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High drama at the Little Theatre, 1730–1737: Henry Fielding, Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Charke, and company. (Volumes I and II)

Fields, Polly Stevens, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1992

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HIGH DRAMA AT THE LITTLE THEATRE, 1730-1737: HENRY FIELDING, ELIZA HAYWOOD, CHARLOTTE CHARKE, AND COMPANY

Volume I

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

The Department of English

by

Polly Stevens Fields
B.S., Vanderbilt University, 1978
M.A., The University of Mississippi, 1989

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PREFACE

This dissertation on the playwrights at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket and their protest dramas during the period 1730-1737 began as a study of the works of Eliza Haywood, eighteenth-century dramatist, novelist, essayist, poet, editor, and actress. I planned to include a chapter on Haywood's activities in the theatre, not only evaluating her plays, but also considering her appearances in Henry Fielding's most provocative dramas produced at the Little Theatre just before the 1737 Licensing Act. I decided to enlarge the scope of my study for two basic reasons.

First, the dramatic career of Haywood points to a larger pattern in operation at the Little Theatre beginning around 1730, and one in which she participated as member of a group, along with Henry Fielding, Charlotte Charke, George Lillo, Henry Carey, Samuel Johnson of Chester, and William Hatchett, as the principal writers. Viewed as an entity, their works challenge a society where gender and class dictate destiny.

Second, the social protest dramas at the Little Theatre seem to be little served by past and present criticism. When these playwrights are mentioned at all, current criticism views them as isolated failures hanging
around the stage because there was no place left to go; they are dismissed as "rogue writers" who were lucky for a time to have Fielding in their midst at the wretched Little Theatre. Suffering the same fate as their playhouse, these particular writers, even Fielding, have received scant attention for their dramatic activities during the crucial period just before the Licensing Act closed London's only venues for politicized dramas. Fielding's presence is mentioned usually as a small indication of things to come, and his work as a playwright is regarded as an apprenticeship for his successes as a novelist. Critics such as Martin Battestin, Robert Hume, and J. Paul Hunter examine Fielding's plays as a cause of the Licensing Act, but they treat the works in isolation, without placing him in the context of fellow dramatists working and writing at the same theatre.

As for the others, Haywood, Charke, Lillo, Carey, Johnson of Chester, and Hatchett have never been viewed as part of a movement, nor have their works been analyzed for political content, beyond an anti-Walpole stance, in the case of Carey. Living as a woman writer, a mother to two illegitimate children, a mistress of one of the Little Theatre playwrights, Haywood is usually remembered, if at all, as the scarlet woman excoriated by Pope in the Dunciad. George Lillo, who knew and wrote first-hand about the winners and losers in the mercantile system, has
been recalled only for his limited innovations in domestic tragedies and his influence on later playwrights, especially Ibsen and Shaw. The third writer who gained a modicum of notoriety, Charlotte Charke has attracted attention for all the wrong reasons, such as her well-known transvestisms, and not for the social and political statements that Charke as a male/female incorporated in her dramas. Although Henry Carey never achieved any distinction and was a has-been long before he hanged himself, his plays utilizing the ballad-opera format convey subtle delineations of a social order determined by money, blood, and gender. The madness of the actor Samuel Johnson of Chester seems to have blocked any real critical consideration of what he was saying as playwright. Together with the obscure William Hatchett, the writers I have mentioned provide dramatically distinctive views of eighteenth-century Britain, for they were themselves outcasts, marginalized by the same prejudices over gender, class, and caste that their dramas unfold.

Because my argument deals with issues which include gender, it is important to determine from the start the definition of feminism as this work employs it. Any attempt to apply in retrospect twentieth-century notions on the eighteenth century, however, would seem to disregard ingrained cultural givens. For instance, I do not suggest here that equality between the sexes is part
of the dramatized views on gender held by the writers under study, any more than I claim that the playwrights to protest class entitlement advocate the overthrow of social institutions. I do propose, however, that these playwrights deal with human problems caused by social biases over class and gender; further, I define the dramatists as feminist in their approaches because their plays all include at dramatic center one or more women among the disenfranchised. Especially, the dramas depict society through an examination of its treatment of women as women, with problems peculiar to their sex and different from those of lower class males. Aside from the effects of departmentalization, such as education, designed to keep in their places all women and and poor men, the latter in the plays nonetheless possess hope and at least a few opportunities simply because they are men. Although only servants, writers, or other low-paid workers, they are employed and may advance, in wealth and power. Men may take part in a money economy denied to women, and even simple public acts, like walking abroad, eating at a tavern, going to a play alone, and meeting friends are available to even the lowest of men, but not to any woman especially the highest socially. Only the lowest of women could go abroad alone, but ironically her purpose in doing so involved selling herself, which, along with theatre work, was one of the few ways for a woman to
earn wages. Because British laws forbade a woman to possess wealth in her own name, money was not really any sort of determiner of women, in spite of the fact that a few upperclass women, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, rose above the usual restraints on the female sex. In the dramas under consideration, women characters, except the actresses, do not assume they have rights over their own persons and know that ultimately they must carry out the dictates of the controlling male. Each of the dramas deals with gender deprivation in addition to issues of caste and class, and each includes one woman of wit and fire who defies social expectations and fights, usually in vain, to control her own life. Depicting a society of women existing as a subculture in the dominant world, these plays employ a heroine as part of a female group who acknowledge the truths of their situations.

We must not ignore the feminist stances in these particular dramas just because they do not meet twentieth-century definitions of feminism. Haywood and Charke present dramatically politicized plays about women, while Carey, Lillo, Johnson, and Hatchett tend to depict the political and economic ceiling of the class system, as well as gender deprivation. Not all the misogynist works that they have been depicted, Fielding’s dramas draw heavily from both gender and class issues, and he creates multilayered plays that exceed mere political satire. All
the playwrights, however, have constructed their dramas and their dramatic activities at the Little Theatre around the issue of social deprivation and the problem of empowerment.

My own theories about the individual members of the group involve some biographical material which impacts on the individual writer's political stance or dramatic purpose. I have tried not to force conclusions because evidence in the form of pertinent letters and specific references to the Little Theatre writers is quite slender indeed, with the exception of information from Charlotte Charke's autobiography and Thomas Davies's brief biography of Lillo. Fielding, Haywood, and the others apparently were obsessive in destroying revelatory personal documents. Although Charlotte Charke is seemingly open in her autobiography about her relations with her father, Colley Cibber, and her lesbian lovers, she is inexplicably silent about Fielding, Haywood, and the rest, in spite of her involvement as playwright, actor, and actress at the Little Theatre for most of the eight years under consideration. While much material obtains about other aspects of Fielding's life, knowledge of his theatre years is based less on fact than speculation, arising from dedications, epilogues, prologues for Fielding's own plays and those he wrote for other playwrights, in addition to a few letters and his later essays in the Champion. For
that reason among others, I have tried to avoid
overloading my dissertation with Fielding, at the expense
of his fellow writers. The two chapters I devote to him
and his work result from the sheer number of his dramas
produced at the Little Theatre.

The first chapter opens with an overview of stage
censorship, patented theatres, as well as a survey of
criticism about the Little Theatre and its playwrights.
Following which, the chapter is divided in three parts
with Part I trying to provide historical background and an
evaluation of financial and social forces on the
eighteenth-century theatre. Part II surveys London’s
theatrical environment produced by the three major
playhouses and the minor ones, along with the tradition of
monarchical prerogative and theatre patents. The appendix
for chapter one provides numerical tables of plays
produced at the Drury Lane, Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, and
Covent Garden theatres, for the eight years under study,
first, because the productions at the patented theatres
defined the bounds of the dramatic establishment which the
Little Theatre resisted, and, second, because plays at the
patent theatres reflected social, political, and economic
forces which the Little Theatre confronted. With the
small playhouse the focus and symbol of the protests
within, I present an analysis of productions at the Little
Theatre apart from studies of the other playhouses, and

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supply in chapter notes acting rosters for the years under study. I have drawn data for the study from Scouten's *The London Stage*, Part Three, from Nicoll's "Handlist of Plays," in *A History of English Drama 1660-1800*, in addition to the archives of the Theatre Museum of The Victoria and Albert Museum, and from contemporary newspapers held by the Bodleian. The introduction concludes with Part III, which incorporates the history of the Little Theatre, as well as an evaluation of government interference with the playwrights under study. Investigation of the playhouse ends with a numerical presentation of all the Little Theatre productions by the playwrights under study, season by season.

Chapters two and three pertain in the first instance to critical views and to Fielding's life and politics as they relate to the years 1729-37; chapter three examines textually his dramas that premiered at the Little Theatre between 1729 and 1737, namely, *The Author's Farce* and *The Pleasures of the Town*, *Tom Thumb; or The Tragedy of Tragedies*, *Rape Upon Rape* [*The Coffee-House Politicians*], *The Letter Writers*, *The Grub Street Opera* [*The Welsh Opera*], *Pasquin*, *Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds*, *The Historical Register of 1736*, and *Eurydice Hiss'd*. I attempt to reevaluate Fielding's image as a misogynist and to define his protest against gendered power.
Chapter four analyzes Eliza Haywood’s life and work as dramatist, and the nature of her political activism as a member of the company. I review pertinent biographical information to aid consideration of Haywood as writer and social pariah. Her plays contain the essence of her politics and, although my study relates to the 1729-1737 period, I include all of Haywood’s known plays, from 1721 to 1733, as the means of establishing her social criticism. The chapter, therefore, includes textual analysis of The Fair Captive (1721), A Wife to be Lett (1724), Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh (1729), and The Opera of Operas (1733). In addition, I consider all of Haywood’s work as an actress at the Little Theatre in the plays of Henry Fielding, William Hatchett, and Samuel Johnson of Chester, since her theatrical appearances comprise a large part of her political activism during the 1730’s.

Chapter five studies Charlotte Charke’s life and the politics of gender that informed her work. Embodying a new definition of masculine and feminine, Charke invested her roles, especially in Fielding’s dramas, with her own experiences on the margins of gender and society. Living and writing as a male and as a female, Charke appeared in Fielding’s most controversial plays and portrayed on stage the duality she embodied. The complexity of Charke’s vision requires a rounded study of her literary
experimentations with personas and voice, and I analyze the drama, *The Art of Management*; the autobiography, *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Charlotte Charke*; and her first known novel, *The History of Henry Dumont Esq*; and *Miss Charlotte Evelyn*.

Chapter six views collectively the theatrical activities of George Lillo, Henry Carey, William Hatchett, and the dancing master from Chester, Samuel Johnson. While little evidence remains of what these writers were and did, their dramas give evidence of manifest involvement with social issues. This segment includes a textual study of their plays premiering at the Little Theatre: Hatchett’s *The Fall of Mortimer*, and *The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles*; Lillo’s *Fatal Curiosity*; Carey’s *Chronophontonthologos*, *The Dragon of Wantley*, *Amelia*, and *The Honest Yorkshireman*; and Johnson of Chester’s *The Blazing Comet* and *Hurlothrumbo*.

In this dissertation, I aim to examine the dramas and theatrical activities of this group during their association with the Little Theatre immediately preceding the 1737 Licensing Act. While Loftis defines drama in the eighteenth century as dramatic articulation of certain concepts about individuals, their relationships, and their society, and finds a social corollary to every political stand, the writers at the Little Theatre approached their dramas in an opposite way, for they postulated a political
corollary to every social stand. It is my contention that their voices of alienation contained the unreason that eighteenth-century society sought to segregate and purify. Because they existed on the margins, the writers at the Little Theatre were in effect created by society and yet were constituted against it; in this paradoxical situation, these playwrights possessed iconographical power, strong enough to bring about their downfall and the closure of the Little Theatre.
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ABSTRACT

Staging works unaccepted by and unacceptable to the establishment, Henry Fielding, Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Charke, and company produced a series of protest dramas at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket between 1730 and 1737. The playwrights deliberately ruptured theatric traditions and boldly presented plays challenging not only the mainstream theatre, but the current social system. Negating the doctrine that tragedy properly concerns the great man, and comedy reviles the low-born, the playwrights at the Little Theatre in both their tragedies and comedies enlarged the province of the drama to include the ordinary human with real problems. By this means, they displaced the aristocratic concept of theatre based on class distinctions and brought in its place a realistic appraisal of the systematic exclusion by class and gender. Although critics have singled out Fielding as a precipitator of the Licensing Act, they have dwelled on his dramas as political commentary and have ignored him as part of a protest movement. He, along with Haywood and the others, go to extremes to prove that "social" and "moral" are unfortunately identical terms. While their characters vary considerably in makeup and in life experiences, one element is fundamental to them all:

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attempts to satisfy completely their individual needs and goals lead to complete estrangement from the social order with its definition of Reason.

Outcast and marginalized themselves by reasons of poverty, madness, or sexuality, Fielding, Haywood, Charke, and the other playwrights employed the drama to decry the social system that sought to exclude them. They became the voices of unreason which dominated the stage at the Little Theatre for seven years, and their plays mirrored closely the reality of the streets. This group played a part in precipitating the closure of the theatre, for the hierarchy was shaken but not destroyed yet. As the advent of the Romantic age elevating the private and the ordinary affirms, however, the social system which the Little Theatre playwrights dramatized and protested had received a mortal blow.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

No person or persons shall act, represent, or perform any tragedy, comedy, opera, play, farce, or other entertainment of the Stage, for gain, hire, or reward, other than, and except such person or persons in whom the right of property in and of the said Letters Patent, granted as aforesaid, to the said Thomas Killigrue, Sir William Davenant, Robert Wilks, Colley Cibber, and Barton Booth is vested, and their respective deputies or servants, during the continuance of the process and privileges to them by their several Letters Patents respectively granted.

On 24 May 1737, writers at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket lost their venue of protest when the stage was clandestinely destroyed, one month before the imposition of the Licensing Act, the chief clause of which is quoted above. Nonetheless, their successful challenge to the status quo is proved by the bill, hurriedly brought forward in order to silence the wits writing at the playhouse, to impose the king's will, and to underscore political and social hierarchies. Henry Fielding, observing that he "had left off writing for the stage when he ought to have begun," entered the Middle Temple to start a new career, but the other writers and activists, Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Charke, Henry Carey, Samuel Johnson of Chester, George Lillo, and William Hatchett, like the shabby playhouse itself, drifted back into
obscurity. The significance of their contributions for eight years at the Little Theatre remains, however; more than 58 years before the French Revolution, the group questioned the social contract existing between government and individual. Brought by their poverty and failure to the Little Theatre when their politicized works were not accepted by the legitimate theatres, Fielding, Haywood, Charke, Lillo, Johnson of Chester, Hatchett, and Carey were activists fighting against corruption and absurdity in the establishment, both Whig and Tory. At the same time, their plays and theatrical enactments depicted and elevated the plight of the common individual, disenfranchised and exploited by reason of gender, as well as class.

The word "group" as applied to the Little Theatre playwrights, should be interpreted in the loosest sense. The playhouse existed without rudimentary management or governing body, a proper acting roster, or even a coordinator, making the idea of a writing consortium untenable. Built solely as a financial venture, the playhouse came to serve as a last chance for writers whose works were rejected by the major theatres. Beginning in 1728, with Gay's production of The Beggar's Opera, the Little Theatre became the site for avant-garde productions unacceptable at the patents. By chance, the playwrights under consideration here between 1729-1737 attached
themselves to the theatre for money and for art; they came there, as Hume says of Fielding, because they "had no choice" (*Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1729-1737* 53). Without design or intention, the writers one by one appeared during this period to produce their several plays which, taken as a body, offer extended political and social criticism. Although in later chapters I discuss in detail the principal writers and their dramas, I want to begin by arguing that certain facts held in common make possible a definition of the writers assembled at the Little Theatre. They were all poor, without means or contacts to fulfill their aspirations. Each writer had tried to produce one or more plays at the Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and each had come to the Little Theatre having failed elsewhere.

One other commonalty among the writers concerns their existence on the social margin. Fielding alone as an aristocrat could boast of acceptance, but he was poor and unable to live an aristocratic life. He seems to have gone to the Drury Lane to act, to dance, and to produce his comedies of manners and traditional farces; when Fielding had something to say, his politically-loaded plays attacking the social order could only be performed at the Little Theatre. The other playwrights in the group, lacking Fielding's advantages of birth and education, inhabited the fringes reserved for outcasts,
such as the disreputable Eliza Haywood, the transvestite writer, actress, oil-seller, and puppeteer Charlotte Charke; the fifty-year-old jeweler-turned-writer George Lillo; the half-mad Samuel Johnson, a dancing master from Chester; and the failed playwrights Henry Carey and William Hatchett.

The drama surrounding the Little Theatre between 1730 and 1737 equalled, if not surpassed, the dramas acted on its boards. There is a certain staged quality to events immediately preceding the Act, designed to destroy the playhouse and its writers. A Secret Committee, which Ralph mentions in his 1743 work The Case of our Present Theatrical Disputes, had confirmed financial misdeeds in Prime Minister Robert Walpole's government. At the same time, a two-act play, the politically explosive and indecent The Golden Rump, allegedly written by one of the wits at the Little Theatre, was forwarded to Walpole by Henry Giffard, manager of the unlicensed theatre in Goodman's Fields. With the evidence of the never-published The Golden Rump which featured the queen and prime minister worshipping the king's golden fundament, parliament passed what Genest calls the "gagging bill for the stage." Although the law did not go into effect until 21 June 1737, the stage of the Little Theatre was completely filled with rubble sometime during the night of 23 May 1737, and the group of writers lost the chance for
one final month of productions. Newspapers were strangely silent and only printed complaints after the bill had passed, a point that Liesenfeld makes in *The Licensing Act of 1737*: he notes that, after the bill’s passage, *Common Sense* ran an article in opposition on 4 June, while the *Craftsman* published protests 28 May and 4 June (Liesenfeld 147-49, 151-155).

The Little Theatre was not a stranger to trouble, and the constabulary were often in attendance. In the course of this chapter, I will deal with the government’s interference at the playhouse and the sequence of governmental actions leading to the closure, but I want to begin with an overview of events directed at the playhouses. Many complaints obtained against the situation at the major and minor playhouses, from protests over pantomime and French productions to the arbitrary rule of the Drury Lane managing triumvirate of Cibber, Booth, and Wilks, popularly called "Avarice, Insolence, and Stupidity" (qtd Nicholson 51). Calhoun Winton in "Dramatic Censorship" states that, "Most segments of British Society with anything approaching political or social influence believed in dramatic censorship" (286). Two acts already existed for controlling the stage and the actors, in addition to the Patents granted by the monarch, giving him control over the major theatres and censorship by means of the Master of Revels. The second Act, 12
Anne, statute 2, cap. xxiii, the Act for Reducing the Laws relating to Rogues, Vagabonds, Sturdy Beggars, and Vagrants, into One Act of Parliament, preceded by an earlier Statute, 394 Elizabeth cap. 4, 2, meant to suppress "rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars" stipulating that all "procurers, patent gatherers, or collectors for gaols, prisons, or hospitals, or fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes wandering abroad, refusing to work . . . shall be adjudged and deemed rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and punished as such."

In addition, there were two other more specific statutes, and one, 3 Jac. s. I, ch. 21, stipulates, "if any person shall, in any stage-play, interlude, shew, maygame or pageant, jestingly or prophanely speak or use the holy name of God, Christ Jesus, or of the Trinity, he shall forfeit for every such offence 10 [pounds]." And another also dealt with the idea of plays and players as Devil's work: Statute I, Charles I, ch. 1, s. 2 was enacted to provide a Blue Law against Sunday activities, like "bear-baiting, bull-baiting, interludes, common plays, or other unlawful exercises and pastimes" (qtd H. Barton Baker History of the London Stage 543-44; also Liesenfeld The Licensing Act Appendix 160-163).
The basic complaint about the wickedness of the immoral stage obviously pertained. Baker in History of the London Stage refers to a 1643 pamphlet entitled "The Actor's Remonstrance or Complaint for the Silencing of their Profession, and Banishment from their several Playhouses, in which is fully set down their grievances from their Restraint, especially since Stage Players only are prohibited: the exercises of the Bear's College (Bear Garden), and the motions of Puppets being still in force and vigour" (33-34). The article ostensibly speaks for the actor in a hostile world, but in so doing repeats Puritan objections, which included "defaming the persons of any men of note," for outlawing plays and closing playhouses.7

Aaron Hill with foresight concerning the government-theatre clash, proposed in the Prompter, 9 December 1734, that the condition of the stage was due to "selfish management of actors, vicious performances, and a debauched public taste." According to the Craftsman, 17 February 1727-1728, a bill, which laid the foundation of the Licensing Act, was introduced in parliament 1733, because sedition on theatre stages was allegedly encouraging street crime. Liesenfeld's "The 'First' Playhouse Bill: A Stage Ghost," published in Theatre Notebook, offers an account that contradicts findings about the origins of the 1737 Act. He avers that the
legend of a 1733 bill derives from a misdated letter and that such a bill never was proposed (9-12).

Also arguing a later origin for the Act, Nicholson gives an account of Sir John Barnard's bill introduced 5 March 1735, first designed to limit the number of playhouses in order to give all a decent profit, and to promote plays over pantomimes. Although the bill was withdrawn 30 April after a first reading, it was later resurrected quickly and passed by both houses in 1737 as the Licensing Act, according to Nicholson's argument (55-58). We should note that the Licensing Act was not ever printed; like other acts passed by both houses, it is recorded in the Journal of the House of Commons and is copied on sheets of sheepskin and stitched together. The Act was actually an amendment to the 12 Queen Anne law and not really needed as there were the two laws on the books already, one granting play rights only to patent holders, and the other, defining actors at unlicensed playhouses to be rogues and vagabonds. In his analysis of the Licensing Act, Nicholson defines seven basic provisions to the bill: 1) play acting may only occur in a patented theatre; 2) old patents remain effective but under current law have a life of 21 years. The king may grant new patents only as the old ones expire; 3) parliament at its pleasure decides the number of playhouses in London; 4) the play licenser acts as
censor for individual plays and applies his own definition of obscenity to protect public sensibilities; 5) actors acting outside patent theatres are rogues and vagabonds; 6) town officials, with penalty for their failure to prosecute, handle prosecution of actors and playhouses breaking the law; and 7) playhouses may charge only customary ticket prices (72-97).

Concerning the Act and governmental involvement, a survey of criticism from 1766 to the present, about the theatre and the writers as political revolutionaries reveals scant attention. Early accounts of the theatre focus almost entirely on the Licensing Act, the Fielding-Walpole hostilities, and Fielding’s theatre management in 1736.8 In what is probably the earliest account, James Quin writing his Life (1766) deals with events leading up to the Act and his observations have become the universal view: "To Henry F-d-g then are we indebted for the licensing act, and the theatrical power that is now lodged in the licenser" (27). Genest in an entry "Hay 1737" from Some Accounts of the English Stage reflects general consensus when he writes,

The Historical Register for 1736--this piece, in good political and theatrical strokes--Quidam was meant for Sir Robert Walpole--the scene lies in the playhouse. (3: 517)

Among Fielding’s contemporaries, however, Colley Cibber in his Apology assesses Fielding’s group and is

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more accurate than he perhaps intended. While he blames Fielding ("the broken wit") for the Act, Cibber at the same time seems to perceive dimly the revolutionary scope of the Little Theatre activities, for he writes that "to draw the Mob after him, [Fielding] must rake the Channel, and pelt their Superiors . . . [H]e produc'd several frank and free Farces, that seem'd to knock all Distinctions of Mankind on the Head: Religion, Laws, Government, Priests, Judges, and Ministers, were all laid flat" (Apology 231). The later theatrical studies of Victor, Dibden, and Baker agree on the nexus of the Fielding-Walpole-Licensing Act nexus and quote Cibber, but they do not find worth mentioning Cibber's crucial references to rebellion at the Little Theatre. Benjamin Victor makes a most significant reference to the Little Theatre playwrights when he states without being specific in identifying the "Adventures," that "[James] Lacy, with many others, became Adventurers with the late Mr. Fielding at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket" (History of Theatres in London and Dublin 1: 66).

Scattered here and there in print over the centuries, these references to a group of Haymarket writers have passed unnoticed by later critics, as I shall demonstrate, beginning with Allardyce Nicoll's seminal 1925 study, A History of the English Drama 1660-1900. His focus in Part 2 concerns the dramas and the theatres within the 1700-
1750 period, and Fielding alone receives attention, although Nicoll does mention by title the plays of Haywood, Charke, Lillo, and Carey, including them in the index. Nicholson's *The Struggle for a Free Stage in London* includes a chapter on "The Licensing Act; The Causes Producing it, and the Attempts to Regulate the Stage Before the Passage of that Act." Tracing the "tendencies" in operation against government, he judges Fielding as partly to blame but is willing only to state that "political tracts and pamphlets of the time, the satires and burlesques, criticizing government, had their origin in the opposition to the policy and methods of the Whig Ministry of Sir Robert Walpole" (48-49). The other writers as a group do not appear in the Index, but Nicholson mentions Fielding's "famous Mogul Company" as being organized "some time" after 1733 (42).

Latter day studies tend to focus on Fielding's dramatic work as a personal vendetta against Robert Walpole. For instance, the *Revels History of Drama* does not consider the mark of the Little Theatre or its revolutionaries, and Fielding alone is singled out for consideration. J. Paul Hunter in *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* includes references to Fielding's "state/stage metaphor healthy, expansive, and fruitful, a convenient way to move among controversies without rigidity and to explore treacherous
areas by indirect access" (63). Without pursuing those "treacherous areas" in Fielding's dramas, Hunter draws the conclusion that Fielding's political characters form a composite portrait blending Cibber, Walpole and George II (62-63).

Battestin in Henry Fielding: A Life also expresses the judgement that "Walpole at this period of Fielding's life was The Enemy, the despised corrupter of his country" (221). We observe with interest, however, that Battestin, without further mention of the other writers at the Little Theatre, discusses a satire from the journal Common Sense about the writing group at the Little Theatre, in which the suggestion of collusion among a group of writers is strong. In the fictional piece, Fielding is shown to be the instigator of propaganda and says that,

I have spoke to all the Writers for the Stage, of my Acquaintance, to put into their Plays all the strong things they can think of against Courts and Ministers, and Places and Pensions, and all that; and they have my Humour to a Tittle; they have not spared them an Ace; the Miller of Mansfield and the Historical Register, have tickled them off ifaith. (qtd Battestin 222)

Stating that Fielding "threw in his lot" with the "disreputable band of rogue comedians" at the Little Theatre, Battestin concludes that the theatre specialized in "an unconventional variety of new irregular and experimental pieces, often with risky political implications" (Henry Fielding: A Life 82-83). But
Battestin does not pursue this point, nor does he note that several Little Theatre writers, not just Fielding, were producing this "variety" of dramas with their daring social statements.

One critic denies an extension of Fielding's politics into his plays, for McCrea sees Fielding's works as "part of a dramatic whole"; nonetheless, he postulates that Fielding wrote without fixed social and political views, concerned mainly with "popularity and success" on the stage. McCrea observes, too, that the Haymarket theatre could not be realistically identified with Walpole's opposition and further states that "[m]any of Fielding's contemporaries wrote for the Drury Lane and the Haymarket" without naming his references. McCrea does mention Charles Coffey and Henry Carey as "now-forgotten contemporaries [whose careers] shed light upon [Fielding's]" in their shifting from theatre to theatre in hopes of finding a producer. Arguing that Haymarket plays were not always "heterodox" and the Drury Lane not always "orthodox," McCrea seems contradictory when he goes on to argue that "[w]riters were more or less free to find an audience where they could, although certain material cound [sic] not be produced at Drury Lane."9

Among other contemporary writing on the period under study, Hume in The London Theatre World 1660-1800 asserts that Fielding's attack on Walpole is clear and that the
Prime Minister "did not err in his interpretation of its political stance" (270); in *The Rakish Stage*, Hume aims to "recreate the vantage point occupied by writers . . . in the decade before the Licensing Act" (271), but he does not mention the Little Theatre, nor include Haywood, Charke, Carey, Johnson of Chester in the index, or in his evaluation. Hume's comments, particularly his "Impresario at the Little Haymarket, 1736-1737," pertain to Fielding and the Great Mogul Company, but because emphasis remains on Fielding as manager, Hume does not consider the body of plays produced at the theatre in the years under study. At the same time, Hume admits by implication the presence, however loose and unsuccessful, of persons already connected to the theatre and says that part of the confusion of the Fielding management occurs for the reasons that "[h]e did not exactly start from scratch, but he did not take over a going concern" (203).

Hume remarks that he "suspect[s] that most or all of the performances before 5 March were by a casual group unconnected with Fielding" (203-204). Not observing the political content of the Little Theatre dramas, Hume in his Preface to *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737* dismisses the Little Theatre for the reasons that the "'company at the Little Haymarket' was in fact not a company at all, and we can only delude ourselves about Fielding's relations with it between 1730 and 1737 if we
imagine it had a manager, a repertory policy and a stable roster of actors" (vii-viii). The antecedent of the pronoun "it" shifts from the "company" apparently to the theatre, which leaves in doubt the critic's meaning. Hume is interested in the 1729-1737 period and finds it important because "new theatres, violent management upheavals, labor strife, aggressive competition, and the introduction of important new forms make each season a fresh adventure" (The Rakish Stage 270). Hume's overall summary of activities at the Little Theatre finds expression in this statement:

Just how political were the offerings at the Little Haymarket? And to what degree did the venue affect Fielding's writing? Pat Rogers sums up the usual view of the theatre and its supposed political commitments when he says that "the management sailed closer to the wind than any other house, and so the theatre was closed by the authorities at regular intervals."

In fact there was no "management" in the usual sense, and the Little Haymarket was closed by authority only once -- in the summer of 1731. . . all of the "political" plays mounted at the Little Haymarket fall into two periods, 1728-1731 and 1736-1737. (Henry Fielding and the London Stage 1728-1737 79)

In order to place the activities of the Little Theatre writers in context and to prove not only their existence as a group, but also the nature of their social protests, I intend to present first the political and social background for the period, including the influence of the mercantile system and the changing nature of
politics and society with the growth of the middle class. Then I view the theatrical environment in London; in addition to pertinent historical data for each patented theatre, my analysis includes an appendix for chapter one with individual accounts and tabulations of theatre offerings between 1730 and 1737, at the Drury Lane, the Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, and the Covent Garden theatres. Finally, I conclude the introduction by examining the history of the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, the role of the writers, and the types of plays offered there during the significant years.

I Political and Social Climate

By 1730, English politics were governed by secular interests rather than ecclesiastical controversies. The Civil War, the execution of Charles I, and Cromwell’s Puritan Interregnum were followed in 1660 by the restoration of monarchy in Britain, only to be succeeded shortly by the Glorious Revolution in 1688, ousting James II and the Stuart line. The theory of Divine Right of kings was challenged by people who believed in government as a social contract between ruler and people, who supported the idea of representatives, and who reserved the right to rid themselves of an unsatisfactory ruler unwilling to accommodate a parliamentary system. Although
the English monarch remained at the top of the ancient and traditional hierarchy, the king or queen was no longer an autonomous figure. After the regicide, the monarch could hardly still be regarded as God's Anointed. Government in reality consisted of parliament, and its ministry, whether Whig or Tory, became Britain's effectual rulers. The problem with the new system lay with control of representative government. The new rich, with huge growth in numbers, jostled for parliamentary representation and fought traditional control by the country gentry and noble families, no longer populous. Lower orders without wealth and power arising from wealth were disenfranchised under the new system; not until parliamentary reforms in the nineteenth century would lower middle classes and those further down the social ladder gain representation. Politics were controlled by the Tories, the Old Guard, and the Whigs, ostensibly populist but in reality involved primarily in power mongering. Between 1730-37, the Whigs were in power, led by Robert Walpole, but various factions, such as the Jacobites, were raised against "the Great Man" for his financial corruption:

From this grand fountain of corruption flow all those little streams and rivulets, which have speared'd themselves through every part of this kingdom, and debauched all ranks and orders of men.\textsuperscript{11}

The shift in power from monarch to ministry occurred at the time of greatest growth of the English middle
class, with the mercantile system and new world trade generating plenty of middle-class money to educate a new generation and to establish hospitals and charity schools. While some of the wealthiest middle class apparently desired to ape the nobility in activities, manners, clothing, and the like, others in the middle and lower middle class felt little desire, or possessed little hope, of rubbing shoulders with their betters. Nonetheless, whether new gentlemen or middle-class drapers, much of their disposable income was spent on amusements, such as theatre tickets. By the eighteenth century, according to Allardyce Nicoll, the stage "was not universal as in Shakespeare’s time, and it was not aristocratic as in the time of the Restoration; it was merely fashionable" (A History of English Drama 1660-1900 11). Whereas earlier, courtiers and royal favorites, lounging backstage, were part of the theatre milieu, now merchants and their sons pinched actresses and misbehaved at unpopular plays, in the manner of lords with their noisemakers and rowdy footmen.12 As Nicoll makes clear in A History of English Drama 1660-1900, the audience constituted a crucial element at the playhouse.

The middle classes, as we have seen, were come to the theatre, and for them was penned the bourgeois tragedy and the comedy of sentiment. Sentimental comedy, on the other hand, would hardly appeal to the several old courtiers of Charles who survived with Betterton to recall ancient days. Hence the preservation of the
comedies of manners and the many dubious
situations and risky amours. For everyone
political plays, and for those who desired
merely to be amused or have their senses
tickled, the pantomime and the ballad-farce and
the opera. From whatever angle we look at it we
find the drama of the early eighteenth century,
as the drama of all centuries, more fully
explained by a reference to the audience than by
a reference to any other thing. (25)

The types of theatregoers in the audience by late
1720's made it homogeneous with lords, merchants,
milliners, and apprentices jostling together in the
playhouse. Often disregarded but numbering 500–600, the
members of parliament, in addition to their wives and
their staffs, constituted another segment of the theatre
audience. All these factions of theatregoers, of course,
affected the performances and entertainments scheduled,
both at the old theatres licensed by the crown with their
history of catering to the wealthy, and at the new,
unlicensed houses with nothing to lose by catering to the
middle class (Scouten The London Stage Part Three
Introduction cix–cclxix). If the aristocracy and would-be
aristocracy gorged with mercantile money, preferred
Shakespeare at the Drury Lane and opera at the Queen's
Theatre in the Haymarket, their servants, workers, and
their tradesmen preferred a theatre, like the Little
Theatre, where contemporary comments enlivened the
prologues and dramatic themes dealt with political and
social issues affecting the working class.
The numbers of the middle and lower classes were not inconsiderable either; the growth of general population, as well as migration from farms to cities as farm jobs waned, accounted for the rapid growth of the cities, especially London. Civil unrest accompanied these changes with unemployment, food prices, and marketing practices affecting the lower classes and pointing to the riots occurring during the period. By 1737, 14,000 London citizens attended the theatre regularly, a high percentage out of the overall population of one-half million. Although the upper middle classes had grown wealthy in trade, most of the those with middle incomes were ordinary citizens who felt that Shakespeare related to the traditions of the old hierarchies, as Washburn in "A Reverend Alterer of Shakespeare" implies. The lessons of the staged revivals of Shakespeare and the Restoration were undoubtedly understood to be a stand against change and a reverence for the old system of ancient beliefs in which political obedience was required of all men, and revolution against the crown was a crime against God, punished by death and damnation, both physical and spiritual. Although Colley Cibber and others sometimes "fixed" Shakespeare to include more popular appeal, the Drury Lane theatre was on the right side of the crown and their audiences (Nicoll A History of English Drama 1660–1900 66–68). Nevertheless, along with middle class
influence, shifts in the fundamental understanding of nature occurred and gradually became reflected on the stage. Consideration of man as fallen and depraved, as he is projected by Hobbes, changed to a humanistic view, embodied notably in the Earl of Shaftesbury's ideas of human benevolence. Humans in that view are capable of altruistic acts which promote the welfare of others, at the same time allowing individuals to improve themselves. They had ceased to be viewed as permanently fixed; just as they were able to improve socially and economically, so their spiritual flaws could be ameliorated.

II Theatrical Environment

Because the history of the Little Theatre is part of the whole history of theatrical struggle against theatrical monopoly, to understand the role of the small unlicensed playhouse and the writers which it sheltered, we must place London theatres in historical context. I want first to present the situation of the monarchs' monopolies and the hold of the patents over theatrical London, as background for understanding the problems confronting Fielding's group. The appendix to chapter one contains a tabulated study the number and kinds of productions at the patented playhouses for the eight seasons under consideration.
Before the Little Theatre was finally debarred from showing plays in 1737, two laws governing the theatre were already on the books. One, of course, was Charles II's original patent grants in effect outlawing rogue theatres and the other, the so-called Vagrant Act of 12 Queen Anne which placed the entire unlicensed acting fraternity outside the law. Originally, letters of patent issued by Charles II in 1660 to Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant granted them sole powers over London's theatrical amusements and established who was in, who was out, who could make money from the theatre, and who, technically, could not. In theory, by law, if not through custom, plays could be mounted only at the Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields theatres, the two playhouses in possession of the patent holders. In fifty-eight years following the patents, there were scattered protests against the monopoly; mainly the problems created by the patents revolved around revenues for the house and for the actors (Nicholson 13-21). From the beginning, monopolies on certain types of plays were devised in order to divide the theatregoers between the two houses, and certain traditions existed, forbidding the competition for actors or for productions between the two houses. Colley Cibber, later actor, manager, patent holder for the Drury Lane, in his Apology states that the understanding provided that "no play acted at one house, should even be attempted at
the other" and, as Nicholson argues, seventeenth-century plays by Shakespeare, Jonson, Rowe, and other traditional favorites, were simply divided between the two houses, and no poaching existed (5).

From the first days, however, popularity followed the Drury Lane as its management offered a bit more variety, alternating Shakespeare plays with more contemporary entertainments which featured its star actors, such as Hart, Mohun, Lacy, and Kynastor, for instance. By 1692, the two patents merged, and Christopher Rich as patent holder offered dramas at Drury Lane. A second company then arose under actors Thomas Betterton, Elizabeth Barry, and Anne Bracegirdle, who obtained a new patent and presented plays at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields for ten years. Nicholson's *The Struggle for a Free Stage in London* narrates the history of the stage during this period; he notes that by 1710, Rich's Drury Lane was closed down by order of the crown, when his monopoly of both theatres came to light and when he refused to pay his actors in full. At that time, Colley Cibber, Robert Wilks, Thomas Doggett, the theatre's leading actors, gained a temporary patent to reopen the Drury Lane. They were so successful as actor-managers that they dominated the London legitimate theatre scene for the next twenty years. The period between 1730-1732 witnessed the advent of Fielding, Haywood, and Charke at the Drury Lane in their beginning
years, and, in 1733, Colley Cibber's sale of his patent to Highmore, as well as salary disputes, precipitated a walkout of actors, led by Theophilus Cibber (Nicholson 34ff). Ultimately the situation resulted in the patent again being sold, this time to Fleetwood in 1734. Lincoln's-Inn-Fields made a comeback in 1714, when newly crowned George I allowed Christopher Rich to reopen the theatre, with John Rich succeeding to the patent after his father's death (Hume Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 55, 147). Unwilling to compete at Drury Lane in play productions, he began a tradition of pantomime plays at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields which lasted until 1732, when he moved his company to his new theatre in Covent Garden (Scouten The London Stage Part Three 517-530). This interest in pantomime drew from lower class audiences and began a vogue for these performances.16

Before 1736, the sheer numbers of revivals of Shakespeare, Jonson, Rowe, Beaumont and Fletcher, Farquhar, Congreve, Centlivre and Behn illustrate the preponderance of old plays over new. We should note, too, that Shakespearean revivals were in some instances the result of the Shakespeare ladies' clubs, formed to influence managerial choices of plays, and possessing sufficient clout to demand the production of the members' favorite dramas by the Bard. Otherwise, the roster was set by the managers in order to cater to their audiences
for the prime reason of ticket sales, although they included a few new carefully chosen plays each season, as Nicoll states (The British Stage 259-62). For instance, Eliza Haywood’s first play The Fair Captive, like Henry Fielding’s second play Love in Several Masques, was staged at Drury Lane, for the works belonged to approved modes of drama: Haywood’s in the classical heroic mode and Fielding’s in the Restoration comedy mode. Scouten’s Part Three of The London Stage suggests that changes in the types of dramas at the patented theatres occurred around 1729-36, as if the popularity of the Little Theatre’s new plays and the inflammatory themes of the Little Theatre’s productions were perhaps drawing audiences from the patented houses (cxl-cxlii). It seems significant to note, too, that the increasing numbers of lower-middle-class audiences with disposable income for entertainment wanted changes in theatre fare, and the patent theatres responded weakly, by offering more interludes and entertainments. Although one may argue that the repertory system had been responsible for the repetitions of venerable pieces to the exclusion of new works, a more cogent reason was fear of ministerial displeasure.

Managers at the patented theatres reacted slowly to changing audiences and to the threat from new and "minor" theatres, namely Goodman’s Fields and the Little Theatre at the Haymarket. Robert Hume makes the point that in the
1730s, the patent theatres moved away from Restoration-type plays; in the chapter "The London Theatre From The Beggar's Opera to the Licensing Act" from *The Rakish Stage* (270-311), and in various chapters in *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737*, Hume studies the Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields for the seasons 1726-27, 1727-28, 1728-29 to date the mainpieces and provides the percentages of new works at the two patent theatres between 1726 and 1732. Further study that is more inclusive and detailed than Hume's work, however, appears warranted, especially for the period just prior to the Licensing Act. For that reason, I attempt to view the offerings for the eight years under consideration, largely basing the plays and figures on Scouten's *The London Stage Part Three, 1729-1737*. A tabular study of the eight-year period appears in the appendix, in which Tables 3, 4, and 5 provide numbers of dramatic productions at the Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and (beginning the 1732-33 season) Covent Garden theatres, in order to demonstrate changes that occurred between seasons 1729-30 and 1736-37. From the figures, certain conclusions may be drawn about interests, both political and theatrical, of the audience which now comprised a vigorous middle class, as we have noted. Further, the types of "new" works written after 1720 carry their own messages about the London theatre. The patterns of productions interest us, as well as the
comparison between the patented theatres and the Little Theatre.

Although my emphasis remains on the Little Theatre, a brief review of plays at the patented theatres seems appropriate for understanding just how different the play rosters at the Little Theatre were. For instance, we may conclude that the four types of comedies inherited from the Restoration—comedy of manners, of humours, of romance, and of intrigue—prevailed at the patented theatres during the period in question (Dobree's *English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century* 222-238). A glance at the playwrights and their works is revelatory. Popularity of the traditional types of plays may readily be seen in the lists of writers who were famous for specializing in these four types of comedies: Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, and lesser writers such as Ravenscroft, Crowne, and Southerne, to mention only a few (Nicoll *Restoration Drama 1660-1700* 211-218). Post-1720 works at the patented theatres sprang from an earlier tradition; for example, Colley Cibber's comedies of manners, written after 1710, gave the audience at the Drury Lane a new play with the old comfortable theme: young wife, old husband, and daring lover. Featuring deep dark villains, the sentimental, heroic tragedies of Otway, Dryden, and Shadwell, for instance, are representative of the traditional stage piece, as
defined by Loftis in the chapter, "Uses of Tragedy in Georgian England," from The Stage in the Eighteenth Century. For this reason, we may define Steele's and Rowe's plays as "new" works shown at the patented theatres, for their themes are not traditional. For instance (and to suggest only one), Rowe's Jane Shore appears now, as it may have appeared then, to be a protest against the patriarchal system defeating the woman, Jane Shore. John Gay's works with their heroes from the lower classes also fall in this category of new works presenting contemporary themes.

During the eight seasons under study here, the play rosters at the Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and Covent Garden do not venture into uncomfortable zones, such as social protests and political satires; their few "new" post-1700 works, by safe writers like Steele and Miller must have been popular, judging from the numbers of productions. Nicoll provides a cogent view of early eighteenth-century drama when he defines the period among the patented theatres:

A period of decay and disintegration it was in many ways. Sentimentalism, during the first half of the eighteenth century, was steadily gathering way . . . Classicism, imported from France, was slowly driving out the more natural expression . . . In no wise can it be denied that, as we watch the drama progressing from 1610 to the end of the eighteenth century, we see in general only a retrograde movement. (A History of English Drama 1660-1900 1-2)
In summary, we may observe the conservative nature of mainstream theatrical London over the eight years in question. As Loftis states, the "dramas of the past" concerned the patented theatres (66-67). At the Drury Lane, the rosters seem to prove that the most produced plays derived from the Restoration and post-Restoration periods. While the actors' walkout affected the numbers and types of productions, the roster remained essentially the same. Pressure from a changing audience brought slow modification, because management misread demands for new theatre fare.

As an example of theatrical London's conservative approach to contemporary works, the production staged the most number of times at the Drury Lane was a conservative opera, Ebeneezer Forrest's *Momus Turn'd Fabulist*, performed eighteen times during the season. Gay's *The Wife of Bath*, a non-controversial play having the extra advantage of being "classical," appeared three times and M. A. Grand's *Cartouche*, a French musical play containing no message, appeared once, no work being repeated in later seasons. Hume remarks that the popularity of *The Beggar's Opera* surely revealed to the patented theatres that there was an "untapped" audience with tastes far removed from the likes of the Drury Lane crowd (*The Rakish Stage* 278). Nonetheless, management of the licensed theatres continued
to produce conservative plays and were content with dividing the profits among themselves.

Although Goodman's Fields Theatre is not part of my study, we must note that Giffard the manager industriously played the same game as the major theatres and produced standard fare at good prices. He was careful to use young talented casts in conservative dramas which brought the level of his theatre close to the larger ones, a point that Hume makes in *The Rakish Stage* (282-285). He also observes that the patented theatres "had decided that they could get by without many new plays, regardless of what Goodman's Fields or the Little Haymarket chose to do. Whether they would have flourished with this policy in the face of aggressive competition is a question rendered academic . . . by the passage of the Licensing Act" (301-302).

III The Little Theatre in the Haymarket

In the 1720's, two new minor theatres offered plays, and a brief comparison of the two allows more understanding of the licensed versus unlicensed status of playhouses in 1730. It is helpful to begin with Goodman's Fields Theatre, for its favored status provides a way to view events at the Little Theatre. Nine years after John Potter, a carpenter at the Drury Lane Theatre, built the
Little Theatre in the Haymarket, Odell in 1729 opened Goodman's Fields in Ayliffe Street under some sort of royal patent, and Henry Giffard continued the operation. Twice protested as a public nuisance, closed by order of the Mayor of London when the crown denied the patent, the theatre nonetheless reopened without further ado under Giffard's management from 1731-37. As Nicholson states in *The Struggle for a Free Stage in London*, Giffard's opening the theatre without a patent and continuing undisturbed shows that the king's prerogative was less than Giffard's, the theatre manager. Goodman's Fields Theatre was closed in 1730, during the run of Fielding's *The Temple Beau*, an official act foreshadowing problems to come for the Little Theatre. One must note that the only apparent petitioner against Odell's unlicensed playhouse was London's Lord Mayor, rather than the Master of the Revels, or the Lord Chamberlain, or even the Prime Minister, people who later condemned Fielding's theatre. Watson Nicholson finds that neighborhood considerations were ostensibly responsible for Odell's troubles; the basic argument by the mayor's office was presented in the *Gazette*, 14 October 1729:

[The Goodman's Fields theatre] so near several publick Offices and the Thames, where so much business is negotiated, and carried on for the support of Trade and Navigation, will draw away Tradesmen's Servants and others from their lawful Callings, and corrupt their Manners, and also occasion great numbers of loose, idle and disorderly Persons, as Street-Robbers and Common Night-Walkers, so to infest the Streets, that it
will be very dangerous for his Majesty's Subjects to pass the same. (qtd. 25-26)

That Goodman's Fields continued to function undisturbed even without a patent becomes quite important in light of the unequivocal closing of the Little Theatre several times before the final closure in 1737.17 Nicholson suggests that Giffard, the Goodman's Fields manager, curried favour with the government by playing a part in the Golden Rump scandal, the immediate cause of closing the Little Theatre (44). Whether Giffard acted in collusion with governmental forces to close the Little Theatre can only be surmised, but an article in Town and Country, October 1737 claims that Giffard was awarded 600 pounds for "zeal for government" (qtd. Nicholson 73-74); on the other hand, Baker's History of the London Stage states that Giffard was granted 1,000 pounds by Walpole for "loyalty" (66-67). And, to mention another suggestive connection between the management of Goodman's Fields and the closing of the Little Theatre, the power of the Lord Chamberlain to examine all plays was reinforced by the Licensing Act. A fee was imposed on the playwright, and the Lord Chamberlain employed a staff to help. Genest in The English Stage states, "[i]n February, 1738, according to the Manuscript in the B[ritish] M[useum], or in April, according to Chalmers, William Chetwynd was sworn in License of the stage (under the Lord Chamberlain) with a
salary of 400 [pounds] a year." He adds that Odell, who founded Goodman Fields, was made deputy licenser (3: 522).

Notwithstanding the luck of the other unlicensed playhouse, the Little Theatre as a building lasted longer than Goodman Fields, being demolished only in 1811 to allow expansion of the Royal Theatre in the Haymarket. Never part of the theatrical district, the small playhouse was far removed from London's fashionable West End, for Haymarket was a lane on the outskirts of town very near a number of dairies serving the city. In existence before Grovesnor and Hanover Squares were built in the area, the theatre was located at the crossing of Suffolk and James Street (now Orange Street), lying between Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square. The corner site of the little playhouse was formerly occupied by the King's Head tavern on Haymarket Lane and Isaac Bliburgh's gunsmith shop, The Cannon and Musket, on Suffolk Street, according to Macqueen-Pope's account (18-20). Tent shows, strolling players, and acting booths at fairs were proving popular, and Potter, like Odell at the Goodman's Fields, saw his theatre not as a forum for political or aesthetic statements, but as a way to increase income.18 His original outlay was small, aside from the cost of pulling down the tavern and the gunsmith's shop; sets, costumes, and the like, when new were worth no more than 500 pounds (Macqueen-Pope 1). It was a cheap theatre, small,
cramped, and shabby. According to Genest, Potter intended to make money from his investment immediately, but he was not able to open until he received the patronage of the Duke of Montagu (3: 159). From December 1720 to May 1721, the Duke sponsored a French Company of dancers as the theatre's first stage offering. Without a manager or even a proper name, the playhouse opened 29 December 1720, following an announcement on 15 December:

At the new Theatre in the Haymarket, between Little Suffolk Street and James Street, which is now completely finished, will be performed a French Comedy as soon as the rest of the actors arrive from Paris, who are duly expected. Boxes and pit, five shillings; gallery, two and sixpence.

The first performance was La Fille a la Mode, ou le Badaud de Paris, "under the patronage of a distinguished nobleman," and the troupe offered four performances weekly. According to Baker, the number of performances dropped to twice weekly; finally Potter lowered ticket prices to four shillings for boxes, and eighteen pence for the gallery (211-212). Baker adds,

during the early years of its existence, we can obtain only stray glimpses through the medium of advertisements in old newspapers, for its doings were considered quite beneath the notice of the dramatic historians of the time. Colley Cibber does not deign to mention it in his Apology. It lived only upon sufferance. (History of the London Stage 212)

In his recollection of theatrical London, Cibber did not mention the Little Theatre, but neither did Fielding,
Eliza Haywood, or Henry Carey, in spite of their years at the playhouse. Even Charlotte Charke, in her autobiography about her family, reveals next to nothing about the playhouse, Haywood, Carey, Johnson of Chester, or Hatchett; she refers to Fielding in a sentence or two. Because there are only the "stray" glimpses of the Little Theatre and no records, with the possible exception of one of Potter's documents, much is mysterious about the theatre. Genest alludes to the quandary of scholars concerning the Little Theatre and the paucity of information, even as he calls attention to suspicious events surrounding what few references remain:

In the only interview which I had with Dr. Burney I understood him to say, that he had the Hay. bills from the beginning--when, some few months after his decease, I was at the British Museum transcribing his bills, I perceived on coming to D. L. 1733-34 that he had taken little or no notice of the secession of the principal performers--I concluded that he had reserved his account for the Hay.--on my requesting to have the Hay. bills, they could not be found, tho' the Librarian was so obliging to allow me to look for them myself--the new plays at that theatre must consequently be arranged at random, except when some information can be obtained. In 1827, the Hay. bills for this season fell into my hands at Mr. Field's sale. (3: 414-415)

Critics, especially Hume and Battestin, try to provide answers and scenarios that would fit the few facts we have about the Little Theatre. For example, Hume takes one piece of information and spins a purely speculative argument about the size of the theatre, the comparative
cost of a season's lease on it, and its capacity; he bases his argument on the 70 pounds rent for the season paid by Aaron Hill (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 215-217). In the same source, Hume criticizes J. Paul Hunter whom he calls representative of the universal view among scholars regarding the Little Theatre. Hume refers to "misapprehensions . . . in our knowledge about the playhouse" (53), and he faults Hunter's view, quoted below, as being "neither complete nor entirely accurate."

It specialized in topical satire, and its audiences expected an anti-Establishment theatre of ideas rather than the revivals and conventional five-act plays presented at the other houses. Its actors, although usually younger and less experienced than those elsewhere, thus became practiced and adept at a certain kind of satirical performance. The Haymarket was Fielding's theatrical home for five of the next eight seasons [following 1728-29], and it asserted a significant control over both the frequency and the kind of writing he undertook. (Occasional Form; Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance 51)

This appraisal seems reasonable, Hume notwithstanding, because of the lack of hard evidence about the playhouse itself; as an example, Langhans's essay "The Theatres," a study containing tables of theatre particulars, can only speculate about the Little Theatre, indicating its length, breadth, and capacity with a question mark. He makes no attempt to provide figures for interior or stage measurements (63).19
That the Little Theatre, also called the "French Theatre" for its first players, was little acknowledged by fashionable London may be inferred by references in contemporary advertisements. In spite of the fact that the playhouse opened in 1720, these advertisements include not only street address but also comparative references to other and better known buildings on the street. For instance, Charlotte Charke announced that her puppet show was to be offered "At the Old Tennis-Court in James, near the Haymarket" (Daily Advertiser 13 Mar 1734). Another announcement in the 1739 Daily Advertiser refers to a puppet show at "Punch's Theatre, adjoining the tennis-court in James Street, near the Haymarket." By 1746, the Little Theatre had become even more obscure, as witnessed by this notice of a benefit for Miss Cymber at the Little Theatre: "Several of Miss Cymber's Friends mistaking the House for The Theatre in James St., are desir'd to observe this is facing the Opera House in the Haymarket" (Daily Advertiser 20 April 1747).

Identified in relation to the Queen's, the big theatre across the road, the Little Theatre had survived by staging the unacceptable, by specializing in those productions that did not cater to the old values. For its entire history, including the eight years in consideration, apparently anyone with ready money could hire the theatre for a night, a month, or a season, and
Potter managed to keep the theatre open by renting to touring troops of tumbling midgets and French dancers who appear regularly on the Little Theatre's roster of performances (Maude *The Haymarket Theatre* 8-10). Aaron Hill attempted to produce *Henry V* with a cast of amateurs, for which his advertisement in the *Daily Journal* (11 December 1721) reads:

A new Theatre will in a few days Time be open'd in the Hay-Market, where the French comedians now play, of which Aaron Hill, Esq; will be sole Manager and Director: The Scenes are contriv'd after a Fashion entirely new, the Habits all new; the principal Characters of the Men, and all the Womens characters will be play'd by Persons who never appear'd upon the Stage before. The chief End and Design of this Theatre is the Regulation of the Stage, and the Benefit and Encouragement of Authors, whose Works very often, tho' good, are despis'd and set aside.

Perhaps unaware of the French dance troupe in 1721, Genest gives what he calls the "first official" notice as follows: "At the new Theatre over against the Opera House in the Haymarket, December 12, 1723, will be presented a new Comedy called *The Female Fop* -- to be performed by persons, who never yet appeared in public" (3: 159).

Citing another instance of the theatre's use for amateur theatrics, Scouten notes that on 2 December 1730, Dryden's *All for Love* was acted with only one professional, Mrs. Williamson, who played Cleopatra, while the other parts were "performed by Gentlemen for their Diversion" (*The London Stage* Part Three 98). Aaron Hill produced a quite
respectable play, *Henry V* with a cast of amateurs, but the production earning the most profit occurred in 1726 with Signora Violante, the tight-rope walker who discovered Peg Woffington. The playbill for 11 September 1732 announces the following performance by the Italian dancer, for whose show prices increased to "Boxes 3s Pit 2s Gallery 1s 6d":

The famous Signora Violante will perform several new and surprizing Performances on the Strait Rope, never perform'd by any one besides herself: [1] She Dances a Minuet as Neatly as a Dancing Master on a Floor. [2] She Dances with a board, ten Foot in length, loose upon the Rope. [3] She Dances with two Boys fastned to her feet; which Occasions great Mirth. [4] She Dances with two heavy Men ty'd to her Feet. [5] She Performs the Exercise of the Colours. After this surprising Performance, Miss Violante will Dance a Louvre in Boys Cloaths. At the Desire of several Gentlemen and Ladies, the White Joke will be danced by an Old Woman, with Pierrot in the Basket. (qtd Scouten *The London Stage* Part Three 232)

Scouten also includes another typical sort of Little Theatre production, this one an "entertainment" 8 May 1731, on a double bill with *The Orphan* and *Damon and Phillida*:

A little Boy of eleven Years old is to fly from the Footman's Gallery to the farthest Part of the Stage; first with two Pistols, one in each Hand, a second Time with two Flags, and to make a small Stop in the Middle, and flourish them over his Head. (qtd Scouten *The London Stage* Part Three 216)

At other times, straight dramas were acted. For instance, during the summer off-season, the playhouse was used as a "chapel-of-ease," as H. Barton Baker terms it
offering an inexpensive summer stage for a pulled-together roster of actors from Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, or Covent Garden. However, I propose that after 1721 when the group of writers at the Little Theatre presented a series of serious satires and were receiving audience support for this type of drama, the dog and pony shows ceased being the mode of attracting crowds. Perhaps by coincidence during that period of time, between 1731 and 1737, events such as the walkout at the Drury Lane also meant that the Little Theatre was the venue for serious drama. The playhouse may always have appeared to some critics to be only a "road house," as Hume labels it in Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 (57); nonetheless, the playhouse came to symbolize what was wrong with the London theatre and the general social order. Perhaps with this symbolism in mind, as well as for reasons of familiarity and economy, Theophilus Cibber and most of the actors at the Drury Lane in 1733 went to the Little Theatre to stage their own plays, after they walked out of the Drury Lane during a dispute over the patent sale by Colley Cibber to Highmore (diary entry, "The Drury Lane Theatre" Box 747 Theatre Museum Archives of The Victoria and Albert Museum). During the tenure of Theophilus Cibber, governmental harassment of actors began at the playhouse. In an attempt to coerce the troupe back to the Drury Lane,
the managers were able to have Mr. Harper, the leading actor, arrested as a "rogue and vagabond" because he was acting at an unlicensed theatre. Mr. Harper, being a "householder," was released by the court, which thereby limited and defined anew the terms "rogue and vagabonds" as excluding an actor with property, regardless of his theatre affiliation.20

After Theophilus Cibber's troupe returned to the Drury Lane, assorted acts then leased the building by night, and although Scouten lists a roster of actors for the Little Theatre between 1729-1737, the theatre had no fixed company, a point noted by Hume (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 54-58). Nicholson mentions that the popularity of satire among the audience attracted to the Little Theatre demonstrated that "the growing tendency to satirize political and social foibles reinforced each other and this increased the demand for more theatres" (21). Scouten suggests that changes in the types of dramas at the patented theatres occurred around 1729-36, as if the popularity of the Little Theatre's new plays and the inflammatory themes of its productions were perhaps drawing audiences from the patented houses (The London Stage Part Three cxxi-cxlii). It seems important to recall yet again, that the increasing numbers of lower-middle-class audiences with disposable income for entertainment wanted changes in theatre fare, and the
patented theatres were not responsive, only offering interludes and "entertainments."

At the Little Theatre, on the other hand, a listing of stage plays (as opposed to dancing and entertainments), all satires, mounted at the Little Theatre between 1725-1729 illustrates my contention: *The Female Fop* (1723), *Penelope* (1728), *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), *The Patron: or, The Statesman's Opera* (1729), and *Hurlothurumbo* (1729), this last play having a run of thirty nights. Nicholson refers to London audiences' "depraved demand for highly seasoned dramatic exhibitions" (23), and this point of view, however narrow, undoubtedly mirrors contemporary views of the goings-on at the Little Theatre, increasingly repugnant to upper-class sentiments and threatening to upper-class dominance. The new art form, the opera, aided greatly by the foundation of the Royal Academy of Music, did not draw from the same crowd that attended the Little Theatre. If money was power, brisk ticket sales at the Little Hay spelled trouble for the managers at the Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and Covent Garden theatres. Beginning in 1729, with *The Beggar's Opera*, the Haymarket theatre began a seven-year history of dramatic rebellion and trenchant social commentary, so effective that it eventually brought about its own downfall.

Before a season-by-season analysis of the Little Theatre productions, a discussion of the theatre's
historic troubles with the government over time may place in perspective the events there between 1729-1737. Even as early as 1721, with Aaron Hill’s attempts at leasing the playhouse to enact *Henry IV*, interference by the forces of power prevented even the first performance. Hume, citing Montagu’s correspondence, points out that the Duke halted Hill’s aspirations, even though Hill had paid 540 pounds to John Potter, for two seasons (*Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737* 12-13). In this case and in later actions, Potter seems to be a double agent, being paid for the theatre and at the same time, being paid to block theatrical productions, a role he reprised in 1737. While there is no obvious connection between these events and later ones other than governmental censorship, this incident allows us to observe a pattern of forces within and forces without, which eventually brought about closure of the playhouse.

The real beginning of the Little Theatre as host to theatrical protests occurred in 1728, when Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* showed the popularity of topical drama and musical satire. The play was condemned in the 17 February 1727-28 *Craftsman* as "the most venomous allegorical libel against the Government that hath appeared." Nicholson points out that Gay’s play was blamed for a host of ills, as well as encouraging street robberies (50). While nothing ill befell Gay, friendly to Pope and other
Augustans, nonetheless, a listing of incidents from 1731 to 1737 illustrates governmental bushwhacking at the Little Theatre, even as it reveals the temper of the times.

A production of The Restauration of King Charles the Second, or The Life and Death of Oliver Cromwell, an historical ballad opera, was closed at the Little Theatre, according to Nicholson (24). In 1731, William Hatchett’s adaptation of Mountfort’s play The Fall of Mortimer was the provocation for government intervention. London’s Theatre Museum holds in its archives a box labeled "The Haymarket," which contains a clipping predating references to The Fall of Mortimer in both Scouten’s The London Stage Part Three (139) and Hume’s Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 (96-97). Both critics refer to 12 May as the beginning of the trouble with government, but this clipping in the archives of the Theatre Museum helps to fill in informational gaps and highlights the confrontational nature of the advertiser or the writer. Well before the premiere, the contents, designs, and purposes of the play were paraded before the reading public. An unknown hand has clipped and preserved the following advertisement from the Craftsman 8 May 1731:

For the Benefit of the Author
By the Company of Comedians
at the New Theatre in the Haymarket.
On Wednesday next, the 12th of May, will be
Presented The Fall of Mortimer: An Historical
Play, alter'd from Edw. III of Mountfort
With a new Prologue and Epilogue. Tickets
Delivered out and Places taken at Mr. Fribourg's
Rapee Snuff shop under the Theatre.

The Fall of Mortimer ran from 12 May 1731 to 39 July,
for 16 evenings, singly for seven performances, and on a
double bill five times with The Welch Opera, and four
times with The Jealous Taylor. Concerning the play and
the government's interest in its suppression, a letter
dated 21 July sent by Nicholas Paxton apparently to
Walpole relates a concerted attempt by Westminster
justices to stop the Little Theatre production and to
prosecute the actors, according to Hume (Henry Fielding
and the London Theatre.1728-1737 82n). So much is clear,
then; the systematic harassment had begun operation on
Hatchett's The Fall of Mortimer, before Fielding's work
was involved, or Haywood's. On 2 June 1731, Scouten notes
an advertisement stating that "Tickets deliver'd out for
the Tragedy of Tragedies, with an Opera call'd The City
Apprentice Turn'd Beau; or, Love in a Hamper, which was to
have been performed this day, for the Benefit of Mr.
Green, Prompter, will be taken at this Play" (The London
Stage Part Three 144). On 4 June, an advertisement
appeared: "There being a great Demand for the Welch Opera,
we are obliged to advertise the Town, that it being now
made into a whole Night's Entertainment, intitled, The
Grub-Street Opera, now in Rehearsal, it cannot possibly be

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performed any longer with this Play" (Scouten The London Stage Part Three 145). On 25 July, another advertisement read, "The Company of Comedians have determined to play [it] notwithstanding the Opposition made by some of the Company to prevent the Performance" (Scouten The London Stage Part Three 147). On 21 July, the play was advertised but not performed.21 From the evidence of Paxton’s letter mentioned earlier, city forces were brought to bear. Scouten quotes from the Daily Journal 22 July: "Last Night when the Company . . . was going to perform The Fall of Mortimer, the High Constable . . . . came with a Warrant from several Justices of the Peace, to seize Mr. Mullet, who plays the part of Mortimer, and the rest of the Performers, but they all made their Escapes" (The London Stage Part Three 148).

