are rectified. The arsenal of political accessories women have built over the past three centuries will arm us in the fights still to come.

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dropped the accessory because they believe the double entendre of pussy excludes trans-women and women of color. See Jayna Zweiman, The Pussyhat Project, https://www.pussyhatproject.com/faq, and Kristen Jordan Shamus, "Pink pussyhats: The reasons feminists are ditching them," *Detroit Free Press*, January 10, 2018, https://www.freep.com/story/news/2018/01/10/pink-pussyhats-feminists-hats-womens-march/1013630001/.

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