The summer season at its end, a production of Hurlothrumbo scheduled for 19 August at the Little Theatre was unusual, for no other play appeared during the month at the playhouse. Significantly, it was advertised but not performed because the constabulary halted the show. According to 28 August 1731 Fog’s Weekly:

Players of the Little Theatre in the Haymarket last Week printed their Bills for acting a celebrated piece call’d [Samuel Johnson of Chester’s] Hurlothrumbo, but were prevented by certain Constables, who came to seize them by Virtue of a Warrant or Warrants from the Justices of Westminster; so that this seditious Play will be acted no more, and, if it be true, that the silly Character of Lord Flame is meant
as a Satyr upon any body, it was prudent to prevent it. (qtd Nicholson 24)

The Daily Courant of 25 August explains that, "On Friday night last the Constables of Middlesex and Westminster went to the [Little Theatre] in order to apprehend the actors and players there, upon a Warrant signed by several of his Majesty’s Justices of the Peace, against them, as Rogues and Vagabonds, but they all made their Escapes." The theatre did not resume productions until 10 February 1732, following the most recent harassment; the same year, however, Potter acting as his own censor would not allow a production of Walter Aston’s The Restauration of King Charles II until it was approved by the Lord Chamberlain. In a spirit of revenge apparently, Aston indicted Potter’s actions in the Dedication to the piece. As Nicoll states, the drama was approved and actors had their parts, when the play was precipitously closed by government order (A History of the English Drama, Part Two Early Eighteenth Century Drama 22-24).

Whether or not Theophilus Cibber and the acting roster from the Drury Lane made some arrangement with Potter, their performances were disrupted at least once. As I discuss below, it would appear from viewing playbills that the arrangement between Cibber’s group and other theatre personnel involved sharing the bill. Evidence in the entire series of bills bears out this assumption, for
Cibber's actors play in the mainpieces, while the afterpieces were written by the Little Theatre writers. See the appendix for the roster of plays at the Little Theatre and note the performance during Passion Week. One assumes that the actor attacked by Walpole himself, to which I give reference below, was one of the group around the writers. Applebee's for 31 March states that,

On Thursday 7-night last at the Performance of Love Runs all Dangers, one of the comedians took the Liberty to throw out some Reflections upon the Prime Minister and the Excise, which were not designed by the [anonymous] Author; Lord Walpole being in the House, went behind the Scenes, and demanded of the Prompter, whether such Words were in the Play, and he answering they were not, his Lordship immediately corrected the Comedian with his own Hands very severely. (qtd Scouten The London Stage Part Three 280)

The following season, few play productions at the Little Theatre occurred. A French dance troupe with performances in pantomimes rented the stage for most of 1735-36. On 24 September 1735, Charlotte Charke, one of the Little Theatre writers, tried to stage a performance at the York Buildings during the time when the French Troupe occupied the Little Theatre stage. Constables intervened and halted the performance of her satire on the patent theatres, called The Art of Management. Nicoll quotes Charke's Preface to her autobiography where she states that she "was to suffer from Civil Power . . . for exhibiting a Satyr on the Managers of Drury Lane" (22-23).
Four months later, further government harassment occurred in January 1736 during the performance of a double bill featuring *Arden of Feversham*, a revised version probably by Eliza Haywood, Aaron Hill, or George Lillo, and *The Contract: or, The Biter Bit*. The *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* for 21 January states that, "We hear there had like to have been a Disturbance at the Rehearsal of *The Contract* ... Some Persons suppos’d to be sent by the Governor of a certain Baronet, endeavour’d first to intimidate the Actors from the Representation of it; and finding that ineffectual, have since attempted to spirit-away some of the principal Performers" (qtd Scouten The London Stage Part Three 545). *A Rehearsal of Kings*, perhaps by Fielding, also met with difficulty in getting staged. The 10 March *Daily Advertiser* reported as news the following story:

Last Night the Representation of the *Rehearsal of Kings* was disappointed by some Persons taking clandestinely Possession of the Hay-Market Playhouse, who were about Eight oClock committed to Bridewell for the same. On this Account several hundred Persons were turnd away. We are assurd that the Publick may depend on the aforesaid Plays being acted, as writ, Tomorrow.

But the paper reports that the next day’s performance was put off, by an "unforeseen Accident." Finally on 14, 15, 17 March, the play was performed, according to the *Daily Advertiser* for the week. In summary, we must note that by 1736, Fielding, Hatchett, Johnson of Chester,
Charke, Lillo and perhaps Haywood suffered from governmental interference with their work at the Little Theatre.

After Fielding's *Pasquin* opened on 5 March 1736 for a long run, interference by city and national governments was not visible, until the following season. Fielding, theatre manager from 1735, produced works by Lillo and Carey, and a new work, *The Nobleman: or, The Family Quarrel*, by Elizabeth Cooper, the third new woman writer whose works appeared at the Little Theatre during the eight years under study. Among the "sorry band of actors," as Hume calls them, Fielding for the crucial seasons hired Eliza Haywood and Charlotte Charke as female leads for his plays until the playhouse closed 23 May 1737 (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 207-08).

The actual closing of the theatre, along with the persons responsible for the sabotage of the stage, is the subject of a letter from John Potter apparently to Robert Walpole. An illustration of the vigor with which the Little Theatre was closed and the writers halted, the manuscript, used in reference by both Hume and Scouten, concerns events of 23 May and reveals Potter's role in the vandalism at the theatre. Evidence of Potter's truckling to government forces makes obvious the agencies most interested in shutting down the theatre. J. Paul de Castro's 1940 publication of the following note provides
further knowledge of Potter’s hand in the Licensing affair (346). Hume mentions de Castro’s find and likewise refers to the Potter documents (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 244-245). Both documents are held by the Folger Library (Ms. T. b. 3).

To his Grace the Duke of Grafton. The representation of John Potter, owner of the new Theatre in the Haymarket.

May it Please your Grace
As my Inclination Lead me to my duty to obtain leave to waite on you and also to apply to the Right Honble Sir Robt. Walpole In Order to prevent what was Intended to Be Represented in my theatre in may last it was your Graces pleasure to declare I should meet with a Reward for such dutifull Behavior and I have Rec’d the promise of Sir Robt Walpole to the same purport with this addition soe soon as your Grace and Sir Robt. should taulk on that head I should with the Rest of mankind find due Incurragement to bear an honnest mind. I therefore Begg Leave to address myself to your Grace that you would Be pleased to Remember me when you shall see sir Robt and I att the same begg your Grace to beleive me faithfully attached to the utmost of my Power against all scandall and defamation. I am with all due defference your Graces most devoted Obedient and most humble servant

7 Janry 1737
(qtd 244-245)

In addition to this admission of complicity to prevent "defamation" of his theatre, Potter sent along a bill for "Loss to my theatre," which Battestin says Potter submitted twice, on 13 June and again 24 February (Henry Fielding: A Life 245), and gives the amount of Potter’s charges as 12 guineas (Henry Fielding: A Life 650: 403).
De Castro quotes the letter accompanying the bill that Potter sent for services rendered (346):

Inclosed is the acct of my theatre youle please to Remember I left a Copy of my Representation with you on monday Last which I hope youle put in your Pockett on Sunday when you goe to the Duke of Graftons mr heidegger hath spoke to his Grace. I am sir very desirous to have his Grace and Sir Robert walpole Informed of my Real Intention not to offend which I flatter myselfe youle doe me Justice In. I Recommend my selfe to your Good offices and am sir your most Obedient humble servt.

John Potter

13th June 1737

Loss by my Theatre

To one day Pullin  
seven days in all

To one day davie  
there were. Some

To one day Roberts  
Returned all four

To one day hatchet  
Guineas Each day 28.08

To kaywood (Haywood?)

To one day dapper

To one day mathisone

To taking down the scenes & decorations so that the theatre was Renderd Incapable of haveing any Play or other performance, and mens time & carts

To fill the same with deale & timber Bricks and Lime

To Charge of moveing those things 12.12.0

To money to Return mrs Coopper on her contract 52.10.0

To money to Be paid By mrs Coopper and I suppose Mr fielding (he haveing Begun a subscription)

twenty one weeks from the first day of January next. 212.12.0

This I submitt wholly to your own Laking 306.12.0

John Potter
When we remember that the theatre was rented for the 1736-37 season to Fielding's Great Mogul Company of Comedians, we see the mainsprings of Potter's actions. Once more, he was bribed to turn out a tenant. Given Potter's greed, we may be fairly sure that both Hill and then Fielding had paid in advance for the season. One question remains about the document, however; Fielding in 1737 announced that he was going to enlarge and refurbish a theatre, unnamed, for the company of writers. That being announced, we wonder why he paid Potter in advance for a season at the Little Theatre. This action does not indicate that Fielding was going to purchase the Haymarket; yet we would assume that Fielding's announcement refers to enlarging that playhouse. Hume does not doubt the authenticity of the manuscript.

That the writers' group under study brought the Little Theatre to a new vitality seems obvious when we observe the nature of the changes occurring at the theatre. A study of the seasons from 1730 to 1737 reveals shifts in numbers and types of performances at the theatre.
Table 1: Mainpieces, Little Theatre, 1729-1737

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Pre-1660</th>
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<th>1690-1709</th>
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<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1736-37</td>
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According to the representations in Table 1, the 1729-30 season produced a preponderance of plays written after 1729 and many premieres, especially for Fielding’s works. Among the few Pre-Restoration pieces, Shakespeare’s Othello was performed once, and among the plays written 1690-1709 were Farquhar’s The Stratagem (3) and The Half-Pay Officer (1). Rowe’s tragedy The Fair Penitent, a work written between 1710-1720, was produced once, but the post-1720 plays were Fielding’s The Author’s Farce (35), Rape upon Rape (8), Tom Thumb (5), Samuel Johnson of Chester’s Hurlothrumbo (8) and The Cheshire Comicks (4), Coffey’s The Beggar’s Wedding (4) and The Female Parson (3), Hippisley’s Flora (2), Hatchett’s The
Rival Father (4), anonymous Love and Revenge (9), and Gay's The Beggar's Opera (1) and anonymous The Beggar's Opera Metamorphized (1). The afterpieces warrant attention for their appearance on the double bill gained profits for the playwrights, as well as reflected the plays' popularity. Excepting Otway's comedy, The Cheats of Scapin (1), the afterpieces were new works, written after 1729: Fielding's Tom Thumb (30) and Pleasures of the Town (1), C. Cibber's ballad opera Damon and Phillida (14), the anonymous pantomimes The Humours of Harlequin (6), The Amorous Adventure (7), and Jack the Giant Killer (2).

Opening a little late on 21 October, the 1730-31 season showed a similar pattern to the previous one, with a low number of performances of works written before 1710, including Shakespeare's Othello, Behn's The False Count (3), Dryden's The Spanish Fryar (1), Otway's The Orphan (1) and The Cobbler of Preston (1) and Congreve's Love for Love (1), C. Cibber's Love Makes a Man (2), Farquhar's The Inconstant (1) and The Stratagem (2), and Rowe's The Fair Penitent (1). We must note that The Orphan and The Cobbler of Preston were one-night stands by "Gentlemen" actors who rented the Little Theatre for a single performance.

Productions of Post-1720 plays included Fielding's The Author's Farce (13), The Coffee-House Politician (1),
Tom Thumb; or, The Tragedy of Tragedies (11), The Grub Street Opera (1), Aubin's The Merry Masqueraders (2), Chetwood's The Generous Freemason (3), Draper's The Spendthrift (4), C. Cibber's The Provok'd Husband (2), Coffey's The Beggar's Wedding (2), anonymous The Indian Empress (3), and Gordon's Lupone; or, The Inquisitor (3). The most popular play, Hatchett's The Fall of Mortimer (17) brought governmental censure, a situation leading to closure of the Little Theatre for six months, at least for evening performances, but no known records exist for Potter's day rentals of the playhouse. Johnson of Chester's Hurlothrumbo, was advertised for 20 August, after closure of The Fall of Mortimer on 30 June, but it was dismissed, perhaps another effect of governmental intervention. Premiere performances of several plays occurred during the season, including Fielding's The Letter Writers, The Welch Opera, The Grub-Street Opera, anonymous The Jealous Taylor, and Hatchett's The Fall of Mortimer, along with Penelope Aubin's The Merry Masqueraders (2), and Gordon's Lupone (3). Afterpieces belong mainly to Fielding including Tom Thumb; or, The Tragedy of Tragedies (12), The Letter Writers (4), The Welch Opera (8), The Battle of the Poets (6), The Author's Farce (2), anonymous The Jealous Taylor (15), C. Cibber's Damon and Phillida (5).
The six-month closure having abbreviated the following season 1731-32, the theatre opened on 10 February 1732 with only two other productions for that month. March, April, and May witnessed more or less full months of theatre evenings, but the whole season consisted of 38 mainpieces. The division between old and new works was not sharply drawn, for there were three evenings of Restoration, five, 1690-1709 and two 1710-20: Otway’s *The Cheats of Scapin* (1), *The Orphan* (1), Dryden’s *The Spanish Fryar* (1), Baker’s *Tunbridge Walks* (1), Farquhar’s *The Recruiting Officer* (3) and *The Stratagem* (1), and Centlivre’s *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1). The post-1720 plays included Carey’s *Amelia* (9), Johnson of Chester’s *The Blazing Comet* (7), Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (3) and *Acis and Galatea* (2), Fielding’s *Tom Thumb* (1) and *The Author’s Farce* (1), Lillo’s *The London Merchant* (1), Young’s *The Revenge* (1), and the premiere of anonymous *Coquet’s Surrender* (1). Coffey’s *The Devil to Pay* (1), Fielding’s *Tragedy of Tragedies* (1), C. Cibber’s *Damon and Phillida* (2), anonymous pantomime *Monstrum Horrendum* (1), *The Wanton Jesuit* (1), *No Joke Like a True Joke* (1) comprised the afterpieces. During the intercession between seasons, the Fielding and Fielding-Hippisley Booths during Bartholomew Fair, offered the droll, *The Envious Statesman: or, The Fall of Essex*, along with *The Humours of the Forc’d Physician*, which played for fifteen
nights, as advertised from 22 August to 7 September. Before the opera, one Phillips did "Postures," mentioned by Scouten.

Season 1732-33 also was rather abbreviated, mounting productions on only 53 evenings, including five during Passion Week, when London theatres were traditionally dark. Plays from 1690-1709 included Vanbrugh's *Aesop* (1), Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem* (2), and *The Recruiting Officer* (3), along with Rowe's *Tamerlane* (1) and *The Fair Penitent* (1). One drama from the 1710-1720 period, Addison's *Cato* (1), was produced. Of the 48 plays given, 39 were post-1720 plays: Haywood and Hatchett's *The Opera of Operas* (12) featured the most number of performances, along with Carey's opera *Amelia* (2), Lampe's opera *Dione* (3), Lediard's opera *Britannia* (5), Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (6), the pantomime *A Jealous Husband Outwitted* (4), Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* (2) and *The Old Debauchees* (1), Coffey's *The Beggar's Wedding* (1), anonymous *The Miseries of Love* (1) and *The Amorous Lady: or, The Biter Bit* (1), C. Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* (1). Most afterpieces consisted of entertainments and dancing with only a few plays, namely, anonymous *Love Runs All Dangers* (6), Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* (2), C. Cibber's *Damon and Phillida* (1), anonymous *The Farmer's Son* (2), the anonymous pantomime *The Fawcer* (1), and a public rehearsal of Lampe's opera *Dione*. 

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For the season of 1733-34, Theophilus Cibber, leading the dissenting actors from the Drury Lane, rented the Little Theatre from 26 September to 12 March. Genest states that the "seceding actors from D. L. fitted up and decorated this theatre with the greatest expedition--they were called the comedians of his Majesty's Revels--the Master of the Revels was probably prevailed on, without much difficulty, to exert the authority which still remained to him in their favour" (3: 415).

The Cibber group featured the same mainpieces shown at the Drury Lane; that is, all the plays were written before 1720 and the preponderance of them, between 1660 and 1709. In Table 1 for the Little Theatre, I do not include the plays staged by the Drury Lane secessionists, because, as I have just indicated, to do so would give skewed numbers. My concern lies solely with the plays by the group of writers at the Little Theatre, and a study of the season's dramas should incorporate the number and kinds of plays by that distinct ensemble. By dividing the plays at the theatre for the 1733 season, I hope to demonstrate that there were tandem forces at work at the playhouse. Playbills for the period feature, for example, double bills like Howard's The Committee paired with The Opera of Operas or, to give another instance, Betterton's The Amorous Widow paired with The Opera of Operas. Judging by references to playbills' advertisements in
Scouten's *The London Stage* Part Three, as well as 1735 clippings from newspapers like the *Craftsman* in Archives Box 1077 and 1076 of the Theatre Museum of the Victoria and Albert Museum, one may determine that performances during the period involved two sets of dramas and two sets of actors both appearing at the Haymarket.

It would seem that both groups shared the stage satisfactorily. Although we do not have any proof about financial or professional arrangements, consideration of the mainpieces and afterpieces for that period reveals or at least suggests some kind of compromise. During the five months that Cibber's group appeared at the Little Theatre, they produced the mainpieces. Their play roster duplicated the Drury Lane offerings, but the afterpieces were written by the Little Theatre writers. There was one exception, however, when the Drury Lane secessionists produced Miller's 1733 play *The Mother-In-Law* (18), as their finale at the Little Theatre. This one contemporary play was in the old comedy of manners tradition, so, although the play was new, its theme was traditional. The 1733-34 listing for this study only includes 39 mainpieces after 12 March when Cibber's troupe left the Little Theatre and opened at the Drury Lane with their Haymarket success, *The Mother-In-Law*.

During September, October, November, December, and part of January, the stage appears to be shared; the
afterpieces performed by the Haymarket company make the playbills appear to be double mainpieces instead of mainpiece and afterpiece. Haywood's *The Opera of Operas* (17), Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* (5), Carey's *The Impromptu Revel Masque: on the Joyous Occasion of the Royal Nuptials* (9), Coffey's *The Devil to Pay* (13) and *The Beggar's Wedding* (2). After 11 January until the secessionists left, the type of afterpieces changes dramatically: Barton Booth's masque *Dido and Aeneas* (15) and *The Burgomaster Tricked* (16) were performed to the exclusion of the Little Theatre writers' works, excepting Coffey's *Flora* (2), Haywood's *The Opera of Operas* (2), and Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* (1). However, in the final two weeks before the Drury Lane actors left, Carey's *Chrononhotonthologos* (10) was performed as afterpiece for every performance except one, when Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* appeared.

On 5 April, the Little Theatre resumed mainpieces with its own group and presented 26 performances for the remainder of the season. Seven plays were written before 1710: Shakespeare's *Henry IV* Part 1 (1), Otway's *Don Carlos* (1), Farquhar's *The Stratagem* (2), Southerne's *Oroonoko* (1), Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (2), C. Cibber's *The Nonjuror* (2) was the only 1710-20 play produced and the other productions were written after 1720, including the premiere of Fielding's *Don Quixote in England* (8),
Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (6), C. Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* (5), Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1) and George Barnwell (1), anonymous *The Humorous Election* (4), *Penelope* (3), and *The Humours of Sir John Falstaff* (1). One piece, Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, was revised (possibly by the male lead, Charlotte Charke) and performed as *The Beggar's Opera Tragediz'd* (2). It played one night paired with *The Covent Garden Tragedy*. Afterpieces were chiefly Fielding's works, including *The Lottery* (7), *The Covent Garden Tragedy* (5), *Don Quixote in England* (1), *The Mock Doctor* (3), along with Coffey's *The Devil to Pay* (4), and *The Beggar's Wedding* (1), Chetwood's premiere of *The Lover's Opera* (2), and the anonymous *The Cobbler's Opera* (1).

The Little Theatre was rented for the 1734-35 season by a French dance troupe from 26 October to 2 June. Immediately preceding their arrival, the theatre group produced on 5 October, Congreve's *Love for Love* and Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*, and on 10 October, Southerne's *Oroonoko* and again Fielding's *The Mock Doctor*. After the French troupe ended the tour in the summer, the following mainpieces were produced and the theatre, remaining open during the intercession, produced plays until 26 August. Plays written before 1710 included Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1) and *The Orphan* (1), Lee's *Theodosius* (1), Farquhar's *The Twin Rivals* (4) and *The Stratagem* (1); the
post-1720 plays were Lillo’s The London Merchant (1), C. Cibber’s The Provok’d Husband (2), Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera (1). Afterpieces were Carey’s The Honest Yorkshireman (7), Fielding’s The Mock Doctor (1) and The Lottery (1), along with C. Cibber’s Damon and Phillida (1).

The season 1735-36 appears to be formed in two parts. From 17 September through 20 February, the first segment featured a sketchy roster of plays; indeed, the season opened at the playhouse with Rowe’s Jane Shore (1), followed on 24 September with actors affiliated loosely with the Little Theatre, producing The Beggar’s Opera on a double bill with Charke’s satire The Art of Management; or, Tragedy Expell’d at the York Buildings, as noted by Scouten. A repeat performance was postponed by Charke’s “indisposition.” I discuss in chapter five the events and censorship involved here in the closure of Charke’s play. On 29 September, Rowe’s Jane Shore with Charke’s The Art of Management again appeared at the York Buildings, while the Little Theatre produced Farquhar’s Love and a Bottle. In October, there was one performance of Love and a Bottle on the 24th, and no more performances occurred until December when plays were acted five evenings in December, four in January, and five in February. Mainpieces were Dryden’s The Spanish Fryar (1), Farquhar’s The Recruiting Officer (1), The Inconstant (1), The Stratagem (1), The
Twin Rivals (1), Vanbrugh's Aesop (1), Rowe's Jane Shore (1) and Centlivre's A Bold Stroke for a Wife (1), all written before 1710. Post-1720 productions included Hill's The Fatal Extravagance (10), C. Cibber's The Careless Husband (1), Young's The Revenge (2), and the revision of Arden of Feversham (1). Afterpieces were all post-1720 works: Fielding's The Tragedy of Tragedies (1), and The Mock Doctor (1), Carey's The Honest Yorkshireman (1), Drury's The Rival Milliners (3), anonymous The Contract; or, The Biter Bit (1) and The Heroic Footman (1).

Fielding's Pasquin opened at the Little Theatre on 5 March and proved to be his most popular work, running through 20 April on a single bill, 61 evenings. On 26 April, the theatre interrupted the run to present Lillo's The London Merchant (1) and anonymous The Female Rake (1), and on 3 May to stage Fielding's The Tragedy of Tragedies, with Carey's Chrononhotonthologos, and The Honest Yorkshireman. The theatre then offered Pasquin again, this time placed on a double bill with Fielding's Tumble-Down Dick (13). Lillo's Guilt its Own Punishment (6), Gay's The Beggar's Opera (2), C. Cibber's The Provok'd Husband (4), Steele's The Conscious Lovers (1) were other 1720 plays given as mainpieces, in addition to the premiere of Elizabeth Cooper's The Nobleman; or, The Family Quarrel (3). Along with the afterpieces already
mentioned, Thomas Philips's 1737 play The Rival Captains was acted six times. Three early works written before 1710 were presented once as mainpieces in July: Otway's Don Carlos (1), Farquhar's The Stratagem (1), Centlivre's A Bold Stroke for a Wife (2). The season ended with a double bill of Gay's The Beggar's Opera and anonymous The Deposing and Death of Queen Gin.

The season 1736-37 actually opened at Southwark Fair from 7 September to 15 September when "Pasquin's Company of Comedians," undoubtedly actors associated with the Little Theatre, acted The History of King John as mainpiece at the Great Theatrical Booth. Giving a total of 55 performances for the season, the playhouse itself opened with two performances which paired Otway's The Soldier's Fortune with an anonymous contemporary play A Hint to the Theatres. The remainder of the season breaks into two parts with the first one, from 6 January to 8 March, which features all post-1720 works 6 January to 26 January: the anonymous mainpieces The Battle of Parnassus (1), The Defeat of Apollo (5), The Mirrour (1), and afterpieces Kelly's The Fall of Bob Alias Gin (3), anonymous The Defeat of Apollo (1) and The Mob in Despair (1). The second part extended from 9 February to 2 March comprising mainpieces written before 1710, with four exceptions, namely Otway's The Orphan, Dryden's All for Love (1), C. Cibber's She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not (1),
Farquhar's *The Twin Rivals* (1) and *The Recruiting Officer* (1). Post-1720 works included Fielding's *Pasquin* (1) and anonymous *The Parthian Hero; or, Love in Distress* (1). During this period, the theatre staged Drury's *The Rival Milliners* (2), anonymous *The Sharpers; or, The Female Match-Maker* (1) and anonymous *The King and the Miller of Mansfield* (1).

Following 4 March until closure on 23 May, the mainpieces were anonymous *The Life and Death of King John* (1), following which on 5 March and 7 March were Farquhar's *The Stratagem* and Congreve's *Love for Love*. After that date, five plays constituted the theatre's presentations: Lillo's *The Fatal Curiosity* (11), (Fielding's?) *A Rehearsal of Kings* [including one performance disrupted which I counted and one postponed which I did not], (5), *Pasquin* (4), *The Historical Register* (24), (Carey's?) *The Sailor's Opera; or An Example of Justice to Present and Future Times* (2), and Carey's *The Dragon of Wantley* [a rehearsal] (1). The afterpieces were anonymous *Fame; or, Queen Elizabeth's Trumpets; or, Never Plead's Hopes of being a Lord Chancellor; or, The Lover Turn'd Philosopher; of, The Miser's Resolve upon the Lowering of Interest* (1), Fielding's *The Historical Register* (12) and *Eurydice Hiss'd* (19), Carey's *The Dragon of Wantley* (5) and anonymous *The Sailor's Opera* (3). 26
I hope to make clear by this study the fact that there was a group of writers at the playhouse producing a body of works whose aim was social commentary. First, it seems necessary to prove by a study of production numbers, the very presence of a writing group at the theatre and to enumerate their contributions to the season. See Table 2 for the results of the study. To demonstrate the contributions of the Little Theatre writers to the playhouse, I compiled the total number of plays, both mainpieces and afterpieces, at the Little Theatre. Of that number, I counted separately the plays by the Little Theatre writers in order to observe their contributions in percentages. I made a separate count of Fielding's plays. Results of the study involving the percentage of Little Theatre writers' plays out of the total number reveal the undoubted contribution of these writers. Numbers further show the relatively consistent presence of a writing nucleus at the playhouse, with Fielding, Haywood, Charke, Lillo, Johnson of Chester, and Carey as principal writers, along with Hatchett. The number of theatre evenings provided by these writers remains far too steady over eight years to be coincidental, and while prolific Fielding was responsible for a large number of the protest dramas, he did not do it all.
Table 2: Numbers and Percentages of Plays Produced at the Little Theatre by Fielding, Haywood, Charke, Johnson of Chester, Lillo, Carey, and Hatchett, 1729/30-1736/37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th># Performances</th>
<th># LT Writers</th>
<th>% LT Writers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1729-30</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730-31</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731-32</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732-33</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733-34</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1734-35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1735-36</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736-37</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1729-30 season provided 148 plays with the Little Theatre writers contributing 95 plays, or 64% (78 by Fielding). The 1730-31 season had 138 plays with 73, or 53% of the production written by the Little Theatre writers (58 by Fielding). The 1731-32 season was shortened by the six-month closure and had only 43 plays with 21, or 49%, produced by the Little Theatre writers (3 by Fielding). The season of 1732-33, a total of 60 plays were produced with 21 plays, or 35% written by the Little Theatre writers (4 by Fielding). Season 1733-34 was dominated by the Drury Lane dissenters, and the total number of plays at the playhouse was 277. Of the total number, the Little Theatre writers were responsible for 66 plays, or 24%, (36 by Fielding). Because the the 1734-35 season was controlled by the French dance troupe, the theatre staged only 26 plays, after the dance troupe contract ended. Of those, however, 12, or 48% were...
written by the Little Theatre writers (3 by Fielding). The 1735-36 season had 140 plays and 94, or 67% of that number were written by the Little Theatre writers (84 by Fielding). The Licensing Act ended the 1736-1737 season; the number of plays produced were 121 and the Little Theatre writers contributed 83, or 69% (63 by Fielding). Even during the leanest years for the writers when other groups rented the theatre, their contribution never dropped below 26%. In five of the seasons, percentages were 48% to 69%. For all seasons under study, the Little Theatre playwrights were responsible for a large percentage of the productions, ranging from 24% to 69%, with a median of 49.5%.

In conclusion, this introduction has explored primarily the background against which the Little Theatre and its writers existed for the eight years under study. Part of the consideration includes the Licensing Act and its major provisions, as well as some implications about its sources, and its impetus. I have tried to point out just how slender is the body of criticism concerning the small playhouse and the writers there from 1729-1737. Aside from consideration of Fielding, critics generally ignore the other writers, in spite of their major contribution to the London stage. The chapter tries to view political, social, and theatrical elements as they impacted on the crass economics of theatrical London: what
plays were produced, by whom, and for what venue. In order to support my assertions about the mainstream of the London stage, I include in the appendix to the chapter a tabulation of theatre offerings at the Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and the Covent Garden theatres, between 1730 and 1737. Growth of the middle class, decay of the old social structure, systematic disenfranchisement of the individual, along with other factors, such as a money economy and fluid theatre audiences, brought change to the stages of London, especially, I propose, to the Little Theatre. The discontent of the populace, evident in the growing number of riots, was paralleled by the protests against the establishment staged at the Haymarket.

Table 1 provides evidence of different offerings at the Little Theatre; if the patented houses promoted the spirit of nostalgia for their dramatic evenings, the Little Theatre featured in their dramas contemporaneous social commentaries. I have suggested the situation of the major theatres versus the minor theatres, and have tried to prove that the Little Theatre sheltered a group of writers who worked together and formed a nucleus of playwrights, however casual. By introducing this material, I hope to provide a rather broad background against which to present the individual writers who gathered around the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, and
to analyze their plays, which as social and political
protests differed from the types of dramas at the patented
theatres. The following chapters discuss Henry Fielding,
Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Charke, George Lillo, Henry
Carey, Samuel Johnson of Chester, William Hatchett and
examine their individual activism at the Little Theatre.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER ONE


2 Royal unease about control over a powerful theatre is reflected in the Preamble to the Grants, where Charles II gives his reasons for creating a monopoly for licensed theatres, later to produce such devastating effects on the unlicensed Little Theatre.

Whereas Wee are given to Understand that Certain Persons and about our City of London, or the suburbs thereof, doe frequently assemble for the
performing and acting of Playes and Enterludes for reevards, to which divers of our Subjects doe, for their entertainment resort, with said Playes, as wee are informed, doe contain much matter of Prophanation and Scurrility, see that such kind of entertainment, which, if well managed, might serve as morall instructions in humane life, as the same are now used doe for the most part tende to the debauchinge of the manners of such as are present at them, and are very Scandalous and offensive to all pious and well disposed Persons.


4 Nicholson presents the events precipitated by The Golden Rump and states that the "Secret Committee . . .
revealed the fact that Fielding had not exaggerated" (43-44). Nicholson goes on to postulate that "some means had to be devised to put a stop to this satiric license, which might degenerate into licentiousness at any time." But he states about The Golden Rump: "[t]he author was unknown, the piece never appeared in print; but a suspicion was current at the time that it had been composed at the dictation of Walpole himself, as the most direct way of silencing Fielding and other political satirists." Nicholson uses as his reference October 1787 Town and Country Magazine (44). My argument is implicit in Nicholson's remarks, but he does not develop them. Agreeing that Fielding did not act alone, I claim that the "other political satirists" to whom Nicholson alludes were Fielding's fellow writers at the Little Theatre.

5 Battestin's Henry Fielding: A Life contains an account of Chesterfield's defense of the Little Theatre (228-229). Among the few parliament members who protested the Licensing Act, Lord Chesterfield is remembered for his passionate defense of the stage. With his inescapable patronizing tone, his address to the House of Lords opposes the bill for reasons of freedom, artistic license, and the principles of property. But Chesterfield also refers to the stage as censor of morals, and he ends his speech with indirect reference to the true cause of the Licensing Act, and quotes the words of Prince Conti to Moliere upon Tartuffe being censured: "It is true, Moliere, Harlequin ridicules Heaven, and exposes religion; but you have done much worse--you have ridiculed the first minister of religion." The main body of his speech contains Chesterfield's basic objections:

When I speak against the Bill, I must think I plead the cause of Humour, I plead the cause of the British Stage, and of every gentleman of taste in the Kingdom. This Bill is not only an encroachment on liberty, but it is likewise an encroachment on property. Wit, my lords, is a sort of property; the property of those who have it, and too often the only property they have to depend on. It is indeed but a precarious dependence. (228)

6 The Tenth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts includes the following letter, dated 28 May 1737. The writer not only accuses Whigs of coercion but gives every indication that their fear of unlicensed London theatre was far too great for one man, even Fielding, to be the chief cause.
Mr. Horace Walpole is expected in London from Norfolk this night. The Parliament, 'tis thought, will sett about a fortnight after the Holydays, in which time The Scotch Bill may be passed in case the North Britains are not strong enough to throw it out before, for as they divided 99 against 140-odd, on the early or late day for the consideration of the Bill, 'tis imagined they will come pretty near in the Progress of the Bill, by many of the Majority going out of Town and such, as the Master, Mr. Pulteny and others, I am told not designing to attend it, they were accidentally in the division for the Comitment of the Only Bill by waiting to flame and exclaim about the Playhouse Bill, I mean Mr. Pulteny for the Master was strong for the suppression of Playhouses etc. and said that tho' it was a thin house, yet he thought if those Gentlemen who were absent, as had been urged, differ in opinion with him and be against the bill, he thought they were better employed in looking after their own affairs, upon which Pulteny did roast him most violently, and said a man who made so great a figure in his Profession in another place, might better keep to that place, then fell upon Winnington without mercy, and spared not Sr. Robt nor Wm Yonge urging that this restraint upon the Writers for the Stage, was a certain preamble to the taking away the Liberty of the Press in general, told a story, that Charles ye 2nd seeing a man in the pillory, asked the crime, 'Twas libelling Lord Clarendon,' odds fish! cries the king, why did not the Fool go on libelling of me, he must now certainly suffer for libelling this great man. Ye Bill will pass and no Playhouse be allowed but in the Liberties of Westminster, and these to be licenc’d and under the direction of the Lord Chamberlain. (1: 266-267)

7 This 1643 pamphlet takes the actor’s point of view and the problems presented to the theatre by contemporary Puritan morals; in contrast to current harrassment, the defense includes reference to an early, golden time of the English theatre:

[W]e have purged our stages from all obscene and scurrilous jests, such as might either be guilty of corrupting the manners, or defaming the persons of any men of note in the city or kingdom; that wee have endeavoured, as much as in us lies, to instruct one another in the true
and genuine art of acting . . . yet are wee, by authority, restrained from the practice of our profession. . . . Besides, which is, of all others, our great grievance, that playes being put down, under the name of publike recreation, other recreations of farre more harmfull consequence are permitted still to stand, viz. that nurse of barbarism and beastliness, the Bear Garden, where upon their usual dayes these demi-monsters are baited by ban dogs . . . pickpockets which in an age are not heard of in any of our houses repairing there, with other disturbers of the publike peace, which dare not be seen in our civill and well-governed theatres, where none used to come but the best nobility and gentry. (qtd Baker A History of the London Stage 35-36)

8 The view of Fielding's attack on Walpole as personal vendetta is contained in Victor's History of the Theatres of London and Dublin: From the Year 1730 to the Present Time, 1: 66 ff; Dibdin's History and Illustrations of the London Theatres 4: 709 ff; Baker's Biographia Dramatica (London: 1742) 3: 129-130; as well in the 1737 issues of Gentleman's Magazine, Craftsman, Prompter. Regarding the authorship of The Golden Rump and its effect in closing the Little Theatre, Austin Dobson in Fielding (London: Macmillan and Co., 1911) quotes Horace Walpole's Memoirs of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George II (I: 12) as saying that Fielding was the author: "I have in my possession the imperfect copy of this piece as I found it among my father's papers after his death." Austin Dobson makes the point that the caricature The Golden Rump appeared in March 1737 Gentleman's Magazine and was "fully described." Dobson also states that Walpole, according to William Coxe's Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford (London: 1798), received the play from Giffard and Walpole "paid [to Giffard] the profits which might have accrued from the performance and detained the copy." Referring to an assertion of payoff to Giffard in Rambler's Magazine, 1787, Dobson adds that "[i]t is alleged that Walpole himself caused the farce in question to be written, and to be offered to Giffard for the purpose of introducing his scheme of reform; and the suggestion is not without a certain remote plausibility" (51-53).

Martin Battestin's Henry Fielding: A Life (London and New York: Routledge, 1989) makes two significant references to The Golden Rump authorship: one is Fielding's statement in the Daily Advertiser, 19 February 1736-7, in which Fielding denies that his proposal to build a new playhouse was a device "to revive the
playhouse Bill." Battestin's second reference pertains to a 1836-7 Select Committee in parliament and a report by John Payne Collier, the theatrical historian contained in Report of the Select Committee on Dramatic Literature, Sessions (1831-2) 7: 23:

[S]ome have supposed [The Golden Rump] to have been a contrivance by certain parties to produce such an impression on the mind of the Minister of the day, as to the inconvenience of allowing an unrestrained state of the drama, that he would introduce the Act of 1737, which he did introduce according. (qtd Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 229)

9 McCrea goes on to argue that "as Fielding shifted his political allegiances, the types of plays that he wrote changed radically, as did the companies that performed them and the audiences that viewed them... But even though the plays are an undistinguished group, we must not overlook the important role of the 1727-37 decade in Fielding's literary career... What was at stake for Fielding during the 1730's was the conception of human nature that he would bring to his art" (76-77).


11 Craftsman 5 December 1726. For a nineteenth-century evaluation of Walpole's governmental troubles, see


13 Arthur Scouten uses these figures in the Introduction to *The London Stage* Part Three (clxii), basing his estimates on existing records of ticket sales and box receipts. He conjectures the following figures for the seating capacity for the playhouses: Drury Lane at 4,500; Covent Garden 4,800; Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields 800; King’s in the Haymarket 1,950; and the Little Theatre 800. Hume, on the other hand, places seating capacity at the Little Theatre closer to 600 (*Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737* 168).

14 Morris Golden finds that Locke, as well as Mandeville and Shaftesbury, agreed that pleasure and pain provide "... [human] motivation" (*Fielding’s Moral Psychology* 22-23). Tuveson makes the point concerning Shaftesbury’s approaches to man’s motivations that "[i]t may be, [that this is] the beginning of the change in the tradition of Hamlet criticism, wherein the play moves from a tragedy of action to that of an inward and subjective revelation, the one absorbing everything" (290). The influence on playwrights would be equally important.


16 The Harlequin figure was taken from the Italian Arlecchino, the Italian Harlequin having the only speaking part. John Rich, acting under the name "Lun," adapted the Harlequin character as a pantomime for the English stage. The power of Rich’s interpretation of Harlequin and the popularity of the form which caused such changes in theatre offerings during the period under study, is reflected by Jackson in *History of the Scottish Stage*, as quoted by H. Barton Baker, *History of the London Stage*.
On [Rich’s] last revival of The Sorcerer, I saw him practise the hatching of Harlequin by the heat of the sun, in order to point out the business to Miles, who, though excellent in the line of dumb significance, found it no easy matter to retain the lesson Rich had taught him -- this certainly was a masterpiece in dumbshow -- from the first chipping of the the egg, his receiving of motion, his feeling of the ground, his standing upright, to his quick Harlequin trip round the empty shell, through the whole progression, every limb had its tongue and every motion a voice, which spoke with most miraculous organ to the understanding and sensation of the audience. (108-109)

While critics usually quote his derogatory comments about pantomime as part of the dog and pony atmosphere of the popular theatre, Fielding in Tom Jones praises Rich for his work, calling him a "great Genius -- not a common Artist."

This Entertainment consisted of two parts, the serious and the comic -- the Serious exhibited a certain number of Heathen Gods and Heroes, who were certainly the worst and dullest company into which an audience was ever introduced; and (which was a secret known to few) were actually intended to be so, in order to contrast the Comic part and display the tricks of Harlequin to better advantage--the contrivance was ingenious and had its effect; and this will plainly appear, if instead of Serious and Comic we substitute duller and dullest; for the Comic was certainly duller than any thing before shown on the stage, and could only be set off by that superlative dullness which composed the Serious; so intolerably serious were these Gods and Heroes, that harlequin was always welcome on the stage, as he relieved the audience from worse company.

17 The original complaint against Goodman’s Fields theatre allegedly came from neighbors and was the subject of a sermon. The following excerpt was placed with a printed copy of Arthur Bedford’s "A Sermon Preached in the Parish Church of St. Butolph’s in the City of London, November 30, 1729."

The Goodman Fields Theatre must not open because the playhouse so near several publick Offices, and the Thames, where so much Business is
negotiated, and carried on for the support of Trade and Navigation, will draw away Tradesmens Servants and others from their lawful Callings, and corrupt their Manners, and also occasion great numbers of loose, idle and disorderly Persons, as Street-Robbers and Common Night-Walkers, so to infest the Streets, that it will be very dangerous for his majesty's Subjects to pass the same. (qtd Nicholson 26)

18 Potter may have seen troupes of strollers as potential tenants at his building. He seems not to have had long leases for his tenants. It is hard to say how many strolling troupes there were in London, but periodical notices provide a way to see that troupes did indeed exist. Newspaper clippings show that drolls were still played at fair booths and that strolling players were not uncommon. Nicoll refers to a collection printed in 1742, called The Strolers Pacquet Opend. He further mentions Charke's autobiography which describes her life as a strolling player at the fairs (410-411). Sybil Rosenfeld's Strolling Players and Drama in the Provinces, 1660-1765 (Cambridge: At the U P, 1960) discusses strolling actors, and their types of plays, including drolls. Other works on the subjects include Alwin Thaler's "Strolling Players and Provincial Drama after Shakespeare," Publication of the Modern Language Association 39 (1922): 243-80; Una Ellis-Fermor, "Studies in the Eighteenth-Century Stage," Philological Quarterly 3 (1923): 289-301.

19 An on-site inspection in the summer of 1991 confirms, by unscientific calculations, the width of the lot to be 148 feet. Although most of the block was destroyed during the recent world war, enough buildings remain, such as the big theatre next door, to make possible an estimate of the frontages along the city block. As for the appearance of the building itself, a few depictions remain, as far as I can discover. The earliest, dated 1768, is an engraving featured as frontispiece to Macqueen-Pope's The Haymarket: Theatre of Perfection (London: W. H. Allen, 1948), and another is an engraving by Dale which shows the demolition of the Little Theatre in 1821. This depiction, which I bought as a single page at a London book stall, comes from an unknown work and contains the notation "To face page 80." Macqueen-Pope in The Haymarket describes the building and the mystery around it:

There is no detailed record of what the interior decoration was like but it is known to have been quite plain and very small. As to the exterior, it was a squat kind of building, very much like
a private house. It was two stories high, with a row of five windows to each storey, quite insignificant and quite undistinguished. (22)

Two possible renditions of the interior exist and both are cartoons about Fielding's great success Pasquin. The satirical drawings feature various characters but as background for the antics in the foreground, the artist uses, I suspect, the Little Theatre. One major reason for my belief involves the identical natures of the stages in proportion, width, height, and placement of stage trap.

For the interior, Macqueen-Pope guesses that the theatre was arranged in the following fashion, popular in that day:

[with] an apron stage, a ground floor a pit with plain backless benches running right up to the row of boxes at the rear. There were boxes at each side, and two tiers above the ground floor of boxes, but the topmost tier had boxes at the side, the back part being the gallery. The side boxes were actually on the apron stage itself, real stage boxes, and most of the action took place on that part of the "boards." (23)

20 Constables arrested Harper, but a justice released him because he was a householder, therefore did not meet the definition of a "vagabond." If a test case against unlicensed theatres was intended, the bench evaded a decision about the legality of theatre licensing. Harper spent a week in jail, according to Genest's account of the incident (3: 404-406).

21 Allardyce Nicoll states in "Hand-List of Plays" in The History of English Drama 1660-1800 Part 2 Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, that The Welsh Opera: or, The Grey Mare the Better Horse premiered at the Little Theatre April 1731. The author of the printed version was "Scriblerus Secundus" with the title page reading, The Genuine Grub-Street Opera. As it was intended to be Acted at the New Theatre in the Hay-Market & 1731: The Grub-Street Opera. As it is Acted at the Theatre in the Hay-Market. To which is added The Masquerade, A Poem. 8. 1731. Nicoll further adds that an advertisement on 5 June 1731 gave notice that a longer version was to appear shortly (324), but The Grub Street Opera premiered in July with no advertisement that we know. Scouten places the premiere of The Welsh Opera on 11 June 1731.

22 Scouten lists the cast for The Beggar's Opera Tragediz'd with women playing men's roles and Macheath played by Charlotte Charke, while actors played the
women’s roles. The afterpiece, a one-act farce, The Humours of Sir John Falstaff, Justice Shallow, and Ancient Pistol, featured Charlotte Charke playing the male lead, Pistol. Scouten notes that the Opera cast wore Roman costumes (402). Public curiosity must have been great, for admission prices were increased to 4s for a box.

23 Nicoll in "The Hand List of Plays" in Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, Part Two of The English History of the Drama notes that The Life and Death of King John was acted at Bartholomew Fair, Cushing Booth in 1749 (452). I have followed Scouten’s listing in The London Stage Part Three which lists the first production on 7 September 1736 at Southwark Fair.

24 The pantomime A Hint to the Theatres; or, Merlin in Labour had only two performances, at least at the Little Theatre.

25 Nicoll in "Handlist of Plays" from A History of English Drama 1660-1800 Part Two Early Eighteenth Century Drama, lists the anonymous work as The M irrour. With the Practice of a Dramatick Entertainment, call’d The Defeat of Apollo; or Harlequin Triumphant, and a farce call’d The Mob in Despair. The play or plays had only the performance at the Little Theatre where the whole was divided into play segments and presented over a fourteen-day period, from 8 January to 26 January.

26 Avery in "Fielding’s Last Season with the Haymarket Theatre," Modern Philology 37 (1939) and in "An Early Performance of Fielding’s Historical Register," Modern Language Notes 49 (1934) presents a history of the play. Scouten also deals with the dates of these final plays at the Little Theatre in "The New Theatre in the Haymarket, 1734 and 1737."

27 Information about the acting troupes at the Little Theatre derives from Scouten’s Part Three 1729-1736 and 1737-1745 of The London Stage and from Burling and Hume’s article "Theatrical Companies at the Little Haymarket, 1720-1737," Essays in Theatre 4 (1986): 98-113, which expands on Scouten’s original. Burling and Hume especially differentiate among the casts of individual groups acting at the Little Theatre over the course of eight seasons.

For 1729-30 (All Companies), Scouten includes the following in the acting roster at the Little Theatre. actors: Achurch, Ayres, Cross, Davenport, Dove, Fielding, Hallam, W. Hallam, Harris, Harris Jr. Hicks, Holt, Johnson, Jones, Knott, Lacey, Marshall, Mullart, Paget,

Burling and Hume list several performers for the season in addition to those included by Scouten: actors: T. Fielding, Hatchett, F. Lacey; actresses: Haywood, Hill, Kilby, Lindsey, Wilson, Wind; dancers: Mlle Delorme, M. de L’Inconu (104).


Burling and Hume also add actors Lewis and Peterson and actresses Britton and Stevens (105).


Burling and Hume also add actresses Careless, Dove, Grainger, Ray; and dancers "Jones’ scholar," Mons Quelqu’un; Musician Thumuth (106).

For 1732-33 (All Companies): actors: Allen, Master Arne, Barcock, Baskotin, Brown, Daly, Davis, Dease, Dighton, Gove, Hallam, Hicks, Hind, James, Jevon, Jones, Kelly, Maynard, Machen, Mountier, Mynns, Mynitt, Morris, Nowland, Pullen, Quin, Roan, Royer, Sanders, Simpson, Snider, Young Stevens, Tobin, Waltz, Williams; actresses: Bowman, Camano, Corbally, Harrison, Hind, James, Jones, Jenny Jones, Martin, Mason, Morse, Palmer, Palms, Phillips, Pullen, Sandham, Strange, Talbot, Thomson, Woffington; dancers: Baker, Barrett, Jones Jr., La Fevre, Lalauze, Lafronde.

Burling and Hume find that four sets of theatre professionals appeared at the Little Theatre during the 1732-33 season and list actors Daly, Dease, Morrice, Quin,
Roan and actresses Corbally, Jenny, Quin, Violante, and Woffington, along with dancers La Fevre, Lalaouze, and Tobin appearing until 20 September with Sra Violante’s company. The second set played in a series of musicals and performers included Master Arne, actors Baker, Barret, Comano, Davis, Hicks, Mountier, Mynet [Minet or Mynit], Snider [or Snyder], Waltz, Watts, and actresses Bennet, Camano, Jones, Mason, Susanna Mason, Palms [or Palms], Seedo, Cecilia Young, along with dancers Jones Sr, Jones Jr, and Lefronde. The third group appeared irregularly and consisted of actors Allen, Barcock, Boskotin, Bethun, Bickham, Brown, Dighton, Giles, Grove, Hallam [or Hallum], Harrison, Hicks, Hind, Jevon, Jones, Kelly, Lefronde, Maynard, Machen, Mynn, Mynnit, Nowland, Pullen [or Pwlen], Royer, Sanders, Simpson, Young Stevens, Williams, Woolley, and actresses Bowman, Cowley, Hind, Horriban, Names, Jones, Martin, More, Morse, Orbin, Sandham, Strange, Talbot, Thomson, along with dancers Coker, R. Jones, T. Jones, and Sandham. Burling and Hume state that as a fourth group, actors from Goodman’s Fields appeared in two plays in May. Two other sets of performers appeared once each in plays: an amateur company of "Gentlemen" in The Fair Penitent 12 July 1733, and a group from different theatres consisting of actors Mullart, Morris, Jones, Stephens, Giles, Hicks, and actresses Mullart, Mann, and Bennet in The Amorous Lady 26 July 1733 (107-108).

For 1733-34 (After 12 April: Various Companies):
actors Aston, Coe, Gray, Hallam, Hewson, Hicks, James, Jones, Machen, Macklin, Middleton, Monlass, Mullart, Pullen, Roberts, Rosco, Salwin, Tench, Thompson, Topham, Turbutt, Warwell, Robert Wilks, Woodburne, Woodward; actresses Atherton, Brett, Charke, Egerton, Freeman, Hide, Jones, Jones Jr, Martin, Monlass, Norman, Roberts, Shireburn, Talbot; dancers Davenport, Oldbeldiston, Brett; singers Arne, Mrs. Jones.


Burling and Hume argue that six distinct groups acted at the Little Theatre. The first was a casual group of actors from Drury Lane and the Little Theatre: actors Cross, Dyer, Este, Hallam, Jones, Lacy, Mecklin, Royer, and actresses "a Gentlewoman," Herle, Lacy, Oates, Purden. who acted in Love for Love for one performance on 7 October and perhaps in Oroonoko 10 October. The French troupe, which is not within the scope of this study, comprised the second group, while the third was an assembly of actors involved in a benefit, somehow relating to the Freemasons, on 12 June. As the fourth, Bond's group of amateur actors from the York Buildings appeared in Aaron Hill's Zara 9 July. The fifth company was identified as "Gregorians," amateurs who performed Otway's Venice Preserv'd 10 July. Burling and Hume note that one of the actors, listed "the Bard of the Order of Gregorians," was Henry Giffard, and cite their reference as Biographical Dictionary, 9: 222 (109-110).


Burling and Hume postulate that six groups of actors performed at the Little Theatre during the season. The first, led by Charlotte Charke, acted at the playhouse, then at the York Building. The troupe consisted of actresses Bennett, Charke, Jones, Male, along with Le Blond, and Chatillion, the dancers. The second group was "A Company of Comedians under the Direction of Mr. Odell" and acted between 13 December and 20 February and comprised of actors Barton, Blastock, Boothby, Bowen, Campbell, de Villiers, R. Drury, Freeman, Gardiner, Hulstone, Jones, Machen, Matthews, Pullen [of Pulling] Richards, Rogers, Topham, Wallis, Whittaker, Yarrow, Yates, and actresses Atherton, Burgess, Edwards, Egerton, Elmy, Freeman, Harris, Haywood, Hervey, Jones, Jones Jr, Pattison, Reading, Stewart, Talbot, Thompson, Turner, Westley, including Young Cunningham and Hemskirk as singers. Burling and Hume list as dancers Adams, Baudoin, Bodway, Castiglione, Demar, de la Hay, Le Grange, Le Sac,
Shawford and as musicians Baker, Biggs, Petit. The third company, managed by Ralph and H. Fielding, acted the rest of the season and consisted of the following players: actors Boothby, Castiglione, Chapman, Collerd, Davis, Mons. D’Herbage, Freeman, Jones, Lacy [or Lacey], Lowder, Machen, Phoenix, Pullen, Roberts, Rosamond, Russell, Master Sherwin, Smith, T. Smyth, Strensham, Topham, Turner, Wallis, Williams, Woodburn, Yates and actresses Beaumaunt, Burgess, Charke, Eaton, Egerton, Elmy, Ferguson, Freeman, Gerrard, J. Jones, Jones, Karver, Mills, Pile, Roberts, Talbot. The fourth group, not identified, acted in Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper’s The Nobleman on 17, 18, 19 May. Fifth was the "Lilliputians" who were children of Haymarket actors: Master Green, Master Norsa, Miss Brett, Miss Clark, Little Miss Cole, Miss Ferguson, Miss Kilby, and Miss Norsa. The sixth acted in the theatre during the summer layoff between 14 July and 2 August; Burling and Hume give as members of the cast actors, Jones, Machen, Pullen, Rowney, Smith, J. Smith, T. Smith, Wallis, and actresses Burgess, Charke, Egerton, Ferguson, Jones, Talbot, along with Baker, the musician (110-112).

Burling and Hume for the 1736-37 season assign three companies in addition to the "Company of Volunteers" appearing in The Soldier’s Fortune 3, 8 December. First was Mr. Green’s troupe in The Defeat of Apollo and The Fall of Bob, Alias Gin 14 January. "The Original Company who performed Pasquin" appeared in The Twin Rivals and consisted of actors Dove, Green, "the Mayor of Pasquin," Lacy, Noble, Roberts, Wallis, Burgess, Pattison, Reading, Talbot. The third group was the "Great Mogul’s Company" acting in Fielding’s final dramas at the Little Theatre from 14 March to 23 May, and included actors Blakes, Davies, Jones, Lacy, Lowther, Machen, Pullen, Roberts, Smith, Topping, Ward, Woodburn, and actresses Charke, Haywood, Jones, Kawer, Lacy, Roberts with Sant, the dancer and Baker, the musician (112-113).
CHAPTER TWO
HENRY FIELDING: THE EARLY PLAYWRIGHT

When Fielding came to the Little Theatre in 1730 after his second play The Temple Beau had closed at Goodman's Fields Theatre, he must have been desperate indeed to join the likes of Eliza Haywood and Samuel Johnson of Chester. Within a three-year period, Fielding had gone from being theatrical London's wunderkind to a failed playwright forced to peddle his dramas at the Little Theatre. This first chapter on Fielding views his early life as a way of understanding the social dramas, and discusses his dramatic concerns during the three years at the Drury Lane theatre. I want to examine the forces behind his social activism and to present biographical evidence concerning his early life. Finally, in order to trace the seminal presence of social issues that became the bases for his dramas at the Little Theatre, I attempt a sequential study extending from Fielding's early works, to his plays at the Drury Lane theatre.

Sir Walter Scott observes in his Memoir of Henry Fielding that the man seemed to be a victim of "precarious circumstances" which, since childhood, had dogged his life and dictated its course (5). With publication of the verse satire The Masquerade, and the production
of Love in Several Masks at the Drury Lane in 1727, Fielding's future seemed secure. In the drama's Preface, he describes the heady experience of seeing his first play immediately succeed the smash hit The Provok'd Husband on the boards at Drury Lane: "These were difficulties which seemed rather to require the superior force of a Wycherly [sic] or a Congreve, than a raw and unexperienced pen; (for I believe I may boast that none ever appeared so early upon the stage)." With his first drama promoted by his second cousin Sir Mary Wortley Montagu, Fielding therefore had an advantage in getting his play accepted by Colley Cibber, the chief manager of Drury Lane. But his luck did not hold: Lady Mary became seriously ill and Fielding's second play was perforce produced at the unpatented Goodman's Inn theatre. With no family money backing him and his non-dramatic works "dropping still born from the press," Fielding's poverty led him, as we have observed, to attempt his productions at the Little Theatre (Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 59). We must therefore look to Fielding's early years to seek the conditions that both haunted him and drove his dramatic genius. As if his penury lessened his art, it has become a commonplace to quote the daughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: "if ever he possessed a score of pounds, nothing could keep him from lavishing it idly, or make him think of tomorrow," and then to cite the following 1735 verse by
Fielding's contemporary James Miller, "Seasonable Reproof
-- a Satire in the Manner of Horace":

F------g, who Yesterday appear'd so rough,
Clad in coarse Frize, and plaister'd down with
Snuff,
See how his Instant gaudy Trappings shine;
What Play-house Bard was ever seen so fine!
But this, not from his Humour glows, you'll say
But mere Necessity; ------for last Night lay
In pawn the Velvet which he wears to Day. (qtd
Dudden 1: 136)

An examination of financial forces driving Fielding
is requisite to a study of his plays, one reason being
that many critics, establishing the formula that need
equals haste equals inferior writing, have focused on his
poverty and profligacy, along with his "wildness," as
reasons to dismiss his dramas. A contemporary satire in
Universal Spectator July 1734, gives an early indication
of Fielding's reputation for hasty work:

Item, I give and bequeath to my very negligent
friend Henry Drama, esq., all my industry. And
whereas the world may think this an unnecessary
legacy, forasmuch as the said Henry Drama, esq.,
brings on the stage four pieces every season;
yet as such pieces are always wrote with
uncommon rapidity, and during such fatal
intervals only as the stocks have been on the
fall, this legacy will be of use to him to
revise and correct his works. Furthermore, for
fear the said Henry Drama should make an ill use
of the said industry, and expend it all on a
ballad farce, it's my will the said legacy
should be paid to him by equal portions, and as
his necessities may require.

This view was so pervasive that Dean Swift, who
actually liked Fielding and even laughed during Tom Thumb,
used Fielding as a derogatory comparison:
In poetry the height we know;
'Tis only infinite below.
For instance: when you rashly think
No rhymer can like Welsted sink.
His merits balanced you shall find,
That Fielding leaves him far behind.²

As Rogers comments, there is deliberate cruelty in these types of contemporary assessments (Henry Fielding 65-66). Fielding’s deficiencies become the focus for judging the man’s works, and his paradoxical position as a poor aristocrat whose father denied him his inheritance somehow reveals his talent as a writer. We must consider that these early estimates formed for years the basis of the Fielding legend to which Arthur Murphy contributed his "[disposition] to gallantry, [caused by] his strong animal spirits" (83). It would seem helpful to approach his poverty another way; instead of looking at Fielding’s financial status to interpret his art, to look at his art to interpret his destitution. For that reason, we need to determine the causes of Fielding’s poverty because it dictated his university, friends, taverns, homes, employment, and, as we have noted, the critical reception of his dramas.

While I appreciate the studies of political impulses prompting Fielding’s work in the theatre, his political aims existed at one level of the dramas and allowed for topical interpretation. He exploited state problems on the stage, but many criticisms have emphasized the state-
stage connection to the exclusion of social commentary. Too, scholarly criticism is divided as to Fielding's actual political allegiance, calling him on the one hand pro-Walpole and on the other, anti-Walpole.\(^3\) His politics have received most of the scholarly attention, but he invested his work with more than broadsides at contemporary political figures like Walpole; his dramas at the Little Theatre contain his social vision. As I note in chapter three, *Tom Thumb*, *The Coffee-House Politician*, *Pasquin*, and *The Historical Register of 1736* are cited as plays aimed at Walpole, but they seem tame, topical political attacks. Contemporary politics is only a side issue that engenders an audience's easy laugh while it masks Fielding's real aim, a depiction of the individual in society. For that reason, my study tends to focus exclusively on his social aims in his dramas and to examine the dramas as part of the whole social agenda of the Little Theatre playwrights.

Criticism of the dramas seems to fall into a pattern of comparing Fielding the dramatist with Fielding the novelist, as a way to offer unfavorable contrast between early Fielding work and later. When his plays are considered, they are removed from the context within which he wrote them and are examined in the light of mainstream political and theatrical London. As my critical survey also tries to show, the dramatic works have been found
lacking because of their supposed immoralities and failure to show goodness in action, assertions especially true in an earlier era. The result has been criticism of Fielding for what he did not accomplish, rather than what he did. Attacks began December 1730 with a verse satire The Candidates for the Bays published by "Scriblerus Tertius," whom Battestin identifies as Thomas Cooke, contemporary of twenty-three-year-old Fielding:

Bedaub’d o’er with Snuff, and drunk as a Drum, 
And mad as a March hare Beau F[ielding] does come; 
He staggers, and swears he will never submit 
To Correction of (a) Friends, or the Censure of Pit; 
He says what is flat shall for ever be so. 
Who tells him a Fault he esteems as a Foe; 
He begs that Apollo’ll his Labours compleat, 
And give him the Bays, or the Wearer’s Estate: 
He instances each little Thing he has wrote, 
And makes a new Item of every Though; 
Commending himself as he passes along, 
From R[ape] upon R[ape] to (b) Belinda a song: 
He vamps upon wretched heroick Bombast, 
And sings the success that attended the last: 
He’ll shew both himself and (c) Assistants are no Wits, 
By valiant T[om] T[humb] and his (d) Battle of Poets: 
He steals all his Beauties when they’re in their Fulness, 
As by (e) Luckless appears, and the Goddess of Dullness. (qtd Henry Fielding: A Life 837: 123)

Ironically, one reference has especially been used to denigrate his work at the theatre, as well as to establish quite erroneously Fielding’s political aims as his only dramatic focus. Eliza Haywood, close to him at least professionally at the Little Theatre, in 1751 found it
expedient to turn on him by reducing his work to its lowest level and at the same time, nullifying her own work at the same theatre. In The History of Betsy Thoughtless her reference to Fielding seems clear, as well as vengeful.

[H]e frequently exhibited there certain drolls, or more properly, invectives against the ministry: in doing which it appears extremely probable, that he had two views; the one to get money, which he very much wanted, from such as delighted in low humour, and could not distinguish true satire from scurrility; and the other, in the hope of having some post given him, by those whom he had abused, in order to silence his dramatic talent. (1.76-77)

Among the early Fielding critics, Arthur Murphy in 1762, apologetically argued that Fielding’s hasty writing and his immaturity caused his failure as a dramatist, in addition to the fact that he wrote in very poor imitation of his betters, namely Wycherley and Congreve. Murphy’s pronouncement about the ephemeral nature of Fielding’s dramas, and of his dramatic talent, has surfaced often to obviate the necessity of analyzing Fielding’s plays. Murphy’s inclusion of the following has become a commonplace observation of Fielding the playwright.

Having become universal, this image of Fielding as wild Harry, the talented drunk, is worth quoting:

When he had contracted to bring on a play, or a farce, it is well known, by many of his friends now living, that he would go home rather late from a tavern, and would the next morning deliver a scene to the players, written upon the
papers which had wrapped the tobacco in which he so much delighted. (26-27)

Undoubtedly with his reputation in mind, Thackery's *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* charges that Fielding's plays are "irretrievably immoral," and F. H. Dudden calls Fielding the playwright a perpetrator of bad taste: "[H]e did invent scenes which are more than a little improper, and dialogues which are not by any means beyond reproach." In addition, the critic deplored his "unseemly personal allusions which he introduced into his plays." The general view of Fielding's association with the theatre appears in Dudden's remarks: "We have reason to be grateful for the Licensing Act, which brought Fielding's work as a playwright to an abrupt conclusion . . . to win for himself everlasting fame as 'Father of the English Novel'" (1: 233). Even as late as 1966, Butt says much the same thing: "Fielding's plays and journalistic essays serve to show something of the range of that experience as well as indicating how the experience might be used by the future novelist . . . . Writing for the stage had taught him how to manipulate dialogue and to devise speech rhythms for distinguishing [social class]" (Fielding 10)

Sympathetic to Fielding's dramas, Cross in his biography *The History of Henry Fielding*, makes his famous remark about Fielding and the theatre and which I find to relate to the social purposes in his dramas:
He had hardly more than discovered where his talent lay before his dramatic career was ended. . . . But for the Licensing Act he would have rebuilt or enlarged his theatre and continued to delight London audiences for another decade or more. On Fielding's stage rather than Giffard's Garrick would have won his spurs. . . . The drama, I have tried to make clear, was to Fielding much more than a means of support; it was his soul; it was his life. Underlying all his plays--farce as well as comedy--was a serious intent. (1: 235-236)

And yet he is far more offhand when he says about Fielding's stage efforts, that "[t]he truth that Fielding between the ages of twenty-three and thirty, put on stage a score plays. Some were damned; others were immensely popular" (3: 141).

Cross's contemporary, Austin Dobson gives an evaluation in Henry Fielding about his contribution to the theatre by considering the plays chronologically, even though Dobson tends generally to dismiss their value. About Fielding's early plays, he says that "[a]lthough in certain cases (e.g., the revised edition of Tom Thumb), the artist and scholar seems to have spasmodically asserted himself, the majority of his plays were hasty and ill-considered performances, most of which he would have thrown into the fire" (25). As well, Dobson speculates that Fielding's 1735 activities on the stage were the result of happenstance:

The stage-world was split up into factions, the players were disorganised, and everything seemed in confusion. Whether Fielding himself conceived the idea of making capital out of this
state of things, or whether it was suggested to him by some of the company who had acted Don Quixote in England, it is impossible to say. (43)

Although Dobson does not so specify in this section, he indicates elsewhere in the biography that Fielding was involved at the Little Theatre mainly for financial reasons.

Also writing around the turn of the century, George Bernard Shaw and H. Barton Baker also looked at the plays and drew different conclusions. Baker observes that Fielding’s dramas were an expression of his personal animosity, and stated that "[h]is comedy was intensely personal; no public abuse and no public character, from the Prime Minister to the actors at the neighbouring theatre, escaped flagellation by that keen and daring wit" (History of the London Stage 213). Further, Baker, denying deep purposes behind the stage works, finds that "Fielding was undoubtedly the father of modern burlesque . . . [which] could with very little alteration have been revived at the old Strand Theatre" (213). Shaw looked far deeper into Fielding’s motives and was concerned with the element of censorship in the history of the plays and wrote about Fielding in the preface to Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant:

In 1737 the greatest dramatist, with the single exception of Shakespeare, produced by England between the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century--Henry Fielding--devoted his genius to the task of exposing and destroying
parliamentary corruption, then at its height. Walpole, unable to govern without corruption, promptly gagged the stage by a censorship which is in full force at the present. (1: xvii-xviii)

Fielding's poverty has inclined critics to find in the art the expression of the life, but the critics mentioned here do not pursue the connection between Fielding's poverty and his dramas, beyond blaming his financial problems for his hurried work. Aurelian Digeon's *The Novels of Fielding* makes a connection between Fielding's early social stance and his writing; he blames Fielding's need for money on the types of works he produced during this period: "His comedies, polemical tracts, translations, and journals were seldom anything more to him than 'potboilers'" (vii). Also evaluating Fielding's rapid writing, Godden in *Henry Fielding: A Memoir* asserts that "[a]n average of two plays a year is a record scarcely conducive to literary excellence; any more than is the empty cupboard, and the frequent recourse to 'your honour's own pawnbroker,' so often and so honourable familiar to struggling genius." Godden quotes Murphy's statement that "[t]he farces written by Mr Fielding were generally the production of two or three mornings" (43).

Like Godden who equates speed with inferior playwrighting, Murphy refers to the comment of Fielding's cousin and sponsor, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, that most of his
dramas would have gone into the fireplace if his dinner had not gone with them.

Finding the early eighteenth-century drama essentially without genius, Bonamy Dobree does not even mention Fielding as a literary force for the theatre; in his 1956 work, *English Literature in the Early Eighteenth Century, 1700-1740*, Dobree states, "There is no marked difference between what Rowe produced at the beginning of the century, what Young gave the public in the middle of our period, and what Thomson wrote at the end. The thing was dead. However, it made quite an attractive corpse when laid out, with all the floral wreaths given it from Rowe onwards" (224).

During the same decade, however, Allardyce Nicoll in *A History of the English Drama 1660-1900, Part 2 Early Eighteenth Century Drama* finds much to praise even as he credits the past with strong influence on eighteenth-century drama. He theorizes that "the finest plays of the later years of the period which show the influence of the manners style are those of Fielding . . . [but even] his best plays show the power of diverse schools--manners, intrigue, humours and sentiment meeting in one" (158). In 1961, Edgar V. Roberts recognizes the disservice done to the works and comments that "Fielding’s plays are too frequently read merely as stepping stones to his novels
and their value as works in their own right is commonly unrecognized" (84).

Yet, in 1976, J. Paul Hunter returns to earlier assessments of Fielding; in Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance, he argues that the later plays differ from the early ones in the writer's growing dissatisfaction with the dramatic format, as if he simply grew into the novel by way of dramas. Hunter identifies his novelistic tendencies as the cause of his disaffection with the playhouse that "had always been in some sense against the grain (69). Yet Hunter also goes on to discuss his debt to the theatre for life and art, as well as to note his ability to modify the dramatic tradition. Hunter interprets Fielding's relationship with traditional literature and, although he does not specify the drama, finds that in general, Fielding was both "acolyte" for tradition and "usher" for the modern. He persuasively argues that while Fielding found the "Augustans beguiling," he was attracted to the "forces of modernity" (11). Hunter contends that Fielding's plays reveal a playwright whose world is "out of control" and that he "dramatizes the connections and confusions between that world and the everyday world of human experience" (21).

On the other hand, Cleary in Henry Fielding: Political Writer supposes that for Fielding's first seven
years as a writer, including his time at the Little Theatre until 1733, he "had nonpolitical affiliation and thus no consistent political aims or direction" (xvi). Considering only the political aspects of the dramas, Cleary goes on to chart the plays for their "Anti-Ministerial. . . "Neutral" . . . [and] "Anti-Oppositional" aims (19). While Cleary rebuts the idea that Fielding suddenly became political during his playhouse years, he declares his social stance as follows:

Fielding was a lover of his country and liberty . . . . But he was always a realist (as were most of his contemporaries in the tight, oligarchically smug world of the ruling classes) . . . . He repeatedly dragged his coat in the hope of attracting patronage from either Walpole or an opposition grandee. In short, he was a young man with all the talents required to become a most potent voice of opposition or the ministry, but one without a political cause or affiliation, and his inconsistency showed it. (5-6)

Pat Rogers in his biography maintains that the Little Theatre "sailed closer to the wind than any other house, and so the theatre was closed by the authorities at regular intervals. Here Fielding achieved his major success as a dramatist in the years to come" (34). And Rogers again uses the same metaphor when he contends that Fielding was the cause of the Licensing Act, even though Rogers does include "his troupe" as well:

Fielding and his troupe had deliberately sailed as near the wind as possible, like a small child trying to see just how far a parent's tolerance will extend. He was a willing martyr, and to
assume otherwise is to credit him with exceedingly low intelligence or knowledge of the world. Everything we know about the man resists that conclusion. (95)

Rogers places his social ideology as simply part of his dramatic strategy and feels that Fielding in his early works, including dramas, used "the dominant literary techniques of the day, and siding with the hard-done-by scribblers, whose ranks he had not yet properly joined" (43); yet, in contradiction, Rogers goes on to state that Fielding boldly identified himself with the wits. From now on [after his first play], he began to range himself against Grub Street, despite many suggestions from the adverse party that he belonged--by reason of poverty and lack of talent--in the very grimest of garrets. (43)

Peter Lewis, *Fielding's Burlesque Drama: Its Place in the Tradition*, (1987) views Fielding as "one of the most important figures in London theatrical life," and calls comedy his greatest contribution, including his "amorphous" burlesque dramas (1-2). Additionally, Lewis identifies in the works a "genuine endeavour to trace the psychological processes of individual consciousness and to analyse social and familial relationships" (211). He goes on to cite the obvious "novelistic" content and to show the struggle between content and form. For instance, he says that the play *The Modern Husband* is "so interesting" for its anticipation of the London scenes in *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* (211). Citing Cross, Dudden, and Brown, Lewis observes that the novel was Fielding's metier, not the
drama which was a "straightjacket on his material and aims" (211-212). Because he was hampered in this manner, Fielding in his dramas fell "between stools" and therefore his "expulsion" from the Little theatre "helped him to find the vehicle that he needed to fulfill his serious literary aspirations, the novel" (212).

Loftis writes in his essay "Political and Social Thought" about Fielding's "indecision" in the early eighteenth century which changed to "political audacity" in the later plays, even to portraying the royal family (270-272). In his volume The Politics of Drama in Augustan England, Loftis emphasizes other aspects of the dramas and refers to the inferior results, while stating that his plays exhibit elements of the novel Fielding later developed. Loftis asserts that in the first half of the eighteenth century, "[t]here appears in drama what we may in retrospect call a novelistic drift, a movement away from formalization in plots, characterization, and dialogue" (152). On the other hand, George Sherburne in "The Dunciad, Book IV," regards Fielding as successful in certain aspects of the drama and believes Fielding's burlesque dramas, containing attacks on debasement of art, to exert successfully wide influence. Sherburne cites especially Pope's revisions of The Dunciad and his addition of a fourth book which features burlesques and satires.
Battestin in *Henry Fielding: A Life* disagrees with Hume's assertion that Fielding was "enormously and conspicuously successful," by observing that Fielding's plays are not generally read or produced on stage. He goes on to conclude that Fielding "broke too many windows and pulled down too many idols" to be allowed to continue as a playwright, implicitly assigning a political basis for his dramas. And Battestin, quoting Fielding's contemporary James Harris in his "Essay" on Fielding, seemingly agrees with Harris. They agree that he was engaged in a private war with Walpole and that his dramas were the result of a vendetta involving only "one private man":

> How those Performances were received, those who saw them, may well remember. Never were houses so crowded, never applause so universal, nor the same Peices so often repeated without interruption, or discontinuance. ‘Tis enough to say that such was ye force of his comic humour and poignancy, that those in power in order to restrain him, thought proper by a Law to restrain the Stage in ye general, bearing even by this act of Restriction the highest testimony to his abilities. The Legislature made a Law, in order to curb one private man. (qtd Battestin *Henry Fielding: A Life* 234)

Battestin, however, does connect Fielding to the Little Theatre in a way unlike other critics, going so far as to mention a "company" at the Little Theatre, albeit not a writing group: "[I]f the reputation he coveted as a serious author of regular comedies had so far eluded him at the two principal theatres, no one -- least of all the..."
daring young company at the Little Haymarket, whose house he had packed to capacity night after night during the previous season — would dispute his genius" (105).

Robert Hume in *The Rakish Stage* places Fielding in the category of Augustan "humane and reform types" and finds that these types include "political, social, and literary satires" represented by his *Historical Register, Modern Husband*, and *Author's Farce* (231). Although Hume proceeds to discuss the "serious comedy" of Elizabeth Inchbald and others later in the eighteenth century, he does not include Fielding's works in the discussion. Hume quotes Horace Walpole's definition of serious comedy in "Thoughts on Comedy," in which he separates it from the definition of *comédie larmoyante*, or sentimental comedy, the distinctions of which are interesting:

I do not take the *comédie larmoyante* to have been so much a deficiency of pleasantry in its authors, as the effect of observation and reflection. Tragedy had been confined to the distresses of kings, princesses, and heroes; and comedy restrained to making us laugh at passions pushed to a degree of ridicule .... I should therefore think that the first man who gave a *comédie larmoyante*, rather meant to represent a melancholy story in private life, than merely to produce a comedy without mirth. If he had therefore not married two species then reckoned incompatible, that is tragedy and comedy, or, in other words, distress with a cheerful conclusion; and instead of calling it *comédie larmoyante*, had named his new genus *tragédie mitigée*, or, as the *tragédie bourgeoise*; he would have given a third species to the stage. (qtd Hume *The Rakish Stage* 235)
In the same critical work, especially the chapter "From Beggar's Opera to Licensing Act," Hume emphasizes chiefly the financial aspects of Fielding's dealings with the theatre; he finds that the desire for profit dictated Fielding's dramatic themes and plots, and he even states that Fielding's anti-Walpole stance was open to "debate" (303). Hume postulates that the audience at Tom Thumb may well not have seen the play as political at all (302-304). In Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737, Hume declares that all except Cross and himself have not valued Fielding's contribution to the theatre. Hume goes on to state that Fielding was "a freelance writer who peddled his scripts where he could in the midst of rapidly changing conditions" (255). But he includes also his consideration that Fielding's greatest fault lay in "his ambition to write 'serious' social satire, a form for which he had little aptitude" (ix).

Before considering the first dramas, we must look at the biographical factors which hindsight reveals to have impacted on Fielding's work in the theatre and to have determined the financial direction of his life. A simple narration of facts demonstrates the complications of his early years. Born rich and noble, Fielding, along with his brother and sisters, became the objects of a custody battle, distasteful in its display of family dirty linen. As the eldest son, Fielding was defrauded time and again.
by his father, and from age 20, earned his living by his pen. Calling himself a "poet," he sold no poems and turned to playwrighting, first for the patented theatres, then for the Little Theatre where he produced his dark comedies. First married to Charlotte Cradock, an heiress whose money bought him for a time the life of a country gentleman, he ran through her inheritance. After the Little Theatre closed in 1737, Fielding gained a law degree at the Middle Temple, became a novelist, and a magistrate at Bow Street Court. In the 1740's, Fielding's bad luck returned when Charlotte died, and his health broke. In 1747, he married Mary Daniel, a family servant, pregnant with his child, and died in Lisbon seven years later. Like Eliza Haywood, whose life and art are discussed in chapter four, Fielding possessed a dramatic distinction, making him seem larger than life.

Because his financial status determined so much of his literary existence, Fielding's financial history is pertinent to our investigations here. His bad luck with money appears to have started with the passing of his mother, when he was eleven; Fielding's grandmother gained his and his sisters' custody by proving the children had been abused by their father and his new second wife. The charges even now seem appalling because witnesses testified to the children's diet of rancid bread and
contaminated water as well as to the beatings that followed their vomiting the unfit food.

Records of Lady Gould's suit at chancery court show that the grandmother used against General Fielding the fact that he married her daughter "without the consent of her Father or Mother and contrary to their good liking," and she also states that Lord Harry Gould, her deceased husband, had bequeathed to his daughter and her children the "Eastover" estate, which profits were to be paid only to her and the children "without her Husband" (qtd Godden 11). That General Fielding was viewed as self-serving, if not worse, is obvious in the wording of the legal suit brought against him. Because Sarah Fielding died intestate, trustees, who later proved to be co-conspirators with General Fielding, were also part of the grandmother's problems. The children "being all Infants of tender years and uncapable of managing their own affairs and to take Care thereof, well hoped that ... their Trustees would have taken Care to receive the Rents of the said premises" for their education (qtd Godden 11). Shady arrangements between the trustees and General Fielding denied the children their money, according to Godden's biography (10-19). The grandmother therefore sought the children's total custody, including their financial affairs, for the children's trustees, [their uncle] Davedge Gould and William Day, had conspired with
General Fielding to take the children's rents and "entered into a Combination and Confederacy to and with the said Edmund Fielding," thereby stealing the children's inheritance which was earmarked for their maintenance and education (12).

One cannot find a trace of any response that Fielding may have had to his position as a Ward of Chancery and his own treatment as a child. Neither Rogers, Battestin, Hunter, Godden, Cross, Dudden, nor Dobson mention any reference made directly by Fielding to his father, either praise or blame. In order to understand as well as we may, the early plays and his precarious existence, a consideration of his relationship with his father seems crucial. In the absence of Fielding's own thoughts, aside from the writing mentioned above, our knowledge derives from the Fielding-Gould family documents and from the General's life, which ironically is documented with a plethora of legal papers, court records, marriage records, prison records, and home addresses. Without laying claim to expert knowledge of psychology, nonetheless, I want to narrate the circumstances of General Fielding's life, as a way to consider his son's poverty and its dramatic consequences. These facts, drawn from Baker's *The History of the London Stage*, Godden's *Henry Fielding: A Memoir*, and from Battestin's exhaustive *Henry Fielding: A Life*,
provide the means for considering Henry Fielding the playwright.

In the narration of events, it becomes clear that Fielding early experienced betrayal; indeed, his male relatives, namely his uncle and father conspired against him to gain his inheritance, while from the female relatives, namely his mother and grandmother, he received money and advocacy, as I have discussed in previous pages. Godden narrates a confusing story concerning more of the General’s efforts to obtain his children’s yearly income. A Mrs. Cottington, the children’s aunt, claimed that General Fielding owed her 700 pounds and sued him for it, stating that the debt if recovered would be used to pay back the "infants." Godden goes on to remind us that 700 pounds, mentioned earlier, was the amount of the gambling debt owed by General Fielding to the gambler Midford (17). As the children inherited little if anything, their rentals on their mother’s estates must have been gambled away by their father. Battestin defends the General by referring to the man’s "grace" and "gayety," and avowing that he was not a "fearsome figure -- whether acting in his role of paterfamilias, or magistrate, or colonel of the regiment" (Henry Fielding: A Life 15).

Godden tends to give the General a much harder examination, especially in regard to his children. None of the biographies is really clear, but Godden notes the
changes in trustees, giving us an idea of General Fielding's means of taking the children's yearly profits. Mrs. Cottington, the honest aunt, was made trustee after the court case revealed the theft by Davedge Gould, Lee, and General Fielding. But by December 1724, Davedge Gould again took over as trustee (Godden 18). We know that by then Lady Gould would have been 75 years old. Several questions remain about her, however. Who inherited her fortune and estates? Her son Davedge had stolen money from the grandchildren, and she had included him in the original suit. Other Gould children are not mentioned. After her death, did General Fielding somehow get his hands on the grandchildren's inheritance from her? Although there are no known financial or trusteeship records beyond 1724, the fact that Fielding did not go to Oxford or Cambridge, or take a traditional year-long Grand Tour (notwithstanding Battestin's guesswork that he did), or spend more than two semesters at Leyden, or live comfortably on family money makes it quite unlikely that he ever received any inheritance, from his mother's or grandmother's estates. General Fielding must have taken it all, in addition to other cash accounts he could drain, to support his gambling habit which included not just cards but the South Sea scheme (Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 16-17). Without drawing an obvious conclusion, Battestin states that General Fielding was justice of the
peace and in that capacity was head treasurer for the "poor at Gillingham" (16-17). We need to observe, however, that while the amount in the town poor box would never have been great, the General could have siphoned off a steady trickle of money, with no questions asked.

Averring that the General was drained of money in supporting all the children resulting from his many marriages and in addition suffered investment reverses, Battestin produces letters from the General that show, according to Battestin's interpretation, a fatherly concern for his daughters. One letter in 1740 especially is not at all convincing, however; the General writes in his application for the Lieutenant Governorship of Isle of Jersey that he needs the job "Better to Maintain my Numerous family" (Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 298-99). He certainly was not referring to his eldest children, for his four daughters by Sarah Gould, being forced to live solely on Catherine's small inheritance from the good aunt Mrs Cottington and on Sarah's tiny income from her novel writing, were in worse financial shape than Fielding (Henry Fielding: A Life 299).

Notwithstanding Battestin's protestations of his innocence, the General in the 1730's and 40's was perhaps more than just "careless" about finances; his actions, both past and present, seemed to be criminal. Battestin notes a suit for debt brought against the General in 1728,
the year Henry Fielding turned 21 years. In regards to his apparent failure to receive any inheritance upon his majority, perhaps there exists a connection between his father's sudden ability to pay the debt, and Fielding's not receiving family money when he came of age.4

As I have pointed out, the General was in prison for debts totalling 887 pounds and 10 shillings from 1740, until his death, as if he had finally run out of other people's money. Battesin states that the elder Fielding had enough money to obtain "quarters" at the Old Bailey and did not spend his imprisonment in a cell (Henry Fielding: A Life 299-300). While incarcerated, the General married his servant Elizabeth Sperrye or "Spary," according to Battesin, but he lived only a few months after the wedding, dying in the Old Bailey around 25 June 1741, on which date he was buried, according to "St. Bride's Burials," Ms. 6543/1, Guildhall Library Corporation of London, as cited by Battesin (Henry Fielding: A Life 658:69). Given Henry Fielding's constant need for money, it is interesting to theorize that Elizabeth Spary inherited (or stole) from the General money rightfully belonging to the son and heir. Fielding does not seem to have come into money during 1741-42, according to Battesin's and Godden's evidence in their biographies of Fielding; therefore, Elizabeth must have
taken whatever the General left, not just the widow's portion allowed by law.\textsuperscript{5}

About a month after his father's death, Fielding wrote \textit{The Crisis: A Sermon} which may be interpreted as comment on his own condition. The wording of the piece about fatherhood, patrimony, and betrayal of trust, may have a broader reference than just to Walpole, for the essay may also pertain to Fielding's view of his father and their relationship. The piece equates financial resources and liberty, implying that to take one involves also taking the other.

\begin{quote}
It is no less impossible for us to conceive, we have any Right to sell the Liberties of our Children. The Power of Fatherhood is the Power of Preservation, not Destruction. Let him look to it, who squanders the Patrimony left him by his Ancestors, and entails Beggary upon his [Posterity]. The smallest Degree of paternal Affection, will inspire us to abhor the Thought of bequeathing such a legacy to our children (8 and 12).
\end{quote}

Additionally, in the \textit{Covent-Garden Journal} 1 February 1752, Fielding printed a translation of an epigram signed "by a Gentleman of Distinction on his third Marriage," and this work, obviously all Fielding's, may pertain to his mother's fate, as well as to his father's marital history.

\begin{quote}
Three Times I took for better and for worse, 
A Bed-Fellow, a Fortune, and a Nurse: 
How blest the State, which such good Things produce! 
How dear that Sex which serves such various Use!
\end{quote}
Fielding must have made at least one other response, for the writers of *Old England* (25 November 1749) accuse Fielding of being "undutiful to his Father" and state that Fielding also had "impiously stigmatized him in his Old Age and Confinement with opprobrious Language." Had he perhaps visited the General in prison and engaged in a shouting match? Or a more likely scenario: Fielding had come to visit and the General asked for money from the son whose inheritance he had stolen?

The same publication a year after this attack, published the following poem about Fielding's marriage to his own servant, Mary Daniel, in 1747.6 Considering that the poem concerns nine-year-old news about the General's below-stairs marriage, and Fielding's responses, it is astounding that the publishers would bother to print it. Even as a commentary on Fielding's second marriage, it was old news about a wedding that had occurred three years previously. Another surprising element in the article concerns the bitter and vengeful tone of the writing, as if it were the writer's ox that had been gored. Fielding's fame as a playwright and notoriety as husband to his former servant may account for publication of the poem. References to his outrage over his father's behavior would seem to indicate public knowledge of their situation.
When erst the Sire resided near the Fleet,
In Want of something, like the Son, to eat,
For Fifty Pounds in Hand, prime Fortune! paid,
Before the Priest he led his Servant Maid.
Curse on the Scoundrel for the Deed he's done,
How I'm disgrac'd! cried out his pious Son.
Another Way did operate the Curse,
In it's [sic] own Kind; for better and for worse,
The Kitchen Maid is coupl'd with the 'Squire,
Who copy'd that for which he curs'd his Sire.
Just Retribution! for by Heaven scons'd,
He makes the Scoundrel he himself pronounc'd!
This Diff'rence only 'twixt the Sire and Son,
The first had Money but the other none.

Aside from these later indirect references, one cannot find a trace that Fielding ever responded to his relationship with his father, at least in nonfiction. There seems to be no indication of why his grandmother, to whom Chancery Court granted custody, did not continue to oversee his financial welfare, although Godden and Dobson both suggest four possibilities: that Fielding had reached man's estate and was no longer subject to her rule; that her age restricted her capabilities severely; that his wild behavior at public school perhaps alienated his grandmother, or that he felt smothered emotionally, refused to return to her home, and so estranged her. The promised yearly allowance of 200 pounds to Fielding from his father was not honored, and Fielding himself said of his allowance that "anybody might pay that would." As we will see in the course of this chapter, financial need from the first determined the course of his life, which in one interpretation appears to be a satirical.
deconstruction of The House That Jack Built. Apparently unable to afford Oxford or Cambridge, Fielding at twenty went to London and wrote his first play; after a year, he went to Leyden University but again after a year, unable to obtain financial support from his father, he went back to London.7 Unable to get his plays produced at the patents, he went to the Little Theatre to support himself; later unable to use the stage at the Little Theatre, he went into law.

Because I want to show the presence of issues that later affect Fielding’s depiction of social problems, including gender issues, I want to end the consideration of biographical issues by bringing forward the old charge of incest between him and his sister Sarah, first discussed by a family servant during the custody battle. A Mrs. Barber gave a deposition to the Court that Henry "was guilty of committing some indecent actions with his sister Beatrice" (qtd Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 23). Other allegations also emerged about Sarah and Henry Fielding committing incest; Battestin refers to Lawrence Stone’s study of eighteenth-century incest between brother and sister, which was "common" (Henry Fielding: A Life 24-28; The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 115-116).

Critics who mention the charge refer to literary evidence of the relationship. In the Preface to David
Simple, her first published novel, Fielding states that Sarah was "one so nearly and dearly allied to me, in the highest Friendship as well as Relation." His Preface goes on in Freudian terms:

[Sarah achieved] a vast Penetration into human Nature, a deep and profound Discernment of all the Mazes, Windings and Labyrinths, which perplex the Heart of Man to such a degree, that he is himself often incapable of seeing through them?

The relationship in the novel between the sister and brother, Camilla and Valentine, is revealing; they feel persecuted by a stepmother who views their love for each other as incestuous:

What it was we meant, by . . . endeavouring to impose on her, and make her accessory to our wicked Conversation with each other; Brother and Sister! --it was unnatural, she did not think the World had been arrived at such a pitch of Wickedness

Then she launch'd out into a long Harangue on the crying and abominable Sin of Incest, wrung her Hands, and seemed in the greatest Affliction, that ever she should live to hear a Nephew and Niece of hers could be such odious Creatures. (David Simple 160-61)

Just as Fielding uses masks and disguises, Sarah employs it in this novel, but critics notice that the purpose seems to be a punishment inflicted on the woman. When Valentine is sick and broke, Camilla in order to beg uses the disguise of an outcast, perhaps a leper. "I made myself a Hump-back, dyed my Skin in several places with great Spots of Yellow; so that, when I look'd in the
Glass, I was almost frighten'd at my own Figure" (David Simple 166).

References to the incest charge include his employment of incest in two plays and several novels. In The Coffee-House Politician, Ramble is strongly attracted to a woman whom he takes to be a prostitute and ravishes before discovering she is his sister; in The Wedding Day, Stedfast finds out just before consummating his marriage that the bride is his sister. Joseph Andrews includes as lovers Joseph and Fanny who find out they are brother and sister in the nick of time. In Tom Jones, Tom commits Oedipus's sin: "Incest -- with a Mother!" Battestin also discusses at length Fielding's last novel, Amelia, with its narration of a brother-sister relationship disrupting the novel and suggesting, at least to Battestin, that Fielding even at that late date was exorcising a devil.

Even Godden's work hints at the relationship between the two, especially when she quotes Joseph Warton about an evening with Sarah and Henry Fielding (160-61). Godden notes that Sarah moved in with Fielding after Charlotte Cradock's death, and moved out when he married for a second time, perhaps functioning as housekeeper. One final incident does not seem to have a simple explanation, however. As Godden makes a point of noting, Sarah was buried in the chancel of the out-of-the-way church, St. Mary Charlcombe, where Fielding married Charlotte his
first wife (51n). What Battestin notes about Digeon, may also be true of Godden. Once each biographer realized the inflammatory nature of interpreting Sarah’s and Fielding’s fictional concern with incest, they just ceased in "horrified dismay" (Henry Fielding: A Life 28). While this information may suggest the possibility of this type of relationship between Fielding and his sister, on the other hand, it may reveal simply a special closeness that influenced their literature. Fielding’s interpretation of women and his willingness to study the social bounds women suffered may well arise from his relationship with Sarah and sympathy for her.

Perhaps as a result of the influences on his art, the carefree humour ascribed to Fielding in various biographical stories about "the paint and powder of the green room, the tobacco clouds of the tavern," as Godden terms it (45), seems less the real Fielding than the narrator of these grim stanzas written in 1729 and addressed to Sir Robert Walpole. Knowing as we do the future relationship between the two men, the poem seems ironically prophetic; the first stanza, which is not quoted below, sets out to prove the question: "Would you not wonder, Sir, to view Your Bard a greater Man than you?"
The Family that dines the latest,
Is in our Street esteem'd the greatest;
But latest Hours must surely fall
Before him who ne'er dines at all.
Your Taste in Architect, you know,
Hath been admir'd by Friend and Foe;
But can your earthly Domes compare
With all my Castles -- in the Air?

We're often taught it doth behove us
To think those greater who're above us;
Another Instance of my Glory,
Who live above you, twice two Story,
And from my Garret can look down
On the whole Street of Arlington.

His career as a playwright brought with it from the
first an air of melancholy, recognized by his second
cousin and first sponsor. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote
later that "he was to be pitied at his first entrance into
the world, having no choice (as he said himself) but to be
a hackney writer or a hackney coachman" (Complete Letters
3: 66). Fielding dedicated his first play to her, saying
she "has long been the Glory of her own Sex, and the
Wonder of ours . . . her Goodness. . . was the greatest
and indeed only Happiness of my Life. In the dedication
to Love in Several Masques, he even asserts that her
belief had allowed the completion of the piece: "it arose
from a Vanity, to which your Indulgence, on the first
Perusal of it, gave Birth." This dedication also may
reveal Fielding's early stand in regard to women, although
Fielding's need might dictate a role of syncophant. He
ends the dedication to Love in Several Masques with
tribute to the learned woman ironically forbidden
education: "You are capable of instructing the Pedant and are at once a living Confutation of those morose Schoolmen who wou'd confine Knowledge to the Male Part of the Species, and a shining Instance of all those Perfections and softer Graces which Nature has confin'd to the Female."

Perhaps still under the patronage of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in 1728, he began writing in earnest, following his year abroad at the University of Leyden. Money dogged his college career; the Old Etonian could not afford to matriculate at Cambridge or Oxford, and had left Leyden owing all his tradesmen. No longer a ward of chancery, or recipient of an allowance, Fielding could not keep up with his old schoolfellows, for Lyttelton, Fox, and Pitt were living like gentlemen at Oxford or on Grand Tour. Just as later Fielding would abruptly become in turn a lawyer, a magistrate, and a novelist, so now he ceased to be a boy; he became suddenly a man without a home or income. Ten years later in Pasquin, his first real success at the Little Theatre, he described his difficulties in breaking into London's theatre world, which seems to explain in large part why he finally went to the Little Theatre to produce the kinds of dramas that reflected his own social stand:

These little things, Mr. Sneerwell, will sometimes happen. Indeed a Poet undergoes a great deal before he comes to his Third Night;
first with the Muses, who are humorous Ladies, and must be attended; for if they take it into their Head at any time to go abroad and leave you, you will pump your Brain in vain: Then, Sir, with the Master of a Playhouse to get it acted whom you generally follow a quarter of a Year before you know whether he will receive it or no; and then perhaps he tells you it won't do and returne it you again, reserving the subject, and brings out in his next Pantomime; but if he should receive the Play, then you must attend again to get it writ out into Parts, and Rehears'd . . . At length, after having waded thro' all these Difficulties, his [the?] Play appears on the Stage, where one Man Hisses out of Resentment to the Author; a Second out of Dislike to the House; a Third out of Dislike to the Actor; a Fourth out of Dislike to the Play; a Fifth for the Joke sake; a Sixth to keep all the rest in Company. Enemies abuse him, Friends give him up, the Play is damn'd, and the Author goes to the Devil, so ends the Farce. (p. 33)

Although in chapter three I devote special attention to Fielding's dramatic purposes in his own plays at the Little Theatre, I want to include here a brief discussion of the social vision present in the early dramas produced at Drury Lane, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and at the conservative Goodman's Fields unpatented theatre. As a way of examining his works which were too strong for these theatres, I want to look at early indications of his later concerns, characters, and purposes, in order to place in perspective the important differences in his plays produced at the Little Theatre. Beginning with The Masquerade, Love in Several Masques, and The Temple Beau, I propose to continue with discussions of The Coffee-House Politicians, The Lottery, The Modern Husband, Old Debauchees, The Covent-Garden Tragedy. I do not include
Fielding’s translations from the French, *The Mock Doctor*, *The Miser*, and *The Intriguing Chambermaid*; Moliere’s themes and characterizations were retained and honored in Fielding’s renditions, even though he added dialogue to the original.

In beginning with influences on Fielding’s dramatic art, it seems appropriate to open with one that demonstrates a clear link between Fielding and the Little Theatre group. In theme and plot as well as character, the similarity between Fielding’s *The Modern Husband* (1732) and Haywood’s *A Wife to be Lett*, printed in 1724, is extremely suggestive as to Fielding’s professional relationship with the other writers at the Little Theatre, and the mutuality of their visions. To my knowledge, this influence on Fielding by Haywood has not been noted in previous scholarly criticism.

Eliza Haywood’s *A Wife to be Lett* was produced in 1724 at Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields and published the same year, eight years before Fielding’s *The Modern Husband*. Unless we are willing to argue that the prolific Fielding was plagiaristic, we must accept the possibility that certain dramatic and social visions were shared by the two writers and that Fielding was heavily influenced by Haywood. A brief view supports this contention. As I discuss in chapter four on Eliza Haywood at the Little Theatre, she could always be counted on to place women at the center of
her dramas; *A Wife to be Lett* contains her strongest feminist protest against social institutions, as it thematically deals with women’s complete disenfranchisement, legal and social. Fielding’s *The Modern Husband* also protests marriage practices and women’s disenfranchisement while he includes satires on the Fop and the pedant. Haywood’s plot involves Mr. and Mrs. Graspal, with the husband wanting to prostitute his wife to Beaumont, a rich aristocrat who ignores his own devoted lover. Susanna Graspal actually fancies her pursuer, but, upon discovering her husband’s plans to take advantage of the pair’s natural inclinations, she spends the rest of the play battling her husband’s design. Having similar plot and characters, Fielding’s work features Mr. and Mrs. Modern with the husband wanting to prostitute his wife to Bellamant, a rich aristocrat who ignores his own devoted wife. Although his play is set in London and Haywood’s in Salisbury, the basic premise of the plot is the same, for actions in both plays revolve around the wife’s attempts to avoid being prostituted by her husband. Both playwrights, using similar means, appear to promote the same message about the legal vacuum in regards to women; according to the laws of England, she had no rights as an individual. Before her marriage, she was her father’s property and after her marriage, her husband’s. With husband and wife therefore constituting
one body, and that body the husband's, the wife theoretically and legally did not exist. In both plays, the wife realizes that she has been betrayed by every agency of civilization; she can only rely on her own wits to avoid being "let." A comparison of the plays' dialogue demonstrates both similarities and differences in Fielding's and Haywood's approaches to the same idea, which is the collapse of the public man into the private Adam. Mr. and Mrs. Modern's argument illustrates the basic theme of the play:

Mr. M. Your person is mine. I bought it lawfully in the church; and unless I am to profit by the disposal, I shall keep it all for my own use... Have I not winked at all your intrigues? Have I not pretended business, to leave you and your gallants together? Have I not been the most obsequious, observant
Mrs. M. Out with it; you know what you are.
Mr. M. Do you upbraid me with your vices, madam?
Mrs. M. My vices! Call it obedience to a husband's will. Can you deny that you have yourself persuaded me to the undertaking? Can you forget the arguments you used to convince me that virtue was the lightest of bubbles?
Mr. M. ... [b]ut, as I must more than share the dishonour, it is surely reasonable that I should share the profit.
Mrs. M. And have you not... Why do you complain then?

Mr. M. Because I find those effects no more... In short, it is impossible that your amours should be secret long; and however careless you have been of me whilst I had my horns in my pocket, I hope you'll take care to gild them when I am to wear them in public.
Mrs. M. What would you have me do?
Mr. M. Suffer me to discover you together; by which means we may make our fortunes easy all at once. (4.1)
Haywood's *A Wife to be Lett* uses the husband and wife argument to play up the same idea, as Fielding's later work would do. Graspal cannot fathom Susanna's objections to being "let" as both of them would profit. He urges Beaumont to take "free egress and ingress" of his wife in exchange for the aristocrat's "golden beauties." As I state in chapter four, the exchange between Graspal and Susanna contains the same argument as the Moderns' conversation, only here Susanna reminds her husband that he would be a cuckold, a point quite lost on him.

*Wife.* And would you be a Cuckold?
*Graspal.* Two thousand Pounds, Pudsly.
*Wife.* Despis'd and pointed at.
*Graspal.* Two Thousand Pounds. --
*Wife.* Become the publick Scorn, and all for Gain, a little trifling Trash.
*Graspal.* Why what dost thou value thy Virtue at?
*Wife.* Thou mak'st thyself a wretched, wicked Fool. [sig. F 4v -sig. G 1]

Although Fielding’s work has twice as many characters as Haywood’s, the number involves married couples who are variations on his marriage theme. Haywood, on the other hand, provides more women characters for she shows women in their roles as wife, widow, maid, jade, and even as a man, when her female spectator disguises herself in male clothing. There are more similarities in the plays than not, however. Fielding's cast of leading characters like Haywood’s features a lecherous older widow, a conspiratorial and omniscient servant, a greedy husband,
an arrogant aristocrat, a lusty beau, an impotent fop, and an intelligent woman endangered by the social system. Although one may argue that some of these characters appeared in many plays, being stereotypical, the sheer number of similarities seems convincing, even to the dramas' final scenes. Haywood at play's end sets up a banquet of reconciliation, strongly resembling Jonson's final scene in *Bartholomew Fair*, where the truth is revealed, the wife castigates the husband, the husband swears to be good, and the couple is united on equal terms. The lusting aristocrat is also forgiven and reconciles with his long-suffering lover, which Haywood equivocates by calling her "a Wife if vows could make me so." Fielding likewise at the end of *The Modern Husband* employs a public gathering, a "levee," where the truth is revealed, his "good" couple is united, and Fielding's lusting aristocrat, like Haywood's, is shamed and united with his wife.

To study the philosophical influences on Fielding's dramas, we are presented with a problem by Fielding himself. His genial light touch, especially dramatically, does not permit an easy grasp of the playwright's philosophic intention. As John Middleton Murry in "In Defense of Fielding," states the difficulty:

The trouble is that Fielding's kind of moral intensity, not being laboured, does not lend itself to laborious analysis and critical
expatiation. For that reason it can, apparently, pass entirely unrecognized: dismissed as "the genial tolerance of the man-about-town," or as "a simple attitude." Nevertheless, it exists and is pervasive.

Another problem in interpreting Fielding and his intents also presents itself, for the traditional view of him should give way, or at least expand to encompass another view. I want first to begin with consideration of traditional interpretation. My argument would take the same line as Battestin's, Sherburne's, and Work's: that Fielding's art is broad enough to stand the examination and his humor too rich to be eclipsed by a serious study. In order to trace other influences on the art, noting especially the background for his dramas, we should begin by surveying what he himself wrote on the subject and how he saw his own interests. He was a writer who believed that "Man . . . is the highest subject . . . which presents itself to the pen" (Tom Jones 8:1), and he states in the novel's opening chapter that his subject is "HUMAN NATURE." For pursuing the truth of man, he wanted his genius to "take me by the hand, and lead me through all the mazes, the winding labyrinths of nature" so that he could "know mankind better than they know themselves" (Tom Jones 8: 1). Fielding did not depend on formal learning for his investigation of the human psyche; rather he understood that "another sort of knowledge beyond the power of learning to bestow [derives from] conversation,
.. with all ranks and degrees of men." He goes on to say about this last aspect that:

So necessary is this to the understanding the characters of men that none are more ignorant of them than those learned pedants whose lives have been entirely consumed in colleges and among books; for however exquisitely humanity may have been described by writers, the true practical system can be learnt only in the world.

With his emphasis on human reality and practicality, we may understand then how Fielding for all his differences in birth and breeding could fit into the writing nucleus at the Little Theatre. Notwithstanding his penchant for rubbing elbows with all sorts and conditions of men, theoretically he was akin to Pope and the Augustans in their belief that "The Science of Human Nature" is the vital study of man. Fielding's "An Essay on Knowledge of the Characters of Men" in his Miscellanies lays out his rules for observations, mentioning first "sufficient Diligence and Attention in the Scrutiny" (155). And he further states that "Actions ... seem to be the justest Interpreters of their [human] Thoughts, and the truest Standards by which we may judge them. By their fruits you shall know them is a Saying of great Wisdom, as well as Authority" (162).

As Fielding himself relates, he was familiar with Hobbes's study of mankind: "Mr. Hobbes tells us, that Laughter arises from Pride," but Fielding argues that this
type of laughter "doth not properly constitute the Character . . . because it is one of those first, and as it were spontaneous Motions of the Soul, which few . . . attend to, and none can prevent" (Miscellanies 159-160). That the idea of a laughing hypocrisy interests Fielding is evident when he says that "Symptoms which Nature kindly holds forth to us [show that] . . . the Passions of Men do commonly imprint sufficient Marks on the Countenance . . . . Among us, this Austerity or Gravity of Countenance passes for Wisdom." He continues by stating that "There is a Countenance of a contrary Kind . . . [with a] glaverling, sneering Smile, of which the greater Part of Mankind are extremely fond, conceiving it to be a Sign of Good Nature [but it is] generally a Compound of Malice and Fraud, and as surely indicates a bad Heart, as a galloping Pulse doth a Fever" (Miscellanies 156-58).

In Amelia, Fielding states the core of his beliefs that "men act . . . from their passions." To anyone to deny this fact, including "great beings . . . [who] know very well how to subdue all appetites and passions, and to despise both pain and pleasure." Fielding adds: "this knowledge affords much delightful contemplation, but [such stoicism is too] vexatious and troublesome" to be practical (8: 5).
Battestin points out that on the one hand, Fielding subscribes to Christian restraint, and on the other, he puts forth a deep regard for the sanctity of human emotions. In his study of Fielding’s ethics, Battestin points to a poem "Good Nature" in Miscellanies which expresses how Fielding saw his dilemma:

The Heart that finds it Happiness to please
Can feel another’s Pain and taste his Ease;
The Cheek that with another’s Joy can glow,
Turn pale and sicken with another’s Woe;
Free from Contempt and Envy, he who deems
Justly of Life’s two opposite Extremes,
Who to make all and each Man truly bless’d
Doth all he can and wishes all the rest. (30-31)

To reinforce the idea, we need to note that Fielding in An Essay on Knowledge of the Characters of Men, includes the same idea of balance or tension between two forces: "Good nature is that benevolent and amiable temper of mind, which disposes us to feel the misfortunes, and enjoy the happiness of others . . . without any abstract contemplation on the beauty of virtue, and without the allurements or terrors of religion" (Miscellanies 158).

The ideas of right and wrong are therefore not absolute or even gray and they exist only in the mind of the spectators. The helpless actor/puppet plays a role with no means of escape, wearing his mask that defines his or her social, religious, political, or sexual postures. Doomed never to see himself or herself, he or she can only use the reactions of the spectators to gain a glimpse of

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the mask he or she is wearing. We can see how the puppet regards his own right and wrong only by observing the imperfections of his role, as he breaks out of the mask trying to escape. Moving from sin to salvation, the actor perfects the role through modeling the role according to social definition of the part without ever having the advantage of seeing himself or herself in the role. The masks provide social, sexual, religious, and political postures. Although critics do not include this perception and do not mention the significance, we should note that women can only wear women's masks and can never be men. They, therefore, have an advantage of seeing themselves as women, as they are perceived by others. By the same token, a woman who illegally wears a man's mask seizes a role which upsets fixed society.

This view would seem therefore to give indication of Fielding's use of the clock metaphor, for the human's unchangeable state within the system. If, as he states in *Tom Jones*, life is a mechanized system run by an outside hand having wound up the works, the actor or human is not able to participate freely in society. We may see his purpose, as well as his connecting to the idea of the mechanism, in the final paragraph in the Dedication to *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*:

I answer . . . . that my purpose is to convey instruction in the vehicle of entertainment; and so to bring about at once like the revolution in
the Rehearsal, a perfect reformation of the laws relating to our maritime affairs: an undertaking, I will not say more modest, but surely more feasible, than that of reforming a whole people, by making use of a vehicular story, to wheel in among them worse manners than their own.

The same idea informs Amelia, where the clockwork notion of a mechanized society is played out; Fielding discusses the prevailing social order, political order, and the relation of the individual to society. In the early novels, the human is at fault, not society and in the later novels, society is in the wrong. Applying this idea to his dramas, Fielding would need to become a god and therefore able to correct or make more accurate the timepiece of society; but instead of a god, he in this construction is a watch repairman, possessing his own potential for good and ill. In the dramas, evil seems to reside in powerful males, while the disenfranchised members of society wear the masks that will gain them the most respect or money or advancement from the male power structure. In this scenario, the good man is the one who, having no regard for self, treats those under him in a manner of noblesse oblige. William Empson in his essay "Tom Jones" makes this aspect of Fielding's dramatic philosophy applicable to the playwright's life:

To die poor and despised while attempting to build up the obviously needed London police force, with obvious courage and humanity, creating astonishment for his refusal to accept the usual bribes for such dirty work, and leaving the job in hands which continued it --
this became too hard to laugh off . . . He provided a new idea of the aristocrat, with the added claim that it was an older tradition . . . I doubt whether, without Fielding, the Victorian novelists (however much they forbade their daughters to read his books) would have retained their trust in the rather hidden virtues of the aristocracy. (129)

Although this action may have preserved Fielding’s reputation, we need to question Empson’s assertion. The dramas, as I hope to prove, do not contain this type of noblesse oblige on the part of the upper classes, for he is not interested in aristocrats as aristocrats. His plays concern what is happening to people beyond society’s pale. Stewart Tuve in The Amiable Humourists: A Study in the Comic Theatre and Criticism of the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries finds in the plays that Fielding "with liberal tolerance" (165) depicts his characters as men living among other men. Tuve sees in the later comedies that Fielding foregoes this tolerance for a much darker view, as he sides with the characters at the mercy of the other men, that is, at the mercy of society.

Including the plays in his evaluation, Morris Golden in Fielding’s Moral Psychology discusses Fielding’s novelistic and dramatic approach to society in which the top of the social hierarchy fulfill their responsibilities to the lower orders by enacting legislation to prevent them from upper class follies. Golden demonstrates Fielding’s purposes without distinguishing between
dramatic and novelistic intentions. Forbidden to seek the luxury that delights the upper classes, his lower classes work and suffer, governed by laws that their masters are beyond. Golden proposes that this view of the basic nature of man runs counter to Hobbes's theory of man's natural depravity. For Golden, Fielding's basic stance incorporates the stand that man's "good and delicate mind," balances his basic selfishness, part of man's inheritance from his animal origins (25).

In the past decade, criticism on the established body of criticism has grown, and Fielding's work has been placed in a larger frame. As Angela Smallwood in Fielding and The Woman Question states, Fielding interpretations, from Dudden to the present, have been institutionalized as a masculine exercise, with criticism written by men, for men, to interpret one of the manliest of writers (1-15). To that end, the woman part of nature as it appears in him, whether his intent is interpreted as pilgrimage or clockwork, is inflexibly interpreted by the critics as undeniably upperclass and absolutely masculine. Because part of the social consideration of Fielding's stance includes his view of women and others who exist outside the white male established hierarchy, we need to pause in order to look at Fielding's image, vis-a-vis the woman character and her society, in order to examine social meaning in his dramas.
Fielding's benevolent view of man's possibilities for goodness and improvement extended perhaps to women, but he never made a statement to that effect. As we will observe in the dramas, in his social vision, women are acknowledged to be different from men. Although his novels may feature a woman in the title, the dramas do not, except An Intriguing Chambermaid, where he describes the job, not the woman, and Rape upon Rape where he describes the crime, not the female victim; nonetheless, Fielding's dramatic treatment of women, as I hope to prove, carries with it a serious consideration of gender difference. He begins sorting out the contrasts in his discussions on laughter and the way to read a man by his smile or his laugh. Fielding identifies forms of laughter as "the various . . Laughhs, Titters, Tehes . . . . of the Fair Sex." He goes on to claim that woman is the part of mankind "with whom, indeed, this Essay hath not any thing to do." And he finishes by announcing that "the Knowledge of the Characters of Women . . . is in Fact a Science to which I make not the least Pretension" ("An Essay on Knowledge of the Characters of Men" Miscellanies 161).

The dramas may offer the best place to observe Fielding's treatment of women. In The Temple Beau, his second play, Valentine says that "woman . . . is a sort of books . . . prohibited at the university because your grave dons don't understand them" (1.5). In Love in Several Masques,
Wisemore says something similar: "One [idea] that has puzzled all who ever attempted it ---Woman . . ." (4.9).

In Fielding's view, man's potential for unpredictability like woman's legendary unpredictable nature demands that moral lessons be inculcated by all means. In the Miscellanies, he includes the following:

Canst see one Man at several Times appear,  
Now gay, now grave, now candid, now severe;  
And see how various Men at once will seem;  
How Passions blended on each other fix,  
How Vice with Virtues, Faults with Graces mix;  
How Passions opposite, as sour to sweet,  
Shall in one Bosom at one Moment meet,  
With various Luck for Victory contend,  
And now shall carry, and now lose their End.  
("To John Hayes, Esq" 51-52)

It seems to have become universal to dismiss Fielding's treatment of women as light and to give as proof, his motto opening the 14 April 1752 issue of Covent-Garden Journal:

Say, with what Ties of Reasoning shall I bind  
The Proteus Nature of the female Mind?  

Another instance used in an anti-feminist argument includes the quotation from Amelia. Mrs. Atkinson states that "Varium et mutabile semper faemina" is "the severest thing that e'er was said against us" (7: 183-84). One of Fielding's male characters says something similar: Blifil even as a young man knows that "the real sentiments of young ladies were very difficult to be understood" (7: 6).
We should review how Fielding approaches his design of woman in certain works, for my basic point concerns his vision of women as part of the whole systematic disenfranchisement practiced against not just all women, but against some men, those without birth or money. My argument concerning his treatment of women involves viewing them as part of the entire social structure. For all of his statements about woman as Other, Fielding in actuallity numbers them among his outcasts through which he can present dramatically his own perspective of the British gender, class, and caste system. While he may have been influenced by the writings of "Sophia: a Person of Quality," the anonymous feminist and Fielding's contemporary, he was not suddenly converted to a feminist view by her tracts. I do not deny her influence, however, and I imagine that Fielding calls one of his heroines Sophia for a reason. Although traditional criticism does not mention the possibility of other feminist influences in his writing, it seems likely. Beginning with the seventeenth-century writings of Mary Astell in 1680, the tradition in England for feminist polemic tracts was well-established, and Fielding would have heard of them, at the very least. He was surely familiar with the writings of his own cousin Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, as well as with the many novels of his fellow playwright, Eliza Haywood. We must note that, between 1730 and 1737, he was
professionally involved with both Haywood and Charlotte Charke, outcasts as a result of their personal and professional activities; given each woman's unrepentant status as being No Lady and No Fool, his employment of them as actresses in his major plays and his production of Charke's drama at the Little Theatre seems to suggest a strong case for their influence on him and his sensitivity toward at least two outcast women in society (A Narrative of My Life 1-30).

This view of Fielding differs considerably from the traditional stance held by generations of critics in the academy which has tended to ignore this sort of influence. In critical circles, he has become what Henley's edition of the Champion portrays to be: "this Man among Men of ours" (20). Henley makes a comparison between Fielding and Richardson, revealing as he does so the techniques he employs in the biography to produce the Fielding legendary Machismo.

[Pamela's] story . . . made excellent reading for all sorts of women; fine ladies, blooming virgins, and good plain wives and mothers . . . To Harry Fielding: who, for one thing, knew the worth of a wench's humour, and for another how the noble Mr. B. should have done by Pamela, and would assuredly have done by Pamela, had he not been the creation of a Vegetarian, who knew nothing of life, and wrote of women only from their own report of themselves: to Harry Fielding, I say, Pamela appeared (as in fact it is) so much strained, unhealthy, and unnatural rubbish. (xxxiv)
Angela Smallwood’s *Fielding and the Woman Question* refers to Henley’s biography, which, even today, contributes to the established view of the relative worth of the novels and dramas; she finds the past in the present, as regards the interpretation of feminine (8). Dwelling on Henley’s manipulation of Fielding’s image, she blames him and Cross for perverting Fielding and for making his masculinity a cult among critics. For instance, she charges that whole essays from the *Champion* were omitted in critical editions because the subject matter did not fit the current view of the manly Fielding. Cross later retrieved and incorporated many of the offending essays about women and marriage that Henley omitted, but Cross’s unwitting use of stereotypes about women contributed to their overall detriment. To give an example, Cross discusses Fielding’s mother, aunt, sisters, and he generally seems anxious to prove Fielding’s tender regard for women:

> Women, it is everywhere clear, were to him eternally interesting: for all their whims he never lost respect for them; they were the best part of God’s creation . . . . it was dangerous for a man to obtrude upon a lady’s privacy or to fail in the etiquette which the world prescribed as her due. This is the man whom Henley eulogized as a libertine. (3: 267)

Cross’s treatment of woman as duty and myth nullifies her reality as surely as Henley’s omissions. All that is missing from his image enhancement is the modern
statement, used to hide prejudice, that some of Fielding's best friends were women. One may find the impulse behind Cross's anecdote still used by serious contemporary critics as an instance of Fielding's sensitivity.

Referring to Fielding's early work and its influences, J. Paul Hunter in *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* states that it is marked by divided loyalties, with Fielding torn between wanting to join the Augustans and yet protesting the dying social structure the Augustans attempted to uphold. Hunter finds that what some critics see as ambivalence or a type of characterless stance attributed to Fielding, is only his response to the opposite forces of "loyalty and commitment." His works therefore reflect a man caught between two eras, as Hunter claims (*Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* 12-15). From the beginning of Fielding's career, one may find certain indications of his later social concerns, especially his focus on the disenfranchisement. I propose that the dramas, especially the early ones, express Fielding's search for definitions, rather than simply present his blase denigration of London society. For instance, the class war between the have and have-nots in which Fielding increasingly engages over time appears vestigially in *The Masquerade* and *Love in Several Masques*, as does his probing of social impediments to individual identity and
gender. To give an instance, his first work, the verse satire \textit{The Masquerade} (1728), appeared under the pseudonym, Lemuel Gulliver, "Poet Laureat to the King of Lilliput," and is addressed to "C-t H-d-g-rr." Fielding's satiric thrusts expose the masquerades that the bogus "Count" Heidegger, like an evil master of ceremonies, conducted at the opera house on off-nights. In the poem, Fielding aims ostensibly to expose immoral goings-on fostered by masquerades where people, disguised in costumes, were in danger of losing their inhibitions, along with their identities. Perhaps, as Rogers suggests, this loss of identity was threatening to individuals, but I propose that the disguises hid personal differences and that masquerades provided a neutral or a natural zone in which caste and class were irrelevant (Henry Fielding 21-22). Rather than the loss of identity being threatening to the individual, loss of social indicators threatened the entire traditional social structure. By masquerading in the neutral zone, those outcast or otherwise deprived by society could slip under the ropes, so to speak, and gain what they could from their natural abilities. In my examination of Fielding's plays at the Little Theatre, I hope to prove that his thematic concern with identity is part of his depiction of the individual who is disenfranchised by reason of gender, or class.
To provide background for chapter three where I try to study Fielding’s dramatic purposes in his Little Theatre dramas, I want to include here a brief discussion of the social vision present in the early dramas. Rogers points out that Fielding’s approach to his moral theme is conventional in its rather puritanical protest against popular amusements, symbolized by the masquerade (21). The satire portrays Heidegger as "first minister of masquerade" and so identifies him with Walpole, first minister of England. Fielding’s fiction follows along like running commentary on Hogarth’s satiric drawing titled *Masquerades and Operas* (Henry Fielding 22). Fielding’s purpose concerns public amusements (Henry Fielding 21), but we may observe also Fielding’s desire to offer a definition of virtue. In the poem, *The Masquerade*, Fielding offers a definition of modern values, by taking the stand that a contemporaneous display of virtue was used only as a public mask behind which lay the true person.

In this first representation, we can find the thematic beginnings of later works and their concern with hypocrisy, as well as Fielding’s reflections on class, caste, and gender.14 He includes fools of both genders and experiments with defining good and evil by employing the fop, the man-woman in his early plays, the transvestite, the woman-man in his later ones. Jill
Campbell points out in her essay, "When Men Women Turn," that Fielding studies role reversals and most often centers on the fop to explore identity (63-64). She mentions Charlotte Charke in one play but does not explore the extent and significance of Charke's work for Fielding; instead, she limits her discussions to the fop and his femininity. Fielding's gallery of rich popinjays begins with Sir Apish in *Love in Several Masques*:

*Merital.* That's a pretty suit of yours, Sir Apish, perfectly gay, new, and *a la mode.*

*SIR APISH SIMPLE.* He, he, he! the ladies tell me I refine upon them. I think I have studied dress long enough to know a little and I have the good fortune to have every suit liked better than the former.

(p. 70)

In opposition to this fool, Fielding includes women characters who do rise above stereotype. For instance, in *Love in Several Masques*, the widow, Lady Matchless and Helene carry the weight of the play's good sense, and possess their own notions of appropriate values. Their relationship involves a sense of responsibility on the part of the older woman toward the younger; at the same time, Fielding makes them wise as they use their wit to avoid the evils of Sir Positive Trap and his lady. As an example, Lady Matchless, glad to "elope" from the "imprisonment" of marriage through the death of her husband, won't commit to "prison" again. Except when
women are valued as equals to men, she sees marriage as resembling the newly painted facade of a tumbled-down mansion whose dowdy hall is hung with antlers, the "lamentable emblem of marriage" (3.5). Lady Matchless, and the virgin-in-danger Helene are truth-tellers, knowing their gender to be the cause of their woes. In contrast, other women, like Lady Trap, are recognizable variations on the lustful, unsatisfied wife hiding behind her mask of obedience. Although Lady Trap actually is the play's evil character, that aspect is not really developed, and she is chiefly designed to be a fool, the female counterpart of Sir Apish.

The reaction to Fielding's first play augured fairly well, in spite of opening opposite the popular The Beggar's Opera. Fielding's play had a run of four nights, according to Scouten's The London Stage Part Three. His second cousin, Lady Mary Montagu, read and criticized the manuscript; in return, Fielding dedicated the work to her and her sponsorship, without which the play by this unknown youth would not have been produced at Drury Lane. Dramatically, the work is quite conservative, like the usual presentations at Drury Lane, and it fits quite well into the roster of plays at the theatre. (See Appendix A for Drury Lane Theatre play rosters.) Love in Several Masques is a rather typical comedy of manners "tempered with humours" and full of "light, airy scenes," as
Fielding himself terms it in the Prologue. The range of characters is limited, because Fielding has written the play along the saucy lines of a Restoration comedy, but Fielding manages to depict certain individual types that I discuss in previous paragraphs.

As I have noted, characterization in the work is a general matter of stereotypes, with one of the male leads a fop, the first of Fielding's "fine gentleman," in addition to a cast of Restoration stock figures: a greedy guardian, a despicable beau, a hapless heiress, and her well-born but penniless true love. Dudden remarks that Fielding in writing *Love in Several Masques* must have realized his lack of experience; the play reflects youthful unworldliness and does not begin to achieve the level of, say, Congreve's comedies. Fielding appears to criticize his own early plays when he writes in *Tom Jones*:

> Vanbrugh and Congreve copied nature; but they who copy them draw as unlike the present age as Hogarth would do, if he was to paint a rout, or a drum, in the dresses of Titian and of Vandyke. In short, imitation here will not do the business. The picture must be after Nature herself. A true knowledge of the world is gained only by conversation, and the manners of every rank must be seen in order to be known. (6: 14)

The plot of the play involves an heiress with a 10,000 pound fortune, Helena, who loves a poor but worthy man. With her "natural spirit, wit, and fire" but powerless because she is a woman, she sees through social
hypocrisy and wants to marry a man "whose merit is his only riches, not whose riches are his only merit" (p. 31). Her guardian and uncle, a merchant, sees her only as a "piece of rich goods . . . to be disposed of at a high price" (p. 30) and demands that she obediently marry a man possessed of 3,000 pounds and a title. In the elderly guardian, Fielding presents one of his strongest characters, Sir Positive Trap, an "old precise knight" whose "ill-bred surliness of temper" prompts him to define in crude terms what other men might think but are too polite to put into words; in Trap's judgment, social subterfuges concerning women should be ignored. Marriage is a "Smithfield bargain," and a man should be able "[to] carry his daughter to market with the same lawful authority as any other of his cattle" (p. 33).

Fielding's concern with contemporary values involving property and ownership continues in his second drama, The Temple Beau, which had a run at Goodman's Fields theatre for thirteen nights during January 1730, just before the theatre was closed by the authorities. The period was trying for Fielding, with both Don Quixote in England and The Temple Beau having been rejected by Cibber's Drury Lane theatre. The play extends beyond the techniques of plot and character informing his first play and is distinguished by a Prologue written by James Ralph.16

Winfield H. Rogers in "Fielding's Early Aesthetic and
Technique," finds the work to derive from the traditional humours play, the only difference being Fielding's "terminology." Rogers finds that "false wit" concerns Fielding primarily (30-31).

A different interpretation about his purpose and intent in his second drama is indeed possible, one which links the first plays to his later ones. Fielding in this second play as in his first shows similarity to Eliza Haywood and her dramatic construction of a separate female hierarchy which operates, unrecognized by men, alongside the dominant male hierarchy. (See chapter four for a study of Haywood's dramas and her connections to the Little Theatre). Although Fielding in this drama uses the notion of a female universe dominated by elder women, with their wisdom and law-giving capacities, he is concerned here with definitions of caste and class. To illustrate the precepts of class distinction as silly and class structure as monstrous, he employs as a strong character the wise slave, whose intelligence and wit rescues the ineffectual and undeserving master, both types drawn from comedies of Roman playwrights, especially Plautus.

The plot involves young fop Wilding sent to the Temple to study law by his merchant father, who desires his son to learn the uses of money and to marry an heiress. Aside from buying volumes of Lord Rochester's poetry, Wilding has spent all his money on clothes and
wine. When the father suddenly appears, the fop's servant Pincet carries off a trickery. A genius compared to his master, the fool, Pincet shows his resourcefulness and his great wit by actually tricking the stingy father out of a large sum of money. Dudden, along with Battestin, finds Fielding's comic targets in this play to be the pedant, the money-mad middle class, and the hypocrite (Henry Fielding: His Life, Times, and Works 1: 45-48).

I propose, however, that Fielding uses these stereotypes for a greater purpose: to demonstrate the inequality in the English class system, he presents the servant, like an Admirable Crichton, superior to his social masters, both the despicable fop and his father. While the play is ostensibly just good fun as it lampoons easy targets, such as the fop and the prude, I suggest that Fielding has begun to explore darker topics. Until he begins in earnest at the Little Theatre, however, he deals here quite carefully with inflammatory themes. Only by looking past the humour may we see that the drama seems to put forward the idea that the wrong lot has the cash, that a social system which raises a fop and denigrates his natural superior can only be a travesty. A conversation between servant disguised as a counselor and the senior Wilding shows that when the boundaries of education, class and privilege are broached, the best man wins. As Pincet's words here serve to mask his true identity and to
provide him with another one, the dialogue in which he proves his superiority is worth quoting:

Pincet. I believe, Sir Harry, I have not the honour of being known to you. My name is Ratsbane—Counsellor Ratsbane of the Inner Temple. I have had, sir, according to the order of your son, a conference with Mr. Counsellor Starchum, who is for the plaintiff, and have come to a conclusion thereon.

Sir Harry. Oh! have you? I am your humble servant, dear sir; and if it lies in my power to oblige you in return—

Pincet. Oh, dear sir! No obligation! We only do our duty. Our case will be this—first, a warrant will be issued; upon which, we are taken up; then we shall be indicted; after which, we are convicted (that no doubt we shall, on such a strength of proof); immediately sentence is awarded against us, and then execution regularly follows.

Sir Harry. Execution, sir! What execution?

Wilding. Oh, my unfortunate father! Hanging, sir.

Pincet. Ay, ay, hanging; hanging is the regular course of law, and no way to be averted. But, as to our conveyance to the place of execution, that I believe we shall be favoured in. The sheriff is to render us there; but whether in a coach or cart, I fancy a small sum may turn that scale.

Sir Harry. Coach or cart! Hell and the devil! Why, son, why sir, is there no way left?

Pincet. None. We shall be convicted of felony, and then follows of course.

Wilding. It's too true—so says Cook against Littleton.

Sir Harry. But sir, dear sir, I am as innocent—

Pincet. Sir, the law proceeds by evidence. My brother Starchum indeed offered that upon a bond of five thousand pounds he would make up the affair; but I thought it much too extravagant a demand; and so I told him flatly—we would be hanged.

Sir Harry. Then you told a damned lie; for, if twice that sum would save us, we will not.

(p. 169-170)
While the fop is chiefly the butt of the comedy, along with money-grubbing merchants, Lady Gravely embodies another type of dark humor. Critics tend to see her as a hypocritical prudish woman, eager to censure others, but another interpretation is quite possible. She sets up as moralizer, the leader of the "solemn body of prudes" (1.2); yet her real sin involves the abuse of power her station gives her. Fielding once again establishes a female hierarchy from the beginning, for the play opens with the evil Lady Gravely. The scene is rather long, being two pages, which is an indication of Fielding’s emphasis on what is being conveyed. The women’s recriminations go beyond the familial for the two sisters speak in the language of the female subculture, and the criticisms revolve around just how believably Lady Gravely adopts the mask of the male-constructed woman. The basic complaint against Lady Gravely is her failure to cover her motivations. Like Lady Trap in Love in Several Masques, Lady Gravely wears the masque of the male-constructed woman and becomes here a social robot, in spite of the fact that she is a widow and therefore outside systematic subjugation.

As I have noted, The Temple Beau was rejected at the patented theatres and the evaluation I have provided of the class struggle at the heart of the drama, shows the direction that Fielding pursued in the dramas he produced

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at the Little Theatre. In addition to discussing these first dramas, we need to consider, as a group, Fielding’s dramas at the Drury Lane and the Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields to be able to distinguish thematically between Fielding’s productions at the patented theatres and at the Little Theatre. Given the conservatism at the patented theatres, we would hardly expect Fielding to be allowed to pursue his economic and class war on the stages of Drury Lane; yet, Fielding did attempt plays of a different hue from 1732-33. Characters in The Lottery, The Modern Husband, The Old Debauchees, and The Covent-Garden Tragedy, are rich people, with problems peculiar to the rich or would-be rich, such as how to marry, inherit, and keep money. The plots merrily concern how the rich will stay rich.17

Buried beneath the Restoration-type glitter and really wonderful dialogue, Fielding’s plots reveal circumstances less than pleasant. Two especially, The Lottery and The Modern Husband, are actually about the conditions of servitude in which women live. Although both plays end on a cheery note, the bare fact remains that in The Lottery, the woman is up for grabs, and in The Modern Husband, she is merchandise for sale. While the dramas do not emphasize the issue, Fielding nonetheless revolves the plots around an unpleasant fact: under English laws of Covert-Baron, a woman did not control her own body but existed at the pleasure of men, from her
guardian who could in effect sell her, to a husband who first bought her and then quite legally could prostitute her if he so chose. What Thomas Hardy fictionalized in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* was deplorable but legal. Charles Woods states that Fielding's play deals with "a state of affairs which enabled a man to make money from his wife's adultery without loss of social prestige, a noxious growth which festered in the English legal system until 1857, when Parliament at last put an end to actions for criminal conversation" (366).

Attacked viciously by the *Grub-Street Journal* (10 August 1732) ostensibly for their flagrantly erotic scenes, both *The Modern Husband* and *The Covent-Garden Tragedy* lasted under fourteen nights.¹⁸ The plays were doomed to fail, even *The Modern Husband*, Fielding's daring experiment with "heroic" comedy, in the opinion of Battestin (*Henry Fielding: A Life* 133). I discuss *The Modern Husband* and the influences of Eliza Haywood on the play, earlier in this chapter. We must note, however, that Fielding claims in a puff that the play was written on "a Model . . . never yet attempted." His cynical drama about men and women had exposed an evil to the wrong audience, who were perhaps involved in pursuing money or women by the very means the play reveals. After this failure, Fielding returned to Drury Lane only with conservative works, like *The Old Debauchees*, a popular
anti-papist work about a lecherous Jesuit, as well as his dramatic adaptations of Moliere's works *The Mock Doctor* and *The Miser*, and Regnard's *The Intriguing Chambermaid*. Although he continued to appear on the actors' roster at the Drury Lane, Fielding did not attempt innovative plays at the patented theatres but began to produce his hard-hitting works exclusively at the Little Theatre.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER TWO


Early biographies of Fielding tend to open with an account of his aristocratic lineage. Dobson's work is representative and begins with the Fielding family's claim to royal blood through the Denbigh connection. This account traces the family back to the first Jeffrey of Hapsburgh, who came to England in the time of Henry III and adopted the name Fieldeng or Filding, the name apparently taken from the ancestral holdings of Rinfilding. Dobson lists other Fielding notables, such as Sir William Feilding, killed at Tewkesbury, among others. One Fielding (spelled the modern style) received a peerage in Ireland, and became Viscount Callan; this branch produced the Denbigh family. From it came Edmund Fielding, a third son, who fought bravely under the Duke of Marlborough and who, at age 30 years, married Sarah, and produced six children, including Henry, the eldest.

These children are the center of the court case mentioned in the text and while Godden states that there were six, Dobson finds that there were four. He quotes Hutchins's *History of Dorset* in which extracts from the parish register show that five children were born to Sarah and Edmund Fielding: Sarah, Anne, Beatrice, Henry and Edmund. The account adds that Anne and Edmund died young. According to Dobson, Beatrice disappeared in history. In regard to the number of children born to Sarah and Edmund Fielding, Dobson does point out that the monument of Sarah Fielding, who wrote *David Simple*, states that she was the second daughter of General Fielding (11-4). I must note, however, that the monument contains at least one error, for Sarah's father is listed as "Henry Fielding." (See endnote #8.)

The Hapsburg lineage must have been taken seriously for Godden includes as Appendix A, "The Hapsburg Genealogy," in order to show that the Hapsburg descent "must now be abandoned" (303). She notes that Burke's *Peerage* had rejected the family claim to the Hapsburg line, and she quotes a Dr. G. F. Warner who states, "I have myself seen the documents upon which it [the claim] rests, and found them to be unmistakable forgeries" (303).

As if by way of apology, Godden concludes with information from Nichols's *History and Antiquities of*
Leicestershire, 4: 394. She cites notable Fielding men, like the grandfather of Henry Fielding, the Rev. and Hon John Fielding, Canon of Salisbury, and Doctor of Divinity, in addition to being Archdeacon of Dorsetshire. Henry Fielding’s uncle George was an officer in the "Royal Regiment of the Blues" and Groom of the Bed-chamber to Queen Anne and to George II.

2 Cross notes that Swift intended his slight of Fielding by linking him with Welsted in the poem "On Poetry: A Rhapsody." Saying "Swift was caught off his guard," Cross argues that he failed to understand Fielding’s grand irony and interpreted Fielding’s humor as weakness. Swift finally understood his mistake and removed the offending line in the Dublin edition, with the change reading, "The Laureat leaves him far behind." This version contains an editor’s note stating that "In the London edition, instead of Laureate, was maliciously inserted Mr. Fielding, for whose ingenious writings the author hath manifested a great esteem." Cross notes that the Dublin edition of the poem appeared 1734, but the editorial note first was added to the 1735 edition (1: 87).

Politics" and Laura LaRue Franta's "Henry Fielding's Political Satire, 1728-1737."

Battestin's stand seems to include Fielding as anti-Walpole, depending on Fielding's needs of the moment; however, Battestin includes in his biography a "begging verse epistle" addressed to Walpole in 1731. Battestin remarks that this type of verse, like the epilogues, showed just how dangerous an opponent he could be for the Prime Minister:

Great Sir, as on each Levee Day
I still attend you -- still you say
I'm busy now, To-morrow come;
To-morrow, Sir, you're not at Home.
So says your Porter, and dare I
Give such a Man as him the Lie?
In Imitation, Sir, of you.
I keep a mighty Levee Too;
Where my Attendants, to their Sorrow,
Are bid to come again To-morrow.
To-morrow they return, no doubt,
And then like you, Sir, I'm gone out.
So says my Maid -- but they, less civil,
Give Maid and Master to the Devil;
And then with Menaces depart,
Which could you hear would pierce your Heart.
Good Sir, or make my Levee fly me,
Or lend your Porter to deny me. (qtd Henry Fielding: A Life 112)

4 According to Godden's account, General Fielding during this period had lost 1200 pounds at gaming tables and was being sued for a debt of 700 pounds by "Captain" Midford; he apparently lost an additional 500 pounds at faro. Fielding's defense against the "Captain," was the statement that "gaming is illegal."

5 Battestin notes that when Elizabeth died in 1770, she left the bulk of her fortune to her niece, Ann Spary (Henry Fielding: A Life 658: 77). Although Sparrye/Spary swore at the General's death that he had died possessed of only "five pounds," the fact that she, with only a servant's wages, had lived in comfort in her own home, and had left an "estate," when she died 29 years later indicates that either Elizabeth had obtained by trickery, theft, or other means, the General's remaining stash of cash. In any event, we know that Henry Fielding's third stepmother upon her death in 1770, had made her niece an heiress.

6 Fielding married Daniel in November 1747 at St Benedict's church, Paul's Wharf. Godden quotes the
account of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's granddaughter, Lady Louisa Stuart:

His biographers seem to have been shy of disclosing that after the death of this charming woman [his first wife] he married her maid. And yet the act was not so discreditable to his character as it may sound. The maid had few personal charms, but was an excellent creature, devotedly attached to her mistress, and almost broken-hearted for her loss. In the first agonies of his own grief, which approached to frenzy, he found no relief but from weeping with her; nor solace, when a degree calmer, but in talking to her of the angel they mutually regretted. This made her his habitual confidential associate, and in process of time he began to think he could not give his children a tenderer mother, or secure for himself a more faithful housekeeper and nurse. At least this was what he told his friends; and it is certain that her conduct as his wife confirmed it, and fully justified his good opinion. (163-64)

7 Pat Rogers makes the point in *Henry Fielding: A Biography* that what Fielding did in 1726 and 1727 is a "total mystery." Like Eliza Haywood, William Hatchett, and Charlotte Charke, fellow playwrights at the Little Theatre, he left no paper trail of his life; someone destroyed his letters, both personal and professional. Presumably surviving because it was not in the possession of Fielding, one document remains from an earlier time, when in 1725, eighteen-year-old Fielding attempted to elope with Sarah Andrew, a seventeen-year-old merchant's orphan. Thwarted by her guardian, determined that she and her fortune should belong to his son, Fielding pinned up the following note: "This is to give notice to all the world that Andrew Tucker and his son John Tucker are clowns and cowards. Witness my hand, Henry Fielding" (qtd Rogers *Henry Fielding: A Biography* 20-21). Fielding must have still been smarting for we may easily see that Fielding took aim at the patriarchal approach to marriage in his next play, *Love in Several Masques*. Sir Positive Trap is surely a hateful portrait of the guardian who thwarted the elopement of twenty-year-old Fielding with Sarah Andrew, two years earlier in Lyme Regis.

8 On her monument, her father's name is unaccountably inscribed as "Henry Fielding." Contemporary references to "Sally" Fielding, as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu called her, acknowledged her as a novelist, whom Richardson praised.
for her "knowledge of the human heart." Her old friend, Dr. John Hoadley, wrote the following verse for his "esteemed and loved . . . Mrs. Sarah Fielding":

Her unaffected Manners, candid Mind
Her Heart benevolent, and Soul resign'd;
Were more her Praise than all she knew or thought
Though Athens Wisdom to her Sex she taught.
(qtd Godden 161)

Fielding's London address is not known until after his marriage, according to Battestin and early biographers as well. We may make conservative guesses based on our general knowledge of the times, however. For convenience as well as cheap accommodations, Fielding must have lived on the outskirts of the theatre district somewhere between Drury Lane and the Little Theatre, which covers about sixteen square blocks in today's London. Being at a distance from the city, the Little Theatre neighborhood was apparently cheap enough for apprentices who attended the Little Theatre, so quite likely the rents were low enough for Fielding. Charles Macklin is quoted in Cooke's biography, Memoirs of Charles Macklin (London: James Asperne, 1806) about the everyday life of an actor, and his comments may give at least confirmation of the my theory that Fielding lived near the Little Theatre. The quotation below refers to the beating of a drum to announce rehearsals, a practice which caused actors to live within hearing distance of their playhouse.

The players in the earlier decades all lived in the neighbourhood of the two [patented] theatres; Quin, Booth, and Wilks lived almost constantly in Bow Street; Colley Cibber in Charles Street; Mrs. Pritchard and Billy Havard in Henrietta Street; Garrick a greater part of his life in Southampton Street; and the inferior players lodged in Little Russell Street, Vinegar Yard, and the little courts and street about the Garden. So that all could be mustered to rehearsal by beat of drum, as might be said, and the expense of coach-hire be saved. "But now," said the veteran, speaking at the close of the century, "we are strangely altered, we are all looking forward to squares and great streets, high ground and genteel neighbourhoods, no matter how far distant from the theatre."
(72-73)

The reference to "Vinegar Yard" as a popular address for actors is perhaps a clue to Fielding's quarters, for
he signed himself "Captain Hercules Vinegar of Hockley in the Hole" in his articles for The Champion: or British Mercury. Fielding gave notice of an address change to "Pall-Mall" on 11 December 1739.


11 Because Fielding may be represented quite closely by Wilson, it seems important to quote all of this quasi-autobiographical account of an early influence on Fielding. Wilson's confessions continues:

I held in utter contempt all Persons who wanted any other inducement to Virtue besides her intrinsick Beauty and Excellence; and had so high an Opinion of my present companions, with regard to their Morality, that I would have trusted them with whatever was nearest and dearest to me. While I was engaged in this delightful Dream, two or three Accidents happen'd successively, which at first much surprized me. For, one of our greatest Philosophers, or Rule of Right-men, withdrew himself from us, taking with him the Wife of one of his most intimate Friends. Secondly, Another of the same Society left the Club without remembering to take leave of his Bail. A third having borrowed a Sum of Money of me, for which
I received no Security, when I asked him to repay it, absolutely denied the Loan. These several Practices, so inconsistent with our golden Rule, made me begin to suspect its Infallibility; but when I communicated my Thoughts to one of the Club, he said "there was nothing absolutely good or evil in itself; that Actions were denominated good or bad by the Circumstances of the Agent. That possibly the Man who ran away with his Neighbour's Wife might be one of very good Inclinations, but over-prevailed on by the Violence of an unruly Passion, and in other Particulars might be a very worthy Member of Society: That if the Beauty of any Woman created in him an Uneasiness, he had a Right from Nature to relieve himself"; with many other things, which I then detested so much, that I took Leave of the Society that very Evening, and never returned to it again.

12 Several critics discuss Fielding's presentation of society, with the progression moving from action to transgression to punishment. Fielding, then, clearly sets up his stage as the world with its social, political, and economic aspects. Depicting man as he is and having no illusions of human capability in spiritual issues, Fielding seems to say that the best the human can do involves adapting himself or herself to roles, to masks that cover gross instincts and hide base motivations. With the movement from scene to scene, the most admirable human is perforce one who is capable of assuming multiple masks in a series of roles, as he progresses through the scenes on the stage of social world. In this concept of society, the individual is at once puppet and actor, and spectator of other actors rapidly changing maskings (Paulson "Life as Pilgrimage and as Theatre" 187-190).

In this consideration of society as stage, the human actor is quite alone, as he finds himself engaging in society only through his adaptation of masks. When he is not moving, these moments of stasis serve only to reinforce the mask that is in place. The human's duty to providence consists solely in adapting the most perfect mask and acting the part to perfections. Unable to escape the shifting scenes, the individual can only be at the mercy of Providence, inscrutably governing the universe.

13 Fielding refers in several works to "Count" Heidegger, the ugliest man in London, as Dudden notes (1: 20-22). In The Author's Farce, there is reference to him in the puppet show, as "Count Ugly" and in Tom Jones, Fielding terms Heidegger "the great arbiter deliciarum, the great

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high-priest of pleasure" (8: 7). Heidegger's masquerades threatened the social establishment and were frowned upon by the authorities who tried to suppress. In that sense, Heidegger existed on society's fringes as the Little Theatre group did, marginalized for offenses against society.

14 Fielding's women in his dramas have not been discussed widely nor have his pro-feminist leanings been explored thoroughly, although Smallwood's *Fielding and the Woman Question* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984) discusses feminism in Fielding's novels. In my views on feminism in eighteenth-century dramas, I generally have been influenced by Jacqueline Pearson's *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists 1642-1737* (New York: Harvester, 1988); Terry Castle’s *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (London: Methuen 1986); Katherine Rogers's *Feminism in Eighteenth Century England* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1982).

15 Fielding employs the fop character with his rich laced coats, his snuff-box (*Love in Several Masques* 1.1), and sword-knots (*Love in Several Masques* 1.1) not only in the plays, which I discuss in the text. Fielding also uses the character in *Joseph Andrews*, where fops are described as "rascals in lace and embroidery" (3: 3) and gold and silver decorations (II:4) a carved walking-stick (3: 3). To give another instance, in *Tom Jones*, fops are "strange monsters in lace and embroidery" (14: 1). Even two years before his death, Fielding continued to write witheringly of the Fop wearing his silk and brocade waistcoat. In The Covent-Garden Journal 4 April 1752, Fielding again used an ape analogy for the fop and states that the only reason fops do not become "even more egregious apes" in their outrageous clothing, is their fear of being pelted by the mob.

Hairstyles of the fop also draw Fielding's attention. In *Joseph Andrews*, Lord Dapper describes his preparations for the evening to include a few hours spent with his hair in "curl papers." The Covent-Garden Journal 26 May 1752 depicts the Fop not only as a woman, but as a woman-for-hire: "his body dressed in all the tinsel which serves to trick up a harlot, and his hair appearing to have been decked by the same tire-woman with hers."

16 James Ralph, former apprentice to Benjamin Franklin and ne'er-do-well, became one of Fielding's staunchest friends beginning in the winter of 1729-30, according to Duddon's account of Fielding's early years (27-29). An expatriate, Ralph returned to London and lived on the fringes of society, like Fielding. Dudden states that
Ralph introduced the young man to London’s low life, including Grub-Street. Ralph produced two poems between 1728 and 1730, the first one being "The Night." His second poem, "Sawney," attacked Alexander Pope for which Pope attacked Ralph in return, using the title of Ralph’s first poem along with writer’s name in the second edition of the Dunciad.

Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls
And makes night hideous—Answer him, ye owls!

In 1730, Ralph wrote the Prologue to Fielding’s The Temple Beau. In 1735-36, he became Fielding’s management partner at the Little Theatre and later his partner in editing the Champion, from 15 November 1739 to 8 April 1740 (Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 691). Benjamin Franklin left Ralph in England when the former ambassador returned to America; they parted on bad terms when Ralph refused to repay a 27 pound loan. Battestin calls him an "opportunist," and quotes Ralph’s biographer as calling the man "a Pretender to Genius" (Henry Fielding: A Life 152). Franklin in his autobiography describes Ralph as an "ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker."

Although Ralph is dismissed as a poseur and libertine, the Prologue he wrote for Fielding’s The Temple Beau contains lines often quoted to illustrate Fielding’s protest against the trends of London theatre:

Humour and wit, in each politer age
Triumphant, reared the trophies of the stage.
But only farce, and show, will now go down
And Harlequin’s the darling of the town
Will’s has resigned its old pretence to wit,
And beaux appear, where critics used to sit.
Button himself, provoked at wit’s decline
Now lets his house, and swears he’ll burn his sign,
Ah! should all others that on wit depend,
Like him provoked; like him their dealings and;
Our theatres might take th’ example too,
And players starve themselves—-as authors do.

Be you the first t’ explore the latent prize,
And raise its value, as its beauties rise.
Convince that town, which boasts its better breeding,
That riches—are not all that you exceed in.
Merit, wherever found, is still the same,
And this our stage may be the road to fame.
Fielding obviously prized Ralph’s work, at least part of it. In the 1731 revision of *The Covent-Garden Tragedy*, he used nine of Ralph’s songs from his ballad opera, *The Fashionable Lady*. The revision apparently only covered the number of musical numbers, raising the number from 31 to 65. Ralph was in good company for Fielding borrowed additional songs from Handel, Henry Carey, Tom D’Urfey, Attilio Ariosti, and Pepusch, all popular composers of the day (Battestin 113-114).

Winfield H. Rogers in "Fielding’s Early Aesthetic and Technique" SP 40 (1943): 529-91 argues that *Love in Several Masques* is influenced in its themes and characters by Fielding’s interest in "Cicero, Epictetus, Plato, Aristotle, and Swift. At the same time, Fielding aims "at no private character . . . at vice, not the vicious" (31). Calling the play, at best, "derivative," Rogers finds that *The Temple Beau* shows Fielding’s regard for Addison and Steele (31). Rogers notes in "The Significance of Fielding’s The Temple Beau," Publication of the Modern Language Association 55 (1940): 440-44 that Fielding takes "the symbol pedant from Addison’s Spectator paper 105 to give new significance to the humour point of view" (440-444).

CHAPTER THREE

HENRY FIELDING: AT THE LITTLE THEATRE

Fielding's long walk in 1730, from Drury Lane to Haymarket Lane was both literal and symbolic; by throwing in his lot with the little playhouse, he became part of the group at the Little Theatre in more than one sense.¹ So involved was Fielding with the theatre, that when it was closed, he ended his career as dramatist.² Fielding had lost his main source of income and chief venue for protest; for all his commitment, the theatre had left him and, perforce, he had to leave the theatre. In order to examine Fielding's contribution to the cooperative enterprise at the Little Theatre, with its common ideological and political agenda, I want to study his plays at the Little Theatre from 1730-1737 in an attempt to prove that gender and class constitute the dramatic means by which Fielding explores society.

Fielding himself defined his works at the Little Theatre as a new genre, "dramatic satires," and his satires attack, as I have noted above, more than topical politics. He aimed at social inequities, and his plays rely on the audience's understanding of the common man of good will. Fielding shifts our interests away from those little glimpses of high life to a sympathetic portrayal of
people outside glittering society. In the domestic tragedies, like Lillo's *The London Merchant* that Fielding produced at the Little Theatre, the ordinary person is crushed by situations he or she does not deserve, victimized by a nameless, faceless social, economic, and political system.

The rules of suppression, by which the ruling sector maintains control, are not ever spoken aloud, however, and depend in large part on inculcation of obedience by hierarchies of family, church, and government, with power being determined by gender and class. In *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding makes the point that women to survive "endeavor, by all methods they can invent, to render themselves so amiable in [male] eyes that he may have no inclination to hurt them." Hypocrisy then is taught women in order to protect them against dominant males, and their own potential is subverted because of it; the same may be said of others at the bottom of the hierarchy, likewise taught to wear a mask of obedience, and repress their own natures. His 1730-31 plays depict the wretchedness of all who must somehow survive at the bottom of society. He pays special attention to actors and servants, half-starved with no escape from their destitution. They may have, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, the right to walk in freedom as males, but as poor males, they have no means of enjoying it.
Except for the servants in *The Grub-Street Opera*, there is a forlorn aspect to Fielding's poor men that does not extend to the women. Middle-class or low-class, having less to gain than men since their gender is destiny, Fielding's women push and shove to earn a penny, to get what is coming to them. To show the contrast, the servant Risque in *Eurydice Hiss'd* talks back to his master, but he is resigned to eating three times a week. The Dancer, on the other hand, demands attention from the prompter, reminds him of her work, and wants another billing. Knowing women's jobs are limited, she competes with other women and never misses a chance to put down the efforts of her female competitors. Further, she says he needs her more than she needs him, just to support his Shakespearean productions. Fielding's use of the woman worker, whether streetwalker, servant, or artisan, in all his plays (except *Tom Thumb*) allows each drama to contain another social dimension.

The plays that Fielding featured at the Little Theatre are evenly divided between the theatre setting and the world of the middle class. Although *The Grub-Street Opera* and *Tom Thumb* have so-called royals, the King and Queen, like the Lord and Lady, are really bourgeoisie. Further, in both plays, the ruling male is incapable and (Fielding implies) impotent too, totally unfit to rule at all. Fielding places responsibility for right order and
rule in the hands of the women in order to show that effective action only arises outside the hierarchy. One reason he employs the transvestite figure of the woman playing a man’s role surely is to show visually that the new man is the woman.

Taken as a whole, the plays under consideration show kings, lords, mayors, and rich husbands as blind to the subversion by women; in The Grub-Street Opera, servants also subvert and replace. Disruption of the social order occurs when ranking males give orders, which are not acknowledged by those at the bottom of the hierarchy, that is, women and lower classes of men. In Fielding’s dramatic satires, this scoffing attitude may be hidden, so humor arises from the deception which underlings must practice against the powerful.

Fielding’s work at the Little Theatre differed in intent from his Drury Lane plays. Although we observed certain thematic beginnings in the dramas at Drury Lane, not until he came to the Little Theatre did he really pursue his class and gender explorations. I propose to examine the plays chronologically, beginning with the 1730-31 plays: The Author’s Farce and Pleasures of the Town; Tom Thumb: A Tragedy; Rape upon Rape: Or, The Justice Caught in his own Trap: A Comedy; The Letter-Writers: or, a New Way to Keep a Wife at Home: A Farce; The Grub-Street Opera (The Welsh Opera: Or, The Gray Mare
the Better Horse). The 1734-37 plays include Pasquin: A Dramatic Satire on the Times; Tumble-Down Dick: Or, Phaeton in the Suds; The Historical Register for the Year 1736; and Eurydice Hiss’d: Or, A Word to the Wise.

Following a revival of Samuel Johnson of Chester’s Hurlothrumbo, Fielding’s first play at the Little Theatre and his first triumph there, The Author’s Farce, opened on 30 March 1730. Judging by the number of times it was acted, this play enjoyed a better reception than others opening subsequently at the Haymarket in 1730, like Ralph’s The Fashionable Lady; or, Harlequin’s Opera. The first of Fielding’s plays-within, or frame plays, The Author’s Farce features within it a puppet show titled The Pleasures of the Town.3

While Fielding’s purposes may encompass all of the critical attributions mentioned above, I propose that his play chiefly is a social protest which views the outcasts that constitute the bottom layer of society. The Prologue states that the social principle of "Liberty, freedom, liberty and Briton!" has been reduced to a cheap reference to get applause. The absence of liberty and the equation of freedom and money, then, become the underlying concerns of the drama, and Fielding parades before us vignettes of people cheated by class or gender. If Hogarth’s drawings feature humans in the process of loss, Fielding’s plays feature Grub Street denizens who have nothing left to
lose. Harry Luckless is the spokesman, the intermediary between us and the stage representations, as he conducts a tour of society's margins where the outcasts struggle, at the mercy of the boarding house, playhouse, and publishing house.

A prelude to theatrical purgatory in act three, the first acts set up the conditions which force artists sell out their souls and become candidates for the underworld of Nonsense. What early critics, such as Dudden, found to be comical, is actually a trip to Hell. Containing clear references to the life of Fielding, the plot involves vignettes in the life of Harry Luckless, a poor poet who is a denizen of Grub Street, and puppet master for the puppets in *The Pleasures of the Town*. A landlady, a publisher, and a playhouse manager thwart the hard-luck writer as he hopes to gain fame, fortune, and the landlady's daughter by having his play accepted at the theatre. The tempters become so many devils to torment him into selling his soul to the Goddess of Nonsense; indeed the majority of acts one and two serves as little lessons about life, art, and death.

Fielding's tour of London's fringes reserved for writers is bounded by the stage and the publisher. Luckless shows us Dash, Blotpage, Quibble, and Scarecrow who, half-starved, have become the publisher Bookweight's writers just to earn "milk-porridge . . . often twice a
day." All except Luckless have sold out. Like the puppets in act 3, their strings are pulled by forces outside their control. Confronted by poverty, they must "be pimp to some worthless man of quality" (p. 16). Fielding says about women in *Love in Several Masques* that "Poverty" brings "capitulation." In *The Author's Farce*, he sets out to apply the statement to other outcasts as well. As Witmore reminds Luckless, "fools lead the town," and so a writer must lower his standards and prostitute his art: "If you must write, write nonsense, write operas, write Hurlothrumbos, set up an oratory and preach nonsense, and you may meet with encouragement enough" (1.5.32-33). Entrepreneurs exploit the destitute artist, while they see art in terms of profit for themselves. The revised version of the play treats the theatre managers more roughly than the original and Marplay Senior and Junior regard Luckless's poetry to be. The publisher's interest in literature is limited to what sells, and at the moment, he is willing to pay for "two Latin sedition mottos and one Greek moral motto for pamphlets by tomorrow morning" (2.4.15-16).

Framing the entire play, the female voice of the landlady Mrs. Moneywood who, like the publisher, survives by cheating the artist, opens as well as closes the drama. She resembles a dungbeetle, feeding on the wretchedness around her and so thrives, even in Hell. Part of the
Grub-Street power structure, she owns her own home and scrapes a living by overcharging those unable even to protest her methods. Spying and insulting Luckless, she even knows how many bad "notes" he has given his bookseller for advances. She says, "I'll hang over my door in great red letters, 'No Lodgings for Poets.'--Sure never was such a guest as you have been. My floor is all spoiled with ink, my windows with verses, and my door has been almost beat down with duns" (1.3.14-17). In spite of her bragging about the boarders and lovers she might have had, like the "attorney of New Inn, or Mr. Filpot . . . two parsons, or a doctor of physic" (1.2.57-58), she can only hope to attract outcasts and losers. Fielding's portrayal of her sexual imposition on Luckless includes the idea that poverty has stripped him of dignity. He is too much in her debt to react strongly to her sexual advances when she says, "Do be kind and I'll forgive thee all" (1.3.65-66). Fielding's revised version casts the lecherous widow in even stronger terms, as she says, "If thou canst not pay me in money, let me have it in love" (Works of Henry Fielding p. 196).

Just as it is unclear whether the play proper is set in Hell or Purgatory, so the boundary between reality and fantasy becomes blurred in the puppet show, which is grafted onto the end of the play. Intending to show the outer limits of marginalized society, Fielding has cast
out his outcasts as far as they can go. Luckless begins with puppets Punch and Judy whose gross body imagery serves to depict the human as simply genitals and guts, denying therefore any social and spiritual aspects. The pair seem to be guardians of the gate to oblivion, for they speak of Orpheus and the Underworld. All we know is the location of their place of punishment, beside the Styx, and that this group did not qualify for Apollo’s kingdom. Luckless, as dramatist, introduces the puppets and the Goddess of Nonsense and is spokesman for their situation. He says to the audience: "since everyone has not time or opportunity to visit all the diversions of the town, I have brought most of them together in one" (3.1. 37-40). Luckless becomes an actor in the drama when he engages in dialogue with the dead Tragedio. Perhaps for this reason, the puppet show replaces dead puppets with live people, thereby disturbing the social reality that is presented. The first arrivals are simply "Poet," "Sailor," and "Director," indicating that their sins have profited them not at all, for they have no money to pay Charon. Without money and power, men are simply known by their occupations and what they have produced is not valued:

Poet. Who knows whether this rogue [Robgrave] has not robbed me too. I forgot to look in upon my body before I came away.
Charon. Had you anything of value buried with you?
Poet. Things of inestimable value—six folios of my own works.

Luckless. Most poets of this age will have their works buried with them. (3.1.133-137)

Called charlatans for their profiteering, as well as their artistic perversions, Don Tragedio (playwright Lewis Theobald), Sir Farcical Comic (Colley Cibber), Dr. Orator (John Henley), Signior Opera (Francesco Senesino), Monsieur Pantomime (John Rich), and Mrs. Novel (Eliza Haywood) unwittingly reveal their flaws, artistic and human, in addition to current social and political views (Dudden Henry Fielding: His Life, Work, and Times 1: 54-56; Rogers Henry Fielding: A Biography 46). For the puppets, the Nonsense kingdom is Hell because they are doomed to live and relive their lives eternally. On earth, Mrs. Novel loved Opera, a castrato, and makes two claims, that she died a virgin and that she died in childbirth. Fighting against the Goddess of Nonsense, in love with Opera's voice, Mrs. Novel finally wins; of course she is doomed to play out for eternity her relationship with a male who has been transformed into a neuter, neither male nor female.

Fielding in the last act achieves a final blurring between reality and fiction. Because he did not prostitute his art in the course of the play, Luckless is transformed into royalty, through discovering that he is a king's son albeit without money or a kingdom. In a gigantic recognition scene when everyone is transformed,
the puppets are revealed to be half-human, and the humans therefore half-puppet. Punch discovers that Mrs. Moneywood is his mother and that he is a king, while Judy, as his wife, becomes thereby "a king’s daughter" (3.1.889) and sister to both Harriot and Luckless.

We come to understand that the wretched system of earth is about to be instituted in the kingdom of Nonsense. Because no members of the upper classes are in the kingdom, we may assume that they are in traditional Hell. Luckless, therefore, has the chance to create a new system, but instead he simply places the bottom of the old hierarchy on the top, creates a new upper class, and appoints as his ministers Sir John to be chief justice; the Orator, poet-laureate and bookseller; Tragedio, Farcical, Opera, and Ugly, their old roles as players; Mrs. Novel, the romance-writer; and Marplay, his old role of theatre manager. Fielding has arranged a new government by crowning as king, a poet-turned-player-turned puppet, and Grub-Street denizens are the new royalty. Nothing is really new; only the site has changed. Mrs Moneywood’s boardinghouse becomes St. James Palace and the new seat of government. For eternity, the puppets must live out their former lives bounded by the boarding house, the playhouse, and the publishing house. As Luckless sings:
Taught by my fate, let never bard despair,
Though long he drudge, and feed on Grub Street air:
Since him (at last) 'tis possible to see
As happy and as great a king as me. (3.1.899-902)

Fielding's purpose is repeated in the Epilogue where four poets sit, in effect chained to a table, forced to end the play and appease the restless audience. They have been reduced to writing epilogues on demand and thereby, of course, qualify for Nonsense Hell. One proposes an ending that features a cat speaking the epilogue as a dumb-show; Fielding reinforces the transformation theme of the puppet play where the relationship between humans and puppets is recognized. Here, Fielding perhaps depicts the human as bestial, or vice versa. The cat, perhaps a rendition of Anubis, Egyptian guardian of the dead, has become a human, in what the cat woman calls a "strange transformation . . . .[for] I that am now a woman, lately was a cat" (65). She does not seem surprised by the transformation, but rather resigned to the knowledge that society treats women no better than cats. Although the play features only four women characters in addition to the cat, they seem to hold the key to social transformation, occurring at play's end.

As Hunter points out, Fielding chooses not to deal with his own questions here (Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance 54-55). The play does not include a rationale for the transformations
occurring; nonetheless, Fielding’s drama does conduct an examination of society by focusing on the disenfranchised at the bottom of the hierarchy. Social icons like religion and justice become in the course of the play Dr. Orator preaching nonsense in his "tub," but Fielding raises consciousness about the status quo without trying to solve society’s problems.

Fielding’s second play for the Little Theatre, Tom Thumb, was often shown during 1730-31, on a double bill with The Author’s Farce and the Pleasures of the Town. Both works feature Fielding’s social concerns as I have set out to prove them, but Tom Thumb is quite political in its references to Walpole and the contemporary political scene.

Tom Thumb; or, The Tragedy of Tom Thumb as Egmont calls it below, later retitled Tragedy of Tragedies, was popular from the beginning. He notes in his diary for 24 April 1730:

Afterwards I went to the Haymarket playhouse, and saw a play called "The Author’s Farce and the Pleasures of the Town," with an additional piece called "The Tragedy of Tom Thumb." Both these plays are a ridicule on poets, and several of their works, as also of operas, etc., and the last of modern tragedians, and are exceedingly full of humour, with some wit. The author is one of the sixteen children of Mr. Fielding and in a very low condition of purse.

His critical analysis of the play has stood up over time; Battestin, Cleary, Hume, among other contemporary critics,
likewise find the play to concern satire of government, literature, and theatre. As I discuss in chapter four, concerning Haywood's adaptation of Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, Fielding's political and artistic concerns are influenced by his social vision. As he later does in *The Grub-Street Opera*, he depicts the effects of political reversals and the effects of gender and class on power.

In the Preface, Fielding begins with satires of tragedy and government, but on the third page brings in examples of powerful women who assumed power in defiance of custom. With reference to Minerva, he includes one fictional woman Sophonisba, killed for exercising both sexuality and power, and an historical woman, Mary Queen of Scotland, killed undoubtedly for the same reason. The focus of the play then concerns women, sexuality, and power. It opens with displays of male entitlement as the king awaits the arrival of the military hero bringing in chains the captured enemy. The family patriarchal lineage from father to son is discussed in hallowed terms, and the hero Thumb is described as the product of good yeoman stock. In the first act, Fielding sets up the kind of world where men play out their masculine roles and fight to gain money, hence power, so that by capturing the giantess and ransoming the body of a woman, Tom gains the monetary control that moves him up the social and political ladders.
In this fairy tale about a midget and a giantess, there is no real need for women to adopt any of the traditional masks; for men, like Tom their finest examplum, are so obviously inferior in every regard. Glumdalca the giantess promises Tom that "[he] alone shalt fill / That Bed where twenty Giants us'd to lie," (2.7.26-27). Just as Glumdalca then reconSIDers, so does Huncamunca who tells Tom that "A Maid like me Heav’n form’d at least for two; / I marri’d him, and now I’ll marry you" (2.10.38-39). Marrying at will and choosing mates according to female sexual appetites, women characters direct their own social order. If the best man is a midget, the best woman is a giantess in a world where, according to traditional male standards, size counts. Women take charge and make traditional masculine gestures in sex and drinking. The latter is not the only indication of the Queen’s male posture, however, as she takes over the King’s role.

Queen Dollabella feels desire toward Tom, but she mentions virtue as stopping her: "For what’s a woman when her virtue’s gone? A coat that’s got no lace- a wig out of buckle- A stocking with a hole in’t." [She can only look forward to her husband’s death when she] "should be left a widow. and Tom Thumb is mine" (1.6.3-11). She seeks a new sexual experience and objectifies Tom at first, not realizing that a man who is small in one part must
therefore be small in all. Glumdalca has twenty husbands "marry'd to ourself," and the Queen responds, "Oh! happy state of giantism!" (1.3.31-32). Adopting the masculine view of sex, women characters manage to get what they please, while males engage in silly pastimes of war and gallantries. The traditional social contract is destroyed by the reversal of large and small, male and female. There is a studied turnabout for, without disturbing the illusionary male social structure, women construct a duplicate one where they operate and speak from their own power base. Within the structure, however, they compete with each other for Tom. The queen, wanting him for herself, forbids the king to marry Huncamunca to Tom, while Glumdalca, testing her "beauty" among the strangers who have abducted her, is refused by Tom, also. He becomes the symbol for female social deprivation, to the extent that the queen threatens suicide by hanging, and, calling the king a "Dog," for misusing her, says that "For riding on a Cat, from high I'll fall, / And squirt down Royal Vengeance on you all (1.3.94-95).

The king in the play is just a nonentity, a figurehead called simply "the king." After being visited by the ghost of Gaffer, the grandfather of Tom Thumb, the king, trying to sound like Hamlet, attempts later to tell in heroic words the ghosts' visitation, and the queen makes fun of his bombastic theatrics: "Why dost thou speak
Like men who carry Raree-Shows about?" [3.4.30]. The king feels that something is wrong in his kingdom, but he can only think misogynistically that he's just been too nice to his wife: "For when by Force / Or Art the Wife her Husband over-reaches, / Give him the Peticoat, and her the Breeches" (1.3.100-102). Instead of blaming male society for social chaos, the king blames women for reversing the order subjecting them. At the end, the king believes that All's Right with God because Tom is married, and Huncamunca has sworn to faithfulness. With marriage the microcosm for the political kingdom, the king as husband does not measure up.

The ending of the play reflects the chaos in the kingdom, for suddenly Tom is swallowed by the red cow, and the others in a killing frenzy murder each other in turn, until the stage is covered with bodies. Only the king is standing, and he says to himself:

And take thou this
So when the child, whom nurse from danger guards,
Sends Jack for mustard with a pack of cards,
Kings, queens, and knaves, throw one another down,
Till the whole pack lies scatter'd and o'erthrown;
So all our pack upon the floor is cast,
And all I boast is -- that I fall the last.

The Tragedy of Tragedies ends starkly. Truly, all the political machinations have led but to the grave, and the sum of the king's power is nothing. The reality and
the myth of male power have never been reconciled in him, and he finally knows it. The play opened with the pomp of masculinity on display as hero and king meet, but the ending seems to disavow the assumptions so prominent at the first. Fielding, however, stops short of dealing with the questions of gender and empowerment that the drama raises.

Following *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, Fielding continued his study of the role of the male in society and *Rape Upon Rape* contains his boldest, feminist work to date. Notwithstanding the political inferences, the drama offers essentially the type of social commentary Fielding began earlier, in experimentations with the idea of women and transformation. The Prologue contains the key idea: "vice," "public villainy" is being fought by the "heroic Muse" who combats the "lion" for the sake of "public welfare" and "public cause." The play had a dual existence, but the first rendition was *Rape upon Rape: Or, The Justice Caught in his own Trap*, staged at the Little Theatre and published 23 June, 1731 by "Scriblerus Secundus." Fielding only claimed, under his own name, authorship of the retitled work, *The Coffee-House Politician*, produced later at the Drury Lane theatre.

Cleary sees the work as propagandist and political, but other critics, such as Dudden, discuss *Rape upon Rape* as a comedy of humors, featuring Squeezum as
representative of judicial corruption (Henry Fielding: Political Writer 36-37). Hume, however, finds that the drama is an "odd amalgam of social satire, intrigue comedy, and romance" and mentions the play's "creaky plot" (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 71-72). Goldgar finds the "rape" to be Fielding's reference to the notorious Charteris scandal in February 1731.4

The plot involves Politick's daughter, Hilaret who, running away to elope with Constant, encounters instead drunken Ramble. Thinking her a street walker, he roughly seizes her by force and commits apparently gross bodily imposition. Screaming rape, she is arrested along with Ramble; Justice Squeezum examines her privately, and she can only escape by agreeing to his sexual overtures. Hilaret acts as her own avenger, trying to bring Squeezum to justice. In the end Constant and Hilaret are reunited, along with Ramble and his "dead" wife Isabella. Politick reveals that the rapist Ramble is his long-lost son and therefore Hilaret's brother.

Compared to the play's women, the males are awful but they symbolize the forces of civilized society. Extorting money from bawds and gamesters, Squeezum finds that "there is no law yet in being to screen a justice of peace from a downright robbery." Old and wasted with his "weasel" face, "spindle shanks" and "crane's neck of a body," Squeezum is an animal in his single-minded greed,
perverting justice to serve himself: "The laws are turnpikes, only made to stop people who walk on foot, and not to interrupt those who drive through them in their coaches" (p. 28). Evil himself, he projects his inner feelings into others and finds the world to be corrupt and corruptible. Politick, the Coffee-House Politician, is the "figure of fun" meant to balance the unsavory judicial rascal whose life intersects with Squeezum's justice as the result of the "rape" of Hilaret, Politic's daughter. In addition, Fielding is able to offer a parade of London types, especially the useless male. For instance, Ramble identifies his purpose in life as: "A Cavalier . . . a knight-errant rambling about the world in quest of adventures. To plunder widows and ravish virgins; to lessen the number of bullies, and increase that of cuckolds, are the obligations of my profession" (p. 274).

The fop Sotmore, like Squeezum, is a dark character, a morass of alcohol and misogyny. When Hilaret matches him drink for drink in a very strange scene, he praises her for being like a man: "if the sex were bred up to brandy and tobacco, if they all liked drinking as well as you seem to do, madam, I should turn a lover" (p. 309). His homosexual impulses are barely hidden and give a jealous edge to his verbal attacks on women. To keep Ramble by his side, Sotmore engages in a dialogue that reveals each man's character:
Sotmore. Why, thou wilt not leave us yet, and sneak away to some nasty little whore? A pox confound them, they have spoiled so many of my companions, and forced me to bed sober at three o'clock in the morning so often—that if the whole sex were going to the devil, I would drink a bumper to their good journey. Ramble. And I would go thither along with them. The dear charming creatures! Woman! It is the best word that ever was invented. There's music, there's magic in it.

Sotmore. Show me the whore; I'll be revenged on her and the whole sex. If thou art hanged for ravishing her, I'll be hanged for murdering her. Describe the little mischief to me. Is tall, short, black, brown, fair? In what form hath the devil disguised himself? (p. 303)

Fielding's dark purpose in the play has not been explored, and I propose that Rape upon Rape, as its title indicates, does not concern men, but rather women and does not concern justice, but rather injustice. The drama's males are constructed as types, even to their names: Squeezum, Politick, Faithful, Constant, Ramble, Sotmore. On the other hand, the women are distinguished by their strength and purpose, and their dramatic situation gains importance. Furthermore, Fielding makes a statement with the sheer numbers involved; in spite of a ratio of eleven men to three women, the play focuses on female problems. From the beginning, the prologue introduces the feminist theme, for the muse is an "amazon," bearding the "lion" of vice, in his den. Fielding invests her with phallic images and her "pen" becomes her "spear" by which she castigates the wrongs of society. The play, as the title

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indicates, tries to define women in society. Like a slave
culture who may speak only among themselves in private,
the voice of the female subculture runs through the work
like a thread. Their conversations about the laws of the
dominant culture act as a counterpoint to the scenes
featuring males who hold the law in their hands. At the
drama’s opening, Hilaret and Cloris acknowledge tacitly
women’s powerlessness in marriage and Cloris, already a
wife, tells Hilaret ways to maintain her dignity and
survive abuse. Hilaret responds satirically to her father
as she plays up to the myth of the submissive female all
the while scorning male gullibility: she knows she will be
honored only as long as she pretends to submit to the
social, political, and economic rules controlling her.

The rest of the play really describes what happens
around Hilaret, a woman of quality, when her body is no
longer controlled by a man. In seizing her own freedom
and leaving her assigned place, she upsets the social
master design. By cutting her loose, Fielding is
therefore able to pose theoretical questions about the
female place in the scheme of things. As long as Hilaret
is taken to be a streetwalker whose body is public
property, Ramble, the constable, the justice, and the
others know how to proceed, even to the assumption of a
certain tone and vocabulary with a streetwalker. She
first protests that she is a woman of "quality," and then

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that she just wants to drop the charge; Hilaret undergoes
the social and judicial scourging awaiting a woman who
cries rape. If she is a streetwalker, then ipso facto,
she cannot be raped. In fact, if she is a streetwalker,
she will be charged for harassing a gentleman. If she is
not a streetwalker, then what is she? A woman of quality
would not be loose in the streets, and as the constable
says, it is only her word against the rapist's. A woman
was not a citizen, therefore had no inalienable legal
rights. Hilaret could not, therefore, bring charges
herself against the rapist, as a man might bring a charge
of battery against an assailant.

From the time she screamed rape, Hilaret began living
a nightmare, and Fielding realistically shows that her
rape includes more rape, metaphorical or literal, by every
patriarchal agency from whom she should expect protection:
a Gentleman, a Constable, a Justice, the latter the worst
because of his potential for harm. No one believes her,
and, from the constable to the justice, she must defend
her social position in order to accuse an upperclass
gentleman. As her rapist Ramble says: "Madam, you shall
be made a severe example of. The laws are come to a fine
pass truly, when a sober gentleman can't walk the streets
for women" (p. 278).

Justice Squeezum seems to specialize in sexually
harassing women who come into his court and forces Hilaret
to meet privately. Saying that she is "upon the town . . . [but] a novice" he in effect will accept a rape charge against a "gentleman" in exchange for her favors, which the justice will reward with money extorted from Ramble (p. 286).

Women who roam free are the focus of Squeezum's obsession, which drives him to put in writing his experiences with prostitutes. There's the strange inference that Squeezum records the sex he has extorted in order to become a prostitute. He salivates when he thinks about women roaming free, and says that "[g]oing to see the sights" has brought women to ruin, as well as education: "for a pen in the hand of a woman is as sure an instrument of propagation, as a sword in that of a madman is of destruction" (p. 287). The pen becomes in these scenes a phallus that better serves men, and Fielding gets across the idea of a woman writing in some way being raped by the very pen she is using. Therefore, Squeezum as a man can more properly write and interpret the female experience. He assumes control over her, her body, and her sexuality through these means. Thinking still that she is a streetwalker, Squeezum begs Hilaret to tell her story of prostitution so that he may add it to the story of his life:

Come, now let us hear the story how you were first debauched.—Come—that I may put it down in my history at home. I have the history of
all the women's ruin that ever I lay with, and I call it, THE HISTORY OF MY OWN TIMES. (p. 315)

Hilaret guesses the depravity involved and the nature of Squeezum's perversion, and, narrating a pornographic tale of rape, frees herself by whipping him into a frenzy and then publicly exposing Squeezum's harassment of women:

Hilaret. At my first entrance he pretended a surprise at seeing me unexpectedly; but on my questioning him how and with what design he had conveyed himself there, he immediately threw off the cloak and confessed all: he flew to me, caught me in his arms with the most eager raptures, and swore the most violent love and eternal constancy. I in the greatest agony of rage repelled him with my utmost force; he redoubled his attacks, I slackened my resistance; he entreated, I raved; he sighed, I cried; he pressed, I swooned; he---

Squeezum. Oh!—I can bear no longer, my angel! my paradise! my honeysuckle! my dove! my darling!

Hilaret. What do you mean, sir?

Squeezum. I mean to eat you up, to swallow you down, to squeeze you to pieces.

Hilaret. Help there! a rape, a rape! (p. 317)

Squeezum then is charged with rape, but Hilaret undergoes another type of rape again in a court of law, when one of Squeezum's hired perjurers takes an oath that Hilaret is a whore and thief, who stole "four of my shirts, two pair of stockings, and my Common Prayer Book."

Fireball also takes the stand against her and falsely swears in open court that she has venereal disease and that he "got something by her, which made my surgeon get something by me" (p. 334). With Hilaret victimized by the judicial system, Squeezum is exonerated, and she astoundingly is accused of rape. At the same time,
Politick comes forward to aid his daughter only at the instigation of the servant Faithful, who shames him: "And can you sit here, sir, reading a parcel of damned, confounded, lying nonsense, and not go to your daughter's assistance" (p. 330).

At play's end, Fielding backs off from pursuing his topic of women's rights and by act five, Hilaret becomes unaccountably passive. One of the subplots has involved Hilaret's lover, Constant, jailed on the charge of rape because he went to aid a woman, actually Ramble's long-lost rich wife Isabella. When Hilaret and Constant finally come together, he interestingly claims Hilaret's body: "Come to my bosom, hide thy sorrows there. Death only shall tear thee from my arms again." So at the end, Hilaret is claimed by a male, and she is again protected and imprisoned at home. Indeed, the injustices practiced against her simply because she is a woman, become at the end of the play just punishment for her daring to control her own personal freedom. With Hilaret's rapist Ramble now identified as her brother, she ceases to act autonomously and becomes a traditional female. Fielding introduces once again the issue of incest and makes it here a near-miss. Her rapist-brother sets his seal of approval on Hilaret's marriage to Constant "in spite of the difference of fortune" (p. 340) and, now a ranking
male in control of Hilaret, he bestows her and her body to
Constant as a present.

Constant. Ramble, you have crowned my
obligations with a gift far dearer than the
earth could prove.
Hilaret. I only wish you may always think so,
captain. And now, papa, I hope you will pardon
this night's sally to both me and poor Cloris;
we have been already sufficiently punished . . .
(p. 340)

In trying to formulate the traditional happy ending,
Fielding has only succeeded in creating for the audience a
deep sense of outrage at the betrayal of Hilaret's
nobility of spirit. Like a female Don Quixote surrounded
by ignoble, criminal, silly, and weak men, she alone has
sought to bring justice and to act out her own designs.
The woman speaking the Epilogue asks, "ladies, did not you
too sympathise?" a question perhaps about Hilaret's
romantic problems but perhaps also about Hilaret's defeat.

Ignoring the fact that Hilaret was assaulted not only
by a young man, but also an old one of high rank, the
narrator proposes several preposterous scenarios that
would keep English women safe from rape. He suggests
creating a male-free Britain by sending vigorous youth to
Italy where they could rape inconsequential foreigners in
peace, not leaving "one maidenhead for the Pope." And
should "some new pope Joan the chair possess, / They'd
play the devil with her---holiness." Is Fielding
projecting a woman in control of a hierarchy? What,
Fielding may be asking, would result if a woman were head of the patriarchy? He suggests that she, too, would be raped by men who ravish to maintain their unjust supremacy. The woman narrator concludes with the heavily ironic advice that "[t]hough ravished," the "Christian" woman just accepts the usurpation of her body and "contents herself with life." The last lines perhaps contain Fielding's strongest irony, for they may be taken two ways:

   Safe to your husbands' arms may you escape,
   And never know that dreadful thing, a Rape!

The play's final words concern the possibility of rape by a husband, not just a stranger. The narrator can only hope that the woman is safe from her husband, but she is by no means sure. Another interpretation of the couplet is possible: because Hilaret's rapist is her brother, will proximity make another rape of Hilaret inevitable? That interpretation is doubtful, for women, as the spoils, have been divided by the men.

Fielding's fourth play at the Little Theatre, *The Letter-Writers: A New Way to Keep a Wife at Home*, continues his theme of control of women, as two old husbands employ threatening letters to scare their young wives into staying at home. Far slighter than *Rape upon Rape*, *The Letter-Writers: or, A New Way to Keep a Wife at Home*, constitutes a one-joke play like a Restoration
comedy: Mrs. Softly, protected by guards, refuses to be imprisoned at home, while Mrs. Wisdom, seemingly is frightened into obedience although she actually now uses her home as her trysting place. Her lover, also the lover of Mrs. Softly, has indeed found a way to keep wives at home. The three-act intrigue comedy served as an afterpiece for *Tragedies of Tragedies*, but *The Letter-Writers* was acted only four times, never achieving the popularity of the mainpiece.  

The plot begins after the old rich merchants send anonymous letters that threaten to kill their wives if they appear in public, in order to regain mastery by keeping the women at home. The title, however, does not seem to concern the male letter writers, so much as it does their imprisoned wives who secretly toss out their own letters of assignation to their mutual lover, Captain Rakel. Mrs. Softly and Mrs. Wisdom respond variously to their husbands' attempts to terrify them. Like Hilaret in *Rape upon Rape*, however, they do not question whether their husbands have the moral right to imprison them, and their concern involves undercutting their husbands' power. Unlike Hilaret in *Rape upon Rape* who escaped at night and on foot, claiming the right to control her own actions, these women pose no real threat to society. They only go abroad in a carriage guarded by servants, but their
husbands want to draw the spousal bonds even tighter by imprisoning the women to prevent their going and coming.

The play opens in medias res, with Rakel and his servant Risque reading a letter from Mrs. Softly. The two receive assistance from Commons, a relative of the elderly merchants, who wants a fling of "wine and women" before he "sneak[s] down into the country, and go[es] into orders" (p. 411). Their discussion revolves around the idea of women as dangerous game whose capture after a "pursuit" may "end in a blanketeting" (p. 410).

Fielding begins his play with the power structure of the male society and includes in the first act, a soldier, a priest, and a husband, representatives of the strongest bastions of male power, who speak of women as portable property. But the soldier is just an ensign, the priest not qualified, and the husband a cuckolded merchant; Fielding makes ludicrous their pretensions to supremacy. Tradition is on their side, however, and Mr. Wisdom recites an old saw about male power:

While in your husband's arms you keep your treasure,
You're free from fear of hurt. (p. 438)

The couplet shows the flawed logic supporting males in power. Two readings are possible: the obvious one is a little lesson in obedience and a threat that a willful wife who shares her "treasure" with a man other than her husband is not free from hurt or from fear of hurt.
inflicted by her lover or her husband. A second reading involves heavy irony: part of the power structure, husbands, after all, are the cause of wives' fear and hurt.

Fielding seems to focus on the disparity between the male supremacy and female lack of autonomy. An example of male impotence, Mr. Softly says that he would prefer "a wife without legs, before the finest-legged woman in the universe," because only then could he control her body. This sort of verbal maiming of the female person goes along with epithets for woman, like "crocodile" (p. 422); when women subvert male designs during the course of the drama, they achieve a kind of dominance, but it extends only to matters within the house. As the servant likewise restricted, Betty quite correctly notes the small area within which women may control their actions, because the only things that women can change are their clothes and their lovers. The significance of giving away clothes, symbols for the female body, and of freeing the clothing is not lost on Betty who sees it as a kind of victory over men: "I am heartily glad to see your ladyship hath so much courage; I always liked those families the best where the ladies governed the most. Where ladies govern there are secrets, and where there are secrets there are vails.---I lived with a lady once who used to give her clothes away
every month, and her husband durst not oppose it" (p. 442).

Against the male power structure, Fielding deals with female oppression, shared by the disenfranchised, upper-class wives and their female servants. The two groups are aware of the other's restrictions, but the lady's maid, free to change jobs at will, ironically possesses more freedom than her mistress. The idea of women acting as a subversive group enters the play several times. Even the men recognize female cohesiveness. Mr. Softly refers to the group first for its own laws which punish a man going beyond what female wisdom allows: "I cannot shut [Mrs. Softly's] companions out: I should have a regiment of women on my back for ill-using my wife . . . . If I could prevail by stratagem; well: but I am too certain of the enemy's strength to attempt subduing her by force" (p. 416). We must note that he would use force against his wife but for the female subculture, which, like her, is "the enemy." The subculture also supplies role models and female lore, apparently passed down from woman to woman. If the wife wants to resist male coercion, there is a precedent already set. Mrs. Wisdom, originally frightened by her husband, finally says she is "resolved to pluck up a spirit . . . and show my husband that I am like other women."
In The Letter-Writers, Fielding enlarges his group of disenfranchised members of society to include class as well as gender. The servant Risque knows he is the intellectual superior of his master; he pimps for him, works out the logistics of his amours, saves him from jail. Risque takes for granted the bounds within which he must stay; yet he is able also to see the disparity between himself and his master and between right and wrong. When Rakel says, "How bless'd is a soldier while licensed to range, / How pleasant this whore for that to exchange," Risque calls him "young Satan" (p. 424). The servant has run away from one master and has attached himself to Rakel, whom he calls a "poor" and "beggarly":

> If half this dexterity had been employed in the service of a great man, I had been a captain or Middlesex justice long ago—But I must tug along the empty portmanteau of this shabby no-pay ensign. Pox on't, what can a man expect who is but the rag-carrier of a rag-carrier? (p.414)

Fielding's point is clear, however; if freedom involves a pecking order, the one at the bottom is the upperclass woman, not the male servant who may after all work his way upwards if he has the right master. As a male, he may also change masters, but wives cannot.

At the very end of the play, Rakel states that the "laws of England are too generous to permit" imprisonment of women in their homes; yet that is precisely where they were indeed imprisoned. He dwells on the word "generous"
for women possessed no right to freedom except as a gift from their husbands. The drama ends ironically with one of Fielding’s double-edged couplets:

> Those wives for pleasures very seldom roam, Whose husbands bring substantial pleasures home.

Perhaps Fielding means that in a sexually fulfilling marriage, a woman "very seldom" finds the need to seek pleasure with another man, or does Fielding imply that a substantially wealthy husband has a better chance of keeping his wife faithful? We note that the first line is qualified and that wives may sometime, if only "very seldom" stray, a word that associates a woman with an animal. A dog may be conditioned to overcome its natural urges, but, Fielding suggests, women are not dogs, and they retain the same urges for freedom their husbands possess.

Following *The Letter-Writers*, a notice in the *Daily Post* on 21 May 1731 indicates the vicissitudes of Fielding’s fifth play at the Little Theatre. First played as a two-act play, *The Welsh Opera; or the Grey Mare the Better Horse*, was revised as *The Genuine Grub-Street Opera*, and then revised a second time as the three-act *The Grub-Street Opera*. Politically explosive with "Welsh" a reference to the Germanic origins of the royal family, the piece caused such controversy that, in spite of Fielding’s work on the revision, such as doubling the
number of songs, *The Grub-Street Opera* was not performed. Governmental forces intervened and Fielding's plan to use it as afterpiece for *The Fall of Mortimer* failed (*Henry Fielding: A Life* 113-114). Roberts, in his introduction to his edition, points out that only *The Genuine Grub-Street Opera* was printed in 1731; but Morrissey in "Fielding's First Political Satire" argues that the only printed edition was *The Grub-Street Opera* brought out in 1755 (325-48).

Critics, like Battestin and Cleary, emphasize the political nature of the play. Of the critics such as Battestin and Cleary, only Golden in *Fielding's Moral Psychology* judges the work to be social commentary, but he finds only that Fielding touches on inequities of the class structure (104-105). He quotes Susan the cook as saying, "Fie upon't, William, what have we to do with master's losses? He is rich, and can afford it.--Don't let us quarrel among ourselves--let us stand by one another--for, let me tell you, if matters were to be too nicely examined into, I'm afraid it would go hard with us all.--Wise servants always stick close to one another, like plums in a pudding that's overwetted" (p.35). Golden in the same work recognizes Fielding's meaning in his social divisions, but he states that, "As a class the lower orders are no more attractive in Fielding's incidental writings than their superiors, since they have
even cruder private passions to satisfy at the expense of their social duty" (104).

Although I do not argue that the work is not political, I find that Fielding established more than one level on which the play operates. A view of the plot allows us to understand the depth that Fielding arranges. The master of a Welsh family, Sir Owen Apshinken (George II), his wife Lady Apshinken (Queen Caroline), their Foppish son Owen (Prince Frederick), and madame's spiritual advisor, Puzzletext, squabble among themselves on their estate where they are served by their butler Robin, cook Susan, coachman William, and the servant maid Sweetissa, among others. The main action involves the below-stairs staff as a body protecting themselves against their masters; at the same time, they are stealing choice items from the estate. Prince Owen acts as a catalyst for all the opposing forces on the estate and chases all the maids, while his parents object to any and all of his choices for a wife. Most critics point to Walpole as Robin, his political enemy Pulteney as William, his mistress Maria Skerrett as Sweetissa. 8

Through the means of his upstairs-downstairs characterizations, Fielding is able to broach more than political commentary; he establishes an upper and lower plot based on divisions of gender and of class. He actually sets up four hierarchies, with female hierarchies
upstairs and downstairs, alongside the male hierarchies above and below. I want to look at the male hierarchies because through their ineptness, Fielding is able to highlight the dominance of the female hierarchies; we must remember that at play's end, women remain undisturbed and in control.

"Scriblerus Secundus" from the first establishes his aim to be "deep, very deep" in order to "[teach] each man to regulate his life, / To govern well his servants and his wife," (p. 4), but the Introduction sets a positive which the play proceeds to overturn. Men do not know how to "govern," servants have the upper hand, the parson does not know the "right way," and women do not "groan for sake of their religion" (p. 5). Fielding then questions who rules and with what right, as he shows rule as it would be in the hands of women and servants. According to the subtitle of the first edition, "the Grey Mare [is] the Better Horse."

Dividing the male hierarchy by class, Fielding shows in the masters upstairs that Sir Apshinken and son possess the title of ruler by courtesy only. Not overtly evil, the two, both the current lord and his heir, are just inept and only their gender and class have secured them their titles. The play opens with the heads of political and religious hierarchies, Apshinken and his preacher Puzzletext, hiding in the study "before madam gets up,"
while they talk about Lady Apshinken's dominance in the household and her "petticoat-government." Sir Owen's wants are simple: "if I could but enjoy my pipe undisturbed, how happy should I be! for I never yet could taste any pleasure but in tobacco" (p. 8). There is the clear implication (given the lechery of George II) that smoking is only a euphemism for sexual profligacy. And Puzzletext agrees that "Tobacco is a very good thing, indeed, and there is no harm in taking it abundantly" (p. 8).

Putting a good face on all the men at the top, especially of the young master who chases housemaids and therefore acknowledges that sexual potency is the qualification for rule and dominance, Puzzletext says:

Think, mighty sir, ere you are undone,
Think who you are, Apshinken's only son;
At Oxford you have been, at London eke also;
You're almost half a man, and more than half a beau;
Oh do not then disgrace the great actions of your life!
Nor let Apshinken's son be buried in his wife. (p. 11)

Dwelling on the smallness of Owen's parts, Puzzletext has picked up on why the maids laugh at their young master. As he is not capable of rape for want of parts, his "great actions" could hardly include being "buried" in any woman. But Fielding renders master Owen as pathetic because he knows his shortcomings: "How curst the puny lover! / How exquisite the pain, / When love is fumbled over, / To view
the fair's disdain" (p. 10). This fop's inadequacy forms the plot of the play: unable to have Sweetissa, the butler Robin's intended, Master Owen, hoping that "Sweetissa's maidenhead may be yet my own," sends anonymous letters to lovers, which accuse each of infidelity. Master Owen obviously knows his wrong-doing, just as his father recognizes faintly his unfitness to rule; Fielding implies that desperate times for men in power call for these desperate measures.

The shadow hierarchy of Robin below stairs displays more vigor and demonstrates his natural leadership in his prowess at sex and theft; Sweetissa knows that "there is more in Robin's little finger than in a beau's whole body" (p. 14). Robin, however, indicates the flawed ecclesiastical hierarchy when he criticizes the parson: "Did he forgive Gammer Sowgrunt for having wronged him of a tythe-pig? Did he forgive Susan Foulmouth, for telling him he loved the cellar better than his pulpit? ... [H]e forgives nobody" (p. 21). Unlike Sir Owen, Robin has the loyalty of his subjects for "though his master he cheats, / His mistress shares what he gains."

That statement, connecting Robin to the true dominant party upstairs, tacitly acknowledges the female hierarchy set up by the mistress. The downstairs servants recognize Lady Apshinken's right to rule, and know her to be the one with power. While her counterpart Susan, cook and
dominant female below stairs, faults her mistress for detecting food theft, Lady Apshinken shows her qualities of perception and intelligence. Educating herself to read and study, she is able to argue theology with the parson, who ingratiates himself first with the lord of the manor and then with his lady, calling her "The great Welsh lamp of Divinity" (p. 8). But for all the fun poked at her by the master and the toadyng parson, Lady Apshinken alone has the care of the estate and the household, as well as their future. She acknowledges her outrage at the injustice of gender bias: "the boy takes after his father, not me--his head is full of nothing but love; for whatever Nature hath done for him in another way, she hath left his head unfurnished" (p. 9). She knows that the male gene for ineptitude will be passed on.

Fielding makes Lady Apshinken far from perfect, however, and she does get pretentious: "Any thing for the encouragement of religion. I am a great admirer of the Latin language. I believe, doctor, I now understand Latin as well as English" (p. 51). She knows human psychology, though, and places in perspective the complaints of those she rules. Susan and Lady Apshinken argue over household economy, the mistress being rather miserly. Susan is eager to keep her own rule in the kitchen and really not concerned with "old English hospitality," as she would appear. In a fine scene Susan sings what became a popular
English song, "The Roast Beef of England" (p. 50), and refers to a golden time when huge chunks of beef adorned tables three times a day with the implication that the old-time master, unlike her stingy mistress, was generous with servants in matters of food and drink. Lady Apshinken, knowing that Susan is stealing her blind, responds mildly that servants resent "the least thrift of a master or mistress" (p. 51).

Her human concerns override her failings, however. Obviously she does not hide in the castle as her husband does; rather, she moves among the tenants and tells Puzzletext what should be his duty: "But oh, doctor.--it gives me pain very great pain . . . One of the tenants, the other day, abused his wife in the most terrible manner. Shall I never make them use their wives tolerably?" (p. 51). She wants to see the whole parish as "good" as herself (p. 52). We cannot defend her hypocrisy, and we must acknowledge that she drinks to excess, keeping the bottles locked under her bed. On the other hand, she defends Robin for beating the hypocritical Puzzletext and tries to defend Margery against a charge of theft.

Compared to the impotent males who misuse their power, she has determined what needs to be done and has done it. Surrounded by her awful family, she tries to rise above her personal sorrow through study and good
works. As the only adult willing to take responsibility, Lady Apshinken resists being accused of miserliness and the threat of her servants to leave: "And have I been raking, and rending, and scraping, and scratching, and sweating, to be plundered by my servants?" (p. 64). In a chorus, all her servants reveal that she has been right all along: their "Rogueries are all confest" (p. 64). What the Lady admires is their honesty, and when Master Owen weds their tenant's daughter, Molly Apshones, she welcomes the girl's sturdy blood and says "let me see you embrace one another, and then I'll embrace you both" (p. 66). To play's end, she remains responsible for the estate's safety, for she warns about the wedding "not to be extravagant in it" (p. 67).

Fielding's satire shows a woman is the fittest ruler, and the other women are truth-sayers. For instance, Sweetissa knows that a woman is "weak [in] her head / Who takes to her bed" (p. 58), instead of fighting for her rights, while Susan says that servants (and women) must "always stick close to one another, like plums in a pudding that's overwetted." The irony of Master Owen's song that "Women in vain love's powerful torrent / With unequal strength oppose" (p. 33) seems obvious because women in the play are swayed neither by Master Owen's title nor by love. As for strength, the only male with strength is the butler Robin, for women's strength
outweighs the wimpish Master and son. Lady Apshinken knows this and says, the men's heads are full of "love," but not hers.

In Fielding's play, Lady Apshinken fills a vacuum in the absence of effective upperclass males and saves an estate, otherwise lost, and, like Queen Dollabella, she is engaged in the business of life. As Fielding does in Tragedy of Tragedies, his message involves female power and in The Grub-Street Opera, he formulates the new hierarchies of servants and women, to supersede the old ones. One song signifies the view that the traditional hierarchy has discriminated against women because the men "are [not] fit for 'em."

The worn-out rake at pleasure rails,
And cries, 'tis all idle and fleeting;
At court, the man whose interest fails,
Cries, all is corruption and cheating:
But would you know
Whence both these flow?
Though so much they pretend to abhor them
That rails at court,
This at love's sport,
Because they are neither fit for 'em, fit for 'em,
Because they are neither fit for 'em. (p. 11-12)

Fielding's next work also deals with the idea of unfit hierarchies. The sixth play, Pasquin, was advertised on 24 February as the first performance of "the Great Mogul and his Company of English Comedians." Rum, Marquee de Nantz, and the Lord Sugarcane; The King and the Miller of Mansfield; and The Historical Register of 1736.
The title gives an indication of the work's complexity: *Pasquin: A Dramatic Satire on the Times: Being a Rehearsal of Two Plays, Viz. A Comedy Called the Election; and a Tragedy, called The Life and Death of Common-Sense.* The play ran for thirty performances before publication, which surely shows the popularity of the work.9 With "pasquin" in common parlance either a satiric piece or the author of such a piece, Fielding advertised in the 24 February 1736 *London Daily Post* that "Mr. Pasquin, intending to lay about him with great impartiality, hopes the town will all attend."

Set in a playhouse, the drama features three sets of actors, including the introductory characters, authors Trapwit and Fustian, accompanied by the critic Sneerwell, whose presence on stage introducing the comedy and tragedy serves to frame the whole.10 Briefly stated the plot involves Trapwit's comedy about political corruption, and Fustian's tragedy in blank-verse about the murder of Common-Sense by Law, Physick, and the priest Firebrand, disciples of Queen Ignorance.11 The standard interpretation of the play, as critics such as Dudden, Battestin, and Cleary see it, involves in the comedy a series of episodes about low politicians and political campaign irregularities. With the spokesman/author calling the piece "an exact representation of nature," we witness two candidates for Parliament, backed by the local
gentry, and two London candidates, both Court favorites, trying to influence the Mayor and Aldermen of a country town. At the same time that Mrs. Mayor and her daughter eagerly seek to please the visiting noble, her husband must make his choice. The candidates standing for Parliament election, Lord Place and Colonel Promise, entice the officials with bribes and promises of bribes. Author Trapwit interrupts the action and tells the actors on stage:

You, Mr. that Act my Lord, Bribe a little more openly if you please, or the audience will lose that Joke . . . .

Get all up, and come forward to the Front of the Stage. Now, you Gentlemen that Act the Mayor and Aldermen, range yourselves in a Line; and you, my Lord and the Colonel, come to one End and bribe away with Right and Left. (p. 7)

Hume finds the work to consist mainly of contemporary allusions, such as "King's Coffee House," the "Act against Witches," Faribelli (Farinelli the castrato), and Cibber's odes. He judges the work to be sofly political in its message that "England is politically corrupt and culturally degenerate" (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 212-213). A variety of views obtains about the work, from the first production of the play. A contemporary analysis of Pasquin in the Daily Gazetteer issue of 7 May 1737, judged the work to treat lightly a serious problem, stating that Fielding like Gay in the Beggar's Opera "exposed with Wit, what ought to be
punished with Rigour [and which made depraved characters] into Heroes and Heroines." Fielding was sensitive to this criticism of the play as corruptive and in the 21 May issue of Common Sense responded to the above critic:

[y]ou seem to think, Sir, that to ridicule Vice, is to serve its Cause. And you mention the late ingenious Mr. Gay, who, you say, in his Beggars' Opera hath made Heroes and Heroines of Highwaymen and Whores. Are then Impudence, Boldness, Robbery, and picking Pockets the Characteristicks of a Hero? Indeed, Sir, we do not always approve what we laugh at. So far from it, Mr. Hobbes will tell you that Laughter is a Sign of contempt. And by raising such a Laugh as this against Vice, Horace assures us we give a sorer Wound, than it receives from all the Abhorrence which can be produced by the gravest and bitterest Satire. You will not hardly, I believe, persuade us, how much soever you may desire it, that it is the Mark of a great Character to be laughed at by a whole Kingdom. (qtd by Rawson Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal Under Stress 204)

Dudden in Henry Fielding: His Life, Works, and Times points to the bribery episodes and finds Fielding's phrase "squeeze by the hand" to be not only a synonym for bribery, but also a reference to Walpole. Dudden quotes an article in The Champion of 13 December 1739, which he takes to be Fielding's indirect references to Walpole, prototype for the corrupt politicians in the play:

I observed a huge over-grown fellow, with a large rabble at his heels . . . He had a smile, or rather a sneer, in his countenance, and shook most people by the hand as he passed . . . You will not wonder at my curiosity in asking who or what this man was. I was answered that he was a great magician, and with a gentle squeeze by the hand could bring any person whatever to think, and speak, and do what he himself desired, and
that it was very difficult to avoid his touch; for if you came but in his reach, he infallibly had you by the fist; that there was only one way to be secure against him, and that was by keeping your hand shut, for then his touch had no power. But indeed, this method of security I did not perceive anyone to put in practice. (Henry Fielding: His Life, Work and Times 1: 172).

Although at this late date the suddenness of his decision cannot be explained, after eleven performances Fielding introduced a new element into the comedy "The Election" by adding a new layer to its complexity. He hired Charlotte Charke for the role of Lord Place, the male lead. We do not know but that Fielding may have written the piece originally for Charke, and simply recast his play when she became available. He removed the actor who had opened in the role at the Little Theatre. With the transvestite Charke as a character, empowered fictionally not only as a male, but a ranking male, Fielding made his boldest social statements so far. The play achieves a nullification of the social margins by bringing a woman centerstage and having her speak outside her traditional place. This action like Eliza Haywood’s dramatic demarginalization of her women characters, brings into question the entire male hierarchy.

Instead of making her flawed like the dipsomaniac Lady Apshinken and Queen Dollabella, Fielding creates Charke as an Amazon, as he metaphorically removes both her breasts and identifies her as a man. At the center of
male power in the play, Charke makes her observations as Lord Place who explains to Mrs. Mayor and her daughter not only social definitions of women but also their place in the masculine social order. In order to show the absurdity of the masculine construction of the world, Fielding has the view put forth by an actress universally known to be a transvestite. He therefore utilizes a woman who had seized for her own life the masculine prerogative, and he casts her in a play where she plays the role of a woman playing the role of a man. Lord Place then becomes a mirror image of the woman who plays him. Fielding's technique provides a new way to interpret the conversation between Lord Place and Mrs. Mayor; and Trapwit's comments to open the scene is worded interestingly for he says to Mr. Fustian, the other observer, that "now, sir, you shall see some scenes of politeness and fine conversation amongst the ladies." But the first speaker is Lord Place saying, "Pray, Mrs. Mayoress, what do you think this Lace cost a Yard?" (p. 13). Standing slightly apart from the actors, Trapwit and Fustian comment on whether Mrs. Mayoress, who has no first name and is known only by her husband's job, is realistically drawn. With the issue of Lord Place's gender, in addition to the quibbling of the presenters about the nature of reality, Fielding sets up commentary on all sides, especially about the "man-woman"
at the theatre and includes pokes at the Little Theatre's low entertainments.

Mrs. Mayoress. [W]e have no Entertainment, but a Set of hideous, strolling Players; nor have I seen any one human Creature, till your lordship came to Town. Heaven send us a controverted Election, then I shall go to that dear delightful Place once more.

Miss Mayoress. Yes, mamma, and then we shall see Faribelly, the strange Man-Woman that they say is with child; and the fine pictures of Merlin's Cave at the Play-Houses; and the Rope-Dancing and the Tumbling.

Lord Place. I cannot but with Pleasure observe, Madam, the polite Taste Miss shows in her Choice of Entertainments; I dare swear she will be much admired in the Beau Monde, and I don't question but will be soon taken into Keeping by some Man of Quality.

Miss Mayoress. Keeping, my Lord!

Lord Place. Ay, that Surprize looks well enough in one so young, that does not know the World; but, Miss, every one now keeps, and is kept; there are no such Things as Marriages now-a-days, unless meerly Smithfield contracts, and that for the Support of Families; but then the Husband and Wife both take into Keeping within a Fortnight. (p. 14)

Fielding's manipulation of gender could not have been lost on the audience for Charke's masculine identity was well known; therefore, the implications of Charke's assuming the role expanded the boundaries of sheer political satire. He forces the reader/audience to refocus on social relations, gender, and power, while he confronts the viewer's perception of Augustan order and harmony because a woman/man has destroyed the boundaries of gender, power, government, and society. Charke, as Lord Place in Pasquin, ceases to be woman the outsider and
redeems her lost power as a woman by changing gender. As Trapwit says, "[D]on’t trouble me with Character; it’s a good thing; and if it’s a good thing, what signifies who says it?" (p. 15)

To achieve this type of female redemption in the plays, Fielding must have known the history of women and was willing to resurrect the Amazon myth. In crossing over the gender line, Fielding’s woman-as-man character allows him to cross over historical lines as well. As I stated above, she is not monstrous, nor is she mad, nor possessed. We may observe the same about other women in the play. For instance, Mrs. Mayoress may be silly, but she sees beneath the patina of male pretense and recognizes the very real advantage men offer. Her husband, the Mayor says he is not for a "standing army." Fielding arranges a naughty passage of double entendres to demonstrate that her chief interest is the masculinity that lies under the lord’s lace coat, for she knows that,

a standing army is a good thing: you pretend to be afraid of your liberties and your properties—you are afraid of your wives and daughters . . . I’ll have you know, the women’s wants shall be considered. I wish we women were to choose . . . . (p. 15)

Mrs. Mayoress also knows that "I’ll teach mankind, while policy they boast, / They bear the name of power, we rule the roast." Later she beats up the Mayor who refuses to vote for her favorite, Lord Place, and she chases him
with a stick, "What has a man's heart to do with his lips? . . . I'll excise you, you villain!" (p. 20).

Fielding's social views in *Pasquin* seem best represented through many types of women, in addition to the "strange man-woman," Lord Place; unlike the strong women, Fielding's favorite poor-male character in the comedy part of the play is the playwright, and other lower class males, such as the country aldermen, do not rise much above stereotype. As if Fielding were appropriating for women the money economy which by tradition was exclusively male, the comedy in *Pasquin* features three working women and their characters address quite real problems facing women; they refuse to act the part of the female myth and yet not being on the traditional hierarchy, they have no real role to fill. Perhaps for that reason, they are competitive with other women, both personally and professionally. We note that they do not compete with men; for instance, the Dancer only regards Miss Minute as her adversary and Miss Stitch is only really catty about the woman editor, whom she ridicules as being "old." That situation may well explain why his women center their conversations around women holding down traditionally male jobs, such as actor, writer, and monarch.\(^{12}\) At the opening, one of the cast waiting for the playwrights is a woman who speaks of her work in professional terms and notes the shortage of women's parts
in the theatre, as well as the influence of the audience's favoritism:

I have a Part in both too; I wish any one else had them, for they are not seven Lengths put together. I think it is very hard a Woman of my Standing should have a short Part put upon her. I suppose Mrs. Merit will have all our principal Parts now, but I am resolved I'll Advertise against her. (p. 3)

Another working woman, Miss Stitch, the tailor's daughter, is apparently an acting partner in the firm if we may judge by Mrs. Mayoress's comments to her. Although, she is a "flirt" and belongs to the "other party," Mrs. Mayoress appears to be afraid of offending her (p. 20-21). Miss Stitch talks like a businessman, has masculine interests, and furthermore, seems to have no household responsibilities. She is free to choose her own amusements and seems oblivious to men. Whatever her income, Miss Stitch is not looking to get married and will not engage in feminine conversation with Miss Mayoress. Eschewing trivialities, she says "I have not been out these three days; and I have been employed all that time in reading one of the Craftsmen" (p. 21). She wants to talk about world politics which she boils down to the "peace" of the Queen of Spain and completes feminizing the world by saying "can I sell my Country for a Fan?" (p. 22). Miss Stitch also mentions another professional woman, the "Old Woman" writer of the Daily Gazetteer, but scorns her for her "pretty" papers, as opposed to the
informational ones written by and for male readers. The economics of the print medium, nonetheless, comes down to the economics of the Old Woman's paper which the female group sees her handling as intelligently as a male publisher. Miss Mayoress says, "I don't suppose the Old Woman, as you call her, sends [her papers] about at her own Expence" (p. 21).

Although Mrs. Mayoress is not a working woman in the sense of the play, her control allows the election of a representative, and the orderly disposition of her daughter in marriage. While the Mayor and the aldermen engage in silly and fruitless consideration of matters beyond their intelligence, Mrs. Mayoress determines the future. Whether we like her or not, the mayor's wife possesses the connivance of a field marshall, setting in train a series of actions which would achieve her object of moving to London. With the marriage of Miss Mayoress to the Colonel, Fielding supplies the irony of female rule for the Colonel only proposes when he is sure that Mrs. Mayoress will arrange for Lord Place to win the election and therefore to pay his bribe to the Mayor. Mrs. Mayoress becomes the arbiter of society for she sets up her own social system, saying to the Mayor, "I have got a place for you," meaning both in the sense of an appointment by Lord Place, and in the hierarchical sense of raising the mayor's place in the social system (p. 16).
In her own scheme of social fitness of things, she establishes the lower order to be "country squires" and "Jacobites" who are "clownish, dirty, beggarly animals" (p. 15). She further hopes to raise her family even further, through the prudent establishment of her daughter into "Keeping" and says, "you will have it in your Power to serve your Family, and it would be a great Sin not to do all you can for your Family" (p. 25). Mrs. Mayoress may not be very nice, but, given her capacity to rule, she is twice the man her husband is.

Fielding opens the play with a professional woman in the theatre and uses the same type of working woman as a pivot between the first and last, the comedy and the tragedy. Like the Actress at play's opening, the last performer is simply called the Dancer, and she makes no pretense at middle-class niceties. Not belonging to a social sphere where male control dictates female behavior, this woman is on her own. To survive, she is forthright, seeking to further and protect her career: "Look'e, Mr. Prompter, I expect to Dance first Goddess; I will not Dance under Miss Minuet" (p. 31). Although her presence is a technical opening to the theme of the tragedy, the Dancer also continues the idea of the woman who is part of the money economy and who knows that she may, with cleverness, work her way upward in the economic system. She "[thinks] the Town ought to be the Judges of a
Dancer's Merit; I am sure they are on my Side; and if I am not used better, I'll go to France; for now we have got all their Dancers away, perhaps they may be glad of some of ours" (p. 32). In contrast to Trapwit's and Fustian's philosophical arguments about the nature of the stage and reality, the Dancer offers a sturdy view of theatrical purpose and knows what pays her salary: "Hang his Play, and all Plays; the Dancers are the only People that support the House; if it were not for us, they might Act their Shakespeare to empty Benches" (p. 32).

In the second part of Pasquin, Fielding's social vision is rather submerged in the political satire. Fielding's employment of women in the tragedy, as Dancer states, is limited to goddess types, the plot involving the murder of Queen Common-Sense by Queen Ignorance. The theme of feminized world appears again, however, in the play's strange Epilogue, which is chiefly addressed to women. The Ghost narrator opens the piece scorning the "rule" governing epilogues which is meant to teach little lessons to the women in the audience: "the ladies that the tragic bards, / Who prate of virtue and her vast rewards, / Are all in jest, and only fools should heed 'em; / For all wise women flock to Mother Needham." With men then responsible for the fiction surrounding women, she becomes a free agent, "wise" in her decision to follow her own dictates. In the final lines, Fielding interjects a

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"serious word" about the situation of the London theatre and speaks metaphorically of the Muse, Music, and Poetry as women of the streets, "beggars" to "starve" while "castrati" and "the tumbling-scum of every nation" thrive. Fielding connects these images with that of Mother Needham, the bawd, who preyed on the bodies of other women. This focus on the starving artist/creator makes broader Fielding's social vision and points to the underlying purpose of Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds, which succeeded Pasquin.

The comedy ends with a quatrain whose pronouns cross the gender boundaries and confuse the focus. The "she" in the second line refers to "nature," mentioned in the first line, but the reference to "her" in line four is unclear. If in the context of the verse, nature is represented by the feminine pronouns, the meaning of the last line makes no sense. Why would "you," that is to say England in the person of the theatregoer, owe "jewels" to nature ("her")? If "cock" who prefers "barley-corn" also refers to "you," the theatregoer, the meaning is obscured through manipulation of pronouns, except for a general interpretation of feminine bounty and masculine ("cock") rejection.

Content with nature's bounty, do not crave
The little which to other lands she gave;
Nor like the cock a barley-corn prefer
To all the jewels which you owe to her.
Fielding also produced during the spring of 1736, *Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds* used as afterpiece first for *Pasquin*, then for Lillo's *Fatal Curiosity*. Although Sheridan Baker, calling the year 1736 to be Fielding's "highly political" phase, finds *Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds* an "anti-Walpole" work, critics generally consider the play to be not only slight but not especially political.\(^{16}\) Golden in *Fielding's Moral Psychology* does not discuss the work at all and Hume's *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737*, mentions it briefly as a satire on John Rich (213-214). Sheridan discusses the work's topical politics in his article, "Political Allusion in Fielding's *Author's Farce, Mock Doctor*, and *Tumble-Down Dick*." While Fielding employed gender as symbol of social ills in *The Author's Farce, Rape upon Rape, The Letter-Writers*, and *Pasquin*, he employs class as symbol for his social views in *Tumble-Down Dick*. Although critics such as Cleary have noticed and commented on the rhetoric spoken by the play's poorest of the poor, they have not commented further on the discrepancy.\(^{17}\) When we consider the play as social indictment, however, we find in Fielding's upending of the social hierarchy why the waterman speaks in heroic couplets. For these reasons, we need to study the play at some length, notwithstanding the brevity of its one act.
Fielding's dedication of *Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds* to Rich may be significant, for the title page describes the work in ludicrous terms, as if it were one of Rich's "entertainments" at his theatre: "A Dramatic Entertainment of Walking, in serious and foolish Characters: interlarded with burlesque, grotesque, comic Interludes, called Harlequin a Pick-Pocket . . . Being ('tis hoped) the last Entertainment that will ever be exhibited on any Stage. Invented by the ingenious Monsieur Sans Esprit. The Music composed by the harmonious Signior Warblerini. And the Scenes painted by the prodigious Mynheer Van Bottom-Flat." The dedication "To Mr. John Lun, Vulgarly Called Esquire," is heavy with sarcasm for Rich's "adequate behaviour" in his elevated station, as well as his "judgement in plays," and his "generosity in diverting the whole kingdom." The dedication ends with Fielding's statement, that "I can, and perhaps may, say much more." A satire on the Drury Lane pantomime, Pritchard's *The Fall of Phaeton*, the plot features Dick, the bastard son of Clymene and (perhaps) Apollo, who goes in search of his father. Unlike the original, Fielding's satire makes a travesty of the legendary quest, for the setting is a round house, the sun is a watchman's lantern, and Mr. Machine governs the universe. In the legend, Phaeton, son of the sun god and the nymph Clymene, demanded that his father recognize him
by letting him drive the chariot of the sun across the sky just once. The boy could not control the chariot, wrecked it, and Zeus killed him. In Fielding's version, the nymph is a sluttish fishwife married to an old husband, and Phaeton is her love child, begotten when the sun god shined in her cell at Bridewell prison. His mother assures him he is not the "son of a whore" by a guardsman, but by a god: "Go, clear my Fame, for greater 'tis in Life / To be a great man's Whore, than poor Man's Wife. / If you are rich, your Vices Men adore, / But hate and scorn your Virtues, if you're poor [sig. B 2v].

Fielding hired Charlotte Charke as Clymene, one of the three female roles she played in Fielding's works. Her song reminding her son of the nature of social transformations revolving around wealth is certainly part of Fielding's definitions of virtue and sin:

```plaintext
Great Courtiers palaces contain,
Poor courtiers fear a jail
Great parsons riot in champagne;
 Poor parsons sot in ale;
Great whores in coaches gang,
 Smaller misses
 For their kisses
Are in Bridewell banged;
 Whilst in vogue
 Lives the great rogue,
 Small rogues are by dozens hanged. [sig. B 2v]
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Picked on by other boys who call him a bastard, he seeks his father the sun god and goes to the round house where he demands that the Sun acknowledge him by letting him carry the lantern one day. Saying "Think you it does
not on my soul encroach, / To walk on foot while father keeps a coach" (sig. B 2], Phaeton goes to sleep in his wheel barrow, tumbles out, and dies. His fallen lantern threatens to set the earth on fire, but Jupiter puts out the flames with bellows.

The plot also consists of other gods and goddesses who are the lowest class, the flotsam living on London streets by which Fielding achieves a scene like Hogarth's Gin Lane. Aurora is a down-at-the heel housewife who "breaks" as a "dirty morning" because she has no clean underwear (sig. C 2). Neptune is a Thames boatman and the Sun, surrounded by lounging watchmen, sits in a chair in the Round-house. Mr. Machine says about the characters: "I must dress my characters somewhat like what people have seen; and as I presume few of my audience have been nearer the sea than Gravesend, so I dressed him e'en like a waterman" [sig. C 3].

The plot also features gentlemen rakes and streetwalkers at King's Coffee House who engage in a dance of the Hours and the Seasons, followed by a hymn to gin. The Genius of Gin gives voice surrealistically to Fielding’s major social concern, that of human hopelessness and of transformed realities:

Take, Harlequin this magic wand,
All things shall yield to thy command:
Whether you would appear incog.,
In shape of money, cat or dog;

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Or else, what no magician can,
Into a wheelbarrow turn a man;
And please the gentry above stairs
By sweetly crying, Mellow pears
Thou shalt make jests without a head,
And judge of plays thou canst not read,
Whores and race-horses shall be thine,
Champagne shall be thy only wine;
While the best poet, and best player,
Shall both be forced to feed on air;
Gin’s genius all these things reveals,
Thou shalt perform, by slight of heels. [sig. B 4v]

Like Pasquin, Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds is a rehearsal play-within, with a narrator who mixes fact and fiction by entering and leaving the stage and by addressing questions to the characters in their fictional personas. In a similar manner, characters comment on each other, blurring the nature of reality. Fielding contains his thematic statement in one such comment and thereby provides his social meaning. The idea of transformation that Fielding achieves in the plays under discussion here, is likewise obvious in this one. Jupiter says about Harlequin that "He has turned all nature topsy-turvy" and the play indeed turns about social classes. Harlequin waving his magic wand is able to achieve "natural and easy transformation" of a justice into a wig block, and later Justice is transformed at the end into an actor. The stage directions in the piece give an idea. One of the stage directions also gives the idea of transformation gone awry and the impossibility of right actions.

Fielding achieves a surrealistic commentary on social
emblems, roles, and class actions in a quite bizarre scene:

Scene changes to a barber's shop. [Harlequin] sets Columbine down to shave her, blinds the clerk with the suds, and turns the justice into a periwig-block . . . . The clerk takes the wig off the block, puts it on, and admires himself. Harlequin directs him to powder it better, which while he is doing, he throws him into the trough, and shuts him down. Harlequin and Columbine go off. The justice re-enters, without his wig; his man calls to him out of the trough; he takes him out, and they go off together in pursuit of Harlequin. [sig. C lv]

In this scene, we must note that after all the actions of the magic wand, Harlequin is unable to change the status quo. He shaves the woman but cannot transform her into a man. The symbol of authority is brought down, but his servant can only think in traditional terms. The judge has lost his emblem, which we see as not only a phallic but a social denominator, but nonetheless his "man" is unable to resist long-standing obedience and follows the justice, without the symbol of power, hence without power. Five other sets of stage directions provide a gloss on the actions of the play and continue the dichotomies of class and power. Concerning the figure of Justice, three of these directions range from showing the Justice learning to read "from an old School-mistress" [sig. B 4v], to the Justice compromising his authority with favors of sex and money from Columbine:

Enter Harlequin in custody; Columbine, Poet, etc. The Poet makes his complaint to the
Justice; the Justice orders a Mittimus for Harlequin; Columbine courts the Justice to let Harlequin escape; he grows fond of her, but will not comply till she offers him money; he then acquits Harlequin, and commits the Poet. [sig. B 4v-C 1]

Like a counterpoint to the stage actions of the gods and goddesses, Machine and Sneerwell not only carry forward the plot but also argue about the relative merits of the actions. Shifting from emphasis on the Justice, the Tragedy King and Queen become Fielding's new metaphor for other social ills.

Enter Tragedy King and Queen, and knock at Covent Garden play-house door; the Manager comes out; the Tragedy king repeats a speech out of a play; the Manager and he quarrel about an emphasis. He knocks at Drury Lane door; the Manager enters with his man Pistol bearing a sack-load of players' articles. [sig. D 1]

The King and Queen figures and the representation of justice enter for the last of the stage directions in which they act in concert to quell the actors. The theatre managers tend to work against the actors and at the same time to align themselves with the government and legal forces. Through the actions of the managers, we see the entertainment possibilities of both the dog and the Justice

Enter Harlequin and Columbine. Both Managers run to them and caress them; and while they are bidding for them, enter a Dog in a Harlequin's dress; they bid for him. Enter the Justice and his Clerk; Harlequin and Columbine run off. Covent Garden Manager runs away with the Dog in his arms. The scene changes to a Cartload of Players. The Justice pulls out the Act of the 12th of the Queen and threatens to commit them

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as Vagrants; the Manager offers the Justice two hundred a year if he will commence a player; the Justice accepts it, is turned into a Harlequin; he and his Clerk mount the Cart, and all sing the following Chorus. [sig. D lv]

Fielding also makes a similar statement in the actions on stage; after Phaeton tumbles from the barrow and his lantern sets the world on fire, the earth goddess dances the "White Joke" as the earth goes up in flames. The dual interpretation, both as social commentary and theatrical commentary, makes the scene appear less absurd than bitter. While the goddess is dancing, three little girls appear carrying farthing candles. The Machine says that,

Those children are all stars; and you shall see presently, as the sun rises, the candles will go out, which represents the disappearing of the stars . . . What are all the suns, sir, that have ever shone upon the stage but candles? And if they represent the sun, I think they may very well represent the stars. [sig. C 2]

With candles for suns and children for human stars, Tumble-Down Dick; or, Phaeton in the Suds is Fielding's most obvious transformation play. Approaching the idea surrealistically, Fielding arranges a duality to make his social statement. With authors acting as commentators and actors as they move in and out of reality, the gods and goddesses on stage carry out actions while the play's stage directions for the pantomimists give another set of actions running parallel. The "topsy-turvey" [sig. C 4v] nature of the characters transforms gods and goddesses into Covent Garden street people, while the stage

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directions transform, for instance, the figure of Justice into a wig-block, then a piece of trough scum, and finally an actor. The figure of Phaeton is just dropped after he has served his purpose as entree to Fielding's social commentary. Although his death extinguishes the lantern of the sun and signals the end of the world, Clymene, whose "teeming time" [sig. C 4v] is over, sees the death only as a void to be filled by another woman's sexuality. With no Prologue, the piece just ends rather abruptly after the Justice is transformed into actor, and he joins Harlequin in the final song about the nature of transformations in "court, country, and town." A "Saint in the shop," becomes "a knave on the 'Change" [sig. D 2]. The merchant has been transformed by his success in business into merchant prince, losing in the process the virtues he practiced as a simple shopkeeper. Success, like power, corrupts.

The significance and meaning of the play's title perhaps appear in the third stanza about the candidate who changes from "knight-errant" burning with "zeal" to a "member" transformed "as long as he rises" [sig. D 2]. In light of Clymene's opening song which defines morals in sexual terms, this final song seems to make a similar connection through the double entendre of the rising member, and to make clear Fielding's purpose to deflate or "tumble down" engorged pretensions, whether social,
political, or sexual. As I note in discussions of the individual works, his equation of power and the penis appears elsewhere in his plays where usually the member represents the flaccid actuality and unworthiness of the ruling male. This interpretation which encompasses Fielding's meaning in the title "Tumble-Down Dick" seems to me to be obvious, although no critic has noted this aspect to date.

The Historical Register of 1736 opened probably on 21 March 1737, succeeding The Defeat of Apollo, The Fall of Bob, alias Gin, and The King and the Miller of Mansfield, and the notorious but anonymous A Rehearsal of Kings, other plays produced by Fielding and his partner Ralph at the Little Theatre. As Dudden suggests, the date for the play's opening is circumstantial, being based on the fictional date of the allegorical auction within the play (194). The genesis of the play's title was the yearly London publication The Historical Register which summarized the year's foreign and domestic news, along with announcements of births, deaths, marriages, preferments. Fielding says in act 1, "If I comprise the whole actions of the year in half an hour, will you blame me, or those who have done so little in that time?" (1.64-66).

The play itself seems to be called a play only as a courtesy for the whole is a series of acts each comprised
of one scene, rather in the manner of unrelated articles in a newspaper, whose only connection lies in their contiguous columnar placement by the editor. Narrators wander in and out of the fictional scenes, and actors, authors, and managers comment on the play. Fielding sets his dramatic purpose to be "[the exposing of] the reigning follies in such a manner, that men shall laugh themselves out of them, before they feel that they are touched" (1.90-91). Cleary in Henry Fielding: Political Writer sees the play as laughing at Colley Cibber, "beaus, fine ladies, auctions, Italian opera, soldiers, and clerics," and does not notice that all the hierarchies of power appear in the play (96). In addition to an obvious political concern, the play’s social center seems to me to override the political vision. Although Cleary calls the social focus of the play as "generally innocuous," the opposite may be true (98). One clear indication is the cast which includes not only Eliza Haywood, who appeared in Fielding’s strongest final plays, but Charlotte Charke who has the male role of Hen the auctioneer. Once again Fielding is employing definitions of the feminine as a major part of his social vision. Consisting of three acts, the drama, neither tragedy nor comedy, involves the same rehearsal technique as Pasquin and opens with indifferent actors waiting for a rehearsal to begin.
2 Player. Ay; pry’thee, what subject wouldst thou write on?
1 Player. Why no subject at all, sir; but I would have a humming deal of satire, and I would repeat in every page, that courtiers are cheats and don’t pay their debts, that lawyers are rogues, physicians blockheads, soldiers cowards, and ministers—. (1.20-25)

The fiction of the play involves Medley the writer explaining the play to the critic Sourwit and to his patron Lord Dapper. Among the "vicious and foolish customs of the age," Medley exposes the connection between "states political and theatrical" but his means of achieving his purpose involves two scenes not usually emphasized. Critics like Hume, Goldgar, Golden, and Cleary focus on the drama’s topical politics without considering the gender roles in the play.18 I base my argument, to the contrary, on Fielding’s dramatic use of gender, once again, as his symbol. He applies the concept of masculinity within the play to a series of men and women, beginning with men, rulers of Corsica, who are "pretty politicians truly." Like Lord Dapper’s, their masculinity consists of "exquisite and refined taste . . . for politer entertainments" (1.255-56). They even note their unfitness to rule and Medley acknowledges that gender as their only requisite for power.

You know, sir, it would not have been quite so proper to have brought English politicians (of the male kind I mean) on the stage, because our politics are not quite so famous: but in female politicians, to the honour of my country-women I say it, I believe no country can excel us; come,
Placing "my politicians and my patriots at opposite ends of my piece," Fielding arranges his gendered view by using acts one and three as a masculine frame for the gender studies of act two with scene one in a lady's drawing room and scene two in the auction house. As I indicated above, acts one and three depict masculine incompetence in politics and then in religion, the theatre, the army. As Medley observes: "a man of great parts, learning, and virtue, is fit for no employment whatever; that an estate renders a man unfit to be trusted; that being a blockhead is a qualification for business; that honesty is the only sort of folly for which a man ought to be utterly neglected and contemned" (3.20-24).

Religion is reduced to Apollo in his great chair and favorite of the "old gentleman" who appears to supervise the general conduct of the play. Medley calls him the "God only of Modern Wit." Fielding minimizes the world to a stage set where Pistol and Ground-Ivy represent humanity as well as the theatre and the military. Ground-Ivy's power consists of "licking" Shakespeare into fit shape for his theatre (3.92-94), and getting rid of "effeminate" characters (3.100-101).

Fielding introduces the "ladies" through the pretext of removing Lord Dapper, wandering around and standing
upon the stage. Medley emphasizes that unless Dapper leaves, the "ladies cannot begin yet" and the men "can't get [them] down" (1.246-47), and when they appear, they indicate their rebellion against the system represented by Dapper. One woman has been "above" with her dancing master, but finally the four women sit together, beginning immediately with discussion of evading the system. While they speak of Farinello’s performance at the opera, they are most interested in the current joke, in which a local woman claims to have borne the castrato Farinello’s child.

All Ladies. Ha, ha, ha!
1 Lady. Well, it must be charming to have a child by him
3 Lady. Madam, I met a lady in a visit the other day with three.
All Ladies. All Farinello’s?
3 Lady. All Farinello’s, all in wax.
1 Lady. Oh Gemini! Who makes them? I’ll send and bespeak half a dozen to-morrow morning.
2 Lady. I’ll have as many as I can cram into a coach with me.
4 Lady. I am afraid my husband won’t let me keep them, for he hates I should be fond of any thing but himself. (2.12-33)

The possibility of being freed from pregnancy leads to the idea of being freed from their masters and the first Lady speaks of revolution, saying that if her husband objected to wax children, "I’d run away from him, and take the dear babies with me" (2.35-36). The women’s view of religion as a masculine force against feminine best interest can be seen readily in the question, "Who makes them?" The artisan would of necessity be a male and there is the
lingering unspoken negative reference to God the Father. Their argument would go something like this: if current beliefs only exist to shore up male dominance and imprison the woman in a round of male demands and yearly pregnancy, then women need another system without a god who is also male. The unlikelihood of being able to control her own body and avoid society's possession of her gendered parts, gives special meaning to the words that one of the women would "run away from" her husband. She is talking about revolution against systematic exclusion and against male usurpation of female purpose. Reduced to childbearing and producing heirs for the mercantile system, women can only think themselves free when they no longer serve the purpose of incubation. They can only be truly independent when they control their bodies or simply to buy wax babies. Male critics over the centuries seem to regard act 2 as silly and often quote Medley's words to establish Fielding's purpose in portraying women as "that light, trifling, giddy-headed crew, who are a scandal to their own sex, and a curse on ours" (2.58-59). What is "giddy-headed" about disenfranchisement and dying in childbed? What male critics see as humor, is the conversation of slaves speaking the same language, encoded so well that it is not understood by male critics writing 200 years later. When Dapper comments on the scene's "politeness, good sense, and philosophy" to Medley, the writer says, "It's
Nature, my lord, it's Nature" (2.53). With the perversion of women's nature by the dominant male society, Fielding can only ask, what is the nature of women's nature?

In addition to the women's group speaking their silent treason, Fielding sets up two characters who are not and yet are feminine in their natures. Critics have not observed the significance of these types who have joined the ladies, in more than one sense. The aptly named beau, the flaccid "Dangle," is their timepiece for arriving at the auction, where social icons are offered for sale by the transvestite Charke in her character of Hen the auctioneer. Medley calls the scene an "allegory" featuring first Mrs. Screen and Mrs. Barter, the first hoping to buy "a great deal" and Mrs. Barter buying nothing. Although critics see the auction as offering the very qualities, such as virtue and modesty, that Fielding's ladies lack, I find that quite the opposite is true. As Fielding establishes in the drawing room scene, female values are at bottom diametrically opposed to the values imposed on them by the male hierarchies. Mrs. Screen is buying, not for herself, but to "buy the whole auction," the implication being that she might then control the true worth of social qualities (2.88-89). As it stands now for Mrs. Screen, she is in the position of people she mentions, who "are of no consequence." Women have become as marginalized as the group she mentions who
"go to an opera without any ear, to a play without any taste, and to a church without any religion" (2.120-22). The definitions of even the most personal values, even music and religion, have been imposed by the dominant society. Christopher Hen, the auctioneer makes this same distinction for he offers only to men "the cloak of Political Honesty," "the delicate piece of Patriotism," "courage," "wit," Common-sense," "the Cardinal Virtues," "Temperance and Chastity." Ironically he offers to women only "Modesty" which is after all another male definition, like chastity and relates only to female sexuality (2.163). The single quality she may buy pertains to her sexual self as it is defined by society. Admitting its spurious nature as a cover-up for true feelings, Hen describes "modesty" to women at the auction as "true French" and "a wash" that will not "change the colour of the skin" (2.174-75). Like other qualities required by males, modesty is a false coloration by which a woman may defend herself, rather like a chameleon's adopting protective coloring.

Many readers remember The Historical Register of 1736 by the auction scene; yet it is short, only three pages and ends with Fielding's great commentary on the masculine gender, in the ludicrous figure of Pistol trying to act like "a great man" and a soldier. Hen has auctioned the last item, "Lot 12," commonsense, and decides to keep it
herself (2.269). Once again Fielding equates masculine right and masculine parts, for outside the auction room, Pistol is running about, thinking himself a "Great Man," and Medley says about Pistol, a fictionalized womanizer Theophilus Cibber, who "[doesn't] overact . . . [on stage] half so much as he does his parts" (2.285-286).

Later Fielding added a one-act afterpiece to The Historical Register of 1736. As Hume notes, Fielding during February had two one-night productions in London, Eurydice at the Drury Lane and Eurydice Hiss'd at the Little Theatre (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 221-222).19 Following audience uprising during Eurydice when soldiers took umbrage at an anti-military joke, Fielding's Eurydice Hiss'd explains the failure of the other work, even as it shows some similarity to The Author's Farce. The setting of Eurydice is Hell and Fielding parades before us a series of vignettes of people empowered by class or gender. The fiction of the plot is the Eurydice legend concerning Orpheus's trip to the underworld to regain his dead wife. He must lead her out and not look back, but he fails the test and must return to earth without her. The devil is "his diabolical Majesty" who is dominated by his wife Proserpine, a "goddess of quality" who has "pretty well worked" her way to control Hell.
This fiction having been "hiss’d" at Drury Lane, Eurydice Hiss’d is arranged to explore the nature of the theatre and the poet’s muse. For this purpose, Fielding employs two women, Charke and Haywood, as poles around which he may look at his issues, in this one-act, one-scene work. As he did in Pasquin and The Historical Register of 1736, Fielding uses Charke in a male role; here she is Spatter, the playwright, able to conceive of another way to live. Speaking as a transvestite and a woman who is speaking as a man, Charke as Spatter sees the world of the theatre to offer a new hierarchy of government. She can create a "Great Man," (1.54), as the "author of a mighty farce" and the ruling figure at the "pinnacle of poetical or rather farcical greatness" (1.27). Below the ruler/playwright, forming the hierarchical base, stands his crowd of fickle admirers by whose adoration the ruler is maintained. With the rule comes obligations such as jobs for dependents and levies for actors, printers, box-keepers, scene-men, fiddlers, and candle-snuffers. Spatter succeeds in making the levee a macrocosm of the world with its struggle between haves and havenots, where the great are "followed, flattered, and adored" (1.28). Yet because Spatter speaks from a feminine as well as a masculine point of view, we see the possibility that the artist may not be limited to the masculine gender but may include a female playwright.
Seeing the hierarchy flawed in concept, Pillage the writer finds that the ruler of this universe becomes no more than the provider for actors. Pillage uses references that bring to mind little birds being fed by a mother bird, when he speak of actors "gaping for parts, and never to be satisfied" (1.41).

In chapter four, I discuss at some length Eliza Haywood's role as the Muse to Pillage, and the sexual implications in their highly charged conversations. I will mention here certain specifics. Fielding portrays the relationship in quite erotic and fertile terms, for only the Muse's sexuality inspires his art. She remembers his taking her "trembling" virginity which has inspired his rapid artistry. Speaking as the spirit of art, she maintains the standards of honest writing, rather to live "in humble garret" and "[w]ouldst sooner starve, ay, even in prison starve, / Than vindicate oppression for thy bread, / or write down liberty to gain thy own" (1.247-51).

Quite independent of Pillage, Spatter sets up her own play using as her creatures the author and the assembled actors; she places Pillage in the levee scene, with his Muse, and finally in the theatre where he is a kind of plague carrier shunned by Gentlemen 1, 2 and 3, hissing his art, and fleeing the theatre. The fops discuss this "fruit" of the union of Pillage and his Muse as poisonous, producing an illness in the actors. The actors vomit the
contagion over the audience, which catches the disease and
groans in pain:

Victory hung dubious.
So hangs the conscience, doubtful to determine,
When honesty pleads here and there a bribe;
At length, from some ill-fated actor's mouth,-
Sudden there issued forth a horrid dram
And from another rushed two gallons forth:
The audience, as it were contagious air,
All caught it, hallooed, catcalled, hissed, and
groaned. (1.315-322)

These gross metaphors for illness perhaps reflect the
state of the theatre as Fielding saw it in 1737 at the end
of his writing career. Although his dramas have never
been valued widely, they contain the open fineness of
Fielding's social vision. That Fielding reverses the
usual embodiment of wrong and depicts it as social, not
individual, is made clear in his comedies at the Little
Theatre. He gives a truth that victims at the bottom of
the hierarchy can understand.

As part of the Little Theatre group, he contributed a
willingness to see beyond the limitations surrounding him.
Fielding did not confine himself to dramatic presentations
of poverty. While the lower orders inform his plays, this
group is only part of Fielding's message, for women in
society become his major means for observing the polite
world. After Fielding went to the Little Theatre, the
works staged there point to the direction literature would
take in succeeding decades when the Romantics took the
life and times of the ordinary human as their central
subject. In his dramatic satires, Fielding sides with the character at the mercy of other men as well as measures reality of the individual against the ideal of individual freedom that society pretends to honor.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER THREE

1 Criticism of Fielding's plays at the Little Theatre mainly discusses Fielding's politics in his dramas and his dramatic canon is divided into subcategories of satire: burlesque, farce, comedy of manners, and the like, as Nichols does, to give only two instances, in "Social Satire in Pasquin and The Historical Register" and Baker in "Political Allusion in Fielding's Author's Farce, Mock Doctor, and Tumble-Down Dick." The following critics deal with Fielding's social and moral purposes in his dramas, although Fielding's Little Theatre plays are not treated as part of the work done at the playhouse, nor are critical treatments of Fielding's social aims the same as mine. Campbell's essay "'When Men Women Turn': Gender Reversals in Fielding's Plays" considers the entire canon of Fielding's dramas and focuses on Fielding's approach to the woman question, but her focus, like her conclusion, is not mine. While we both consider the androgynous character that Fielding includes, Brown curtails the scope of her work and does not view all of Charke's male roles in Fielding's plays. Golden in Fielding's Moral Psychology does not distinguish among the plays, and the criticism mainly concerns Fielding's novels. Hume's Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 discusses Fielding's politics in the dramas and treats Fielding as a lone writer at the Little Theatre. Sherburne's article "Fielding's Social Outlook" deals most helpfully with aspects of Fielding's social consciousness but mainly views the novels Tom Jones and Jonathan Wild. Sherburne does mention The Modern Husband as part of Fielding's depiction of justice received. Hunter, focusing mainly on the "reflexive" nature of the dramas, distinguishes among the plays, but his criticism concentrates chiefly on Fielding's satiric view of contemporary politics. Work's "Henry Fielding Christian Censor" depicts Fielding as Christian moralizer intent on punishing evil and rewarding good and the essay chiefly considers the novels.

2 In 1737, Fielding broke with the theatrical world for all intent. He was only thirty and, being out of work, could have returned to the Drury Lane as actor and dancer where he had performed for years. His name remained current, for Fielding's works, like Tom Thumb and others, were produced at the patented theatres after 1737. Three "new" plays, heretofore not produced, Miss Lucy in Town, The Wedding-Day, and a revision, The Debauchees, were staged at the Drury Lane, according to Battestin's chronology. Nonetheless, Fielding did not participate in the productions, nor did he continue to open his theatre.
booths at London fairs, in spite of the ready money to be
obtained that way.

3 While the work is regarded as a hotch-potch of influences and topics with social and political themes, Thomas Cleary quite correctly finds that the view of the play as simply political has been "exaggerated." In spite of the fact that the drama may be seen as Scriblerian in its scorn of society's flaws, a consideration of the plot shows its lack of "Scriblerian" stance and anti-Walpole posturing, according to Cleary (29). Pat Rogers finds the theatre the chief spoof, and Cleary, too, judges that "Cibberian practices and the brazen Colley" to be Fielding's targets, rather than politics. Hunter also states that Fielding "portrays players, critics, and even authors responding to plays in ways that recast the meaning of a text" (Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance 50). Campbell finds that Fielding satirizes inverted sexuality and "nonsensical female desire" (70). Lewis posits that Fielding purpose an indictment:

[of those people] most responsible for the decline in dramatic and literary standards, theatre managers, and booksellers, and to portray the unfortunate predicament of writers dependent for their livelihood on these unscrupulous men . . . .[and offers] a comprehensive survey of current drama, men who ran the theatres, booksellers and their hacks, and the domestic plight of impoverished Playwrights. (Fielding's Burlesque Drama 87)

4 Battestin makes the connection between Rape upon Rape and the scandal involving Colonel Francis Charteris, a notorious and unprincipled rake. Convicted of raping his maid, he spent time in Newgate and fined. Only a few months afterward, Charteris, popularly called the "Rape-Master General of Great Britain" had been pardoned by the king, thanks to Charteris's close friendship with Walpole. Hogarth features a figure resembling Charteris in the first plate of Harlot's Progress where he appears as the debaucher of a country girl. His procurer standing next to the girl as she alights from the dusty cart may represent the notorious Mother Haywood (Henry Fielding: A Life 92-3). Hume also mentions the Charteris scandal and its possible influence on Rape upon Rape (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 72-73).

5 Isaac Disraeli, Calamities and Quarrels of Authors (London: Routledge, Warnes, and Routledge, 1859), includes a reference to the "celebrated" Pope Joan in a work by an
anti-Dunciad poet who was part of the Theobaldian group. Fielding's reference may also point to the hostilities between the two factions.

Thus when famed Joan usurp'd the Pontiff's chair,
With terror she beheld her new-born heir;
Ill-starr'd, ill-favour'd into birth it came;
In vice begotten, and brought forth with shame!
In vain it breathes, a lewd abandon'd hope!
And calls in vain, the unhallow'd father--Pope!

6 Dudden judges that the play to be "pure farce," and that the wives possess "some skill," in preserving themselves (75-76). Hume's Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 finds that Fielding's dramatic strategies in the play "reduces the marital and sexual tensions of the play to the vanishing-point" (92). Rogers avers that the play is "Chaucerian, with two elderly Januaries trying to keep local Mays away from their youthful wives" (51). Wood in his article "Notes on Three of Fielding's Plays," argues that the plays reflect contemporary events in London and says that Fielding based his plot on the extortion letter received by his cousin, Lady Diana Fielding. Wood points out that there must have been other letters for, on 20 November, the king proclaimed that extortion money should not be paid, and the government offered a reward for apprehending the extortionists (359-373).

7 On 14 June the Daily Post ran a notice that "We are oblig'd to defer the Grubstreet Opera till further Notice" (qtd Battestin Henry Fielding: A Life 118). During that same period, Henley's The Hyp-Doctor which was performed 8-15 June contained the following stanzas obviously referring to Fielding's work:

The Censuring World, perhaps, may not esteem
A Satire on so scandalous a Theme,
As these Stage-Apes, who must a Play-house chuse,
The Villain's Refuge, the Whore's Rendezvous:
So dull in ev'ry Shape, that you may see
Sorrow turn'd Mirth, and Mirth turn'd Tragedy:
Mullar't's chief Business is to swear and eat,
He'll turn Procurer for a Dish of Meat,
Else the poor hungry Ruffian must, I fear,
Live on grey Pease and Salt for half the Year.
According to Battestin, Henley also continued his attacks on Fielding's management and his plays at the Little Theatre.

Under-Spur-Leather, your Dagger of Lath, your Crier of Mustard to bite the Noses of the Hay-Market Actors, your Threader of Acts and Scenes, your Tragedy-Trimmer, your Farce-Bundler, from the The Fall of Mortimer to The Grub-street Opera; in short, your Player of dead Wits for live Conceits, your Rat-Catcher of Poetic Images, that either run from Him, or fly in his Face. (qtd Henry Fielding: A Life 118-119)

In opposition to this judgement of Fielding's gross immorality, contemporary critics find Fielding's moral stance clear in the opera, and they cite his metaphorical use of "china" to refer to women's chastity. "A woman's ware like china, / Once flawed is good for nought (1.11, Air 19). Later Fielding wrote in the 15 March 1739-40 Champion that "Nothing can be more becoming than modesty in women . . . Indeed, she who wants it is a kind of monster in nature, a sort of frightful prodigy; yet even this amiable quality may be carried too far [and] may be distorted into affectation."

8 Cleary in Henry Fielding: Political Writer refers political identifications in the play, with "Robin" being Robert Walpole and Lady Apshinken being Queen Caroline. The connection between Walpole and the Queen, both financial and political, and the dominance of both over the king is an integral part of the play. Queen Caroline's well-known drinking habits, like Walpole's, along with her miserliness and theological interests comprise her character. The internecine fighting refers to the governmental battles between Walpole and William Pulteney, in the play William the coachman (48). As Cleary notes, "Master Owen" as Frederick, the royal heir, is the most "insulting" depiction (48). Stupid, he is not just incapable of everyday actions but also an inpotent and fumbling lover. When Puzzletext calls him "half a man, and more than half a beau," Fielding refers to Frederick's search for a wife and his parents' rejection of his choices, one of which was Lady Diana Spencer, later Duchess of Bedford, according to Cleary (48). Rogers also makes the identification between the play and court figures (Henry Fielding 51-52), while Battestin agrees and calls the play "a good roasting" of political figures (Henry Fielding: A Life 117). For elaboration on the play's employment of contemporary figures, see Brown's article on "Henry Fielding's Grub

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An advertisement in the Daily Gazette on 24 February 1735-36 boldly introduced the new acting troupe and the new management:

**HAY-MARKET**

*By the Great Mogul’s company of English Comedians, Newly Imported.*

*At the New theatre in the Hay-Market, Friday, March 5, will be presented PASQUIN, A Dramatic SATYR on the Times.*

*Being a Rehearsal of two plays, viz. a Comedy, called THE ELECTION; and a Tragedy, called The Life and Death of COMMON SENSE*

*N. B. Mr. Pasquin intending to lay about him with great Impartiality, hopes the Town will all attend, and very civilly give their Neighbours what they find belongs to ‘em.*

*N. B. The Cloaths are Old, but the Jokes entirely new.*

Following the seasons at the theatre in 1733-34 when the Drury Lane seceders and the French dance company rented the stage, Pasquin ushered in the era of great Fielding plays in the two years before the 1737 Licensing Act. Managed by Fielding and Ralph, the theatre produced a series of dramas beginning with Pasquin: Lillo’s *Guilty its own Punishment; or Fatal Curiosity; Tumble-Down Dick or Phaeton in the Suds; Philip’s The Rival Captains; The Deposing and Death of Queen Gin, with the Ruin of Duke Rum, Marquee de Nantz, and the Lord Sugarcane; The King and the Miller of Mansfield; and The Historical Register of 1736.*

Among twentieth-century critics, Hunter views the play important for its technical aspects; in *Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance,* he refers to the boldness of this structure and uses the term "reflexive" to indicate the self-references prompting the design. Hunter says,

*Consisting of full rehearsals of two separate plays—within, Pasquin in almost plotless in the usual literary sense... [i]t is difficult to describe its structure except as a continuing dialectic between represented action and commentary upon it; otherwise, its movement is linear through time, each theatrical moment precisely representing an imitated moment of the same length.* (58)
Charles Nichols's 1972 dissertation "Fielding's Satirical Plays of 1736 and 1737: Pasquin, Tumble-Down Dick, The Historical Register for the Year 1736, and Eurycle Hiss'd," along with his article, "Social Satire in Pasquin and The Historical Register," presents a different approach, somewhat more traditional, to the work. Interpreting in political terms, Goldgar in Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722-1742 finds that the play is generally about politics, but that the work is really not anti-government:

Pasquin contained nothing overtly objectionable to the government, and its popularity was not attributed at the time to any satire on Walpole which might have been suspected. The papers sympathetic to the opposition gave it no support and made no effort to capitalize upon it, with the [Tory] Grub-street Journal, in fact, launching its first full-scale attack on Fielding in several years. The Journal's criticism... was directed at Fielding's cynical indictment of all parties, as equally corrupt and at the very generality of his satire on lawyers, physicians, and divines. (152-53).

11 Cleary, Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth Century, judges that Fielding in Pasquin speaks in "a strong unequivocal voice," as he uses the Goddess of Nonsense to "attack standard Scriblerian targets like Cibber and Theobald. He sets up an analogy between stage and state and, like Pope, uses signs of corruption in the drama to satirize corruption in the state." Cleary goes on to state,

Fielding's real assault was implicit in the road depiction of England as corrupt and sliding into cultural degeneracy, with Cibber its Laureate and religion, law, and medicine declining into priestcraft, pettifoggery, and quackery. This would seem a massive condemnation of the results of Robinocracy and... corruption, recalling the Dunciad and Gulliver's Travels, once audiences were given a nudge in the right direction. (72-73)

12 The standard interpretation of the play, as critics such as Dudden, Battestin, and Cleary see it, involves in the comedy a series of episodes about low politicians and political campaign irregularities. With the spokesman/author calling the piece "an exact representation of nature," we witness two candidates for
Parliament, backed by the local gentry, and two London candidates, both Court favorites, trying to influence the Mayor and Aldermen of a country town. At the same time that Mrs. Mayor and her daughter eagerly seek to please the visiting noble, her husband must make his choice. The candidates standing for Parliament election, Lord Place and Colonel Promise, entice the officials with bribes and promises of bribes. Author Trapwit interrupts the action and tells the actors on stage that

I inculcate a particular Moral at the End of every Act; and therefore might have put a particular Motto before every one, as the Author of Caesar in Aegypt has done; thus, Sir, my first Act sweetly sings, Bribe all, Bribe all; and the second gives you to understand that we are all under Petticoat Government . . . (p. 16)

Hume finds the work to consist mainly of contemporary allusions, such as "King's Coffee House," the "Act against Witches," Faribelli (Farinelli the castrato), and Cibber's odes. He judges the work to be softly political in its message that "England is politically corrupt and culturally degenerate" (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 212-213). A variety of views obtains about the work, from the first production of the play. A contemporary analysis of Pasquin in the Daily Gazetteer issue of 7 May 1737, judged the work to treat lightly a serious problem, stating that Fielding like Gay in the Beggar's Opera "exposed with Wit, what ought to be punished with Rigour [and which made depraved characters] into Heroes and Heroines." Fielding was sensitive to this criticism of the play as corruptive and in the 21 May issue of Common Sense responded to the above critic:

[y]ou seem to think, Sir, that to ridicule Vice, is to serve its Cause. And you mention the late ingenious Mr. Gay, who, you say, in his Beggars' Opera hath made Heroes and Heroines of Highwaymen and Whores. Are then Impudence, Boldness, Robbery, and picking Pockets the Characteristicks of a Hero? Indeed, Sir, we do not always approve what we laugh at. So far from it, Mr. Hobbes will tell you that Laughter is a Sign of contempt. And by raising such a Laugh as this against Vice, Horace assures us we give a sorer Wound, than it receives from all the Abhorrence which can be produced by the gravest and bitterest Satire. You will not hardly, I believe, persuade us, how much soever you may desire it, that it is the
Mark of a great Character to be laughed at by a whole Kingdom. (qtd by Rawson Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal Under Stress 204)

13 None of the critics to date sees Fielding's women as his means of commenting on society; no one so far has viewed his androgynous figure, played by Charlotte Charke, as a major statement in itself. Although as I have mentioned, Jill Brown in "When Men Women Turn": Gender Reversals in Fielding's Plays provides some history for understanding gender reversals in Fielding's plays, including a discussion of the bisexual representation. She states that "the theatre provided Fielding with a particularly powerful—though ultimately restrictive—means of imagining and representing issues of gender identity and reversal, and all they might imply" (63). Beginning with Tom Thumb and the queen's "petticoat government," Brown talks about the female acting the role of Thumb and the male acting the part of Huncamumca (62-64). She deals in a limited way with the Fop figure as a female, while she discusses the maleness of Dollabella and Lady Apshiken in their "petticoat government." Brown does not discuss is Fielding's message about women, as women; nor does she deal with the definition of feminity as Fielding sees it. Brown mentions Pasquin only in connection with the so-called "sexual corruption" in the role of Miss Stitch, which seems to reach too far for the point (63). Her article, taken from a dissertation, discusses briefly Charlotte Charke in her role as Hen in The Historical Register of 1736.

14 Critics generally agree on Fielding's purpose in the play concerning the spoofing of the mercantile system and the merchant class. For instance, Golden in Fielding's Moral Psychology, sees that "In Pasquin the mayor and his aldermen, all tradesmen, keep busy selling the votes of the town to the highest bidder, while his wife and daughter are eager to provide anything at all to the nobility." Fielding's dramas and his novels do not necessarily correspond in views of women or of London, a point that Golden misses. Although he sees London as a place of "insurmountable challenges to integrity," he fails to show Fielding's dramatic use of the country as an enclosed place also full of iniquity and temptation (104).

One other purpose of the play may be a satire on the pantomimes for which John Rich was famous at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields. Rich opened 10 April 1736 Marforio: A Theatrical Satire, which Dudden among others, finds to be an attack on Fielding's Pasquin. Rich's piece contains references to the "the Great Mogol" and in effect accuses Fielding of stealing the idea of the play-within-the dual narrators (Dudden 1: 182). Fielding often praised

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Rich, as he does in *The Champion* 22 April 1740, where he writes about "that truly ingenious and learned entertainmatic author" and 3 May 1740, Fielding again writes of "the theatre where Rich, great machinist, presides over animate and inanimate machines, and the dextrous Harlequin." Dudden remarks that these representations notwithstanding, Fielding held general contempt for pantomime (1:180). Rich may have been already smarting from Fielding’s attacks. A contemporary cartoon about Fielding and *Pasquin*, his great hit, shows a goddess labeled "Common-Sense" whose right hand is pouring gold into Fielding’s hands as, supported by Shakespeare, he kneels to her; her left hand is holding out a halter to the figure of Harlequin, probably meant to be John Rich, supported by two clowns and three divines. The caption reads "The Judgment of the Queen of Common Sense, Address’d to Henry Fielding Esq."

Rich himself seems to have made much of little, being illiterate, and yet managing Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields theatre along with Covent Garden theatre. Dudden relates several bizarre incidents of Rich’s life and ends with stating that his second wife, a former servant, turned evangelical, and so Rich "laboured under the tyranny of a wife and the terror of hell-fire at the same time" (*Henry Fielding: His Life, Work, and Times* 1:181).

15 "Mother Needham" was the infamous madam, Elizabeth Needham, whom Fielding characterized as "Mother Punchbowl" in *The Grub-Street Opera*, as well as "Mother Needham" in *Pasquin*. She kept a house of ill-repute hear St. James Street, in the neighborhood of the Little theatre. Needham was convicted on a disorderly charge in April 1731, and sentenced to stand in the pillory. Stoned viciously by passersby, she died of her injuries a week later, on 3 May 1731 (Dudden 110). In the *Dunciad*, Pope refers to her as "pious Needham" because, he says in a note, that "she was very religious in her way; her constant prayer it was [that she might] get enough by her profession to leave it off in time, and make her peace with God" (1: 324).

Hogarth includes the figure of Needham in the first plate of the *Harlot's Progress*. She is the well-dressed older woman who is tempting the country girl just arrived in London. See endnote #3 for her connection with Colonel Charteris.

16 McCrea’s *Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth Century*, and Golden’s *Henry Fielding's Moral Psychology*, to name two important works on Fielding, do not discuss *Tumble-Down Dick*. 

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17 Cleary's *Henry Fielding: Political Writer* asserts that,

> [t]he political innocuousness of Tumble-Down Dick obviously did not signal a withdrawal from Broad-Bottom activism; it was the afterpiece to Pasquin, after all. Indeed, Fielding's opposition connections and a particular political resentment may have spurred his non-political ridicule of Pritchard's play. (90)

Early critics, such as Dudden and Cross, make the connection between Fielding's Broad-Bottom activities begun in Pasquin. Cross especially sees Fielding's insult to Frederick, finding evidence in the speeches of Jupiter and Phaeton as references to the publicized quarrels between King George and Prince Frederick (Cross 1:94). Similarly, Sheridan Baker's "Political Allusion in Fielding's Author's Farce, Mock Doctor, and Tumble-Down Dick," views the work as largely political and definitely anti-Walpole.

18 Hume judges the play to be a "melange" and comments in a note to Cibber's troubles with his play King John, as well as the famous battle of the two Pollys, involving Cibber's daughter-in-law Susanna Arne Cibber and another popular actress Kitty Clive (235: n90). Presenting the general view, Hume also states of the play as a whole that:

Unhampered by the constraints of plot and character development, [Fielding] infuses each of the skits with genuine venom without ever becoming shrill or tedious. The felicitous touches are far too numerous to catalogue. Special mention may be made of the first political . . . the appearance of the noted auctioneer Christopher Cock as 'Mr. Hen' . . . and Ground-Ivy's . . . sublime conviction that Shakespeare 'won't do' without a good deal of alteration and improvement by himself. (*Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737* 235-236).

19 Avery's "Fielding Last Season with the Haymarket Theatre" and Crean's "The Stage Licensing Act of 1737" also make direct and indirect references to all of Fielding's last plays, including The Historical Register, Tumble-Down Dick, and Euridyce Hiss'd.

Brown finds that Fielding's technique in The Historical Register involves using Charke the "noted male impersonator and eccentric" to
create a dramatic context for the selling of goods that interprets both that selling and sexual inversions in a particular way. But before the auction has even begun, the terms of such an interpretation have been established in a short dramatic prologue, a conversation among the ladies who will attend . . . The stage direction and first line open the scene with a caricature of the univocal control fashion exerts over the ladies; words: the same voice, the voice of fashionable society, speaks through all of them. (65-66)

Brown's ideas revolve around Fielding's single emphasis of the popularity of Farinelli, the Italian castrato. She ends her consideration by stating that,

While some of the satiric material concentrated its ridicule the castrati themselves, much of it, like this scene from The Historical Register, turned its satiric attention on the women interested in them, competing to articulate what it would mean for a woman to prefer a man without the use of his penis. (65-66)

This last sentence actually opens the way for Brown to explore another possibility. My interpretation of the scene involves a reading of the text which deals quite specifically with the ladies' conclusions.

20 Hunter calls attention to the reflexive action in the play, which capitalized on the failure of Eurydice:

[It]s play-within involves still a third play, received by an audience that is also viewed by an author, a critic, and a lord—who are also viewed by us. It is very nearly an orgy of spectatorism, and like each of its immediate predecessors, this play has political meanings that interact with its artistic and theatrical self-consciousness. (Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance 49)

21 Fielding uses such an elaborate technique for a purpose, and we should see the play for its threatening social vision. His statements are clear. Although there is no firm reference to Fielding's feminism in the play, its social stance seems to be intertwined in its political stance. Most critics only discuss the play's politics. For instance, Cleary quotes a warning letter (perhaps
signed by Lord Hervey) in The Daily Gazetteer of 7 May 1737 which says that the play "is criticized for treating government as a farce, threatening the very foundations of society, and exposing the present ministry before Europe, . . . a true Patriot [would never] endeavour to render his country contemptible: He would rather strive to hide its Weaknesses" (qtd Henry Fielding: Political Writer 107–108). Cleary goes on to state that in 1731, Fielding decided that he should become cautious and avoid publication of "any version of his play" (109).
By the spring of 1729, when she quite probably met Henry Fielding, the enigmatic Eliza Fowler Haywood (1693?–1756) had written forty-four novels, three plays, two periodicals, one-hundred translations, and ten poems, in addition to ghosted works. With her reputation and novel sales at low ebb, 1729 was a watershed year for Haywood, because she was unemployed, and burdened with severe personal problems, according to letters written around that time. She therefore met Fielding at a time when it would seem that conservatism, financially and personally, might have offered Haywood her safest course of action in a society still censuring women writers; surely she was tempted to whitewash her reputation with pious works and middle-class propriety. In the absence of documentation other than play bills showing her activities as playwright and actress, however, we can only speculate about why Haywood joined the maverick writers at the disreputable Little Theatre, where Henry Fielding and George Lillo, along with William Hatchett, formed the nucleus of the company. To examine the forces behind Haywood’s social and political activism, and to consider her work at the Little Theatre, this chapter first reviews biographical
evidence about her life and political stance as a woman writer and views Haywood within the theatrical milieu. Second, I analyze her dramatic approaches to gender and class struggles in the plays she wrote, while I consider the dramatic roles in which she appeared. Finally, the chapter shows the chronological development of Haywood's social and political consciousness by examining each work in Haywood's dramatic canon.

It is important to state clearly at the beginning of this chapter that little hard evidence of Haywood's life remains, although an accumulation of apocrypha has arisen about her. Most contemporary writing about Haywood's life relies on George Frisbie Whicher's 1915 biography of Haywood; he bases his assertions on bits of gossip from Genest's, Chetwood's, and Baker's accounts of the theatre; Haywood's baptismal record at St. Peter's Cornhill; theatre and book publishers' advertisements for some of Haywood's novels and plays; two newspaper announcements; poetic references by Sir Richard Steele, Alexander Pope, Richard Savage, and James Sterling; a 1711 baptismal record for Haywood's first child; a 1720 manuscript signed by Haywood; Edmund Curll's *Key to the Dunciad*; and an unacknowledged source for her burial date, incorrectly given in the biography as 25 February 1756. Drawing from these scattered sources, Whicher argues certain possibilities about Haywood's life and spins a more or
less convincing narration of events. He uncovered important documentary evidence concerning Haywood's life, such as her marriage to the Anglican priest Valentine Haywood, the 1711 baptism of her son Charles, and the newspaper notice of her "elopement" from her husband. Nonetheless, Whicher's pronouncement that Haywood was a "She-Romp" involved in licentious living and writing has clouded the serious intent of her novels and dramas. When references to Haywood appear before 1970, Whicher's influence on these works is readily obvious, because the focus rests on Haywood's morals.

Three years after the 1915 biography, C. A. Moore's article in *Modern Language Notes* investigates enthusiastically another reference to Haywood's licentious life, a three-line advertisement from the *Weekly Journal*, 24 September 1715, about an alleged three-volume work entitled "A Tragi-Comedy Dialogue between Mr. Andrew Yeatman and Mrs. Elizabeth Haywood." While Moore faults Haywood for her independence in conduct as well as in her novels, Jerrold in *Five Queer Women* calls Haywood "The 'Ouida' of the Eighteenth Century," and dwells on her putative liaisons with the likes of Viscount Gage, William Hatchett, and Edmund Curll. It seems superfluous to add that Pope's attack in the *Dunciad* on Haywood's morals as a woman writer provides the central issue in all early narrations of Haywood's life, beginning with Whicher's.
In assessing her art, he bases many of his conclusions on prefaces to Haywood's novels as well as on her drama's epilogues and prologues. His biases in interpretation, like his conclusions, derive from a masculine orientation about women's writings in general, and Haywood's work in particular.\(^3\) Notwithstanding Whicher's admirable initiative in documenting certain evidence of Haywood's life, his approach marginalizes the woman for her writing and vice-versa. My examination attempts to sift through the accumulation of "information," as well as to add to the truth about Eliza Haywood and her life at the Little Haymarket.

To call Haywood notorious during the part of her life under study would be vast understatement, which is possibly the reason she chose to leave only her work as her life's testament. Baker's *Biographia Dramatica* ascribes her wholesale destruction of documents to Haywood's fear that the details of her life might be published. Having witnessed the scandal caused by the publication of Aphra Behn's biography, (then thought to be unauthorized), Haywood may have taken warning:

> from a supposition of some improper liberties being taken with her character after death by the intermixture of truth and falsehood with her history, she laid a solemn injunction on a person who was well acquainted with all the particulars of it, not to communicate to anyone the least circumstance relating to her; so that probably, unless some very ample account should appear from that quarter itself, whereby her
story may be placed in a true and favourable light, the world will still be left in the dark with regard to it.  

So thorough was the destruction of her documents and so vigilantly did she thwart a potential biographer, that one of the few remaining indications of Haywood's essential personality is the uncharitable, pre-\textit{Dunciad} portrait of "Sappho" by her friend Sir Richard Steele in the \textit{Tatler}:

\begin{quote}
A fine lady who writes verses, sings, dances, and can say and do whatever she pleases, without the imputation of any thing that can injure her character; for she is so well known to have no passion but self-love, or folly but affectation, that now, upon any occasion, they only cry, "It is her way!" and "That is so like her!" without farther reflection.  
\end{quote}

Although at some point she, or the particular friend mentioned in Haywood's entry in Baker's \textit{Biographia Dramatica}, suppressed facts, certain published evidence still remains. After Haywood's desertion of her husband, there followed two public documentations of her life, one being the newspaper advertisement placed by Mr. Haywood in 1721  \textsuperscript{6} and the other being Alexander Pope's vicious attack in Part II of the \textit{Dunciad}, 1728.  \textsuperscript{7} Public scorn for Haywood, arising in part from Pope's public accusations against her morality, as well as from her independent life as an actress, a woman writer and a single mother, undoubtedly resulted in the decline in her novel sales. Whicher quotes Richard Savage's attack in "The Authors of the Town" in which Savage, Haywood's former friend,
seeking to curry favor with Alexander Pope, calls her "A cast-off Dame... A Printer's Drudge! /... for Stage Renown she pants, / And melts, and swells, and pens luxurious Rants." Jonathan Swift, too, excoriates Haywood in his "Corinna" and presents her life as her work. His lines provide the plot for a woman writer that reads rather like William Hogarth's "The Harlot's Progress"; in Swift's depiction of Haywood, a progression that begins with uncontrolled female sexuality leading to uncontrolled spending, which, in a continuing downward spiral, leads at last to her becoming a writer and finally, at moral rock-bottom for a woman, to having her books published by Edmund Curll:

At twelve, a Wit and a Coquette;
Marries for Love, half Whore, half Wife:
Cuckolds, elopes, and runs in Debt;
Turns Auth'ress, and is Curll's for life.  

The accumulation of attacks proved to be too great. By 1729, her works that had two years previously sold for three shillings were relegated to the six-penny bins. Before she joined the Fielding group at the Little Theatre, financial need seems to have directed most of Haywood's existence; in the two years following her separation, she established a pattern of turning to play writing for quick cash. Having finally broken with Mr. Haywood around 1721 as the newspaper advertisement indicates, Haywood (given the date and the evidence of the
letter quoted below, probably pregnant with her first illegitimate child) wrote and mounted at the Drury Lane. In 1723, Haywood staged *A Wife to be Lett* at Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields. Financially strapped in spite of approximately 350 pounds sterling revenues from her plays in addition to profits from novels and periodicals accumulated by 1729, she wrote *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh.* Its one performance occurred at Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, not too far from the Goodman’s Fields Theatre where Henry Fielding’s *The Temple Beau* was in rehearsal.

One notes with irony that the only surviving documents of Haywood’s life during this awful period following the failure of *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh,* with its protest against class and gender discrimination, have been preserved as part of a nobleman’s estate. They are housed in the British Museum Manuscripts Room. Haywood wrote the two begging letters sometime around 1730; these small manuscripts to unknown noblemen (perhaps Viscount Gage, to whom she dedicated *The Fair Captive*) constitute the only remnants in Haywood’s handwriting.

The earlier letter, written around 1730 enlarges considerably our knowledge of Haywood’s life and career. Revealing that Pope was right in his accusations, this letter refers to the factual existence of two
(illegitimate) children, both under seven years. The letter quoted below provides revelations that dispel some of the mystery surrounding Haywood:

Sir:
The Indifferent Success this Tragedy met with, (notwithstanding my great expectations on the account of the Theme) would make me tremble to lay it at the feet of so good a Judge did I not know that truly great and generous minds are always most pleas’d to confer favour where most they are stood in need of.

Tho I am not happy enough to be personally known to you Sir, yet you will believe I am not unacquainted with the Character of your goodness not only in a general, but particular manner when I shall tell you that my maiden name was Fowler, and am nearly related to Sir Richard of the Grange, an unfortunate marriage has reduc’d me to the melancholly necessity of depending on my Pen for the Support of myself and two Children, the eldest of whom is no more than 7 years of Age. This is all the Plea I have to hope a favourable acceptance of the Trifle I now offer. I will wait on you in person to know how far you can Forgive this Presumption. Sir, Your most humble and most obedient Servant. Eliza Haywood.11

With internal evidence concerning the "theme" of George II’s forebears, the letter may be dated with some security as 1729-30, the year of his coronation. That being so, Haywood cannot in the contents be referring to her one legitimate son, Charles. He was baptized by his father at St Aldermary’s Church on 3 December 1711, according to Whicher, and therefore was eighteen or nineteen years old in 1729. Writing that the "eldest" of her "two children" is seven years, Haywood undoubtedly refers to two subsequent children born after Charles, the
eldest around 1720-1721, the date of her first play. The younger of the two was perforce born between 1721 and 1729; one may tentatively speculate that Haywood's younger illegitimate child was born around 1724, the date of her second drama. Although the two children may have been twins, it seems most unlikely that Haywood, in a desperate letter seeking money, would bother to split hairs establishing the literal sequence of the twins' birth. We should interpret her employment of the word "older" in the usual way of distinguishing between two children, born in different years. This evidence of other progeny contradicts assumptions by Whicher and other critics that Haywood had only one child, Charles, her "only manifestation of happiness" (Whicher 9) with the Reverend Mr. Haywood. Although critics dismiss Curll's and Pope's references to Haywood's two love children, her letter suggests that the gossip about her children was true.

In addition, the letter also offers Haywood's own evidence of her family lineage: that "Fowler" is her maiden name and that she is connected to Sir Richard of the Grange, one of Britain's landed gentry. According to Burke's A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland, Haywood's forebears obtained a Baronetcy in 1704. It descended to Richard Fowler, who produced among five other children, Elizabeth, wife of the Reverend Mr. William Inge, canon
residentiary of Litchfield. This impeccable Anglican lady, also named Elizabeth Haywood, would have been a contemporary and cousin of Eliza Fowler Haywood and her two illegitimate children. This branch of the family would hardly have offered to aid Haywood.

The second letter, dated around 1724 by internal evidence, specifically deals with the condition of a woman writer.

Honrd Sr

Precarious as the condition of a person is whose only dependance is on the pen, to the name of Author wee are indebted for the privilege of imploring the protection of the [great and?] good.

The Books I take the liberty to lay at your feet were in their Original highly admired by the French Court, and in my translation have met with more Encouragement [unclear word] become me to boast, the matters on which they treat, and the delicacy of the notions concerning also those perfections which adorn the mind of a truly fine Gentleman may, I hope, render them acceptable to your Hon., who in the several characters which compose the Belle Assemblee, may discern, as in a Mirror, those graces which are complicated in Yourself, and which alone could give me either the desire, or courage to make this address.

But as it is from Your Honrs sweetness of Disposition, and that benignity of Nature, which like Heaven, makes You regard more the Zeal than merit of the Votary, that I alone can hope pardon for this presumption, to that I commit my self for pardon, and my Books for a favourable acceptance; --Encouragement, Sir, is the Sun by which poets thrive, who unless I am very dull indeed to receive it from Your [unclear word] must certainly measure my Genius with some more worthy performance, but however that shall happen; kno the Inclinations I ever had for writing be now converted into a necessity, [unclear word] the Sudden Deaths of both a Father, and a Husband, at an age when I was
little prepared to stem the tide of ill fortune, Yet with it always be attended with pleasure, and a justifiable pride, when I am permitted to hope what I write will be read by Your Hon; I am With the utmost Humality, Duty, Submission Hon. Sr. Your most obedient, & Devoted Servt. E. Haywood

Haywood's translation The Belle Assemblee was published in 1724 which allows us to estimate a date for the communication. In the absence of other documentation, however, we can judge the letter to be an attempt at gaining financial support, or a patron, or both. Haywood seems to be stretching the truth for she refers to the "Sudden Death" of her husband. As Reverend Mr. Haywood was alive until 1746, her desperation must have prompted the untruth. It is clear that Haywood was not intimately known to the recipient of the letter, or she could not have included something palpably untrue. On the other hand, the letter indicates personal knowledge of the recipient and includes several flirtatious remarks, especially about the "sweetness" of the recipient's disposition, puzzling in such a letter. As Haywood refers to the gentleman as a reader of her works, it is possible that he already has acted as patron, and she is calling his attention to her most recent production to ensure financial reward. In the absence of much real evidence at all about Haywood, these letters provide the most substantial information since Whicher documented her first
child and her marriage to Valentine Haywood in the 1915 biography.14

Along with the biographical data, the manuscripts are valuable in documenting the desperate state of a woman writer living, like Haywood, on sufferance. From the time she went to the Little Theatre, Haywood, as Baker suggests, began an association with one of the writers, William Hatchett.15 She must have achieved a financial stability unapparent in previous years, although in 1734, she sold her copyright to a two-volume history to her publishers.16 The once wildly-prolific Haywood, however, ceased any (known) writing between 1730-1737, except two novels, Love-letters on all Occasions (1730) and Adventures of Eovaai, (1730), an anti-Walpole work, in addition to her one successful drama, The Opera of Operas (1733), an adaptation of Fielding’s Tom Thumb, or The Tragedy of Tragedies. It would seem that Haywood’s sole work at the Little Theatre involved collaboration with other Haymarket writers, notably Fielding and Hatchett, in addition to her stage appearances in their plays. Given that Haywood’s acting had always been met with "limited approbation," her presence in the casts of Fielding’s revolutionary dramas is astounding.17 While they raise interesting (and unanswerable) questions about her relationship with Fielding, her stage appearances also suggest the depth of her commitment to Fielding’s
revolutionary social and political ideals, strongly similar in certain regards to her own.

Haywood's earlier experience on the stage included her first performance in Dublin as I have mentioned, followed two years later in 1723 with her role as Susanna Graspal in *A Wife to be Lett*. Haywood's politics, as I hope to prove, determined generally her roles and a study of the character types she acted suggests strongly her social and political advocacy. A listing of plays which featured Haywood in the cast discloses her selectivity, for she appeared only in dramatic works by the company of writers at the Little Theatre. Appearing on stage by choice rather than by chance, she must not have generally solicited acting jobs after 1730. The following table provides a survey of Haywood's known theatrical roles.
Table 3: Stage Appearances by Eliza Haywood,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>THEATRE</th>
<th>DRAMA</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1715</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Timon of Athens</td>
<td>Shakespeare/</td>
<td>Chloe</td>
<td>Victim</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shadwell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723</td>
<td>Drury Lane</td>
<td>Wife To Be Let</td>
<td>Haywood</td>
<td>Susanna</td>
<td>Hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>The Rival Father</td>
<td>Hatchett</td>
<td>Briseis</td>
<td>Hero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>The Blazing Comet</td>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>Lady Flame[^b]</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>Opera of Operas</td>
<td>Haywood/</td>
<td>Huncanunca</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hatchett/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tampe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>Arden of Faveraham</td>
<td>Arden/</td>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Haywood[^c]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>A Rehearsal of Kings</td>
<td>(Fielding?)</td>
<td>First Queen</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Incognito</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>The Historical Register</td>
<td>Fielding</td>
<td>Screen</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737</td>
<td>Little Hay</td>
<td>Eurydice Bisa'd</td>
<td>Fielding</td>
<td>Misse</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^a]: A study of Scouten's listings in *The London Stage*, Part 3, reveals that Haywood was on the Little Haymarket roster for 1731-32; her name is not listed again at any theatre until 1736-37, when she again appears as company actress at the Little Haymarket. This fact supports my assertion that Haywood, from 1729-1737, appeared on stage only in plays by Mogul Company of writers and Samuel Johnson.

[^b]: Haywood is listed in the cast of characters as "Madam de Gomez," a stage name perhaps borrowed from the author of a novel Haywood translated from the French, *La Belle Assemblee, L'Entretien des Beaux Esprits* (1724).

[^c]: Arthur Scouten quotes a playbill that "Mrs. Arden--by Mrs. Haywood, the Author." The reference may simply identify Haywood, not attribute the drama to her (3: 45).
According to Scouten's *The London Stage*, Part Three, Haywood did not appear on stage again until 2 March 1732. At that time she was cast as Madame Flame in *The Blazing Comet* by Samuel Johnson at the Little Theatre and on 19 April, Haywood reenacted the part in a benefit performance for herself. The following year on 31 May, she appeared as Huncamunca in her own play, *The Opera of Operas*. Beginning in 1736, the political nature of her appearances becomes quite marked, because on 21 January, Haywood was cast in *Arden of Faversham* as the victimized wife, Alice Arden, burned alive for killing her husband. After 14 March 1737, Haywood appeared in swift succession, first in Fielding's *A Rehearsal of Kings*; then on 21 March, *The Historical Register of 1736*, and on 13 April, *Eurydice Hiss'd*. On 23 May 1737, the two plays were presented as a benefit for Haywood. They were the last Mogul Company dramas; on 24 May 1737, the Licensing Act was instituted, and the unlicensed theatres returned to oblivion. Haywood and Fielding witnessed both the beginning and the end of high drama at the Little Haymarket.

Further consideration of Haywood's stage parts, then, discloses the same social and political views as her dramas. Perhaps the roles appealed to Haywood because the character's views were Haywood's own, or perhaps the roles were written by Hatchett and Fielding specifically for Haywood. Her roles involve a woman who has been sexually
betrayed by a man and his sexual wrongs against her "unseal" her eyes. She protests, goes mad, perhaps commits murder, but she does not see herself as a victim. To the contrary, as Briseis in *The Rival Father* with the playwright William Hatchett playing Achilles, the man who seduces and then abandons her, Haywood portrays a character possessing full knowledge of both her power and her identity. Briseis elevates her sexuality to the cosmic realm and seeks revenge on her betrayer for reasons that exceed the personal. The parts that Haywood plays receive frank treatment of their sexuality which rises above erotic impulses. Lady Flame in *The Blazing Comet* seems to be, like fire, a natural force, a universal element, and her power to entice Lord Wildfire is hardly obscured by her madness. When Lord Wildfire speaks of their imminent suicide pact, Lady Flame wants to indulge her flesh, and thereby shows her ability to overcome the male with her own sexuality as a weapon:

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Hold, hold, my Lord, I think I came into this World for something more than this; just now my Head is an Egg laid in the Nest of Love, and Cupid hovers over it, and will turn it addle. And before you kill me, do, do, sit upon it, and make it hatch an Angel; come, come, come, do, do; come, come, come. (49)
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In *The Opera of Operas*, which I discuss in detail later, Haywood's portrayal of Huncamunca includes similar traits, because the princess seeks to cure what ails her by having sex with Tom Thumb, swaggering hero and upstart
lord. Later, the young woman realizes that men need to be measured by their "Dimension," as determiner of their fitness to rule; Huncamunca accordingly shrugs off male control of her female sexual power and sets out to take care of her own interests. The character of Alice Arden, which Haywood played in Arden of Faversham, contains this same sexual energy, which by extension includes political power to topple the hierarchy imprisoning her. This aspect, of course, precipitates the action of the dramas and the female characters that Haywood plays are simply uncontrollable by men. Whether First Queen Incognito, in The Rehearsal of Kings; or, the Projecting Gingerbread Baker, or Mrs. Screen in The Historical Register of 1736, in which Haywood as Mrs Screen refuses to buy at auction a grain of modesty, these characters flaunt their independence and their rejection of female myths. Further, in Fielding's Eurydice Hiss'd, Haywood is The Muse, whose sexual abilities enhance her political insights. Two of her speeches serve to illustrate this point, a point that Marcia Heinemann also notes in her article "Eliza Haywood's Career in the Theatre." The Muse's sexuality has provided inspiration to the playwright, and she shows her power to name his transgressions as writer/lover:

And dost thou ask, thou traitor, dost thou ask? Are not thou conscious of the wrongs I bear, Neglected, slighted for a fresher Muse?
I, whose fond heart too easily did yield  
My virgin joys and honor to thy arms  
And bore thee Pasquin. (2.223-228)

Later in act two, Haywood as The Muse is the character chosen to speak Fielding’s serious intent informing the comedy.

Oh, name not wretches so below the muse.  
No, my dear Pillage, sooner will I whet  
The ordinary of Newgate’s leaden quill,  
Sooner will I indite the annual verse  
Which city bellman or court laureates sing,  
Sooner with thee in humble garret dwell,  
And thou, or else thy muse disclaims thy pen,  
Would’st sooner starve, ay, even in prison starve,  
Than vindicate oppression for thy bread,  
Or write down liberty to gain thy own. (2.240-250)

In Fielding’s pursuit of political and social justice, he portrays The Muse (and Haywood) in sexual terms, for the power implicit in female fertility, as he links procreation in woman and author, portraying creativity in sexual terms. The same act in lines 278-280 mentions that the author and his Muse have "gone to write a scene, and the town may expect the fruit of it; Yes, I think the town may expect an offspring indeed."

But if Haywood’s stage presence was reserved for political works which allowed her to make statements, she invested her dramas with the same political stance. Eliza Haywood must surely have appropriated Alexander Pope’s dictum, as her dramas set out to prove that the proper study of mankind is woman. There is a cold realism in Haywood’s presentation of society which lends a dark view...
of her women's plight, even in her comedy. Jacqueline Pearson asserts,

The period after 1700 marks a decline in the female tradition of play-writing and in the importance of women as dramatists. Still, some of these plays present interesting images of women, exploring the nature of women's language, and devising images of sexual reversal to allow women new and challenging roles. (The Prostituted Muse 251)

Given Haywood's depiction of women and society, it is easy to see her as continuing the earlier tradition. Her references to the professional woman writer and the onslaughts she suffers appear in numerous dedication pages for her works. The dedication to The Fair Captive provides a general illustration of Haywood's acknowledgment of this tradition of women writers and, hence, her involvement in it:

For my own part . . . [when I became a writer] I suffer'd all that Apprehension could inflict, and found I wanted many more Arguments than the little Philosophy I am Mistress of could furnish me with, to enable me to stem that Tide of Raillery, which all of my Sex, unless they are very excellent indeed, must expect, when once they exchange the Needle for the Quill.

One other introduction, this one the Preface to The Memoirs of the Baron de Brosse (1725) also may be singled out for its pointed reference to the situation of women writers and, by inference, to Haywood's acknowledgment of her literary inheritance. She speaks as a woman writer about her plight and about the circumstances of other women writers.
It would be impossible to recount the numerous Difficulties a Woman has to struggle through in her Approach to Fame: If her Writings are considerable enough to make any Figure in the world, Envy pursues her with unweary'd Diligence; and if, on the contrary, she only writes what is forgot, as soon as read, Contempt is all the Reward, her Wish to please, excites; and the cold Breath of Scorn chills the little Genius she has, and which, perhaps, cherished by Encouragement, might, in Time grow to a Praise-worthy Height.

These particular references offer indication that Haywood recognized the existence of a sorority of women writers, and, further, that the tradition was entrenched enough to provide an historical view of women in literary society. Because she can think of herself as part of the group that exchanged the Needle for the Quill, Haywood clearly links herself with earlier women writers. Living and writing thirty years after Aphra Behn, a decade after Delariviere Manley, Mary Davys, Mary Pix, and Susanna Centlivre, Haywood was part of the continuum of women playwrights, which reached back to the seventeenth century. One may readily observe seventeenth-century influences in Haywood's writing, especially in the dramas, which carry on the traditions of the "Female Wits" in several particulars: namely, love is an abstraction and, while marriage is the only social contract in which a woman may partake, she is usually forced into becoming a party to it (Williamson 184-195). Man is the Other, the opponent of the woman, and Haywood, like Behn, reverses

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gender roles and supplants the romantic hero at the center with a tough woman protagonist, psychologically complex. Haywood in many regards goes beyond the Female Wits. She clears space for her women characters in which they may gain control and initiate action, before they succumb finally to outside forces.\(^\text{18}\)

Further, Haywood is at pains to draw her women characters outside social demands of "womanliness." Without children, mothers, pregnancy, and domestic duties, Haywood's women are connected to the men's world only by their sexuality and in breaking that tie, they free themselves. Haywood's dramas begin after the woman's sexual initiation, literally or metaphorically, and she defines that experience without using traditional male rhetoric. What occurs as a result of the initiation is an epiphany, with the woman's eyes becoming unsealed, and she "sees" for the first time, the falsity of the female myth, and the truth of her actions. The woman character's loss of virginity does not cause her to "fall," but rather the loss enables her to "rise." To that extent, then, Haywood elevates what male society calls a "fallen" woman, by making the woman's loss of virginity unremarked by other women characters and by providing a standard, other than sexual, to define a woman as "bad" or "good." In their heroism, Haywood's women are isolated, lonely figures without a personal history, and they appear to
have always been troubled adults, never carefree young girls; without any references to past happiness or future pleasure, Haywood's women face lives of loneliness or subjugation. There is no community of women, no mothers, daughters, sisters, even nursemaids to whom the women characters may unburden themselves and from whom they may receive understanding. Even in Haywood's comedy, the cousins are on opposite sides of the feminist fence and each, with exasperation, views the other without empathy. While betrayal by other women is the norm in the dramas, the only help a woman can ever expect derives from other women, who, like the inmates in the silent harem, accept the fact of common feminine suffering.

Although it can be argued that Haywood's novels eroticize the female experience, a study of her dramas suggests that the plays contain the essence of Haywoodian dogma: neither angels nor devils, women have the right to define their own sexual realities and to embody an inviolable selfhood; knowing male power to be intrinsically sham, they correctly collapse the public hero into the private Adam. If the plantation system is best studied through the eyes of slaves, then Haywood finds that the social structure is best studied through the eyes of women, whose gender removes them from participation in the social contract. The female figure which Haywood projects through a series of doubles in her
dramas embodies her commentary on society. In the adaptation, *The Fair Captive* [1721], as well as the original plays, *A Wife to be Lett* [1723], and *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh* [1729], Haywood presents the same story: two or three central female characters push outward against the parameters of patriarchal society in which every woman is for sale "sooner or later."19 With Haywood's use of settings as metaphors to represent the "outside" freedom of male domination and the "inside" containment of females, I find that she explores gender roles while she presents the female myths that surround and control women within society.

Excepting *The Opera of Operas* (1733), which Haywood and William Hatchett versified from parts of Henry Fielding's *Tom Thumb: or, Tragedy of Tragedies*, and added a two-page ending, her plays are introduced by an Epilogue or a Dedication which establishes the feminist stand informing the work. The Prologue of *The Fair Captive* sets out Haywood's phallic initiative as a female playwright: "A Female Pencil draws the Lines to-night . . . and [males] in the audience should learn to pity then / A Woman's Sufferings, from a Woman's Pen." Similarly, the Prologue in *A Wife to be Lett* states, "A dangerous Woman-Poet wrote the Play . . . With manly Vigour, and with Woman's Wit." Even *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh*, the historical play about George II's
illustrious forebear, includes in the Dedication a reference to Haywood’s feminism: "So vast the Theme, it only can be felt! Nor ought a Person of my Sex to blush in confessing herself unequal to a Task, in which the most improved Genius of the Other would be found defective." Her choice of the phrase "the Other" to indicate males provides more than a hint that Haywood’s perspective as the "we" of "our Sex" dominated her presentation of dramatic worlds. The casts include a betrayed, abandoned woman, a female spectator if you will, who in disguise hides and silently watches the activities of male characters. Haywood very much aligns herself with this figure of the watcher, and her technique in point of view therefore gives scope to her feminist perspective.

Haywood’s "design" allows the establishment of male and female forces whose conflict prompts the dramatic action; moreover, the controlling structure she employs in her first work, The Fair Captive, remains the same in her succeeding dramas. The plays open in an outside setting with assorted stereotypical figures of male authority engaged in patriarchal ritual and ceremonies; using this opening to represent the forces bringing pressure on the females, Haywood displays male characters who require a pantheon of female myths, like the pure virgin, the fallen woman, the obedient daughter, the subjugated wife, the forgiving victim, the silent sufferer, among others.
Males exude a foppish incompetence and appear vaguely repulsive in their flabby use of the power with which they are invested. Including Frederick, Haywood’s men are interchangeable within the definition of their roles; from emperors, to archbishops, from viziers to soldiers, none is really exemplary, just as none is really evil. They conduct love affairs, propose marriage, and maintain a virile facade; however, they obtain their main chance to fame and riches through their use of a woman. The male characters are complacent figures who occupy masculine strongholds of power: army, home, court, church. Not one of the males, however, is good enough for Haywood’s women; not one provides compatibility, except on the lowest level of female expectations. Haywood presents no happy masculine ideal against which to contrast lesser men. Haywood’s male characters subvert order and right rule as they turn every possibility into their own advancement. Unlike Susanna Centlivre’s The Busy Body, or Aphra Behn’s Oroonoko, to name two examples of women writers whose works were enjoying revivals during the 1720s and 1730s, Haywood’s plays contain no exemplum of right action within male-dominated society. In clearing space for her women to topple the hierarchies, Haywood disrupts the old heroic ideal by portraying a vizier, an archbishop, an emperor, even a husband, not at all in control of themselves or other men, much less women. To give two examples,
Mustapha and Frederick, Haywood's most favourably depicted male characters, are governed by their passions, with their sleep broken by fearful dreams, bespeaking their unworthiness to rule. Haywood's men never live up to the potential of the titles they bear. No one believes, to give an instance, that Graspall the husband is reformed at the end of A Wife to be Lett, but we all understand the despair which Mrs. Graspall feels.

All the dramas begin in medias res at the moment when, in Virginia Woolf's words, "something in [the women] seems . . . to have brimmed and overflowed and uttered a demand for something . . . that is perhaps incompatible with the facts of human existence." Dramatic tragedy or comedy, the cruces occur when the male myth of the female runs head long into the truth of woman's reality; Haywood's plays center on the female predicament and female responses resulting from the clash. Introduced toward the end of the first act as living protests against the female images within the male pantheon, Haywood's women characters include one central woman, whom the authority figure has betrayed; in The Fair Captive and A Wife to be Lett, she has a double, a younger woman, whom the male has deflowered, metaphorically or literally, and abandoned. These doubles, betrayed by the men in their own families, become Haywood's watchers in male disguise, the only women who possess freedom to move in and out of
the container.\textsuperscript{21} In the course of dramatic action, her central characters progress from silence to speech, from victimization to aggression as Haywood draws on female characterization in the Restoration theatre. At a time when post-Restoration influences presented women on stage sentimentally, Haywood's characters hark back to an earlier time when open misogyny of Restoration theatre allowed for vigorous and outspoken female characters, eager to take on society. Contrasted to the males who make only shaky use of power, Haywood's women carry out the only effective action. Haywood's "dark design" involves a sort of stylized dance between the groups, with the males moving from outside to inside and back again; attempting to resist subjugation to the female myth which the males come inside to impose, the central females remain static, their actions at first limited to the environs of the container. Following a confrontation which results in an epiphany, they become aggressive and in a series of actions, are able to cut down the authority figure. To highlight these superwomen, Haywood includes, like a type of control group, male-constructed women, silent and passive "good girls," such as early Isabella and the harem in \textit{The Female Captive}, Marilla in \textit{A Wife to be Lett}, and Anna in \textit{Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh}. Even though Haywood does not depict females bonded in friendship, she does surround her central
characters in the first two plays with other women collectively oppressed by the system, although acting autonomously. Haywood expects them to grow with their experiences and to act in accordance with their feelings; Haywood does not question whether the women’s feelings are correct or even appropriate. It is enough that they honor their own responses. The dramas reflect a type of melancholia because we know just as the woman protagonist knows, that, in spite of her heroic actions, she will nonetheless lose the struggle. Not a voting member of the social contract, she helplessly sees the chaos of the patriarchy which will overwhelm her, if not immediately then later. Frustrated, Haywood’s central female goes mad or frenzied with sheer fury at societal injustice and seeks to obtain justice for herself, for other women, and, in Haywood’s final drama, for the state; by showing the corruption behind the title, the woman protagonist exerts every effort to expose the social wrongs against women. In Haywood’s only comedy, A Wife to be Lett, her central female character gains revenge, albeit temporarily, but Haywood’s tragedies end with the character’s final protest against the female myth. These women accept the price and condition of their gendered existence, even as they know it as the means by which men can categorize them as wife, widow, maid, or jade. The character also knows the price
she must pay to exercise sexual freedom; in Haywood’s dramas, if a woman puts out, she loses out.

In spite of the fact that Haywood’s first play, The Fair Captive, was an adaptation, her own words testify to the extent of her control of the structure and content. Haywood was paid to adapt the drama, originally written by "Captain Hurst," but as she states in the Advertisement to the Reader, "excepting in the Parts of Alphonso and Isabella, there remains not twenty lines of the Original." The Prologue and Epilogue both introduce Haywood’s themes of female subjugation with the Epilogue equating the essential imprisonment of English women contained by their cage-like steel "hoops" with the captivity of "Turkish" harem girls who sit "in passive Rows, all Day, / And musing cross-legg’d, stitch strange Thoughts away." By dramatizing the hollowness of the male authority, Haywood shows the reality behind male power: the public figure with five hundred women at his disposal is really a near­impotent Adam who, like the "warm Sun," can only rise once a day.

Haywood considers female experience in the Epilogue with its fiction that the "I" of the first-person narration is a harem girl "broke loose" who comes forward to testify what it means to be a "Turkish" wife. Her female voice is silenced, however, and she is not allowed to speak the truth of her experience as a woman; a male

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spokesman, "Aaron Hill Esq," appropriates her experience and narrates it himself. Set in exotic Constantinople soon after the Moslem defeat at Venice, the basic plot concerns the captive virgin Isabella, her captor the sexually-obsessed Vizier Mustapha, and her fiance Alphonso, whose arrival precipitates the play's action. The Sultan's daughter, Irene, whom Mustapha has married to gain his title, and Daraxa, whom Mustapha has deflowered and abandoned to marry Irene, work to prevent Mustapha's appropriation of yet another female body. Two officials, Ozmin and Achmat, plot to overthrow Mustapha's inept rule by appropriating Irene's and Daraxa's fury for their own purposes. Even with their limited freedom, Irene and Daraxa (in disguise) only pretend to be tools of revenge for Ozmin and Achmat as the women push against female myths and carry out their own design of self-identification and dignity. Haywood's central female characters have their own agenda to carry out political action: Irene refuses to become a second wife and lose her dignity as a princess royal; Daraxa refuses to accept Mustapha's rejection. Acting independently, the central female and her double successfully thwart the Vizier's plans to execute Alphonso, rape Isabella, and overthrow Irene's father the Sultan.

Haywood's title ostensibly refers to Isabella and Constantinople, both of which have been captured by the
Turks, but, she implies, all female characters (and apparently the female audience too) exist in captivity, to be used at male pleasure. In the first lines of the drama, Haywood introduces her disturbing description of female bondage and rape in a thinly disguised correlation between the Turkish capture of Greece and the plight of the play's (and England's) women. She lets Alphonso open the play with his female image of Greece as a woman with "[h]er ravished Freedom, and lost Estate" [sig. B lv]. Alphonso seems to salivate over this image of a silent woman submissive to masculine will, as she is raped by Turks pouring out of "Rocks" like "ravenous Beasts of Prey" [sig. B lv]. Haywood's forceful (and Freudian) presentation of males feeding on a female body reinforces her idea that sanctioned by patriarchal society, men advance politically and financially by the appropriation of a woman.

In the first act, Haywood projects a quick series of these images from virgin to whore, loaded with political and economic meaning. Alphonso is obviously a parody on the romantic hero, and Isabella is his icon whom he depicts in monetary and heavenly terms: she is worth more than "this extended Empire" [sig. B 2]; she is "Their Prize," and "an Angel's Frame" [sig. B lv]. Isabella becomes the baby whom he can silence "with Sounds of Love" [sig. C 2v] and, yet again, she is "despairing Ariadne.
... Expos'd" and he an "am'rous God" [sig. B 4v]./nVirginity her chief appeal, Isabella is mythicized, allowing Alphonso to glorify his actions in political and even religious terms: she is the Virgin Mary, the chalice of his quest, but she is also the "treasure" of gold [sig. B 1v]. For Ozmin and Achmat, however, women receive darker images. Daraxa is compared to a rank flower grown into a poisonous weed because she has subverted her femininity and seized the initiative in vengeance. To them, Irene is a Bathsheba-like character to whose "Bed" Mustapha waded "thro seas of Blood" [sig. B 3]. By placement of these references to blood, Haywood is able show that men identify women with death, blood, sex, and the potential for anarchy.

By playing with the definition of gender, Haywood's male group includes a man by courtesy only, Haly, the head eunuch; without testicles, he must seek political power without using a woman. A slave himself, mutilated by his master, he nonetheless knows his male gender makes him part of the social contract; his own status notwithstanding, he calls Isabella "the lovely Captive" [sig. C 2]. Because Haly and Daraxa in disguise join the ceremonies of masculine ritual, they are accepted as men by other men, as part of the Old Boys' network. Male characters seem to fear that their power over women will somehow be ended and their social empowerment lost; for
that reason, they bond trustingly with anyone who appears to be male, even a eunuch and a transvestite. While men may refer to woman in her mythic images as food, hunting prey, icon, and sexual vessel/vassal, she is most of all the enemy whom they fear.

At the end of the first act, with the introduction of Daraxa in male disguise, Haywood presents the female reality behind the female myth. Seduced by Mustapha her father's friend, Daraxa assumes a disguise which covers what she first calls her "Shame," and which later she values for the freedom it allows. In *The Fair Captive*, unlike the other two plays under consideration, Haywood shows her watcher relating to men privy to her true identity. Achmat and Ozmin discuss Daraxa's unsanctioned sexuality as something to be hidden, perhaps feared, like their plot to kill Mustapha and claim his throne; to her face, they spell out Daraxa's usefulness as a male tool and their "Way to Fame and Vengeance" [sig. B 4v]. At the same time, they see her rejection of female submissiveness and her invasion of the male preserve to be symptomatic of her corruption: "With the infectious Air of Scorn or Falshood, / Your very Nature changes to its contrary, / And kills the Stems, whose Roots it fed before" [sig. B 4v-C 1]. For Daraxa, however, a disguise brings freedom, while it also imparts the truth behind male deception. Because she is outside, Daraxa can speak freely and can

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reveal her hidden knowledge that "these Men, by their own Interest chiefly led, / Wou'd make my seeming Hate their plea for Ruin" [sig. C lv]. Defining female reality and giving voice to one of the major themes of all Haywood's dramas, she uses private reasons for her public actions against Mustapha: "he that so foully cou'd betray / A Maid who lov'd him, might betray the World" [Sig. C 1].

The three central women characters, Daraxa, Irene, and Isabella, exhibit different levels of speech, indicative of their resolve. With Daraxa's female voice silenced, she has much in common with the five-hundred harem women who, the Epilogue tells us, are watching silently. Haywood apparently depicts them as the ultimate feminine myth, neither seen nor heard and used only for male pleasure. Haywood projects Irene's voice alone in protest, but Isabella's voice develops during the course of events, as she becomes aware of her total disenfranchisement.

In the middle acts set within the seraglio, Haywood arranges movement from outside to inside the container, when males enter the female preserve: Ozmin comes in to kindle Irene's anger against Mustapha; Alphonso enters with Isabella to seek Irene's aid. As psychological growth precipitates her into aggression, Irene herself in turn invades Mustapha's royal apartments to force from him his intentions toward Isabella. Throwing off the
submissive image that society demands, Irene is compelled to speak the truth of her situation and to undercut his authority. Although she is aware of Mustapha's motivations, he unwittingly shows in his asides that, blinded by his male power, he knows nothing about female truth. Finally, she discards forever her mask of female obedience to a corrupt system and says "I no more will feign an Ignorance" [sig. C 4]. Goaded by Mustapha's babying words, "Now, now my Irene" [sig. C 4v], she tells him, in imperious third-person, that she sees the emptiness of his power:

Away, false Man!
Irene is not to be caught
By smooth-tongu'd Flattery, the Bait of Girls:
I see the Villain thro the fawning Courtier.
[sig. C 4v]

The Princess carries out a series of altruistic actions to restore justice, finally dying when she rescues Isabella from rape. In response to the fair captive's cries, Irene, disguised and hiding, swings into action: "It sends Thee Help in Me" [sig. I 2]. She refuses to submit to the female image, as the "prop" for male political pretences; having experienced life as a female hero telling the truth and enacting justice, she must make her final statement as a woman. When Mustapha thinking her an assassin stabs her, Irene recognizes the justice of her fate. Death frees her from the social contract, and her body is no longer the possession of Mustapha, as the
"prop [his] wild Ambition lean'd on" [sig. I 2v]. Her self-identity and dignity will be upheld in "the other World" where, she implies, women are equal to men and no longer for sale.

Haywood's two other women, less altruistic than Irene, nonetheless evolve from victim to avenger in toppling the hierarchy. Daraxa grows in character when she assumes male traits and power. In contrast to the static life of a female locked up and guarded, Daraxa in becoming not just a eunuch but a eunuch slave occupying an even lower social position, nonetheless as a "male" gains the right to physical activity and darts around carrying messages. Like Irene, she perceives the truth behind male words and dupes Ozmin and Achmat, setting her own political strategy. Silenced at first because she is a woman, then because she is a slave, Daraxa has only a few speaking lines, but references to her hidden activities tend to remind us that she is everywhere and invisible. Referring to herself as a "poor discontented Ghost," [sig. F 3v], Daraxa at the end repudiates her role as the watcher and takes up her identity as a woman, rushing inside to warn Mustapha of the plans to overthrow him. Significantly, Daraxa, removing her male disguise, stabs herself in the heart to "punish the Betrayer of my Honour" [sig. F 3v], because her trust in a man led to her downfall. Her own blood is the oblation for her sin,
which is not sexual, but rather her belief in a man’s love; she knows that death alone can remove her from the marriage plot in a society where only her sexuality gives her value. Daraxa dies too soon, however, because her father’s death and the Vizier’s have freed the women under their control for a time. Irene in The Fair Captive dies as a man, but Daraxa, throwing off her male disguise, finds the courage to die as a woman. Perhaps she originally brings the knife to stab Mustapha, but once there she can only fault herself for her sexual betrayal. Like Irene, her new role has revealed the tragedy of the female in the system and, after witnessing the patriarchy as a man with freedom and respect, she will not resume her former life as a woman.

The play’s good girl, Isabella, grows during the course of the play, and little by little, finds her own identity and is able to name her experiences. In two scenes, her responses to Alphonso illustrate the psychological growth she has achieved. At the beginning of the drama, Isabella, a patriarchal puppet, is abjectly submissive to her knight. Later, when he accuses her of being raped, calling her "Eve" and "tottering Fort," [sig. I 3v], Isabella’s psychological growth is most obvious in her sneer to him. She comes to speak of her own experience, finally realizing that "I want the Art to
trace beyond [men's] Words / Their meaning may be Vile, tho' seeming fair" [sig. H 4].

Although Irene with her last breath says, "The Sultan will avenge me" [sig. I 2], Haywood indicates that right order can never occur in Constantinople any more than it can in eighteenth-century England; the forces of chaos and misogyny are inherent in society exclusive in gender and class. Daraxa's prediction has come true. The Sultan is old, and the reins will drop any moment. Achmat and Ozmin are political thugs intent on seizing control; one can surely predict the usual sequence of events in revolution, retribution, and more revolution. The hollow posturing that Alphonso maintains in a room littered with bodies of dead women denotes considerable lack of male astuteness, and not one man realizes the meaning of what has transpired. Haywood, however, does not wring her hands about males clinging to the power invested in them by virtue of their gender. Irene recognizes the essential emptiness of social hierarchies, and rightly exposes the dreadfully flawed man behind Mustapha's title. Haywood's interest centers on the moment of truth when Irene, Daraxa, and Isabella must decide whether to embody the social construct or to project selfhood; they must choose between silence and speech.

Produced in 1723, two years after The Fair Captive, Haywood's A Wife to be Lett: A Comedy is her only comedy.
While the ending determines the play's category and the central female, Susanna, is able to establish at least temporary selfhood, Haywood's comedy nonetheless reflects the same dark view in *The Fair Captive*: within patriarchal society, a man possesses the bodies of women under his male authority and essentially progresses politically and financially by shrewd trading in female flesh. Haywood has not written a comedy of manners, nor is she interested in a comedy of morals; she studies women that she may study the society where masculine vice and violence against women go unremarked. The Epilogue (spoken by Haywood at the first performance) presents as its narrator, a female obviously part of English society and thoroughly familiar with the buying and selling of women. She warns women coyly to know "your own Worth," as if somehow they could barter themselves and pocket the proceeds, while she finds that the "wise" and "just" husband pays the wife directly for her "charms," like a prostitute. In the narration, Haywood draws the image of the "Miser, melting down his Wife" into coin of the realm and evaluating her at "Two Thousand Pounds" which would, on the male scales of right and wrong, "weigh against the heavy'st Horns in Nature." The projection of women as treasure brings in its train the idea of female captivity and containment, with men possessing the key that controls
the hoard, to be used, or saved, or passed from male to
male.

Set in Salisbury, the basic plot deals with six women
(three maids, two jades, and a widow): Susanna, rented by
Graspal to Beaumont; Celemena and Marilla, sold by Fairman
into marriage with Sneaksby and Toywell; Amadea, abandoned
by Beaumont. Because they also want to marry Celemena and
Marilla to obtain their fortunes, Courtly and Gaylove seek
to trick Sneaksby and Toywell into calling off their
respective engagements. Haywood's central female figure,
Susanna, the "Heroine," manages to retain self-
determination while she "Gains Glory by a hard, and
dangerous Way." Susanna, Amadea, and Celemena enact their
own political statements, thwarting the plans of Graspal,
Fairman, and Beaumont to buy or to sell women. The fifth
and sixth women, the Widow Stately and Dogood, prostitute
cum housekeeper, appear as Haywood's women free of male
domination and entrepreneurs in a subplot parodying
masculine behavior: Stately is interested in buying a bit
of young male flesh, and Dogood, for a price, assists her.

With the same structure she employs in *The Fair
Captive*, Haywood opens with males freely strolling in the
countryside and discussing women as treasure. Unlike the
first play, however, where Haywood employs a series of
female images, this drama dwells on one particular female
metaphor as coin of the realm, "golden beauties." United
in the myth of the upper middle class, Courtly and Gaylove speak of the world as a male preserve where women, once their marriage contract has made their husbands rich, are confined within four walls doing "Cookery, Pickling, and Preserving" in contrast to men in wide open spaces engaging in "Hunting, Hawking and Drinking" [sig. B 2]. This projection of the male as a new Adam in Eden, with Eve appropriately imprisoned, is personified by Sir Harry Beaumont, a "great Traveller" whose character is described in terms of his possessions: "from all the different Courts [he] brought with him every thing worth the wearing of a fine Gentleman" [sig. B 2]. Men pay lip service to the polite fiction of the woman as divine goddess, the possession of whom makes for the man "the loss of Liberty a Happiness" [sig. B lv]. But, of course, husbands are not the marriage partner who loses the freedom.

Celemena's "Life and Spirit" contain less attraction for Courtly and Gaylove, broke and in rustication from London creditors, than her image as an heiress.

With male ritual and ceremony, Courtly and Gaylove speak of Sir Harry Beaumont as a "fine Gentleman" with his "vast Estate" [sig. B 2]. Because they (like all the play's males) hold the image of woman as treasure, Courtly and Gaylove name a woman in relation to the male who possesses her and at the same time in relation to her putative dowry. The niece of Mr. Fairman ("[who] I
believe loves Money"), Marilla is the only surviving child of Fairman's brother [sig. B 1]. Her dead father has even reached beyond the grave to sell Marilla to Toywell (yet everyone acknowledges that he is a "Fop" who loves her "only for her fortune" [sig. B 1v ]). Mrs. Graspal is possessed by a husband, "the most covetous miserable Wretch that ever was" [sig. B 2v]; obviously the marriage was not her choice but, like the other women, she has been sold into matrimony.

When Haywood introduces Dogood, Amadea, and Susanna at the end of the first act, she provides variations on the female image as treasure, by showing the flip side. Sexually speaking, the first one has sold herself, the second has given herself, while Susanna, as the third one, is considering unsanctioned sex with Beaumont. Dogood embodies the entrepreneurial female who kept her profits, and now swears "by [her] maidenhead" [sig. B 3]. Outside the patriarchal setup, she is fallen and therefore able to rise, as freely as a man. She has without the benefit of clergy invested herself with a new name, in defiance of the patriarchal custom. When her prostitute business became risky, she adopted the image she now projects -- a solid middle-class citizen, with "a Gold Watch," like a man's.

Through the character of Amadea, seduced, abandoned, and now disguised as a man, Haywood again makes a
statement about male freedom and female constraint. Amadea, the watcher in man’s clothing, is a convincing male image who informs Susanna about perfidious Beaumont’s lust and does not care about Susanna’s sexuality as such; she just wants to keep Beaumont out of Susanna’s bed. When Susanna calls her Beaumont’s "mistress," Amadea claims she is "His Wife, if Vows can make me so" [sig. G1]. In the strained relationship between the two women, Haywood is able to get at the ideal of womanly chastity, an inborn quality according to patristic teachings. In spite of deep distrust of each other, Susanna and Amadea are not interested in the other’s morals and don’t bother to discuss Susanna’s lust or Amadea’s premarital sex; their silence on this topic is more resounding than speech. They know that chastity is just another male trick to fool women. As Susanna walks outside, symbolically free and now possessed of revelations about Beaumont’s past actions of love ‘em and leave’ em, she realizes her own entrapment in the ultimate female image of "Duty":

O! to what Fate are wretched Women born!
Condemn’d to Slavery, tho’ conscious of superior Merit, and bound to obey the severe Dictates of a very Fool, when e’er the Name of Husband gives ‘em Force. [sig. B 4v]

Following her tight structure of setting middle acts inside the female preserve, Haywood depicts the image-bound, duty-bound, house-bound woman for whom the entry of
males, roaming about freely, means both distraction and doom. In her comedy, Haywood is able to pursue the idea of man as the only distraction in the monotony of female existence. Celemena sees Gaylove in precisely that way, although she is satiric about his greed for her money. Men seem oblivious that women are lonely; husbands, suitors, male friends never come into Haywood's houses to visit or play cards and certainly never simply to converse with women; males enter only to impose their will and to trade for what they want. Beaumont and Toywell (who have money) want Susanna for her body; Courtly and Gaylove want Marilla and Celemena for their money; the servant Shamble (now "Sir Shamtown of Shamtown Hall") wants Widow Stately for her money, while she wants his body; and Graspal disdains his wife's body but wants Beaumont's money, his "golden beauties."

Celemena and Amadea exhibit different levels of voice, with their propensity to speak indicative of their resistance against the system. Although women name each other simply with Marilla, for instance, calling Celemena "cousin," Dogood with her "Change of Habit" also "shifted [her] Name" [sig. B 4]. In course of the play, women only refer to each other by their virgin names, not by their married names. Amadea, speaking only in her male disguise, is silenced as a woman, and Celemena, in spite of her cynicism, has been silenced as a "good girl" [sig.
D 2]. Widow Stately and Dogood speak frankly but only Dogood, with her criminal connections, may speak honestly, so to speak, with a fellow crook.

Aided by the watcher, Susanna is left to struggle against patriarchal control as she slowly realizes Graspal's real power. Because she is a woman, she has no rights under "Covert-Baron" in English law. There is great irony in the first act, when Susanna refers to the danger presented to women by the "meaner" sort of soldiers, and expresses her gratitude that their potential evil is controlled by "officers" and gentlemen, like her husband. Haywood builds up to Susanna's confrontation with Graspal, by including at the beginning of Act III, Dogood's reference to Widow Stately's "old Broadpieces, that have not seen the Sun these forty Years" [sig. E 4]. With the idea of a woman's sexuality as treasure to be used, the lighthearted double entendres between Toywell and Beaumont about the use of Graspal's "library" bear dark interpretations indeed when Graspal actually sells Susanna. Haywood provides foreshadowing of the ugly reality when, attempting to rape Susanna within her own home, Toywell says to the struggling woman, "I can stop your Mouth" [sig. D 4] and viciously knocks her backward against a closet door, with enough force to jar it open.

The confrontation at the climax between Susanna and Graspal discloses that to him, her body, like his "Sword,"
is "useless" [sig. F 4]; he acknowledges that she is only "a Grace to [his] House" [sig. F 4]. We realize for the first time that he has not consummated the marriage and that Susanna's virginity is what he is selling. Graspal wants to exchange Beaumont's "golden beauties" for "free Ingress, Egress and Regress" [sig. F 4] of Susanna. Like Irene, Susanna can only try to force his hand and getting the last line, collapses his public power into private wickedness:

Wife. And would you be a Cuckold?
Grasp. Two thousand Pounds, Pudsy.
Wife. Despis'd and pointed at.
Grasp. Two Thousand Pounds. --
Wife. Become the publick Scorn, and all for Gain, a little trifling Trash.
Grasp. Why what dost thou value thy Virtue at?
Wife. Thou mak'st thyself a wretched, wicked Fool. [sig. F 4v - G 1].

Knowing Graspal has told Beaumont that he is going to "force the Box [of gold]" and has recommended that Beaumont "take the same Method if he pleases" [sig. H 2], Susanna is rescued from rape by Amadea, forced out of hiding and out of her disguise as a man. In spite of knowing Beaumont to be a ravisher of women, she wants only "the dear false Rover to reclaim" [sig. G 1v]. Amadea's situation is left with much unexplored and unresolved; the reconciliation scene notwithstanding, Amadea's future with the indecisive Beaumont will be smooth only as long as her face remains so.
As the third of the central females, Celemena is immured like the harem girls. She speaks of "reason" and the truth of Marilla's bondage to Toywell: her "Vow [to her dead father] was forc'd and consequently not binding" [sig. C 4]. Courtly and Gaylove as they come in and out trying to gain Celemena and Marilla for themselves put a good face on the obvious, but Celemena's cynicism parodies romantic conventions. She knows her marriage is determined by a man only wanting her fortune, and she recites her bitterness mockingly in Heroic couplets: "When sympathizing Grief o'erspreads the Plains, / And Shepherds mourn your Fate in rural Strains; / When my Disdain's the Theme of every Song, / And Celemena hangs on every Tongue" [sig. D 1]. The idea of marriage by choice does not fit the male schema, and Celemena knows it: "you speak the Charms of Liberty to a Galley-Slave" [sig. D 2]. The woman's intelligence makes Celemena one of Haywood's truly tragic women, even more pitiable than Susanna. Celemena has no recourse to being sold in marriage to effeminate Sneaksby and, when Gaylove manages to break the engagement, she says that "[s]o to escape one Slavery, I must throw myself into another, which, for ought I know, may be as bad" [sig. F 2]. Celemena's progress psychologically from victim to aggressor, perhaps ameliorates her fate in marriage. Pushing outward against the parameters, she says "I'll lay aside the Woman for
once" [sig. I 2], and gives her own hand to Gaylove. Her tone of bravado, however, cannot hide the tragic truth of her position outside the society that controls her.

Like the Jacobean dramatists, Haywood arranges the banquet of reconciliation at play's end, but she purports to show that for women, justice is a bitch. Depicting Graspal, Fairman, Beaumont as slave traders in female flesh, Haywood once again exhibits the corrupted hierarchies of the social contract. In the drama, husbands are impotent, soldiers are effeminate, and noble titles are bought, not Divinely invested. The widow, independent of male restrictions, suddenly discovers that her young husband is a sham knight. But she keeps him for his sexual potency, saying that he's "wedded [her] and bedded [her]" [sig. K 4] so thoroughly that she "could not rise today" [sig. K 3v]. Although Amadea and Susanna expose Graspal's plan to "lett" his wife, he himself uses the banquet incredibly to search out another buyer for his wife's body. Graspal, with mock repentance, falls to his knees before the company, and Susanna must shore up her elder to restore some sort of order, stating "Rise, Sir, this is not a Posture for a Husband" [sig. K 3v]. But the woman in projecting her own selfhood has won only a temporary reprieve; to gain a modicum of freedom under English law, she must only wait for Graspal's death. Haywood is not concerned with Graspal's life or death,
however. She maintains her interest in that moment of realization when Susanna, Celemena, and Amadea push outward against the society restricting them.

Haywood's third play, *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh*, [1729] contains her strongest feminist statement about women in society. The work is an early example of the docu-drama, historical facts being altered and the female protagonist created to suit Haywood's fictional purpose, notwithstanding the Dedication, Preface, and Prologue which ostensibly honors the "Good, the gen'rous, and the Great" forebear of Britain's new king, German-born George II. Haywood's drama narrates as history the events of Frederick's election as Holy Roman Emperor and his assassination by his nobles in 1400. Plotting to kill the emperor to prevent his coronation, Count Waldec, nephew to the wicked archbishop of Mentz, and his aide Ridolpho hope to retain the spoils of the corrupted empire. The two men attempt to use Waldec's sister Adelaid, abandoned by Frederick to marry a Saxon princess, as a weapon against him. About to be sold in marriage by Waldec and her uncle, the evil archbishop, to regain the family fortune, Adelaid goes mad, hiding and spying on Frederick. She brushes aside Waldec's attempts to sell her to Duke Wirtemburgh and to use her as a weapon to assassinate the emperor. Adelaid, having discovered her brother's plot to kill Frederick and faced with
betraying either Waldec or Frederick, hesitates too long and causes Frederick's death.

The drama opens in front of the Reichstag where his supporters speak of Frederick in Divine terms, calling him "the great Redeemer," and "Godlike Frederick," [sig. B lv]. In accord with the play's intent to flatter, Frederick and his supporters are grandly noble, "Lords of all Creation" [sig. D 6], but, for all that, never rise above stock figures. Haywood interestingly employs no female images, relying rather on the audience's knowledge of the social contract and the images of women it implies. Instead, introducing Adelaid early in the first act, Haywood plays with male gender in feminizing Waldec who says when plotting Frederick's death: "Now do I feel what Women do, who long / For Pleasures unexperienced, and forbid" [sig. B 4]. Adelaid is portrayed as far more masculine than any of the strutting military types. She enters the first act as belligerently feminist, defining aloud the system thwarting her: "Oh! why does Custom, (Tyrant over Reason) / Confine to Man alone all great Decisions? / Woman more resolute, more bold, more daring, / Yields not her Purpose till by Force compell'd" [sig. B 4v]. Adelaid is alone at the center of the drama, the watcher and the sole activist against political and social corruption. Frederick's election has become the
precipitating cause for Adelaid's involvement, and the woman fights for her own dignity, especially after she realizes that she may need to become an attendant to Anna and be "[a] humble gazer on her Splendor... [filling] the number of her Train" [sig. B 6]. The central character, Adelaid, though she is on the brink of "perfect Madness" [sig. B 5], retains her own voice throughout. When Waldec proposes that she marry to recoup the family's losses, Adelaid is busy defining her own situation: Of all the Passions / None sure so stormy in a Woman's Breast, / As Hate, arising from ill-treated Love" [sig. B 5].

Betrayed by every social institution on which she should rely, like the church in the person of the archbishop, government represented by Waldec and Frederick, even by her body servant Sophia, Adelaid, unlike Haywood's other central women with their doubles, is totally alone. Haywood does not gather her women as support groups; rather, she shows very clearly that the class system functions strongly against women, who being highly placed, are sequestered more completely. Adelaid, aware of the doom awaiting her spinsterhood, balances that fate against marriage, knowing that marriage offers her nothing, except another master: "A slave she is, and still a slave remains" (sig. B 6). When Adelaid confronts Frederick at the climax in act three, she pits herself against a man whose forty small minutes of power already
make him speak in the royal "we." Enraged, Adelaid reduces Frederick's greatness to private betrayal, as she portrays the reality of his behavior: she was a "helpless Maid" with easy "Faith" who believed his "betraying Vows" [sig. B 8v]. Frederick's smooth reply shows his duplicity and his attitude that women are of no account: "Adelaid boasts a more just Discernment, / Than to mistake th' unmeaning Gallantries, / Which Youth to Beauty pays for serious Courtship" [sig. B 8v]. In other words, she was stupid to believe him, and should be honored to have served as a sort of a sexual teething-ring. As a result, her desire to level him arises from his open acknowledgement that she, as a woman, is a non-person. When Adelaid equivocates over revealing the death plot to Frederick, there is the insinuation in her delay that she is weighing his life against his reality. Like Daraxa, she knows that a man capable of betraying a maid has indeed already betrayed the world. Anna and Sophia, the other central women characters, rarely rise above stereotype, and they speak as man-constructed women, rather like Marilla in A Wife to be Lett, acquiescent in their place as women, outside the social contract. Sophia appears to be the stereotypical nurse, reminding Adelaid that Anna who "yielded but to her Duty" [sig. B 5v] was sold to Frederick as a political pawn. A tool of the patriarchy, however, Sophia can only act like a male-
constructed "good girl" toward Waldec when she mincingly hands over Adelaid’s secret letter to Frederick: "'Tis fit indeed / Your Lordship should be Judge" [sig. D 7]. Anna, though, begins the play promisingly when she greets Frederick with "But what is Empire . . . when poiz’d / Against the weightier Virtues of the Mind?" [sig. C 1v]. Only on one other occasion does Anna speak in her own person: "it [were] permitted for my Sex to wield / The massy Spear, or draw the glitt’ring Steel" [sig. C 2v]. After this point, Anna is silenced; perhaps Haywood’s need to flatter the monarch resulted in these passive-aggressive aspects to the character. Called to witness Frederick’s death, however, Anna reclaims fully her subjugation within the patriarchy when she faints and is reminded by the nobles of her only value to the system as mother to her "blooming Offspring" [sig. E 5v], heirs to the throne.

In spite of the historical nature of the play, Haywood manages to focus, not on Frederick, but on Adelaid. Her crusade for justice denies and overthrows "Custom’s Duty" which the play’s traditional women stiffly obey. Once she has decided to fight the social system, male designs have no effect on Adelaid’s autonomy; she brushes aside attempts to sell her in marriage. Like Haywood’s other women who confront their disenfranchisement at a crucial juncture, she simply will
never again be controlled. Her resolve contrasts with male incompetence, and the more elevated the male status, the greater his incompetence. Frederick possesses too much machismo to have body guards, and he is killed. Noble Waldec, with his last breath cravenly blaming everything on Adelaid, has bungled the assassination of his emperor and is killed himself. Although she bemoans her part in Frederick's death, Adelaid achieves what she set out to do, and further, Haywood does not allow her to die at play's end. Adelaid leaves the stage, calling on fate to take her life, but the words are stylized responses. The stage is littered with male bodies whose deaths have just freed her from the imprisonment of gender and class. There is no male left living to impose society's restrictions, and Adelaid can continue to live independently. Her former suitor, the nice-guy Wirtemburgh, credits outside forces with her recent activities as a woman in control: "spirits bring a man-like resolve to Adelaid" [sig. C 4v]. He sounds as if he is whistling in the dark. Having caught a terrifying glimpse of the reality of female power within Adelaid, Wirtemburgh begins to understand the female potential for toppling all the hierarchies. Only in this final tragedy, does Haywood have a man pay tribute to the power of her protagonist, and she creates her only non-threatening man to acknowledge Adelaid's ability in directing political
affairs and penetrating male deceptions. But even he is made nervous by the discovery and entertains a false hope that "Adelaid seems different from her Sex" [sig. C 4v]. Having manipulated history to add the character Adelaid, Haywood employs her to symbolize the potential for greatness in all women, and she indicates thereby that Adelaid is precisely not different "from her Sex."

In the evolution of Haywood's dramas, her first play presents the protagonist Irene and her double Daraxa who defy society, provide public justice but, after all, die in protest of their lives as women. In her second drama, Susanna and her double Amadea, as befits a comedy, carry on at play's end and also restore a sort of order. We know, nonetheless, that their dismal future as women can only be relieved by a series of male deaths. By 1729, Haywood's protagonist in Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburg has become so advanced that she plays a lone hand, with no double. In addition, Adelaid is depicted as the savior of the western world, for she weighs her decision to save her brother or to save her emperor. In the end, she chooses to save neither.

One way to study the clearly defined evolution of Haywood's treatment of gender issues within society involves consideration of The Opera of Operas; or Tom Thumb the Great, her final known attempt at playwriting. Notwithstanding the fact that Haywood, along with Hatchett
and the musician Frederick Lampe, adapted Fielding’s *The Tragedy of Tragedies*, she was perhaps the most important reviser. Much of the play’s adaptation involves no more than placing some of Fielding’s original lines in quatrains and setting them to music. There are exceptions, however, where lines are added, especially toward the end; for one of the thirty-three airs and the final three pages give every indication of being Haywood’s work. In these sections, the play shifts to include some of the issues that Haywood typically invests in her dramas. The air that she wrote for the piece employs images of the body and corruption as part of the mercantile system:

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My body’s like a bankrupt’s shop,
My creditor is cruel death,
Who puts to trade of life a stop.
And will be paid with this last breath.
Oh! [sig. E 3v]
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This same unpleasant imagery appears in Glumdalca’s speech: "I’m all a Hurricane, as if / The World’s four Winds were pent within my Carkass. / Confusion! Horror! Murder! Guts and Death" [sig. D 2]. While women characters (the Queen, the Princess Huncanmuca, and the captured giantess-Queen Glumdalca) appear in both the original and the adaptation, the emphasis in Fielding’s work remains to the end on the mysterious figure of Tom Thumb, swaggering military hero and newly made lord. In *The Opera of Operas*, there is a general shift to Tom as
symbol for male incapacity and silliness. Haywood’s song that she substitutes for the King’s dark verse in Fielding’s original is significant:

A monarch, when his people’s gone,
Would look but awkward on a throne.
With pleasure then resign thy crown,
Since all thy subjects are o’er thrown.
What signifies it to survive,
When only thou art left alive? [sig. E 4v]

This idea of an empty center marginalizing to valorize its own power, informs much of Haywood’s work, and we note with interest that she uses this argument to resurrect the hierarchy.

As her problem in devising the musical version of Fielding’s work must have been chiefly in the transition between the two, Haywood employs Fielding’s technique of blurring drama and reality through the use of stage-craft. She contrives a transition from the Fielding version to her own through the means of spokesmen who come forward over the dead body of the king, as he dies in Fielding’s original, and discuss with each other and the audience the actions up to that point. Sir Crit-Operatical finds the opera’s ending to be "stupid, irregular, bloody . . . Banquet of dead Bodies" and not at all the happy ending of an Italian opera [sig. F 1]. Modely, the other spokesman, seems to speak for the writer for he says that the opera is indeed not over, and a resurrection will come to pass.
Merlin appears, waving his wand, and Tom Thumb's rebirth occurs through the body of a cow. When he emerges, the others arise, and the transformation is complete. The king is established at the head of government, and the queen is stuck with him. Glumdalca seems to resign herself with the reality of her situation and decides to marry Grizzle, who is "but half a Giant" [sig. F 2]. Huncamunca is tired of "abstaining," so agrees to have sex with Tom, who, "in the fit," is already talking about being only as "constant as times go" [sig. F 2v].

Like Fielding in his version, Haywood has raised questions she will not answer. The promise of the first half of the play and the total usurpation of male domination is not fulfilled, in spite of the fact that the best man is a midget and the best woman is a giantess in a world where, according to traditional male standards, size counts. Men are only "half" what they should be, while the women are twice their size. With Haywood continuing the structure established by Fielding, women establish a shadow government and run their own affairs while the men engage in war or gallentries. The queen, who says frankly, "I am half seas over," escapes through drinking, and to thwart her growing power, the king keeps her drunk:
When your dames of Superior class,
Submit to the pow'r of drams,
This virtue attends the kind glass,
It makes 'em quiet as lambs.
If then without Brandy, or Rum,
Your Wives will not study to please,
Let 'em swill till they're tight as a drum
Or they'll live the longer to teaze.  [sig. B lv] 23

By these appalling methods, the traditional hierarchy, nonetheless, reigns supreme at the end. We know when Merlin says, "Now King, now Lords, now Commons, all arise" (42) that male rule has been re instituted. While Tom and the King, except for expiring, do not change at all during the course of the play, the women do, for they move from revolution to death to resignation, restricted by the hierarchy that is seemingly indestructible. A chorus, obviously male, ends the play, celebrating the restoration of man on top: "let each his own wife kiss in peace" [sig. F 2v].

Through structure and characterization in The Fair Captive, A Wife to be Lett, and Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh, Eliza Haywood provides studies of women seeking rights as individuals in a society where gender, like class, disenfranchises them. Structured according to an inside-outside design providing metaphorical depiction of female constraint and male freedom, Haywood's plots revolve around the moment of explosion when her central women characters push against the what-is of society and impose their own justice on the
patriarchy. Parodying men's images of themselves as the stereotypical brave hero, wise ruler, good husband, Haywood explores complexity in female personalities. In a world where only males can control money from which they receive their identification, the female characters, ritually denied monetary access, show what a woman can achieve, nonetheless. Haywood's dramas present women as whole humans, defined by something other than their genitalia; her woman protagonist is more than wife, widow, maid, or jade. In the face of male pretensions, greed, and stupidity responsible for social chaos, women's struggle for real order and individual rights gains sympathy and importance. Seeking respect for themselves, they grow and never doubt their female perspective, especially when they "lay aside [their] Woman" and aim for righting social wrongs. They gain strength and knowledge from their losses. By assuming disguises, the doubles achieve masculine power, become voting participants in the social contract, and carry out the ideals of traditional gentlemanly behavior. Irene, Susanna, and Adelaid define their own realities by illuminating the sham nature of the authority that society grants control over them; in their hands, the great man, whether vizier, emperor, or husband, is revealed to be a Tom Thumb, a little man, who can only achieve power by objectifying a woman. Graspal falls just as Mustapha and Frederick die, not destroyed by their
paltry sex drives, political failures, or even character flaws, but ultimately by their arrogant and systematic denial of female reality and rights.


The biographies of Haywood also contain brief references to her dramas with Schofield's account containing, as well, a view of her women characters. While Haywood's dramas receive only scorn in Whicher's biography and, to mention only one, in Robert Hume's The Rakish Stage, no works, until Pearson's, Cotton's, and (especially) Williamson's considerations, seriously evaluate the literary merits of Haywood's dramas.

3 Janet Todd, The Sign of Angellica: Women Writing and Fiction 1660-1800 (London: Virago, 1989), states, "Whatever else writing women did to keep themselves, very few indeed achieved real affluence and complete respectability. None reached the heights of Samuel Richardson, the well-to-do printer, or of Henry Fielding, the justice of the peace." Her comments go on to include the quote from the seventeenth-century spy Mary Tonkin, unwilling to bear the additional disgrace of being a literary woman: "I am no writer" (134).

5 Tatler. 23 April 1709. Poems by Richard Savage are inserted as introductory material to *Love in Excess* and *The Rash Resolve* (1724), like similar verses by James Sterling, provide a saccharine portrait of Haywood as writer but do not refer to the woman herself: "You sit like Heav’n’s bright Minister on High, / Command the throbbing breast, and wat’ry Eye . . . the Proxy of vindictive Heav’n." A much more flattering depiction surprisingly occurs in *The Female Dunces. Inscribed to Mr. Pope* (1733). Whicher’s biography, *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Havwood*, (New York: Columbia U P, 1915), identifies Haywood as the subject of the anonymous quatrain: "Eliza good Examples shews in vain, / Despis’d and laugh’d at by the vicious Train; / So bright she shines, she might adorn a Throne / Not with a borrow’d Lustre, but her Own"(18).


Whereas Elizabeth Haywood, Wife of the Reverend Mr. Valentine Haywood, eloped from him her Husband on Saturday the 26th of November last past, and went away without his Knowledge and Consent: This is to give Notice to all persons in general, That if any one shall trust her either with money or Goods, or if she shall contract Debts of any kind whatsoever, the said Mr. Haywood will not pay the same.

Haywood’s disappearance, apparently, was delayed in being reported; for, in 1715, Eliza Haywood must have already left his bed and board as she was in Dublin, acting the part of Chloe in Shadwell’s very free adaptation of *Timon of Athens*, performed in Dublin’s Smock Alley. Perhaps the notice, given the evidence I provide about the 1721-22 birth date of Haywood’s first illegitimate child, is meant to provide public distance between Reverend Mr. Haywood and his wife whose pregnancy with another man’s child, in addition to her writing and acting, was more than he and his parishioners could bear.

Pope’s other comment about Haywood as one of the “scribbling women” has appeared in many criticisms of his works, with the ironic result that, thanks to Pope, Haywood’s name has remained in currency.

8 Savage’s about-face is mentioned by Whicher, p. 110. The attack appears in Savage’s "The Authors of the Town; a Satire." Inscribed to the Author of the Universal Passion in 1725. Whicher also makes reference to Haywood’s drop in public esteem.

9 Haywood’s connection with Curll would have caused contemporary scandal even for a woman of her scarlet reputation. He was called "odious in his person, scandalous in his fame," and infamous for publishing indecent material, along with dishonest practices. According to Dudden, he was censured at the bar of the House of Lords; in 1728, he was fined and pilloried for publishing pornography. Fielding attacked him in The Champion (1 March 1740), in an article that cited a recent spurious publication and remarked the public would have been tricked except that Curll was "too well known to have any such attempt suspected, both from the nicety of his conscience and his judgement" (1: 49-50).

10 I base my calculations on the account of box office receipts and ticket sales 1721-1729, included in The London Stage, Part Three. I estimate that Haywood earned around 500 pounds sterling, a figure that includes her revenues from four author’s benefit performances. The dates and the totals for her Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields Theatre performances are: The Fair Captive on 4, 6, 7 May, 16 Nov (2 benefits), 1721 with a total of 166 pounds, 55 shillings and 18 pence; Frederick. Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh on 4, 5, 6 March (benefit), 1729 with a total of 178 pounds, 49 shillings, 18 pence. A Wife to be Lett was performed in 1723 at the Drury Lane Theatre, but those accounts do not appear in Scouten’s references. He uses only John Rich’s account books from Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields. One can estimate that three performances of A Wife to be Lett at the Drury Lane on 12, 13, 14 August (a benefit), brought Haywood 150 pounds, at the very least.


12 British Library Add. Ms. 4293 ff 82.

13 Gabrielle M. Firmager, "Eliza Haywood: Some Further Light on her Background?" (Notes and Queries June 1991) questions the authenticity of the second letter quoted (181-83). Haywood’s handwriting in the second letter does exhibit considerable variance. The size and smoothness of
the handwriting, however, may simply reflect ideal writing conditions or her good health. Or, as Firman suggests, Haywood dictated the letter, which I find the most likely. The factor on which I based my judgment concerning the manuscript is her signature. The writing of "Haywood" in the second letter resembles in points of comparison, the "Haywood" signature in the first letter and in samples known to be hers. I refer to six receipts for payment which resulted from her sale of the stage history to Nourse, and housed at the British Library (Add. Ms. 38728 ff 112, 113). See endnote #18.

14 Given the evidence above, we see that Haywood was hard-pressed to support her growing family, and she was shouldering the responsibility alone. It is fair to state that Haywood could not have made the children legitimate through her marriage to their (unknown at present) father, even if she had been so inclined. She remained married to the Reverend Mr. Haywood until he died, apparently; a review of documents from the House of Lords and currently housed in the Bodleian Camera reveals nothing about the Haywoods' marital status. Divorce actions between 1720-1746 (the latter year marking Valentine Haywood's death) passed into law by the House of Lords do not include the Haywoods'. Ecclesiastical sources likewise produce no evidence. Westminster Cathedral Muniment Room records do not reveal any indication of the only formal separation available to a priest, that is, Articles of Separation. Lambeth Palace Archives, containing biographical and employment records of priests in the London dioceses, contain nothing to show Mr. Haywood's marital status. According to records of St. John's College, Oxford University, Father Haywood, an alumnus, remained a curate in London. Later, he was made priest of St. Matthew's Church on Friday Street, where he served between 1711 and 1729. St. Matthew's is a small, undistinguished church, still standing in Cheapside about a mile from St. Paul's churchyard where her bookseller, J. Roberts, had his shop. On her way to collect her profits from Roberts, she may have passed her husband's church and rectory often.

Later he became the minister of Great St. Helen Bishopsgate. Finally in 1736, he became Lady Moyes's Lecturer, an honorary post. This fact of advancement appears quite significant for its indication of Mr. Haywood's reputation, unspoiled by notoriety. His one work, An Examination of Dr. Clarke's Scripture-Doctrine of the Trinity, with a Confutation of it, published in 1719, reflects his extreme conservatism, as the work argues, a point of theology about the Father-Son-Holy Spirit Trinity that no orthodox Anglican/Episcopalian would want to refute.
No ecclesiastical or academic record of Haywood's life, however, contains any reference to his marriage, much less to a divorce or separation or even to his wife, Eliza Haywood. The archive staff at Lambeth Palace library speculated, during an interview on 3 August, 1990, that Father Haywood's bishop would never have allowed him a divorce. Had the priest pursued one, he would have been as notorious as his wife and undoubtedly have been defrocked.

15 In the 1782 edition of Biographia Dramatica, D[avid] Erskine Baker states in the entry entitled "Hatchett, William": "This author was a performer on the stage, though he seems never to have arisen to much eminence in that profession. He acted a part in his first play, as did Mrs. Haywood, with whom he lived upon terms of friendship." Hatchett is further mentioned as reviser of The Fall of Mortimer, which Wilbur Cross in The History of Henry Fielding calls "the boldest attack that the stage has had yet made upon the Prime Minister" (I: 107-108). See chapter six, part two, "William Hatchett."


In 1734, Haywood sold her copyright for two volumes of The History of the British Theatre. Part of the legal document is illegible, making unclear some of the words inserted between the lines. The Westminster Abbey Muniments representative interprets the document's reference to Haywood's address as "St. Margates," to be a corruption of "St. Margaret's." Vestry records for 1756 in volume entitled "St. Margaret's Westminster Register of Weddings 1751-54, Baptism 1750-69, Burials 1749-69" show that Haywood did indeed reside in St. Margaret's parish and that her funeral occurred on 3 March 1756 at St. Margaret's church, with burial in the churchyard. Her funeral expenses of eight shillings, six pence, indicate that Haywood lived modestly but did not die in poverty.

One matter is clear, however; at a time when Pope could command around three hundred pounds for a copyright, Haywood sold several volumes of theatre history for sixteen pounds, four shillings, an amount demeaning in its niggling calculation. The document transferring her copyright in its entirety reads:

Memorandum this 15th day of March 1734 it is agreed on and between Eliza Haywood of St. Margates Westminster of the one part and Francis Cogan and John Nourse of the City of London Booksellers of the other part that in consideration of the sum of sixteen pounds four shillings in hand paid unto the said Eliza
Haywood the Receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged the Said Eliza Haywood has sold unto the said Francis Cogan and John Nourse the Copy Right of a Book intitled [sic] the History of the British Theatre [inserted: "containing an acc’f of forty five plays"] at the Request of the Said Fran. Cogan and J Nourse [illegible insertion], the said Eliza Haywood shall immediately assign over to them all her the Said Eliza Haywood Right Title Interest Claim Demand or Pretence whatsoever to the Copy and Copy Right of the Said Book for ever by such Instrument as they shall be advised is proper and sufficient for the purpose. [Signed] Eliza Haywood

[Addendum: 1745 Sept. 26. Receiv’d of Mr. John Nourse two pounds four shillings in full for my share of the above copy. [Signed] Francis Cogan. Witness Charles Corbett]

The addendum was signed by a witness, Charles Corbett. It is not clear whether or not Haywood was present at the signing of the Addendum. If the witness was the book seller by the same name and Haywood was present, then Corbett lied in his deposition about Haywood’s 1749 pamphlet. He stated that he had not seen her for ten years, but this document would show that to be untrue, for he saw her in 1745 when he witnessed Cogan’s signature, assuming she was present. (See chapter six, part II "William Hatchett.")


18 My interpretation of Haywood’s feminist politics has generally been influenced by Patricia Ann Myers Spacks, Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U P, 1976), and by Louise Westling, Sacred Groves and Ravaged Gardens: The Fiction of Eurora Welty, Carson McCullers, and Flannery O’Connor (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1983). Westling especially emphasizes women’s existence inside the container, both home and garden, while men remain free to roam outside. Although Spacks’s and Westling’s works do not deal with Haywood or her dramas, their observations about women’s literature have helped to inform my overall evaluation of Haywood and her women protagonists.


21 Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Cross-Dressing and Re-Dressing: Transvestism as Metaphor" *Sex Changes: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale U P, 1989), 324-376, with references to pages 330-332 especially. My interpretation of Haywood's female spectators and transvestites has profited from this essay.


23 In the late 1740s and early 1750s, Haywood either repented her previous erotic writings, or recognized that to make money she needed to join in the moral fervor in England. During this time, she published four advice pieces: *The Husband, The Wife, A Present for a Serving Maid*, and a small work, attribution by the British Library, interestingly entitled *To Women Who are Addicted to Drink*. In a general and informal survey of Haywood's novels and periodicals, especially *The Female Spectator* directed at a reading audience of middle-class women, one notes that Haywood incorporates little lectures on women's faults which she defines as gossip, love of parties and finery, gambling, and sexual incontinence, but nowhere does she discuss the problem of female alcoholism. One cannot avoid making a connection between *To Women Who are Addicted to Drink* and "Air II" in *The Opera of Operas*. The air quite possibly was composed by Haywood, but questions remain. On the one hand, in referring to the drinking habits of the Queen, was Haywood capitalizing on her own reputation for drinking, as she had capitalized on her reputation for sexual licentiousness in her previous works for the stage? She originally appeared as the alcoholic Queen Dollabella in Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, and her adaptation continues the characterization, with Haywood adding the versification. On the other hand, was Haywood only being topical with reference to the contemporary English problem of the masses drinking gin and their masters drinking brandy? The problem of gin consumption and the growing number of dramshops in London was current; in 1736, Lord Hervey described it as stated "The drunkenness of the common people was so universal, . . . that the whole town of London . . . swarmed with drunken people of both sexes from morning to night."
Gin Act to control and license retailers passed in the spring of 1736.

As evidence against Haywood's composition of the air, her twenty known poems have nothing in common with this doggerel verse. Haywood's poetry is thematically serious, even her light verses to Hilarius (Aaron Hill); she adopted a male persona, or at least, spoke in a male voice, while her themes, classical references, and vocabulary show influences of traditional poets, such as Dryden and Milton.
CHAPTER FIVE
CHARLOTTE CHARKE

Puppeteer, dancer, singer, actor, writer at the Little Theatre, Charke (1712?-1760) specialized in playing both male and female roles, at first on stage and then in life.¹ With her duality as Charlotte Charke/Charles Brown, she embodied the paradigm of gendered complexity of self and society in the eighteenth century. As I shall argue, she slipped back and forth between mirror images of male and female, a kind of ying and yang, while she balanced on the margins of society and gender. Furthermore, Charke wrote about her duality in order to interpret her own history, to document her own social ideals, and thereby committed a combination of sins for which literary criticism has since held her accountable. This chapter attempts to study the works of Charke as social protest invested with her own duality; for she speaks in fictional autobiography and autobiographical fiction as man and woman. Using her one extant drama The Art of Management; or Tragedy Expell'd as the structure by which to demonstrate her technique of dual personas and voices, I also analyze her autobiography and her first novel, The Life of Henry Dumont, Esq; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn.

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To start, I want to establish the facts surrounding Charke's association with the Little Theatre and her presence there because a surprising amount of apocrypha has accrued. As one example, Robert Hume states that Charke went to the Haymarket because Fielding lured her there and made her if not a star, at least a luminary:

I suspect that as soon as Fielding realized *Pasquin* would be a success, he hastened to improve his sorry band of actors. Within two weeks, he scored a coup, hiring Charlotte Charke (Colley Cibber's transvestite daughter) away from Drury Lane. This very odd young lady had quarreled with her father and brother, and her satiric play *The Art of Management* (York Buildings, 24 September 1735) had presented so contemptuous a picture of Fleetwood that the Drury Lane management was glad to see the last of her, even without notice in mid-season. She joined the Little Haymarket troupe on either 18 or 19 March (the 11th or 12th night of *Pasquin*), replacing a nonentity (Yates) as Lord Place (*Henry Fielding and the London Stage 1728-1737* 207-208).

The facts, however, do not quite jibe with his assertions or the implications that Charke first appeared at the Little Theatre in *Pasquin*. Hume's pleasant fiction notwithstanding, Charke as a matter of fact was married, betrayed, pregnant, and deserted during 1729-30, with the result that she began to moonlight at the Little Theatre, in addition to performing at the Drury Lane. She continued to work the second job at the Haymarket, her name appearing on the roster as dancer 1730-31 and as actress for the seasons 1733-34, 1734-35, 1735-36, 1736-37. As for being lured by the chance to play a male, as
Hume implies, by the time she appeared in *Pasquin*, she had appeared in male roles at all the theatres: three at the Drury Lane, six at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and 15 at the Little Theatre.³ Even by 1729, she was acting in male parts, for she appeared as Hunter in *Hunter; or The Beggar's Wedding* at Fielding's booth in the George Inn Yard.⁴ Furthermore, she had begun to dress and live as "Mr. Brown" well before *Pasquin*, as I hope to make clear.

While the other writers at the Little Theatre left little in the way of personal history, the reverse is true of Charke, whose autobiography and fiction filter through her own experiences in which gender determined empowerment. Charke is concerned with sexual roles, but gender forms part of a greater social consideration. Charke's sexual proclivities may or may not be represented by her clothing, but her social stance most certainly is. She could have had no doubts that the patriarchy understood such a message, or how the powers would treat a woman such as herself who published her "Fame," as Richard Graves's "The Heroines: or, Modern Memoirs," terms it:

Not so of Modern Wh-res th' illustrious train, Renown'd Constantia, Pilkinton, & Vane-- Grown old in sin, and dead to amorous Joy, No Acts of Penance their great Souls employ-- Without a Blush, behold, each Nymph advance The conscious Heroine of her own romance: Each Harlot triumphs in her Loss of Fame, And boldly prints---& publishes her Shame.
In company with Laetitia Pilkinton, Charke was accused of starring in "her own romance." Equating her lickerish tongue/pen with a lickerish tail, society marginalized Charke as much for writing about her clothes as for wearing them. As we see by the fact that they marginalized her, Charke’s contemporaries understood the context in which she presented herself and the subtleties involved. Crossdressing possessed meanings that varied with the situation, the enactment sites, as well as the gender and the social class of the transgressor. Somehow Charke managed a lethal [for her] combination of these factors; while the other social misfits at the Little Theatre just disappeared, Charke has survived in memory with her literature disparaged, because she was notably offensive. Thanks to Pope, Haywood’s name can still raise a smile, but, as we observe in criticism below, nobody laughs at Charke. She seems even now to cause a certain edginess, perhaps because, as Pat Rogers asserts, "she managed to make herself too like a man for comfort" ("The Breeches Part" 30). Maybe for that reason, what she accomplished has been obscured by what she was.

The body of critical opinion on Charke presents the first and best case in point, for concern with labeling her as transvestite, crossdresser, lesbian, bisexual, hermaphrodite, or sensationalist gets in the way of the literary vision she offers. To give an example, Charles
Peavy's 1969 article, "The Chimerical Career of Charlotte Charke," finds that

Her novels are, with one exception, unoriginal hack-work, and it may be argued that the autobiography is not literature at all. It is, however, the absorbing chronicle of an eighteenth century actress who was . . . . a transvestite for the greater part of her life. (10)

Part of the responsibility, of course, lies with Charke's autobiography. Unlike her father's *Apology*, which allows him to posture elegantly, Charke's life writing sturdily sets forth her offenses. She succeeds in portraying a society that damned her as a female for riding asses and donning breeches, and her *Narrative* may be taken as a metaphorical nose-thumbing, enabling her to say, So What? Certain subjects, however, are off-limits, such as the reasons for her crossdressing, and her associations with the writers and actors at the Little Theatre. We need to recognize that Charke is not interested in our knowing why she was marginalized, but what her artistic vision became because she was.

At the same time, I do not argue that Charke was too naive to realize the possible interpretations arising from public perception of her gender. The eighteenth century was, after all, the era of the molly houses of homosexual assignations, and Charke's contemporaries evinced a certain homophobia which "turned the occasional sin of buggery into the more terrifying stereotype of the
sodomite" (Rousseau and Porter "Introduction" 3). Among the works which warned strongly against the practice, Armstrong’s *The Oeconomy of Love. A Poetical Essay* (London 1736) presents, along with the amatory arts, a poetic warning against homosexuality; he contends that sodomy has a foreign origin. The poem suggests that not only is the act unnatural, but unpatriotic to boot.

*For Man with Man*
*And Man with Woman (monstr’ous to relate!)*
*Leaving the natural Road, themselves debase*
*With Deeds unseemly, and Dishonour found.*
*Britons, for shame! Be Male and Female still.*
*Banish this foreign Vice; it grows not here,*
*It dies, neglected; and in Clime so chaste*
*Cannot but by forc’d Cultivation thrive.*

A fascination with the unnatural created a demand for writings on the subject, and nice profits were made with these lurid reports. Although women homosexuals were less viciously attacked than their male counterparts, they were reprimanded in several works. *Satan’s Harvest Home* states that homosexual women "not content with our Sex, begins Amours with her own, and teaches the Female world a new Sort of sin, call’d the Flats . . . practis’d . . . at Twickenham at this Day" (qtd by Wagner 59). Another work *A Sapphic Epistle from Jack Cavendish to the Honourable and most Beautiful Mrs. D.* (London, c 1782) is a bawdy piece about a lesbian’s love adventures. A third popular work, containing a history of female homosexuality and references to a Queen of England, has the title, *The*
Sappho-An. An Heroic Poem, of three Cantos. In the Ovidian Stile, Describing the Pleasures which the Fair Sex Enjoy with Each Other, According to the Modern and most Polite Taste. Found amongst the Papers of a Lady of Quality, a great Promoter of Jaconitism (nd). Iwan Bloch quotes a visitor to England who commented on "Anandrinic societies" and the number of lesbian actresses in the last half of the eighteenth century (Sexual Life 425).8

Part of the fascination with Charke, indeed with masqueraders in general, arose from an almost morbid interest in sex itself. What Rousseau and Porter call a "public sex culture" (beginning in the first decade of the eighteenth century) included brothels, pornography, streetwalkers, all featuring both sexes, and constituted an "increasingly commercialized culture of the emerging consumer society" ("Introduction" 2). The rising middle class eschewed the license of the social upper echelon, but for all their nobler purposes, the middle class male theatregoers sought tradition on stage, even as they patronized the brothels. With the eighteenth century’s general urge to exploration and the vivid interest in man’s sexual nature, there was a liberation of the libido for men, but women, as the result of the division of labor and increased middle-class wealth, were housebound as never before.9
This "angelification" and idealization further served to isolate her in the private sphere, clearly apart from man's public sphere. The image of woman as a delicate "Other" was furthermore proliferated by the new novel. It became clear that only by women being maintained outside could men maintain their own masculine notions of self and the universe. As Gayatri Spivak in her article, "Explanation and Culture: Marginalia," defines these actions:

The putative center welcomes selective inhabitants of the margin in order better to exclude the margin. And it is the center that offers the official explanation; or, the center is defined and reproduced by the explanation that it can express." (206)

Aside from keeping women in their place outside, another result of these views involved the growing animosity toward homosexuals, who became targets for increased legal punishment. Anthony Simpson in Masculinity and Control: The Prosecution of Sex Offenses in Eighteenth-Century London, a work which studies male effeminacy among the lower classes, claims that the machismo, misogynist male became the image of manhood and the reverse of this image was thus defined as abnormal. The distinction seemed simple: one was macho, therefore male, or the reverse. In summary, "normal" men gained a complex social image built on the negation of women's
traits, and males who were not "normal" according to this image lost their social rights as men.

Almost as a corollary to the increased legal prosecution of homosexuality, court judgements on rape and abuse failed to uphold the ancient common laws protecting women who, therefore, became increasingly vulnerable with a loss of their social rights under civil and criminal law (Simpson "Vulnerability and the Age of Female consent: Legal Innovation and its Effect on Prosecutions for rape in eighteenth-Century London" 182-187). The threat of shifting sexual boundaries brought condemnation of crossed genders through the family unit, in which, as microcosm to society, men punished transgressive women. Lynne Friedli in "Passing Women" observes that this setup, to avoid any usurpation of masculine prerogatives, demanded a definition of "women" because of the unsettling presence of male and female crossdressers, hermaphrodites, and other sexual "monsters" (240-242). For that reason, medical and scientific studies attempting to define the "normal" boundaries of gender characteristics were very popular.11

A view of the history of crossdressing places Charke in the context of her era and suggests the nature of her transgressions. Pat Rogers's "The Breeches Part" calls attention to the advent of the travesti roles on the Restoration stage and credits their popularity to the sexy
and stylized masculinity of Nell Gwyn, Mrs. Elizabeth Barry, Mrs. Mountfort, Mrs. Bracegirdle, as early practitioners. J. H. Wilson's *All the King's Ladies* claims that between 1660 and 1700, 89 of the 300 plays produced contained breeches roles and prove their popularity. In explaining the phenomenon, Rogers quotes Marion Jones's explanation in volume five of *The Revels History of Drama in English:*

More than one excuse served to get actresses into breeches for the delectation of a predominantly male audience. First, of course, came revivals of old plays with parts written for boys playing women, where the plot demanded assumption of male disguises at times during the action: with the advent of actresses, titillating denouements with bared bosoms and flowing tresses became popular, and new plays were written to exploit this 'disguise penetrated' motif. Next, increasingly popular after Nell Gwyn played the madcap Florimel in Dryden's *Secret Love* (1667), came the 'roaring-girl' type of part, where the heroine adopted men's clothes as a free expression of her vivacious nature: prologues and epilogues were sometimes given by favourite actresses in men's clothes with no other apparent reason than to provide the same arbitrary thrill. Something akin to this was the practice by which an actress took the part of a male character just to amuse the audience: Peg Woffington made a great hit of Farquhar's 'Sir Harry Wildair', though the role—very far from Epicene—had been made to measure for its creator, the dashing Wilks. Occasionally a whole play would be performed by women--Pepys relished Killigrew's "bawdy loose play" *The Parson's Wedding* done like this in 1664, and there are several instances of the novelty in the early eighteenth century. (148-49)
Rogers includes a limerick about Peg Woffington in order to show the titillation implicit in a breeches-clad actress:

That excellent Peg
Who showed such a leg
When lately she dressed in men’s clothes—
A creature uncommon
Who’s both man and woman
And chief of the belles and the beaux! (qtd 250)

But the verse deals with far more than titillation for it displays the results of blurring gender lines. Peg’s clothes allowed her to be perceived as both man and woman, while her personal attractiveness only intensified this kind of sexual dividedness. The versifier notices and even celebrates the fact that, through the negation of precise gender definition, Peg has become the sex object for both men and women, unifying through her disguise the sexuality of both genders.

While we may say that Charke and Woffington were similar in their employment of men’s clothes, the objects of each actress were obviously quite different. My argument about Charke concerns the fact that she did not specialize in the types of dramas featuring crossdressing as titillation; for instance, Charke and Woffington, who were noted for their male characterizations, acted only one part in common, that of Lothario in Rowe’s The Fair Penitent.
Mentioning actresses and singers such as "Mrs. Farrel" and Signora Galli who also specialized in travesti parts, Rogers differentiates between them and other women who, for various reasons, preferred a masculine way of life. He points to Hannah Snell as representative of "freaks and oddities" who lived and dressed as a man, but he singles out Charlotte Charke as "the only specialist in breeches parts who publicly extended her cross-dressing to life outside the theatre" ("The Breeches Part" 251).

Looking at the different roles that Charke played, we may see just how committed she must have been to transvestite roles, for her wide repertoire included such representations as Pistol, George Barnwell, Macheath, Lothario, Plume and Archer (Farquhar). In addition, she played the very difficult role of Sir Fopling Flutter, for which she had to play a man playing an effeminate man, which would present about the same level of difficulty as a woman playing a man playing a woman. The chief difference between Charke's breeches roles and those of the Restoration actresses involves a certain dynamic of feminine sexuality. For instance, an actress, dressed to appear sexually ambiguous, possessed a femininity that showed through, alongside a masculine ease and elegance. The Life of James Quin makes clear the type of femininity/masculinity that Woffington, for instance, portrayed.
There was no woman that ever yet had appeared on the stage, who could represent with such ease and elegance the character of a man. Every one who remembers her must recollect that she performed Sir Harry Wildair, in the Trip to the Jubilee (the subtitle), far superior to any actor of her time. She was so happily made, and there was such symmetry and proportion in her frame, that she would have borne the most critical examination of the nicest sculptor. She had besides dispossessed herself of that awkward stiffness and effeminacy which so commonly attends the fair sex in breeches. (40)

In contrast to Woffington's great male charm which only called attention to her good legs, Charke rejected this type of sexual dividedness with its masculine and feminine eroticism, in favor of another type of gendered duality based on power and privilege. She became in her private life the male/female that she portrayed on the public stage, and the Narrative of her life advertises on the title page that duality: "Her Adventures in Mens Cloaths." Because Charke in this way privatizes her public image and publicizes her private one, critics have commonly viewed Charke in one of three ways, either as a sociopath, a lesbian, or a feminist, the last two views current in post-1970 criticism.

Critical views on Charke break in two parts, as we might expect with feminist criticism in the 70's re-evaluating literary women ignored by early critics. Nowhere is this more apparent than in opinions about Charke, which I will attempt to trace. D. Erskine Baker's view of her in his Biographia Dramatica has determined in
large part her place in theatre annals and the way she has been remembered. Dwelling anxiously on her masculinity, Baker in the first critical evaluation begins by saying that "she most commonly used to be dressed in man's clothes even in private life," and seems to consider Charke's worst crime to be her "passing" as a man:

It must be confessed, that she very early seemed to show a disposition so wild, so dissipated, and so unsuitable to her sex . . . an evident foretaste of the like masculine conduct which she pursued through life. (103)

Writing after her death in 1760, he judges Charke's final days in destitution and misery to be the results of "the ungovernable impetuosity of passions, which ran through all her actions, [and] induced her to quarrel with Mr. Fleetwood" against whom she "left on a sudden with no notice given but even vented her spleen in public" (104). Baker goes on to cite Charke's other "heinous" offenses, which estranged her father and caused him to act toward her with "a conduct entirely opposite to that humanity and universal benevolence which were so well known to the characteristics of that gentleman's disposition" (104). Charke's sins, aside from her poverty and perversions, revolve around her seeking "the lowest kind of theatrical employment" (by which Baker means the Little Theatre), and her association with "well-known prostitutes and public brothel-keepers," who raised money when she was in debtor's prison.
In presenting one last glimpse of Charke a few years before she died in misery and squalor, Baker cites her "folly, imprudence, and absurdity." Because this portrait has become universal, it is appropriate to use his words about Charke's final days. We understand Charke's heavy irony so apparent in the Whyte narrative, but neither Whyte nor Baker understood Charke's real meaning when she told the dog, Fidele, that the visitors were "friends," an ironic reference for people who, as she knew, came to her house in order to cheat her out of her last novel and to profit by her defeat.

Because the account opens with the literal site of Charke's dwelling in the no-man's land between sea and town, this description of her literal, as well as figurative marginalization is worth quoting. Baker and Whyte manage to suggest in the squalid setting outside of society a kind of evil place where Charke, like a witch, was surrounded by her familiars.

Her habitation was a wretched thatched hovel, situated on the way to Islington, . . . where it was usual for the scavengers to leave the cleansings of the streets, and the priests of Cloacina to deposit the offerings from the temples of that all-worshipped power. The night preceding, a heavy rain had fallen, which rendered this extraordinary seat of the Muses almost inaccessible . . . To the right we perceived, and bowed to, the mistress of the mansion, sitting on a maimed chair, under the mantelpiece, by a fire merely sufficient to put us in mind of starving. On one hob sat a monkey . . . on the other a cat . . . on the dingy flounce of her petticoat reclined a dog, a
skeleton . . . a magpie perched on the top rung of her chair . . . . (106-107)

Because the uncleanness "got our white stockings enveloped with mud up to the very calves," we know that the male visitors later threw away their silk stockings so contaminated with Charke's filthy life. In this account, not just one man but two, Whyte and Baker, are able to provide final judgement about what happens to women who defy the gender system. Not surprisingly after this entry on Charke, later biographers were caught up in labeling Charke on the basis of her social and sexual defiance. For instance, Dibden early on carried Baker's depictions one step further and helped to create the contemporary image of Charke as a depraved pervert. He described her as belonging "in the annals of profligacy . . . in short, [she was] one of those disgraces to the community that ought not to be admitted into society" (qtd by Russell).

In the twentieth century especially before 1975, Charke's life remained a titillating source to provide spice in a volume of theatre memoirs. For example, Lewis Melville's *Stage Favourites of the Eighteenth Century* (nd) opens with the editor's introduction to the 1775 edition of Charke's *Narrative*:

If no otherwise instructive, her Life will serve to show what very strange creatures may exist, and the endless diversity of habits, tastes and inclinations, which may spring up spontaneously, like weeds, in the hot-bed of corrupt civilisation.

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As if her own words were sufficient to lend credence to the editor's judgement, Melville in the twenty-six pages on Charke, employs the Narrative for nineteen pages, letting her speak for herself about her childhood, marriage, and stage career. Although Melville mainly deplores Charke's sexual waywardness, he is one of the first critics to treat seriously her revelations about the eighteenth-century theatre, such as her comments about Fielding and Pasquin. Further, he alone includes the titles of her works.

In the 1930's, criticism of Charke ranged from the opinion of Richard H. Barker in Mr. Cibber of Drury Lane that Charke was "disreputable—if not, indeed, sexually abnormal" (178) to Havelock Ellis's studies in sexology. Seeming at pains to call Charke normal yet at the same time continuing to employ early opinions of Charke, Ellis ignores the facts of her professional life. In an astounding evaluation, he places the blame for Charke's historical bad odor on the libido of other women. He interprets her life and Narrative as follows:

Charlotte Charke, a boyish and vivacious woman, who spent much of her life in men's clothes, and ultimately wrote a lively volume of memoirs, appears never to have been attracted to women, though women were often attracted to her, believing her to be a man; it is, indeed, noteworthy that women seem with special frequency, to fall in love with disguised persons of their own sex." (Studies in the Psychology of Sex 1: 4: 245)
A 1952 volume, *Ladies First: The Story of Woman's Conquest of the British Stage*, by W. Macqueen-Pope builds its criticism also on Freudian grounds as he discusses Charke in a chapter titled "Masculine Femininity." He states that "Charlotte [was a woman] whose tragedy was that she had failed to be born a man" (241). Elsewhere he repeats the sentiment: "[s]he felt that she, who had the mind and feelings of a man, had been cheated in being born a woman" (247). Although he does not use the term "lesbian," he seems to have that in mind and apparently feels that proper handling by a man could have overcome her sexual perversity. With Macqueen-Pope providing no documentation, the chapter explores psychological explanation of her actions, and one example suffices:

[In 1733 when Charke was appearing as Lucy in *George Barnwell*] was a brief but comparatively happy period in her life, for her stage earnings brought her four guineas a week, which seemed enormous wealth to her. She spent it on finery and dressed her little daughter very smartly . . . . But the truth of the matter was that Cibber could not avoid being pompous with her and did not know how to handle this spirited filly he had bred. He made the mistake of preaching to her and Charlotte took the bit between her teeth, tossed her head . . . . (243-244)

This type of critical analysis in the traditional vein has continued to the present, feminist criticism aside. Even as late as 1969, Peavy in "The Chimerical Career of Charlotte Charke" writes that "[h]er Narrative, as revealing as it is, remains but the scattered tesserae
of the macabre mosaic that was her life" (4). He seems most disturbed about her masculine clothing: "I can find no adequate explanation for the conduct of Charke during the transvestistic stage of her life. Consultation with members of the psychology department and research in the various texts . . . have all proved fruitless" (3). Finally, he observes that "Charlotte was always eccentric. She refused to learn the feminine arts of sewing and cooking, but had a peculiar affinity for boyish pastimes . . . " (1). While he touches on Charke's novelistic use of beatings, incest, and crossdressing, he sees them as part of the trend toward "anti-sentimentalism" and does not explore Charke's meaning aside from her psychological disturbances.

Sallie Minter Strange's 1976 article, "Charlotte Charke: Transvestite or Conjuror?" lies rather between the traditionalists and the feminists. Although Strange praises Peavy's article, discussed above, for its "careful re-examination" of Charke's sexuality, her essay mainly deals with defending Charke's name against the forces that would label her "transvestite" and lines up her defenses: Charke was not a transvestite but rather wore male clothes for reasons of safety (56), job opportunity (55, 58), theatrical stylishness (57), and economy (57, 58).\[13\] Charke's living as "Mr. Brown" with his "Mrs. Brown" was an act of non-sexual friendship; as evidence, Strange
points to heterosexual episodes in Charke's life and to Charke's daughter who "turned out to be a 'normal' woman, marrying a Mr. Harman, another strolling player" (58). Intent on rescuing Charke from the gutter where plain and simple transvestism would place her, the article places great weight on Charke's veracity in the Narrative and ends with the (disturbing) comment that the truth about Charke has been revealed for "no one has yet referred to her specifically as a transvestite" (54).

Other considerations of Charke during the 1960s and 70s rely mainly on traditional assessments which, in turn, feature Charke's offenses against gender. For example, Highfill states that "the last of Colley and Katherine's children was the oddest" (3:239), and Scouten makes the famous remark in The London Stage Part Three that "Cibber's queer daughter" was the "well-known troublemaker, Charlotte Charke" (lxi) and he indexes under her name, "shabby career of" (cxcvii). In his analysis, her masculine mode of life claims more attention than her literary contributions and, without explaining his reasoning, Scouten implies that playing male roles, let alone working at the Little Theatre, brought her what she deserved:

The best known example of a falling career is that of Charlotte Charke . . . . it is difficult to think of a person who had a more promising start or who had more sponsorship than did this daughter of Colley Cibber. Here was an actress
who made her debut on the Drury Lane stage and who was the daughter of the manager. From that house she deserted to the New Haymarket. In time she descended from performing in regular companies to announcing one-night stands in various houses; then from regular acting to managing puppet shows. When she did act in a play, at one of the various booths or wells, she was announced for Lothario, Macheath, Marplot, or other male roles. (The London Stage Part Three cxxxii)

Writing of Charke in the manner of D. Erskine Baker, Leonard Ashley in his 1969 facsimile edition of Charke's Narrative, presents an introduction that touches on the art of biography. Employing definitions of the art by illustrious male writers, such as Roger North, Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Harold Nicholson, Edgar Johnson, as well as Cibber and Rousseau, by comparison, Ashley sees Charke's attempts at autobiography as "the last infirmity of actresses" writing her "not-so-illustrative life" (xxii). Finding that Colley Cibber's Apology does not resemble Rousseau's ("It was not the fashion"), he fails to extend the comparison to Charke, even though the Narrative bares her heart well before Rousseau showed the world how. Ashley allows that her autobiography allows us to "glimpse . . . the somewhat frighteningly indomitable woman" (xxiii). Like Scouten, Ashley contends that Charke's essential shallowness caused her problems and judges that she deserved a life of misery because she was "uncontrollable."

Her whole life had seen [sic] one desperate attempt after another to keep her head above
water. The autobiography she offered [sic] to the public was not by any means the most notable shift to which this buckeen had been driven by penury. (vii)

Including only a bare listing of her works, Ashley sees the life as the art: "What its moral may be is uncertain" (xxiv). Ashley ends his introduction by saying of Charke's autobiographical account of her heroic war with the patriarchy: "It is fun. Read it for pleasure" (xxiv).

This edition contrasts interestingly with Fidelis Morgan's 1988 edition, for the two approaches exhibit the vital changes that feminist evaluation brought to literary criticism. Morgan confirms her part in the re-creation of Charke for the title page reads "A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Charlotte Charke by Fidelis Morgan and Charlotte Charke." Morgan's introduction and narration dwells on the gendered aspects of Charke's life more than her works. As editor and co-writer of Charke's Narrative, Morgan, however, argues against the idea that Charke was lesbian, and her case relies on points similar to Havelock Ellis's. Morgan includes as the frontispiece a print of Charke, haughtily elegant, wearing a becoming dress with pearls, and carrying a fan while one satin shoe peeks out beneath the skirt's rich folds. Providing a sort of caption to the picture, Morgan offers a puzzling argument, based apparently on the notion that if clothes make the man,
clothes also define once and for all, the gender of the wearer. The caption on the overleaf reads:

Charlotte Charke in one of two surviving prints made of her during her lifetime. (The other one, done in 1755 to coincide with publication of her autobiography, shows her as a young child dressed in her father's clothes, and appears on the jacket.) Charlotte appears in a dress, carrying a fan, and bears no resemblance to the swaggering, debauched transvestite drawn by historians of all future generations.

Cotton's work, *Women Playwrights in England c 1363-1750*, weaving the personal with the professional against a social and historical background, places a different spin on Charke's life and finds that she, misused in general by everyone, was "indomitable" as she coped with disaster after disaster. Calling attention to Charke's obvious parallel between the theatre, the patriarchy, and God the Father, Cotton sees the transvestism as a protest against what Cotton calls her "birthright" and quotes Charke's comparison of herself to Adam and Eve in the prologue to *The Art of Management* when she was "from ancient Drury expell'd" (176). In brief references to Charke's play, Cotton supposes that, because Charke was a woman, "Fleetwood then fired her on the grounds of immorality. An interesting charge from a company in which, the previous May, Charles Macklin had killed a fellow actor in a dispute over a wig" (174).

Tracing traditions since the Restoration, Pearson's work *The Prostituted Muse* focuses on Charke's theatrical
accomplishments and downplays her transvestism, at the theatre at any rate: "Even under normal circumstances actresses were good box-office, and companies occasionally tried to capitalise on this by allowing the actresses to play all roles, male and female" (28). Considering Charke's multiple accomplishments, she observes that Charke's gender has deprived her of the recognition that would have automatically gone to a man showing her abilities as actor, playwright, dancer, singer, puppeteer. Pearson refers to The Art of Management as annexing lines from Othello (246-247). She goes on to speak of Charke's autobiography as a romance revealing "psychological complexity [and] radical attack on conventional stereotyping of manliness and womanliness" (248).

Lynne Friedli's "Passing Women--A Study of Gender Boundaries in the Eighteenth Century" examines Charke's literature as feminist writing and evaluates her work as subversive to the male structures.

The main interest of the narrative lies in her ability to explore a number of roles normally reserved for men, in a manner which oscillates between a caricature of herself and of the mystique with which gendered roles are invested. . . . [yet] gendered roles have no meaning outside the costume, accessories and acting ability that constitutes them. What limits the actress are the conventions of her audience. (240-241)

Friedli does not evaluate the duality that, I propose, lies at the heart of Charke's literature, but she
does comment that "the 'personal' or 'private' is largely silent, like the shadowy figure of her companion, Mrs. Brown, slipping quietly in and out of the text" (241). Nussbaum makes a similar argument in "Heteroclites," stating that Charke is a feminist because she exists in terms of her profession, not of her familial status, and because her actions in crossdress challenge "male life patterns and female stereotypes" (147).

Erin Mackie's 1990 article, "Desperate Measures: The Narratives of the Life of Mrs. Charlotte Charke," presents the first thorough evaluation of the major works in Charke's canon. Arguing against Nussbaum and Friedli, she proposes that Charke goes beyond simple feminist stances and instead

reproduces a patriarchy where she may play a whole constellation of conventional roles, both male and female, making it difficult to isolate an essential female Charke who is either empowered or betrayed by transgression. (842)

Mackie, however, calls Charke's duality a way to "affirm the value of the masculine" and her actions are "reformative rather than subversive imitations" (844). The article calls attention to Charke's efforts in the autobiography, *The History of Henry Dumont*, and *The Lover's Treat* as attempts to "reinscribe the patriarchy" after Charke's own desires, so that she may join it (844).

The facts of Charke's life, as she writes it in the *Narrative*, reveal the complexities so interesting to
critics. We can say of her what Fielding says of Colley Cibber in the *Apology*: hers was a life lived to be written about. Hated by her oldest sister Catherine and spoiled by her mother, Charke was the last of the Cibber children, an "Impertinent intruder" she calls herself, "Tho not least in love" (14). Until she was fifteen, she claims that she was petted in spite of her penchant for male clothes and practical jokes, and was even sent to Mrs. Draper's young ladies' school at Winchester. She claims that her "Education . . . might have been sufficient for a son instead of a Daughter" (17). After her coming of age, Charke was sent away to live with a Dr. Hale's family to "establish [her] health," to learn womanly arts, but, spending her time dressing in men's clothes, hunting on the moor, and playing doctor for the locals, she was sent home (30). Using Fielding's words about his leaving the theatre, Charke refers to Mrs. Hale's abortive attempts to make her a woman: "she ended where, poor dear soul, she ought to have Began." (30).

After her mother died, Charke shot up the neighborhood during a midnight ramble, in addition to riding down and almost killing a local child. Quickly sent to her theatre apprenticeship, Charke, tutored by the dying legendary actress Anne Oldfield, made her debut in *The Provoked Wife* at the Drury Lane. Almost immediately she married Richard Charke, gave birth to Maria Catherine,
and separated. At this point, her father refused to aid her, and in an infamous family conference just after *Pasquin* opened, Charke was "baited like a Bull at a Stake" and, as a result, never saw her sister Catherine, or Cibber again. On the Drury Lane roster as actress and dancer, she first acted women's roles in *The Provoked Wife, The Tender Husband, Oroonoko,* and *The London Merchant,* in which she created the role of Lucy. Performing also at the Little Theatre from 1730, she defected with Theophilus Cibber during the Drury Lane strike in 1733; she moved more or less permanently to the Haymarket when she was fired by Drury Lane management for *The Art of Management* in 1735. After the 1737 Licensing Act closed the Little Theatre, Charke produced puppet shows, acted at fairs, joined strolling companies twice, and worked as grocer in Long Acre, tavern keeper in Drury Lane, pastry cook in Wales, waiter at the King's Head in Marleybone, proof reader in Bristol, valet to Lord Anglesea, oil seller, hog merchant, and suitor to an heiress in London. She lived as a woman with her second husband, unnamed in the *Narrative* but apparently John Sacheverall. As "Mr. Brown" (the name of the hated Catherine's dead husband) she lived with her wife, "Mrs. Brown," during nine years of strolling and dodging bumbailiffs. In 1755, she attempted to blackmail her father into a reconciliation by threatening to go public.
with her life and to publish in eight installments her *Narrative*. Critics, such as Pearson among a multitude of others, claim that she failed in the attempt, quoting the *Narrative* as stating that her letter of appeal was returned unopened, probably by Catherine.\(^{18}\) Between 1750 and 1757, she wrote the autobiography as well as three novels: *A History of Henry Dumont, Esq.*; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn; *The Mercer; or, Fatal Extravagance*; *The Lover’s Treat; or, Unnatural Hatred*.

Although it seems popular to view the older Charke as existing on her pen for her livelihood, in reality she continued to work on the stage until the final six months of her life. During her final two years, she acted in Canterbury in March 1758 and in London a few months later, where she received permission to produce a play for ten evenings before the regular season opened. On 28 October 1755 at the Little Theatre, Charke gave a final performance and died 6 April 1760 (Koon Colley Cibber 180-182). A letter that same year from Anne Chetwood, Charke’s niece, reveals Charke’s final days: "The Distresses of my family inforces me to plead to your pity in this hope that my Aunt Charke Shard in your Compassion . . . " (qtd by Ashley 202). No record exists about her funeral or burial site, and one notice of her death appears ironically in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*. As the Cibber family had long been parishioners at St Martin’s.
in-the-Fields where Charke was married, perhaps she was buried there, but the graveyard has been built over.

During the period that Charke belonged to the Little Theatre, Charke suffered her greatest losses of family and husband; the autobiography ends with what I see as a reference to this period (as well as a reference to Richardson's heroine Clarissa Harlowe):

I cannot recollect any Crime I have been guilty of that is unpardonable, which the Denial of my Request may possibly make the World Believe I have; but I dare challenge the most malicious Tongue of Slander to a Proof of that Kind, as HEAVEN AND MY OWN CONSCIENCE CAN EQUALLY ACQUIT ME of ever having deserved that dreadful Sentence, OF NOT BEING FORGIVEN. (276)

At some point in 1730, Charke appealed to her father for help. Until now, only one response from Cibber has been used to show his early rejection of Charke. A letter universally dated around 1736 is generally quoted by such biographers as Koon to be evidence of the break between father and daughter:

Dear Charlotte,

I am sorry I am not in a position to assist you further. You have made your own bed, and therein you must lie. Why do you not dissociate yourself from that worthless scoundrel, and then your relatives might try and aid you. You will never be any good while you adhere to him, and you most certainly will not receive what otherwise you might from your father.

Colley Cibber (Colley Cibber 143)

There exists, however, an earlier letter held by the Theatre Museum Archives, Box #747. Written perhaps by Cibber in response to a begging letter from Charke, the
document is credited to Cibber and dated "1730" by an unknown hand. As Koon points out in the only critical reference to this letter that I can find, the handwriting is not Cibber's but perhaps may be Catherine's (Colley Cibber 147). My argument about the document's reference to Charke's crossdressing seems to hold good regardless of which family member wrote it. The text reveals a total rejection of her for a cause only hinted at, as well as tacit knowledge of her desperation.

September 21 [1730]

To Mrs. C. Charke

Madam--

The strange Career which you have run for some years (a career not always unmarked by evil) debars my affording you that succor which otherwise would naturally have been extended to you as my Daughter. I must refuse therefore — with this advice — try Theophilus.

Yours in Sorrow
Colley Cibber.

However pompous and mean-spirited, this letter provides the only outside evidence to lend verification to Charke's assertions in the autobiography. This point becomes important for, if Charke had not written her own life, nobody else did; Colley Cibber and Theophilus Cibber in their autobiographies do not even mention Charke. Cibber does not just refuse her "succor" but accuses her of a "strange career" and unnamed sins, thereby providing us with verification of the portrait Charke draws of
herself. Bearing in mind the womanizing bounder Charke married in 1729, I find it difficult to see just what "evil" Charke had time to commit, given that she was then about eighteen years and was either pregnant or had just given birth.\textsuperscript{19} Cibber's reference to Charke's strange and "evil" career that "[she had] run for some years" must imply offenses for which she was marginalized. In other words, the letter cannot refer to the marriage or the baby, which may be called hasty and ill-considered, but hardly evil. The \textit{Narrative} for this period includes comments that may shed light on Cibber's letter. She writes that the "loose and unkind Behaviour, [of Richard Charke] consequently made me extravagant and wild in my Imagination; and, finding that we were in the same Circumstances, in Regard to each other, that Mr. Sullen and his Wife were, we agreed to part" (53). The only logical explanation that would fit both the meaning of Cibber's letter and Charke's references to her "extravagant and wild" behavior involves some defiance of social rules, in other words, her crossdressing.

I propose that by 1730 Charke had begun to live a dual existence, as a woman and as a man, which "career" Cibber sees as a continuation of her earlier masculine propensities for which she had been sent away at age 14 to a doctor's, in a fruitless attempt to curb these tendencies, to "cure her of her illness." It would seem
that she returned to her old ways after the first few months of marriage, when she was freed from the domination of husband and father. Richard Charke's infidelities with "a plurality of common Wretches, that were to be had for Half a Crown" created in her what she terms "an aversion" (77). While she may mean an aversion against Richard, I argue that her aversion refers to her life as a woman.20 We should note that the total break with her family occurred during this period.

Without attempting to get involved in psychology, we see that by the time she was 21 years, Charke, rather like Fielding, had been betrayed by her family, especially her father. Although the autobiography protests her pampered status, another source provides some evidence that the reverse perhaps was true. The Weekly Journal, or Saturday's Post, 1 March 1718, reports that Cibber neglected one of his children to the extent that "she" appeared "very bare in clothes." Cibber's theatrical partners held a benefit for the child, but, as the article avers, Cibber seized the revenue "rather than let his child have necessaries" (qtd Barker 19). This circumstance might be viewed as isolated except for other indications of Cibber's disregard. According to court records, he deprived his children of their inheritance from their grandparents. William Shore willed his estate to his daughter Katherine Shore Cibber, who was to receive
30 pounds for "her own seperate use" while the remainder went to her children. In addition, Rose Shore bequeathed her estate, along with pearls, diamonds, and lace to her granddaughter Elizabeth Cibber, Colley's middle daughter, for her education. Ignoring the wills, Cibber kept all the inheritances for his own purposes, and his wife Katherine Cibber, to get her father's bequest, was forced to bring suit against him in Chancery Court during 1714. Citing Chancery Decrees and Orders as well as Masters' Reports for 1716, Barker in the biography states that Cibber won the case, although his income from the theatre amounted to some 1,000 pounds yearly (18-19). The court allowed him to keep the accumulation of wealth left his wife and children, except for the 30 pounds specified for Mrs. Cibber's use. Cibber claimed that the inheritance should be used for the maintenance and education of all the children, but, aside from Charlotte who was two, the others were well past the years of education. And only Theophilus, who attended Winchester College, received much education. Like Fielding's father, Cibber never had to account for the money, but his selfish actions would seem to lend credence to the story of the unnamed and neglected daughter, undoubtedly Charlotte.

Some critics find that Charke's manipulation of gender and her exploration of the male power structure indicate her desires somehow to expand it to include
herself. In this interpretation, Charke creates a new society that reinscribes the old one and casts herself in conventional male roles (Mackie 846-848). But I argue that Charke does not simply recreate an identical social structure; instead she forms a new space where her characters may act out their salvation in relationships untrammeled by patriarchal expectations. The fiction in each work employs the destruction and subsequent replacement of the father figure. The space that Charke clears is a marginal area, either a stage, as in The Art of Management, the strollers' territory, in the Narrative, or, in The History of Henry Dumont, Esq.; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn, a marginal area with the potential for metamorphosis. While she peoples these confines with good and bad examples of men and women, Charke creates a new gender system, through the adoption of a series of dualities. Taking within her feminine self the values of being male, she is able to erase gender distinctions and thereby is able to embody a symbiotic duality. This achievement of oneness, of two blended into one, is portrayed variously in her works as twinship, marriage, or a kind of brother-sister incest: in the drama, she is Mrs. Tragic/Headpiece, in the Narrative, Brown/Charke and Mr. Brown/Mrs. Brown, in The History of Henry Dumont, Esq.; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn, Henry Dumont/Charlotte Evelyn, Henry/Billy, and Charlotte/Ursula. I propose to trace
Charke's methods beginning with her first extant work, The Art of Management, as a way to observe her means of addressing these issues in A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Charlotte Charke, and The History of Henry Dumont, Rsg.; and Miss Charlotte Evelyn.

Charke's very first works, The Carnival; or, Harlequin Blunderer, Tit for Tat, and The History of Peggy and Paty would be instructive to study, both as plays and as puppet plays, but they were never published. The Art of Management probably owes its publication and survival to the scandal Charke created by attacking management at the Drury Lane. Fleetwood had fired Charke for "immoral" reasons, and she invested her play with her grievance. Denied access to a stage, Charke produced the play at York Buildings; she must have been harassed, for Scouten notes two postponements of the play before it was finally shown.22

As she explains in the Preface, the work provides "publick" reasons for "publick Proceedings." Charke thereby creates the first duality in the work, making private public and public private:

for my private Misconduct, which it seems, has been (for want of a better alledged as a Reason) tho' a bad one; for while my Follies only are hurtful to my self, I know no Right that any Persons, unless Relations, or very good Friends, have to call me to Account. I'll allow private Virtues heighten publick Merits, but then the Want of those private Virtues wont affect an Actors Performance

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She therefore speaks in her own voice, but at the same time, rejects the private and demands to be judged on professional and public grounds. Her private life has long been public, "too conspicuous" and the "Town will hardly be surprize'd at what they have been so long acquainted with."

Charke's Prologue employs the metaphor for duality which, as I discuss later, she continues to use in her fiction:

When the first Pair from Paradice were driv'd,
They sobb'd, thly [sic] wept, and mourn'd their latest Heav'n.

From the beginning, Charke ("I") is both Adam and Eve, when she is "expell'd" from Ancient Drury by the God/Manager. The fiction of the Prologue continues, and she notes that "unwillingly" she has established for herself space at "this poor refuge" in order to carry out an enactment of the expulsion from Eden.

This idea of alienation is built on the foundation of another type of alienation. In two lines, she is able to depict her private marginalized existence and to acknowledge that her own salvation comes through her work, which formerly allowed her to gain the "shore" and escape marginalization at least professionally. Alienated privately and now publically in her profession, Charke initiates the play's theme of duality.
The fiction of the plot involves the fired Mrs. Tragic, supported by Headpiece in her fight with Bloodbolt and Brainless and their subversion of the stage into a dog and pony show at the expense of drama. The play opens with the dressers, Mrs. Glidewell and Pinwell, discussing the usual fate of women in the theatre and referring to the casting couch as a woman's sure means of success. If Charke is taking arms against the theatre managers, she is likewise defying the nice notion of the obedient silent woman in life and in art. Throughout the drama, she is not concerned with male assessment of her personally, but she is vigorous in being defined in terms of her profession.

Charke creates as the first duality Charke/Mrs. Tragic who sees herself in heroic terms and speaks, like the traditional hero, as one beset by fate. Mrs. Tragic's male voice can only speak from dramatic dialogue, and she valorizes her assumption of power by using male words by male writers, such as Shakespeare. Charke/Mrs. Tragic adopts the heroic masculine voice in her rage and narrates her own defense, repeating twice her abilities to work under pressure. She saved the day as an understudy when at "fifteen minutes notice" she played the part of Cleopatra [sig. F 2v].

Although critics who mention the play discuss its fragmented nature, we need to look at the structure in
which, I argue, Charke moves through a series of paired speakers until she reaches the central duality, first of Charke/Mrs. Tragic and then Headpiece/Mrs. Tragic. While the drama encompasses only one act and one scene, Charke uses a series of narrators, all presenting views of Mrs. Tragic. What is perceived as a flaw in the drama occurs because of Charke's problems with voice and persona. To achieve the duality for which she strives, she breaks the drama into two parts, the first beginning with Charke/Mrs. Tragic, the stage travesty male, intervening in the masculine world by speaking as a male actor. The second is the duality of Headpiece/Mrs. Tragic in which Headpiece takes over the male voice of Mrs. Tragic and becomes her male self, her "brother." In this early work, Charke slides in and out of her male and female personas, and sometimes it becomes a bit difficult to know which gendered half is speaking.

Charke uses the stage itself to prove her case against the theatre. As she will do in the Narrative, the setting is the theatrical margins which she clears in order to put on her own show. Two by two, she brings on stage gendered pairs who define the patriarchal stage. Glidewell and Pinwell see the theatre as a misogynistic place where women to keep their jobs must work on "Sunday." Diction, Porter, and Headpiece speak as members
of the "Fraternity" and assess Tragic as another loser to the system.

When Charke/Mrs. Tragic finally appears, we note that while Charke does not employ a literal transvestism in the duality, she uses a male voice, speaking as the tragic hero Othello (Othello 3.3.353-600).

Oh! Farewell all pride Pomp and Circumstances of Self-Conceit. Farewell all, for Tragic's Occupation's gone. [sig. c 2v]

Charke seemingly plays deliberately upon her known image of transvestite, and whereas she wears woman's clothing as Mrs. Tragic, she speaks like a man, thereby subverting and undercutting the masculine power that theatre managers Brainless and Bloodbolt possess. Charke's situation raises her to heroic levels, for more than her occupation is gone. The stage has provided for Charke/Mrs. Tragic a way to publicize gender concerns. Adopting masculine clothes, voice, and attitude, Charke's stage roles enabled her to carry out her protest privately, publicly, and professionally and evade patriarchal constraints. Her depiction of herself as Adam and Eve employs not only a duality she has established privately, but also exposes the management as God of the theatre who has judged her and found her evil.

When Headpiece arrives on stage, she refers to this duality as brother-sister and begins to change her
gendered stance. When Charke ceases to provide ambiguity of gender (Headpiece is literally male), she provides ambiguity of sexual taboos. For instance, the following dialogue opens the meeting between Headpiece and Mrs. Tragic, and we may observe the change when she no longer is the masculine half.

Trag. Ha! discharg'd! dismiss'd! turn'd out! Death!
Rage! Torture! Now mourn ye tragic Muse
Since Tragedy's expell'd! New Revenge alone
shall sate my Fury!

I'll rant and roar! Sound; not Sense, impart!—
No more with just Accent grace my Tale,
But Nonsense, Noise, and Spangles shall prevail.
Head. Prithee, no more; Learn rather to make
yourself a real Loss, to them, than a happy
Riddance; will your acting ill make them, or
yourself most. Let Reason get the better of
these mad Passions! and be advis'd by me. You
know I wish you well; and as you are ally'd to
me, consequently, have you more at Heart.
Trag. My Thanks receive with Gratitude sincere
But, oh! alas! Fate like mine, what Heroine can
bear;

This with prophetic voice, I now proclaim
That thou, my Hero, shall in Drury reign.
Head. Perhaps the Prophecy is good, yet for a
while, we'll our Thoughts in our own Bosoms
we'll confine; but see the Author of your
Wrongs; be calm as summer Seas, and patient as
the Dove. [sig. C 1-1v]

As we see, Headpiece has gained control over Mrs. Tragic's voice, or at least assumed he could, although she has one more outburst as a male. In the duality that they become, Mrs. Tragic urges the other pairs of Diction and Porter, Glidewell and Pinwell to allow Headpiece to speak, and Headpiece says "let me speak my Thanks." Mrs. Tragic
sets the terms of their duality which Charke seems to show as incestuous and a way of removing or blurring gender lines. Charke herself then has served as the point of reconciliation between Headpiece and Mrs. Tragic, their genders become one.

*Head.* My Sister! Oh! let me hold thee to my heart

*Trag.* There if I grow the Harvest is your own.

One major difference in the drama in comparison to later works, however, concerns Charke's sudden reversal to conventions. In the cleared space of the theatre or other marginalized territory, Charke obviates patriarchal control by establishing a series of male figures, usually fathers, who have titular control, but who are too weak or stupid to use it or even appear to use it. In this play, however, she reconciles through traditional means and reestablishes the hierarchy, notwithstanding her role as the king-maker. She invokes the "Gods" on Headpiece whom she "crowns" as "our King." Bloodbolt, before depicted both as God and king on the "theatric throne" (sig. C2), has been defeated, arrested for debt, and the throne is vacant. Headpiece has already become the brother/lover to whom she gave her voice, and now she reinforces his control in a formal coronation. Because the play's final message is so very different from the techniques she uses in the autobiography, for instance, we need to quote the final song Air III, sung by Mrs. Tragic to King Headpiece:
With Transport I glow, and with Pleasure,
At once bid adieu to my Pain,
My Wishes succeed beyond Measure,
Nor can I my Joy then refrain.
Then come to my Arms and partake,
The Transport that rises from thee,
Dame Fortune at length for thy Sake,
No longer then blinded will be,
No longer then blinded will be. [sig. F 3v]

In summary, Charke establishes in her first play, many of the techniques she uses in subsequent works. She internalizes the politics of gender and power, and by taking on a series of dual characters, offers reconciliation and salvation. In the first two works, the "I" that Charke employs allows for a multiplicity of voices, and she becomes male and female, with the masculine voice dominating.

Written twenty years after The Art of Management, her autobiography, simply stated, narrates how Charke arrived at the place where she was in 1755. Ostensibly, the work is an apology to her father and an attempt to reconcile with him. She speaks with the dominant voice of the duality. For instance, in the Narrative we may determine the narratorial voice and persona identity from several clues, which taken together make us realize that Charke, much like Gertrude Stein in her autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, imposes a voice from the outside to tell the story of another person's life as a woman; she chooses to allow this voice, later revealed as male, to mediate and to explain, as it were, what it all meant. To emphasize

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this voice which more or less rescues Charke's experience as female other, Charke opens with reference to the duality in play ("The Author to Herself") and dedicates the piece to "Madam" as she speaks to her other half, wishing that "You and I may ripen our Acquaintance into a perfect Knowledge of each other, that may establish a lasting social Friendship between us" (viii).

In the Narrative, the male narrator selects for telling those instances in her woman's life which he sees as leading to the formation of her male self. We are permitted to see her wearing men's clothes, shooting on the moors, currying horses, digging ditches, as though this constituted her life. Only when we realize that Charke as a woman is not the narrator, do we see that at least half the picture of her childhood is missing. Charke was sure to have had a pet rabbit, a cat, or a favorite nurse, just as she was sure to have had at least one school friend. And yet these details are not included. The voice narrates her beginning, and all of a sudden she is four and wearing Cibber's clothes, and then fourteen, wearing Dr. Hale's clothes. I view the autobiography as not just negating the feminine stereotype but also negating a girlhood, through her use of two narrators, one a predominating male, and the other a recessive nearly silent female. The narrator prejudices
our view by including only those events where the masculine takes preeminence.

Critics, such as Friedli, have commented in passing that certain characters, like Mrs. Brown, Charke's wife, "slip" in and out of the text (241). I would argue that Charke's narrator is the one that slips in and out until Charke allows us finally to glimpse him. At a certain point, Charke's male narrator, who has related grimly what has happened to Charke as a woman with a perfidious, improvident husband and cold father, reveals his presence. Until now, the reader assumes that Charke's persona is a woman, but in this scene, Charke reveals not only the narrator but the nature of the persona. In the scene, Charke came home to find her little daughter in convulsions, but we notice a certain strange behavior when Charke says she seized the child but "immediately dropped her on the Floor; which I wonder did not absolutely end her by the Force of the Fall." Charke left the dying child lying there:

In the Hurry of my Distraction, I run [sic] into the Street, with my Shirt-Sleeves dangling loose about my Hands, my Wig standing on End, "Like Quills upon the Prettful Porcupine," and Proclaiming the sudden Death of my much-beloved child, a Crowd soon gathered round me . . . The Peoples compassion was moved, 'tis true; but, as I happened not to be known to them, it drew them into Astonishment, to see the Figure of a young Gentleman, so extravagantly grieved for the Loss of a child. (98-99)
What catches us off-guard is the near collision of Charke's male and female dualities, over the body of the child. At this moment, the figure of the narrator and persona is revealed, and he is a man. Charke is very involved in the legerdemain and acknowledges our surprise, along with the onlookers' when she says "I happened not to be known to them, it drew them into Astonishment" (99).

Once we realize the duality, Brown/Charke's statement that "I was entirely lost in forgetfulness of my real Self" bears new meaning, and we see that there is not just one real self. Her maleness is allowed to obscure her feminine self, now silent and submissive, to the extent that she forgets any automatic nurturing associated with her role as mother. She has established a discreet distance between her role as man and her role as woman, but, in the moment of crisis, allows them to blur. The crowd notices and disapproves the "unprecedented Affection" of Charke's male, who has become effeminate to them, outside the definition of male. He, therefore, borders on being a non-male, as we have discussed. What we also realize here is just how good Brown/Charke's disguise is; further we notice that, even lounging around the house, Brown/Charke disports herself as a man. Her maleness, therefore, is not a role assumed for public consumption, convenience, or economy, but a part of a gendered duality.
After this, Charke creates a new embodiment for the duality through the union of Brown and Mrs. Brown. About the same time, she takes on "that darling name of Brown, which was a very great help to my concealment" (148) which we may interpret in several ways: concealment of her feminine self; concealment of her old identity; concealment from the law. Although critics generally state that Charke uses the name Charles Brown as a slight to her hated sister Catherine Brown, another possibility exists. She adopts the name (148) after she has begun cohabiting with her friend (141), who well could have been named Mrs. Brown. I propose that Charke adopted his friend's name and became Mr. Brown, a circumstance that would clarify the otherwise inexplicable use of "darling" in the context of the sentence.

As I mentioned above, the male/female image that Charke presents in the prologue to The Art of Management, becomes the central image in her other fiction. Brown and Mrs. Brown are another representation of her Adam and Eve sent out of the Garden. In fact, she uses this reference when, let out of prison, she "thought it comparable to the Garden of Eden; and question much, when the first Parents beheld their Paradise, whether they were more transported at the View, than I was when let out of my Cell" (216). Brown and Mrs. Brown wander in the world of the theatre and the earth is peopled with strollers. Deprived of her

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birthright in the family and theatre, as she implies with reference to the "Prodigal" (120), the duality that she has become has no home, no relatives, other than her daughter. At the same time, we may see that Charke creates for her characters a free space without restrictions within which they may conduct their lives. It is not perfect--Charke's description of the strolling life is jarring in its reality:

I think going a Strolling is engaging in a little, dirty kind of War, in which I have been obliged to fight so many Battles, I have resolutely determined to throw down my Commission: And to say Truth, I am not only sick, but heartily ashamed of it, as I have had nine Years Experience of its being a very contemptible Life; rendred so, through the impudent and ignorant Behaviour of the Generality of those who pursue it; and I think it would be more reputable to earn a Groat a Day in Cinder-sifting at Tottenham-Court, than to be concerned with them. (187)

Notwithstanding Charke's obvious ambivalence toward it, this free space exists as a contrast to the patriarchal territory of the town which they have left and which presents restrictions to the union she has achieved.

My being in Breeches was alleged to me as a very great Error, but the original Motive proceeded from a particular Cause; and I rather chuse to undergo the worst Imputation that can be laid on me on that Account, than unravel the Secret, which is an Appendix to one I am bound, as I before hinted, by all the Vows of Truth and Honour everlastingly to conceal. (139)
Once, she runs into an old Gentlewoman who inquired into "my being in Mens cloaths; which, as far as I thought proper, I informed her" (143-144). Brown/Charke is incarcerated in the men's prison as a stroller and comes near having her gender discovered, but she climbs into the empty women's section of the jail. In Bath, another incident occurred. Brown/Charke says that she cannot avoid taking Notice on a malicious Aspersion, thrown and fixed on me as a Reason for leaving it; which was, That I designed to forsake my Sex again, and that I positively was seen in the Street in Breeches. (258)

Charke's engendered self is in danger in the urban setting; Charke must give up her "very handsome lac'd hat" (90) for it is a means of identifying her (as a man).

In Mr. Brown/Mrs. Brown/Adam/Eve, Charke creates a reverberating redundancy of strong/weak, brother/sister, husband/wife, man/woman, heterosexual/homosexual, which resolves the conflicts of gender and power in the autobiography. She seems intent in proving that the Brown/Charke is the "real" one, not silent, submissive Mrs. Brown who perhaps dies during the years of strolling, for she is missing when Charke arrives in London to begin writing. The last instance of Brown/Charke's use of "we" may well refer to the "good-natur'd Person" helping Brown/Charke get to London (267).
The Narrative contains several feminine characters apart from Mrs. Brown. Women, such as Betty Careless who goes her bail, Mrs. Dorr the tavern owner who calls her "son," in the fairy tale are good characters whose values are distinct and superior to patriarchal standards. Two women fall in love with her, and one, having found out "I was a woman" attacked her (164). Brown/Chark wears the feminine guise herself, when, for instance, she must play the repentant daughter in order to squeeze money from Cibber. As I mention elsewhere, this may not be autobiographical but simply a narrative technique which Charke uses to prove a feminine co-existence, forming a gender triangle Brown/Charke/Mrs. Brown.

For that same reason, Charke's daughter, never described and rarely discussed, appears sporadically in the work when her presence aids the technique of duality; for instance, as mentioned earlier, her illness allows Charke to furnish the revelation of the male narrator; she delivers Charke's begging letters from prison; she as a bride receives Charke's visit. Her uses are limited to displaying the feminine half, and of her, Charke speaks as a father might: "I had a Child to support." Maria Catherine appears so seldom once Charke has achieved the duality as Brown/ Mrs. Brown, that we are surprised when Charke suddenly mentions that her "child" is on the road with her and Mrs. Brown. Not until the last of the
narrative do we even know that her name is "Kitty" (241). Charke describes her only generally as a woman who is "sober and reasonable," but she is specific in assessing the girl as a professional, stating that Kitty's "figure" (we assume weight) should make her a good character actress and suitable for "low comedy" because "she has an infinite Share of Humour" (243).

I view references to motherhood as Charke's technique of maintaining vestiges of the feminine within herself as Brown/Charke, maybe as a sort of hermaphroditism. It may also be her acknowledgement that biology is destiny; such a reference occurs at the very end when she speaks of Lymington "where my Daughter enslaved herself for Life" (265). She seems to be referring to the birth of her daughter's baby; an alternative reading would apply the remark to Lymington as the site of her daughter's wedding to a man Brown/Charke dislikes. She leads us, however, to the first reading because the previous paragraph ends with the statement that "I [Charke] must, while we both exist, be undoubtedly her Mother." Motherhood then in the context is the life sentence and the fathers are notably absent.

Charke calls her autobiography a "trifling sketch" begun as the introduction for The History of Henry Dumont, Esq., and Miss Charlotte Evelyn. Because she was "universally known to be an odd Product of Nature" (269),

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she was asked for an account of her life. In several sites in the autobiography, Charke mentions the ongoing work on the novel. At one time she cuts short a visit to her daughter, "as [Charke] had made a considerable Progress in Mr. Dumont's History" (263) and wants to get the work published quickly as a serial. It is not surprising to note strong similarities in the two works, as they were written concurrently.

While I do not intend to explore the novel in detail, I want to look at the work in terms of the dualities which structure Charke's literature. I will mention briefly the plot, then discuss the dual personas which here undergo several metamorphoses. Unlike the autobiography, the novel is less concerned with dual voices than with the techniques of dual personas. In place of a theatrical setting as the Eden where Brown/Mrs. Brown wander, Charke establishes within the novel a cleared space in France, at once foreign and dangerous. The plot is fairly complicated, but in essence is this: the orphan son of Lady Charlotte and Archibald Dumont, Henry is raised by his grandfather, Mr. Allworth, and his tutor Mr. Evelyn. Evelyn dies, leaving his orphan daughter, Charlotte, who is adopted by the grandfather. Henry goes on a young man's wild ramble, falls in with evil gambling companions, and is welcomed back home as the prodigal. Henry returns
to discover that Charlotte is now his adoptive sister, and they marry.

Charke's basic question is the old one: What constitutes definitions of gender? Within the space that Charke provides, each half of the duality must deal with its mirror image; Henry's potential other is the homosexual transvestite Billy Loveman and Charlotte's is the pig-like monster Ursula. While, as we mentioned, Charke is the site of resolution of Mr. Brown/Mrs. Brown in the autobiography, in this novel Charke also acts as the site of resolution of the mirror images and as the agent by which they may avoid metamorphosis into their other.

Because the relationship between Henry and Billy Loveman offers great similarities to Charke and her Mr. Brown, their relationship reveals tenseness about gender transgressions. Although the few critics who comment on the novel find it to be a diatribe against the kind of gender blurring that the homosexual Loveman represents, I argue that the opposite is true. As she does in the autobiography, Charke unifies sexual conflict within herself and becomes both the nearly seduced and feminized Henry, as well as the flamboyant drag queen Billy Loveman, and his lover, Turtle. Charke's glancing depiction of the homosexual underworld with its jealousies, loyalties, courtship patterns, and even "marriages," shows its
similarities to heterosexual practices and, I would argue, demonstrates Henry's overreaction to be a case of protesting too much. Henry sees the line blurring and perhaps wonders why Loveman singled him out for affection. When the love letter from Loveman arrives, Henry is "entirely innocent of such unnatural proceedings," and thinks that a love letter from a man must be meant for Charlotte (59). Instead of ignoring it, however, Henry's defense of his own virtue is a bit suspect. He wants to prove that "his behaviour could not in any degree give the smallest hope to the unnatural passion of such a detestable brute" (60). When he says that "[t]he bare mention of his name from the mouth of such a wretch, might throw an imputation on his character, which he would rather suffer death than deserve" (61). Instead of Charlotte, the virtuous heroine of the novel ironically is Henry. Bearing in mind that Loveman has so far only sent a love note to one he assumes welcomes it, we note that Loveman's excoriation by Henry is simply cruel. When Henry arrives for a rendezvous he has arranged to entrap Loveman, the homosexual kisses Henry "with the ardour which might be expected from a drunken fellow to a common prostitute" and for that, Henry and his friends beat him. It is interesting to note that all the male characters, except the fathers, gather for the gay bashing as if they were fighting off the very devil chasing them. The
episode has occurred on the outskirts of town, a marginal area, and Henry is shown fighting what must have appeared to be a woman in woman's clothes and makeup. Indeed, we might question exactly why Henry set up a rendezvous at an inn, instead of simply ignoring Loveman's passion or challenging him to a duel. The setting is France after all. Charke at this point appears to back off from the situation in the face of Henry's potential for metamorphosis into another kind of duality with Loveman. The violence with which the mob turns on Loveman, beating him and dunking/purifying him, receives confirmation of his worthlessness, when Loveman's servants and his lover Turtle fail to offer him assistance or protection:

The history of this affair in a few minutes got wind, sufficient to blow a whole mob together. And when the male-madam was permitted to decamp as he was . . . they snatched him from his supporters and very handsomely ducked him in the fish pond. (66-67)

Charke leaves us with the image of travestied woman climbing the mud banks of the pond in her long skirts. Just as Billy blurs the gender boundary, Charke suggests that the gendered distance between the two men is also blurred, which Billy knows and Henry senses. Turtle also does, for he sulks around jealously as "injured wives are apt to shew violent resentment, when they find their husbands are engaged in intrigues" (67). Likewise, Charlotte, who apparently feels herself as threatened as
Turtle and for the same reason, says "no punishment was sufficiently severe for such unnatural monsters" (60).

Although Charlotte’s sentiments are generally ascribed to Charke’s own, I suggest that Mrs. Evelyn’s moderate reaction, indeed sympathy, to the situation represents Charke’s, whose own life was similar to Loveman’s. I argue that both mirror images find resolution in Charke and that she blurs the gender boundaries separating the two men, much as she does the boundaries separating her and Mr. Brown. Rather than being a diatribe against homosexuality, the novel is rather a graphic depiction of society’s hypocritical treatment of homosexuals as "unnatural monsters." In her duality, we may easily see Charke as both the attacked and the attacker, acting out her own disenfranchisement and social marginalization.

With Loveman and Turtle representing one kind of femininity, Ursula, Charlotte’s mirror image, is another, and, I suggest, because Charke is the agent of reconciliation, she becomes yet another. Although there is no sexuality in their confrontation, Charke presents the idea that Charlotte may be contaminated by the kind of female humanity Ursula represents, just as Henry is now contaminated by Billy. Although Ursula may be perceived as anti-feminine, she is meant to represent Eve as she probably was—sweaty, sexy, and big. To Charlotte, she
undoubtedly appears to be an "unnatural monster," corpulent and physical; dressed in red, she "appear'd like a moving fire," saying "lauk, lauk, measter, do but feel how I swot" (77, 80), the mirror image of pale submissive Charlotte who deliberately subverts her femaleness to appease her adoptive father. We see that it is an act and that she is not the innocent when she tells Henry that his love note comes from a man with no interest in the female sex; that insight reveals a certain hardness, hidden knowledge, a subversion of what she is in order to be the patriarchal image of woman. But if Henry is drawn to Loveman, Charlotte is repelled by her opposite. Ursula is free and equal to men.25 She wrestles and boxes in matches with men; but she is not a transvestite and decorates herself with ribbons and lace. Sir Boistrous Blunder brags that "my daughter shall wrestle or box with e'er a two men within fifty miles of her, for a wager of as many pounds" (84-85). Unlike Henry, Ursula will never have her virtue threatened, but she honors her physicality and may give it away if she chooses. It is difficult to see that Charke presents Charlotte as the proper mirror image for herself. Rather, it may be that Charke presents Ursula as a suggestion of a way to live, perhaps married to a rude and hearty farm boy who would let her be as female as Eve, uninhibited and uncorseted. While we may argue that Charke hopes in this novel to exhibit the
rehabilitation of her own character, she would not choose
to be Charlotte surely.

In their negation of their mirror images and having
their gender and gender traits affirmed by society, the
Henry/Charlotte duality reveals that its wide separation
of gender is reconciled but maintained in Charke, as she
is the agent for the mirror images of Loveman/Henry and
Ursula/Charlotte. We suspect, however, that Charke
intends the implication of incest in the separate-but-
together relationship of Henry and Charlotte, for she
plays the male role in warning Henry about Loveman. We
wonder if Charlotte during marriage will educate Henry, or
if he will retain the feminine innocence she does not
have. Aside from Henry, Billy, and Turtle, other men in
the novel function as their titles: father, grandfather,
tutor, husband, macho townsmen. None of the women wants
to be men (except perhaps Charlotte secretly), but at
least two of the men want to become women. Women are
mothers (Mrs. Evelyn), patriarchal women (Charlotte), Eve
(Ursula), redefined women (Billy Loveman), but men can
only be men.

By studying Charke's experimentations with persona
and voice in her literature, this chapter has attempted to
show the influences that Charke brought to the stage of
the Little Theatre. To draw conclusions about Charke, it
is important for us to establish what Charke wasn't, even
if we cannot quite identify what she was. Outcast by her occupation and her sexual image, Charke was in a double bind of ostracism and apparently was marginalized by those on the margins of society. Charke, however, was not simply part of that "culture of travesty." Her masculine identity did not play a part in that "vast masquerade" of London society. Rather in her life as in her stage career, Charke protested the constraints against women by pursuing different and difficult ways of living. As I discuss in chapter four, Haywood in her work deals with sex, sin, and women under pressure to conform; Charke, on the other hand, seems more concerned with the question: How may a human thrive in a repressive society? She sets about answering the question through her protest literature, following essentially the same techniques she establishes in her first work, The Art of Management. Clearing a space for the male/female duality at the center of her works, Charke becomes the point of reconciliation between the sexes, as she creates a new gender system. Using the metaphor of twinship, marriage, or a brother-sister relationship, she arranges a oneness, a blending which removes gender boundaries and enables herself to play all the roles. In rejecting the traditions of the hierarchy, Charke found her own plot and voice by filtering her literature through her own experiences. While critics have viewed Charke as being what she wore, I
have argued that Charke attempted to break such limitations by defying gendered boundaries, especially in her stage representations.

The stage at the little Theatre brought together Charke with Fielding who employed her duality as part of his dramatic message. Cast in leading male roles in his 1736 and 1737 dramas, Charke received thereby public validation of her social defiance, allowing us to view her relationship with Fielding as symbiotic. While I am not suggesting that Fielding only wrote his dramas for Charke, it is clear that the impact of the later dramas would have been considerably lessened had Charke not appeared in the leading male roles. Her very presence on stage allowed him to address dramatically the issue of gender roles and social definitions, otherwise not possible.

We note that Charke appeared only in those dramas by Fielding and by George Lillo, whom I discuss in chapter six. For him, she developed the heterosexual female characters of Millwood in The London Merchant and Agnes in Fatal Curiosity, thereby extending her definition of the defiant woman at odds with society. Her contribution to the Little Theatre group therefore ranges from writer to actor to actress. Because Charke lived, wrote, and acted the role of the outcast ostracized for her gender and class, her presence at the playhouse advanced strongly dramatic possibilities for fellow playwrights, Fielding
and Lillo. She was, then, an enabling force as well as the embodiment of the revolution at the Little Theatre. Perhaps for that reason, she felt an attachment to the playhouse, whose fate in many ways resembled her own. After 1737, she dropped back into obscurity, although as I have noted, she continued acting as a stroller and at fair booths during the 1740's and early 1750's. She may have been part of Theophilus Cibber's ill-fated "Histrionic Academy on the Bowling Green," founded in 1755 for which he advertised that his assistants, pupils would produce The Busy Body and The Mock Doctor. The academy did not open, but Charke produced and starred in one final play. In the last year of her life, on 28 October, 1759, she rented the Little Theatre for a one-night performance of The Busy Body in which she played the male role of Marplot. The advertisement for the production reads "As I am entirely dependent on chance for a subsistence . . . I humbly hope the Town will favour me" (Scouten The London Stage Part Four 476). This was her last appearance on the Little Theatre stage, for she died 16 April 1760, at an unknown site in the Haymarket district. The British Chronicle 16 April smooths over the running battle Charke conducted with society and identifies her in the obituary only as "a gentlewoman remarkable for her adventures and misfortunes." Like the writers I discuss in chapter six, the essential Charke remains a mystery.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER FIVE


2 I base my assertions on the acting rosters at the Drury Lane and the Little Theatre as they appear in Scouten, The London Stage Part Three.

3 The listing of Charke’s male roles derives from Scouten’s The London Stage Part Three and from The Index to The London Stage, in addition to Sybil Rosenthal’s Theatres of the London Fairs. I have indicated with an asterisk Charke’s male roles at the Little Theatre.

1733-1737

Rodrigo (Othello), Fainlove (The Tender Husband), Douglass (The Albion Queens), * Macheath (The Beggar’s Opera Tragedized), * Pistol (Humours of Sir John Falstaff), Lord Flame (Hurlothrumbo), * Sir John (The Devil to Pay), George (George Barnwell), * Lothario (The Fair Penitent), * Hartley (The Nonjuror), Townley (The Provok’d Husband), * Jack Stocks (The Lottery), * Rovewell (The Contrivance), * Harry (The Humorous Election), Sir Charles (The Beaux Stratagem), Poppingdon (The Careless Husband), Sir Francis (The Provok’d Husband), * the doctor (The Mock Doctor), Archer (Squire Basinghall), Gazeteer (Politics on Both Sides), Grizzle (The Tragedy of Tragedies), Marius (Caius Marius), Charles (Love Makes a Man), Tattle (Love for Love), Clodio (Love Makes a Man), Pistol (The Beggar’s Pantomime), * Lord Place (Pasquin), * Spatter (Eurydice Hiss’d), * Don Resinando (A Rehearsal of Kings), * Hen (The Historical Register of 1736).
1740-1755

Lovegirlo (The Humours of Covent Garden; or, The Covent Garden Tragedy), Plume (The Recruiting Officer), King (The Miller of Mansfield), Pope John/Joan (Pope John VIII); Ancient Pistol (The Captive Prince; Or, Love and Loyalty, With the Comical Humours of Sir John Falstaff and Ancient Pistol). [The cast also included "Miss Charke," as the Captive Prince.]

4 Sybil Rosenfeld, calling Hunter a one act "ballad opera taking the same time to perform as a droll," cites Fielding's advertisement in the Daily Post 23 August 1729. Performances of the piece occurred on the hour between 2 and 11 at Fielding's booth in the George Inn Yard (32). Richard Charke is listed among the musicians performing between acts.

5 Diane M. A. Relke's "In Search of Mrs. Pilkington," Gender at Work, Ed. Ann Messenger, (Detroit: Wayne State U P, 1990) 114-149 argues that Colley Cibber became a father figure for Laetitia Pilkington when she was in London attempting to break into the literary world. Giving her money and raising funds to bail her out of prison, Cibber encouraged her with creative and economic support, never wavering even in the face of her imprisonment for debt. Considering his treatment of Charlotte Charke, we may view ironically Cibber's letters to Pilkington in which, as Relke quotes, he dismisses her failings and lauds her accomplishments. Relke mentions a letter from Cibber after Pilkington went back to Ireland, which is filled with advice from a "loving father" (127). Although the article states that she "compensated for Cibber's disappointment in his own daughter, Charlotte Charke," there seems to be few differences between the history of the two women. Like Charke, Pilkington was a writer, a (would-be) actress, a divorced woman whose husband was a womanizing cad. Like Eliza Haywood, Pilkington was married to a priest, albeit a thief and plagiarizer. Yet Pilkington was able to attract patrons, such as Cibber, Swift, and even Bolingbroke, who said that Pilkington’s husband wanted "morals, and as I hear, decency sometimes." Those words in the Bolingbroke quotation are especially ironic for they resemble the accusation made by Cibber against his daughter and used by him as a reason to deny her requests for assistance. (114-149).

6 The eighteenth-century gender system which Charke defied through her life and work will not legitimately bear twentieth-century definitions; yet, at the same time, there is the communality that the system served then as it
serves now to effect women's subordination and exploitation


There are a particular gang of sodomitical wretches in this town, who call themselves Mollies, and are so far degenerated from all masculine deportment or manly exercise, that they rather fancy themselves women, imitating all the little vanities that custom has reconciled to the female sex, affecting to speak, walk, tattle, courtesy, cry, scold, and to mimick all manner of effeminacy. (265)

Ward uses the term "molly" which earlier had functioned as a general reference to women, rather like our "Jane Doe." As Friedli points out, Ward's use of "molly" is the earliest reference to an effeminate man (251). Simpson notes the harassment of homosexuals in London and the increased punishment for sodomy. Stories circulated which served to inflame prejudice against gay men. One in particular concerned initiation in marriage and birth ceremonies. Homosexuality in Renaissance England by Bray discusses these practices and cites evidence given in trials for sodomy: "There is a bed in that middle room, for the use of the company when they have a mind to go there in couples and be married; and for that reason they call that room, The Chappel" (qtd Friedli 251).

While some of the ferocity against crossdressers may be assigned to factors I have mentioned, other reasons also exist. One especially concerns the growing legal concern over fraud and misrepresentation, either to gain money or to avoid creditors. For instance in 1709, the copyright law prevented fraudulent use of an author's name; in 1721 a law against impersonation with intent was passed making the attempt a felony. As Friedli points out:

What is at issue here is not only a concern with property, ownership and authority, but a need to establish, with increasing precision, the parameters of the factual. Concern with the problem of evidence is aimed at counteracting any discrepancy between appearance and truth.
The need to define precisely what constitutes valid evidence is fundamental to Enlightenment epistemology, notably in the areas of religion, natural history, philosophy and law. (254-255)

8 Linda Woodbridge claims that a "transvestite movement" existed in the early eighteenth century (Women and the English Renaissance 141, 145). She may refer to the growing number of women in real life, who dressed as men; perhaps, as Pat Rogers observes, they did so to "protest . . . against the limitations . . . which so constricted the available modes of being . . . women" ("The Breeches Part" 253). Pearson cites as examples of transvestites who became soldiers, such as Margaretha Linck, Henrica Shuria, Deborah Sampson, and Christian Davies; some crossdressers were sailors such as Hannah Snell and Mary Anne Talbot, as well as pirates such as Ann Bonny and Mary Read (The Prostituted Muse 104). Friedli cites legal action taken against 34 women crossdressers between 1700 and 1800, and she states that five were married and were convicted under the "unnatural" laws governing marriage between members of the same sex. Of the others, four would have gone unnoticed but for their arrest for other crimes. Five were discovered but, because they lived as single professional men and were not breaking marriage or fraud laws, they were not arraigned (250). This last point concerns Dorothy George in London Life in the Eighteenth Century when she discusses the lack of women's jobs as the result of the division of labor, a fact which led to some instances of transvestism.


See also the biography of Hannah Snell (1750); and Herman Mann's biography of Deborah Sampson The Female Review: or, Memoirs of an American Young Lady (1797) as well as Henry Fielding, The Female Husband and the expanded edition entitled The Surprising Adventures of a Female Husband (1813).

9 Janet Todd in The Sign of Angellica calls attention to the expensive and uncomfortable clothing for the eighteenth-century lady, as a result of the division of labor, the new leisure, and middle class disposable income for luxury items, such as dress:
Hooped skirts, stiffened with whalebone over petticoats, gave a dome-shaped appearance to the fashionable lady; this was flattened towards the end of the period when skirts were so tremendous that the well-dressed found it necessary to go sideways through doubler doors. Meanwhile coiffures grew so tall that they could catch fire from the candles in chandeliers, and the decolletage fell so deeply that white fichus were needed by respectable ladies to cover the space. Stays were tight and there was much shaping of the female figure with back boards and weights for the head to ensure correct posture; female toes were forcibly encouraged to turn out. Frequently the whole concoction of the fashionably patched, peached and plumped lady seemed a defiance of the female body.

Todd cites the similarity between the women’s and men’s fashions, such as "patches, wigs, powder for the hair and heavy make-up." She refers to the 'fascination' with male clothing on actresses and cites what she calls Charke's "functional transvestism" meaning that she wore men’s clothing on and off stage "to make a living and avoid creditors" (The Sign of Angellica 107-108)

10 We may see an example in Richardson’s Clarissa which sets forth a single definition of female virtue even though the novel acknowledges a diversity of male behavior. Haywood’s novels, emphasizing ways a woman may err, also acknowledge a single standard of womanly behavior, and, at the same time, portray the masculine sex life as part of the warp and woof of his existence. The early novel contributed positively to the male macho image but negatively to the ideal female image with its self-denial and domesticity.

11 Until the social crisis of the eighteenth century, the definition of gender under the law pertained only to the question of the hermaphrodite and that was established by law. Edward Coke, Commentarie upon Littleton, 1628, (Section IL.I.C.I.), handed down an opinion that "Every heire is either a male, or female, or an hermaphrodite, that is both male and female. And an hermaphrodite shall be heir, either as male or female, according to that kind of the sex which does prevail (qtd by Friedli 259).

But the eighteenth century brought the new sciences to bear on defining gender, including the Royal Society exhibition of "Michel-Ann Drouart" for study as an
hermaphrodite. Arnaud's Dissertation on Hermaphrodites was a popular work. Friedli calls attention to the figure of the hermaphrodite as the image of male and female unification, and as such represented all the old myths the new science wanted to dispell with empirical studies.

Some popular contemporary works included Bienville, Nymphomania or A Dissertation concerning the Furor Uterinus (1775), and Bianchi, An Historical and Physical dissertation on the Case of Catherine Vizzani, containing the adventures of a young woman who for eight years posed in the habit of a man . . . with some curious and anatomical remarks on the nature and existence of the hymen . . . to which are added certain needful remarks by the English editor (1751). Translated by John Cleland, the latter is a study of a transvestite with an "irregular and violent inclination [toward other women] which must either proceed from some error in nature or from some disorder or perversion in the imagination."

The Life and Adventures of Charles D'Eon de Beaumont otherwise known as Mademoiselle la Chevaliere D'Eon 1728-1810 was a biography of Chevalier D'Eon, the celebrated male transvestite. He took his secret to his grave, and only after his death was he discovered to be a man.

12 The word "transvestite" is packed with the contemporary meaning of a fetish pursued for erotic purposes. Mackie calls attention to Woodhouse's statement that "cross-dressing and transvestism are not one and the same thing--transvestism is one form of cross-dressing" (21). Woodhouse makes the distinction that transvestism is activity almost exclusively practiced by males; women who wear men's clothes do not engage in the practice as a fetish (18).

13 Charke's cross-dressing may or may not have indicated her sexual practices and preferences, but there's no way to know. I use "passing" as it retains its meaning among the Black community for a Black passing as a White; here I employ it to mean a woman passing as a man. As Friedli states in "Passing Women," transvestism exhibited itself in many forms; therefore, we need to distinguish Charke's use of male clothes as a way to pass as a man, from other types of crossdressing.

14 Catherine Cibber Brown is the wicked stepmother in Charke's story of her life, which Patricia Meyer Spacks notices, and in her analysis of the narrative, she even refers to Catherine as "Charlotte's stepmother" ((Imagining a Self 75, 88). The unintentional reference is interesting because Catherine lived with Cibber after Mrs. Cibber died, apparently prevented any contact between Cibber and Charke, and inherited all his estate, which, it
was said, was considerable. In the Narrative, Charke refers to her and her hold over Cibber:

I am very certain my Father is to be, in Part, excused, as he is too powerfully persuaded by his cruel Monitor; who neither does, or ever will, pay the least Regard to any Part of the Family, but herself: I am certain I have found it so, and am too sure of its Effects from the Hour of my Birth: and My first Fault, was being my Father's last Born. Even the little Follies of Prattling Infancy were, by this Person, construed in Crimes, before I had a more distinguishing sense than a Kitten. As I grew up, I too soon perceived a Rancorous Disposition towards me, attended with Malice prepense, to destroy that Power I had in the Hearts of both my Parents, where I was perhaps judged to sit too triumphant, and maintained my Seat of Empire in my Mother's to her latest Moments: And, 'tis possible, had she lived, my Enemy might not have carried this cruel Point, to prevent what I think I had a natural Right to receive, when I so earnestly implored it. (122-123)

15 See Scouten *The London Stage* Part Three (lxxiii passim).

16 See John D. Holland typescript, "My Name was in Capitals," for references to the unknown male lover with whom Charke had a "union." Holland identifies the man as John Sacheverell.

17 Far from wishing to destroy the patriarchy, she takes on a male persona who seems to qualify as a decent man living as well as possible in the space she has created. Brown/Charke cannot settle in one place because he is unwilling and/or unable to defeat the father-figure, so avoids confrontations with bailiffs, landlords, businessmen, puppetmasters, and theatre managers. In *Pill*, for instance, Brown/Charke leaves town taking his business key with him, planning to mail it to the landlord rather than face him. The narrator shows us Charke as victorious, however, for as Brown she never meets a man she cannot outwit eventually, except her father perhaps. For some reason, Charke goes to trouble to portray her character as decent and clean. She is almost obsessive about clean linen, and takes pains to inform us about the state of her characters' underwear, although she never mentions other garments. A few instances will
suffice. For example, Charke mentions that her finances are so bad that she and her daughter are down to one change of linen. At a tavern, Charke suspects one of the men of being a thief and immediately determines that he wants to steal her handsome linen. Another time, Kitty is missing, and the servant remarks that she went upstairs to change her linen. Mr. and Mrs. Brown do not have one shilling and Brown is "without a hat," but Mrs. Brown has a "Bundle in her Hand," which contains a "Change of Linnen for us, on our Travel" (233). Once to get ultimate revenge on a hateful woman, Charke steals the woman's small linen from the hedge where it was drying.

She also finds other underthings, such as stockings, important. Charke once saw the Queen in The Spanish Fryar play her part without stockings, because she had given her "fine Pair of Cotton" stockings to the ragged actor playing the hero. At another time, this same actress lifted up her hoop to descend from the stage and thereby revealed to a shocked Charke standing below that she wore no linen or stockings (186).

18 As stated above, Catherine, the oldest, married Colonel Brown, was widowed, and moved in with Cibber. Apparently she gained control of him and his money, for she inherited his estate. Koon quotes a notice in the Public Advertiser 12 January 1758, "To be Lett, Elegantly Furnish'd, the House of the late Colley Cibber, esq.: in Berkley Square, the corner of Bruton Street" (180). Catherine died in 1761, the same year her one daughter married John Thomas, Esq. According to the Daily Post 1 November 1727, Anne owned a china house and sold "all sorts of China and Japan ware; the best tea, as pekoe, congon, bohea, hyson, green, and imperial; likewise coffee, sago, and chocolate; also fine hollands, cambrics, and most sorts of millinery goods." She married John Boulty sometime after 1727 (Koon 180).

Elizabeth married Dawson Brett and, after he died, Joseph Marples; Charke's Narrative states that Elizabeth owned "a neat, well-accomodated" tavern near Gray's Inn, and served "flesh, fish, and poultry ... in an elegant manner at reasonable rates" (120, 55-56). Anne Chetwood, the indigent semi-illiterate whose pitiful letter refers to "Aunt Charke" is Elizabeth's daughter.

Theophilus had two wives, the second Susanna Arne, the musician Dr. Arne's daughter, was a respectable woman whom Theophilus attempted to prostitute for money. He died in 1758, when the ship in which he was a passenger sank in the Irish Sea, according to the Barker and Koon biographies of Cibber.

19 Although her birthdate is not recorded, we know from her Narrative that still "quite young," she made her stage
debut in 1729 during "benefit-time" in February; therefore, she was around 17 years in 1729 when she married (with her father's permission) and subsequently went on the stage. Janet Todd's Dictionary of Literary Women states that she was born 1712.

20 There is a question about Charlotte Charke's actual relationship with Charke after 1730. Her Narrative, however, states in unequivocal terms that "though he [Charke] did not live with me, I knew [he] had a Right to make bold with any Thing that was mine, as there was no formal Article of Separation between us" (76); but John D. Holland's typescript of Charlotte Charke's life and works, "My Name was in Capitals," argues that she and Richard Charke formally lived apart, and he refers to a "Bill of Separation" at the Public Record Office in London.

She was freed from him after his death but the date is in question. There are three pieces of conflicting evidence about Richard Charke's demise. Charke herself states in the Narrative that "Mr. Charke went to Jamaica, where he died in about twenty Months after his leaving England" (76). Other sources, such as D. Erskine Baker, Koon, and Wright use Charke's evidence about his death in 1735. There is a discrepancy, however, for Scouten's The London Stage Part 4, indicates that Charke was performing in person at the Drury Lane as late as 10 April 1736.

Although Richard Charke is not listed on the acting rosters after 1733, The London Stage Part Three lists his name as appearing in advertisements 27 times between 1733 and 1737, usually for music performances at the Drury Lane. Some of those notations are ambiguously worded, making it difficult to tell if he was actually there, such as "Music: A Comic Medley Overture composed by Charke." He played a violin solo at the Drury Lane 9, 10, 11, 14 February and 10 April 1736. An advertisement for 7 May 1736, at the Drury Lane states "By Desire, a Solo composed by Charke will be performed on the Violin by his scholar, Master Oates." After a single reference 27 October 1737, Charke's death acknowledged in an advertisement 20 October 1744 for a performance of "Comic Medley Overture composed by late Mr. Charke."

21 Old Mr. Shore, Cibber's father-in-law, may early have recognized Cibber's character defects for he strongly disapproved his daughter's marriage. Charke's Narrative states that

In short, a private courtship began, and ended in a Marriage against her Father's consent . . . But not withstanding my Grandfather, in the End, gave her a Fortune, and intended a larger, but this Marriage made him convert the intended

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additional Sum to another Use, and in Revenge, built a Polly on the Thames, called Shore's Polly, which was demolished some Years before I was born. (80-81)

Perhaps Cibber’s and Theophilus’s reputation for greed was current. When Susanna Arne married Theophilus, the unusual marriage settlement stated that her income was her personal property, that two trustees would hold it and give her amounts as she required. Further, her will made her parents, not her husband, beneficiaries, according to Barker’s biography of Colley Cibber (180-181).

22 The work was first staged as an afterpiece on the same bill with The Beggar’s Opera in which Charke played Polly. The cast for The Art of Management included Charke as Mrs. Tragic; Turner as Brainless, Machen as Bloodbolt, Smyth as Headpiece.

The following notice appeared about the first performance:

The Company are oblig’d to remove from the Hay-Market Theatre to York-Buildings, as being too young a Sett of People to venture at great Expences, without first having merited the Favour of the Town to support them in it; but as we are determin’d to the full Extent of our Power, to endeavor to entertain them, we humbly hope they will accept of our Performances . . . Charlott [sic] Charke.

A notice in the Daily Advertiser, 26 September read:

We hear that Mrs. Charke . . . drew Tears from the whole Audience in her Prologue, which she spoke very pathetically; and the new Farce . . . was very much applauded, notwithstanding the impotent Attempts of several young Clerks to raise a Riot, who were for that purpose properly marshall’d by the cunning Lawyer their Master: Their rude Behaviour was so extraordinary, that several Gentlemen were provok’d to threaten them with the Discipline of their Canes, upon which they thought proper to desist. (qtd Scouten The London Stage Part Three 513)

The play was staged twice more following the opening. On 26 September it was an afterpiece with Jane Shore and 1 October, with George Barnwell. Scouten includes the
notice from a 1 October newspaper that "Printed Books of the Farce will be sold at the Great Room" (The London Stage Part Three 515). These are the copies that Fleetwood allegedly bought to prevent their being read.


24 Richardson Wright's Revels in Jamaica contends (20) that Charlotte Charke went to Jamaica in 1735 with her soi-disant husband Richard Charke, but Part Three of The London Stage shows Charke performed in London regularly over the year with the only significant gap over six weeks occurring between 26 December 1735 and 5 March 1736. Inasmuch as the voyage to Jamaica took a minimum of three months during the winter months, it seems unlikely that Charke left December 1735, performed in Jamaica, and returned to London by 5 March 1736. She was separated if not divorced from Charke, and would have not real reason to go, except to accompany her daughter who did go about that time with her father. While actors could make money touring there, many died from tropical diseases. Scouten quotes a letter stating that one of the troupes performing The Beggar's Opera had buried its "third Polly."

Revels in Jamaica offers information on the later life of Maria Catherine Charke Harman. Wright, who does not provide a source for this information, asserts that Douglas, no longer calling his troupe The Company of Comedians from London, but rather the American Company of Comedians, opened in New York in fall 1758 and toured then to Philadelphia. At this point (but the date is not clear), new cast members, some from London and some from Jamaica, joined the troupe, including Mrs. Harman, "the daughter of Charlotte Charke, the abandoned wife of the Charke who came with the musicians that Henry Moore brought back with him to Jamaica in 1735" (47-48). Wright goes on to trace the life of Mrs. Harman, implies that she continued to live in Jamaica after Richard Charke either died or left, 1735-36. If so, then the daughter was back in London acting on stage with her mother in 1744 according to contemporary theatrical advertisements. When Mrs. Harman returned to London from Jamaica, if indeed she really went, is not clear. There is the possibility that perhaps her father gained her custody or her confidence, maybe before the Jamaica tour. She may simply have been weary of living hand to mouth with Charlotte Charke, but
returned to London after 1735. Sybil Rosenfeld’s *The Theatre of the London Fairs* contains several indications that Mrs. Harman lived in London between 1744 and 1756. The *General Advertiser*, 1 May 1744, announces a new droll at Hallam’s New Theatre, *The Royal Heroe; or, The Lover of his Country*. Intermix’d with several Comical and Diverting scenes call’d The Blundering Brothers. With the Merry Adventures of Timothy Addlepox and Davy Dunce. Among the cast appeared "Eumenes, Mrs. Charke" and "Lucia, Miss Charke."

The *General Advertiser* for 3 May 1744 gave notice of another play, *The Captive Prince; Or, Love and Loyalty*. With the Comical Humours of Sir John Falstaff and Ancient Pistol. The cast includes "Captive Prince, Miss Charke" and "Ancient Pistol, Mrs. Charke" (114-115). Twelve years later, The *Daily Advertiser* 3–6 September 1756, advertised a performance at the Swan Inn by Hallam’s Company in the play *Half an Hour*. "Harmon" [sic] and "Mrs. Harmon" [sic] appear on the actors’ roster, along with Roebuck, Walters, Jones, Pack, Platt, Frisby, Miss Jones, Mrs. Frimble. Charlotte Charke pursued acting, at least at fairs, for the same paper announced her appearance in a performance of *England Triumphant; or The British General*, along with *The Merry Beggars*, *with the comical Humours of the Royal Consort Queen Tatter*, at the Great Room George Inn Yard. According to this evidence, then, Catherine Charke Harman left England, went to Jamaica, returned to England, and went once again to Jamaica from which she emigrated around 1767 to America, dying in New York 1773. Koon cites an obituary in the 27 May 1773 *Rivington’s Gazette* which was probably similar to the one Wright quotes from the *New York Mercury*:

> Since she will not appearing in Jamaica again, let us set down the demise of this lady. In the *New York Mercury* for June 7, 1773, we read that Mrs. Catherine Maria Harman died on May 27th, at the age of forty-three, and was buried in Trinity Churchyard. And it adds the touching note: ‘Her little fortune she has left to Miss Cheer: and her obsequies were attended, on Saturday night, by a very genteel procession.’ She had been with the company since 1767, being next in importance to Mrs. Douglass. (181)

We may observe several differences between Mrs. Harman and her mother. By 1773, acting was rather respectable, at least in America, but we should not be misled by the writer’s patronizing description of a "genteel" group at Mrs. Harman’s graveside. I daresay the writer would not apply the term to an upperclass lady’s
funeral procession. The word gives us an idea that Mrs. Harman's way of life in America, while not exactly affluent, was comfortable, and she left a "little fortune." In any event, she died at forty-three in circumstances quite different from the desperate poverty in which Whyte found forty-three-year-old Charlotte Charke.

Wright notes that "Miss Cheer" was Margaret Cheer Cameron, an established London actress who debuted in American 1764. Her marital history is quite chequered, as she had one known husband, perhaps a separation, and an elopement. She married Lord Rosehill in 1768, thereby becoming the first titled actress in the United States. Absent from the stage for a while, she appeared for a last time in America during the 1794 season. According to Wright, she spent some time acting in Jamaica, where she died in 1800, listed on the death rolls not as Lady Rosehill but as Mrs. Long, because, as the rumor goes, she eloped with a family servant, the coachman Mr. Long (49).

25 There is strong similarity between Charke's Ursula and Ben Jonson's Ursula in *Bartholomew Fair*. Both "water the earth" with their honest sweat and provide earthy comforts for men. Scorning social pretensions, they exhibit and foster man's Adamic nature. In their presence, Mrs. Overdo, for instance, and Charlotte appear to be pale imitations of women. But while Mrs. Overdo has the potential for salvation through Ursula's castigating honesty, Charlotte does not. Drury Lane theatre offered Jonson's play several times between 1730-1737, and Charke conceivably was quite familiar with Jonson's depiction of Ursula as the magnanimous earth mother dispensing roast pig and jordans.

26. *An Epistle from Mr. Theo Cibber to David Garrick, Esq.* London, 1755. In a letter dated 20 November 1755, Cibber states that he returned from Guilford the previous July and found he had been fired by Covent Garden. The Duke of Grafton obtained him a license to open the Little Theatre. He produced plays for ten nights during a three week period and made some money. The Rehearsal was staged on 15 September in which Charlotte Charke played Volscius. Authorities closed the production after one performance. When the fall season began and the Drury Lane opened, Theo Cibber was ordered to cease his productions. Again he sought the protection of the Duke of Grafton to obtain permission for a season of plays at the Little Theatre. On December 15, the announcement for the acting academy appeared but nothing came of it (Scouten *The London Stage* Part Four 612, 636 *passim*).
HIGH DRAMA AT THE LITTLE THEATRE, 1730-1737:  
HENRY FIELDING, ELIZA HAYWOOD,  
CHARLOTTE CHARKE, AND COMPANY  

Volume II  

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CHAPTER SIX

...AND COMPANY: SAMUEL JOHNSON OF CHESTER, WILLIAM HATCHETT, HENRY CAREY, AND GEORGE LILLO

Members of the extended company of playwrights at the Little Theatre had begun to employ the theatre as a venue for protests years before Fielding's work brought their stage into prominence. Never prolific, these writers may seem minor contributors to eighteenth-century theatre; to the contrary, their plays as social documents are valuable in providing a composite of life on the margins of society. Scott in "A Memoir of the Life" refers to the denizens of the Little Theatre as "discarded," as if the theatre had brought them together and made their lives and works count for something (7). This chapter addresses this assumption, for I discuss each of the writers as an individual visionary whose work at the Little Theatre gave expression to the unacceptable. In order to trace developments and possible shared influences of these playwrights, I want to examine the works in chronological order of their staged productions at the playhouse: Samuel Johnson of Chester's Hurlothrumbo: or, The Supernatural, as it is Acted at the Theatre in the Haymarket and The Blazing Comet; William Hatchett's The Fall of Mortimer and The Rival Father: or, the Death of Achilles; Henry Carey's Amelia: A New English Opera, As it is Perform'd at the New
Theatre in the Hay-Market. After the Italian Manner, Chrononhotonthologos: The Most Tragical Tragedy That ever was Tragediz'd by any Company of Tragedians, and The Dragon of Wantley, and The Honest Yorkshireman; and George Lillo's Fatal Curiosity, with consideration of his earlier work, The London Merchant.

We should note from the first that Fielding was not the savior-figure at the Little Theatre when he arrived in 1730; on 18 December 1729, Johnson began a run of Hurlothrumbo for six performances, followed by Johnson's never-published second work The Chesire Comicks; or, The Amours of Lord Flame. William Hatchett's work also appeared during the time, for his The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles opened in April 1730 four nights after the premiere of Fielding's The Author's Farce. As we may observe from this simple chronology provided by play rosters, Fielding did not function as a magnet who attracted the other playwrights. They were older, with long memories and old grudges, veterans of London's mean streets. No doubt, they saw Fielding as a toff, part of the establishment. How his fellow-playwrights appeared to Fielding we do not know except for the 1740 piece he wrote in memory of George Lillo, which I quote below. In an advertisement for The Rehearsal of Kings, Fielding refers to the 1735 assemblage at the Little Theatre as having "dropped from the clouds," and he well might have said
something similar about the other playwrights, who, like himself, simply had appeared one day at the theatre.

What Pat Rogers calls the "secularization of taste" or *embourgeoisement* seems clearly applicable to much, if not all, of the work produced at the Little Theatre ("Introduction: The Writer and Society" *The Eighteenth Century* 15). The plays of the writers under study in this chapter do not deal with the traditional prevailing class structure and the orthodoxy of the ruling class; instead, they focus on economic, political, and social interests of the lower classes, from which they themselves arose. Lillo's family were Dutch immigrants, and he was a jeweler before turning playwright at fifty; the rumored illegitimate son of a Lord, Carey took up his mother's trade of schoolteaching. Johnson arriving from a small town had become a dancing master in London before he turned dramatist, and, aside from three plays, Hatchett's only known source of income were the earnings of his paramour, Eliza Haywood, discussed in chapter four. The playwrights' common ideological center was the lower-class situation, home, and workplace, far removed from the cultural milieu of court, country house, and university.
It seems appropriate to begin with Johnson, whose birth and death are slighted in literary history which generally notes only that he is the Other Samuel Johnson, not to be confused with the real one. Of his background, we know only from Baker that he was madman and a dancing master from Chester. His lunacy, real or assumed, determined his role at the Little Theatre, made his plays a popular fad in the eighteenth century, and, ironically, has prevented any real study of his dramas in the twentieth century. Samuel Johnson of Chester's work at the theatre began December 1729 when Hurlothrumbo opened for what was to be a run of thirty performances. His popular play, which Fielding called exquisitely "bad," was printed with a list of subscribers and dedicated to Robert Walpole, who agreed to take thirty copies (Cross The History of Henry Fielding 79). According to Baker's account, Johnson's second work, The Chesire Comicks: or, The Amours of Lord Flame, opened two months later, on 23 February 1730, and both plays continued to be featured at the Little Theatre during March and April 1730, sharing the stage with such plays as Fielding's The Author's Farce, Hatchett's The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles, as well as The Metamorphosis of the Beggar's Opera, featuring Charlotte Charke. With the exception of
Carey, Johnson must have worked intimately during that two-month period, with all the playwrights under study.

As stated above, the major critical evaluation of Johnson is Baker's four-page analysis of his life in *Biographia Dramatica* where the focus is on Johnson's madness. We find that he acted his "part of Lord Flame . . . with a violin in his hand, . . . and sometimes walking in [sic] high stilts." Baker provides anecdotes about Johnson's "suit of black velvet with a long white flowing periwig," and his fan club called "The Hurlothrumbo Society" (1: 402). About Johnson's way of life, he says

[I]t is apparent that he must have been infected with a strong tincture of insanity; in consequence of which, it is probable, that not many persons would be willing to intrust their children in his hands; yet . . . his madness did not take any dangerous or mischievous turn, and as it was accompanied with flights of wit and humour that rendered him, though an extraordinary, yet far from disagreeable companion, his acquaintance was sought by most of the gentlemen of fortune in that country, at whose houses he used to reside alternately for a considerable time, in such manner as to render the pursuit of business unnecessary to him. (1: 402)

He also provides several anecdotes to show Johnson's turn of mind, as when the wife of a country gentleman tried to get rid of Johnson as a permanent houseguest. He sent word that leaving would kill him, and, after he died, he would come back to haunt her. The woman's delicate nerves fell apart at the idea of Johnson as a ghost with a
free run of the house, and she begged him to stay on
(Baker 1: 404).

John Byrom in The Private Journal and Literary
Remains of John Byrom includes several remarks in volume
one, 1729-1735, about Johnson's first play and provides a
glimpse of the man himself. Byrom attended Hurloothrumbo,
and wrote on 2 April 1729, that the play was the talk of
Dick's coffeehouse "from one to the other":

He [Johnson] had a full house and much good
company on Saturday night, the first time of
acting, and report says all the boxes are taken
for next Monday, and the quality they expect an
epilogue next time (there being none last) from
Mr. B. It is impossible to describe this play,
and the oddities, out of the waynesses, flights,
madness, nonsense, comicalities, & ect., but I
hope Johnson will make his fortune by it for the
present. We had seven or eight Garters ... the pit; I saw Lord Oxford and one or two more
there, but was so intent upon the farce that I
did not observe many quality that were there; we
agreed to laugh and clap beforehand, and kept
our word from beginning to end. The night after
Johnson came to Dick's, and they all got about
him like so many bees; they say the Prince has
been told of Hurloothrumbo and will come and see
it; he said he would call on me to-day, but he
has not. I shall get him to vary some passages
in it if I can that from anybody but himself
would make it an entertainment not quite so
proper for the ladies, and I would have our
ladies here see it because they know the man;
for my part, who think all stage entertainments
stuff and nonsense, I consider this as a joke
upon 'em all. (I: 2: 349)4

Distance from the events allows us to see Johnson as
a showman whose antics served as stage hype. He was his
own best publicity and managed to parlay his public
identity into a free ride through life. The stilts and
velvet coat sold as many theatre tickets as his plays; if he was indeed mad, his condition served him well. Baker seems to hint at this interpretation for he says that

As a writer he stands in the same predicament as in his personal character; his works have madness in them, but at the same time it is evidently the madness of a man of great abilities. (1: 405)

Until now, no analysis of the plays exists, yet Johnson's two extant dramas reveal that the works are not mad gibberish. Each concerns itself with the class system and more especially with the nature of madness. Johnson examines the rules or "reason" determining who is marginalized. What he achieves is a multifaceted definition of human misery, and his dramas present a series of characters, each of whom is mad in his own way. Some are marginalized, some are not, and Johnson explores the causes of social ostracism. Showing sanity or reason to be insane and irrational in ordinary practice, he sets up the dramatic fiction that what is mad is sane and what is sane is mad. Johnson's social commentary expands to include problems like poverty as he defines civilization by the outcasts on its margins. Although topically the plays are similar and share the same structure as well, I propose to examine them individually.

_Hurlothrumbo; or, The Super-Natural as it is Acted at the New-Theatre in the Hay-Market_ provides the attribution "Written by Mr. Samuel Johnson, of Cheshire," although in
1729 when the play was published, Dr. Samuel Johnson was not yet in London. The distinction by place of origin then must have reasons other than differentiation. The play's title page is further distinguished by a brief poem:

Ye Sons of Fire, read my Hurlothrumbo,  
Turn it betwixt your Finger and your Thumbo,  
And being quite outdone, be quite struck dumbo.

Further indication of Johnson's intent to introduce early the idea of madness includes the Dedication to Lady Delves and which he signs "Lord Flame." At the same time, the shrewd dedication manages seemingly to include every lady of importance between Cheshire and London:

I do not flatter when I say, your Taste is universal, Great as an Empress, Sweet and Refin'd as Lady Malpas, sublime as Lady Sarah Cowper, Learned and Compleat as Lady Conway, Distinguishing and Clear as Mrs. Madin, Gay, Good and Innocent as Lady Bland. I have often thought that you are a compound of the World's Favourites, that all meet and rejoice together in one; the Taste of Montagu, Wharton, or Meredith, Stanhope, Sneid, or Byrom; the Integrity and Hospitality of Legh of Lime, the Wit and Fire of Bunbury, the Sense of an Egerton, fervent to serve as Beresford or Mildmay, belov'd like Gower.

The piece ends with a mention of Mrs. Leigh and Lord Essex, and the last sentence contains the projection that "If every Pore in every Body in Cheshire was a Mouth they would all cry out aloud, God save the Lady Delves!"

Johnson's questionable taste in employing corporal
references continues in the play with his use of the body as metaphor.

A second dedication to Robert Walpole takes a different tack, and he thanks Walpole, Lord Montagu, and Mr. Charles Stanhope for their "encouragement, saying "I have nothig [sic] to boast of in my Play, but the Character [sic] of Soarethereal, yet you great Men, that shine among the Angels, did condescend to support me."

The Prologue introduces the issue of madness and Johnson's attribution of the condition to a "Fire from Heaven":

Unchain'd by Art with true Poetick Rage,
In Buskins highly rais'd, we tread the Stage,
With Fire from Heaven, to thaw the frozen Age

He refers to "criticks" whether of plays or human madness, and finds that they, like wolves, bay at the "Moon because she shines so bright." Through the medium of art, Johnson sees man's condition raised by madness to achieve creativity. The plot involves a series of actions that pertain only indirectly to Johnson's dramatic meaning. King Soarethereal, surrounded by Dologodelmo, Hurlothrumbo, and Lord Flame is the object of overthrow by the conspirators Urlandenny, Darno, Darony, along with the Dutch general, Lomperhomock. The king and his followers have become mad through love for Princess Cademore and her attendants Sementory, Seringo, Lusingo, and Cuzzonida who along with Prince Theorbo, have recently escaped from
Spain, ruled by Theorbo's and Cademore's father. King Soarethereal and his court are considered too insane to rule by the rational conspirators whose plan for achieving the revolution is actually not just mad, but stupid. Having converted all their property to "coin," they hope to cause a revolution by appearing on their individual roof tops and shooting guns at two o'clock in the morning. When the citizenry pour out into the streets, the leaders on the roof tops will tell them to go overthrow the king. The king is surrounded by madmen Lord Flame and Hurlothrumbo, and warned of the coup by "Six solitaries" from the supernatural world who appear to him. Featuring the figures of Genius (who descends to the stage in a machine) and Death (who enters on a "pale dun horse"), the play is not concerned especially with plot, but with the nature of reality and of madness.5

To that end, Johnson sets up his characters and uses the metaphor of fire and of the cosmos to indicate their condition. Hurlothrumbo, the "supernatural" who is the title character explains the king's madness in cosmic terms:

Hurlo. ... he's King and he's no King; his high-born Soul is a [sic] above the Sublunary World, he reigns, he rides in the Clouds, and keeps his court in the Horizon; He's Emperor of the superlative Heights, and lives in Pleasure among the Gods; he plays at Bowls with the Stars, and makes a Foot-ball of the Globe; he makes that to fly far, far out of the reach of Thought. (p. 2)5
The royal insanity has released him from earthly restraints, and he has become one with the universe. His soul only can reach fulfillment through this release, and Hurlothrumbo employs terms of royalty and speaks of the king who "reigns" with his "court" as "Emperor." The King, however, sees himself as truly alive since insanity has set him apart. He speaks of madness in personal terms:

"King. O my Cademore, now I live: as that great Sun revives this lower world, and makes all Nature rejoice in his Presence; so you cherish and revive my Heart, all my Faculties rise up in Raptures: A thousand sublime Thoughts." (p. 9-10)

He has become more human with a "Heart" revived and his "Thoughts" sublime; this kind of madness makes him a happy citizen of the "lower world." He does not need to leave the world, for only on earth can Cademore "revive" his Heart and, by extension, enjoy the bodily fruits of his "Rapture."

Like the king, Hurlothrumbo sees his own reality in terms of self, and feels that he only lived that day in Rome when he underwent mortal combat with a lion. The madness that came over him and enabled him to win remains with him:

"Hurlo. The Door of the Den was no sooner lifted up, but the Monster hugely rouz'd himself aloft, staling gravely he enter'd, flinging from his Talons sedentary Pain, with Scarlet fiery Ogles den'd all around; but when I saw the Beauty of Greece, my
Heart was all Granade, I had an Army within, a Centry guarded every Pore, and this compound of Elements thundered. The Lion came at me amain, with Jaws open, dreadful as the Mouth of Hell, he sprang aloft, I glanc'd, he mist me, then with rebound he turn'd, and by the Main I caught him as he flew, and over his Back I threw myself astride, then with my Knees I crushed his Ribs and Heart together, and with my Right hand Spur I cleft his Skull I bruised the Pan of his Brain, till Flashes of Lightn'ing flew swift from his Eyes.

My Coat I roll'd up thus, and hurl'd it to his Breast, then eagerly grasping the Prey, I march'd towards him, I spurn'd at his Heart; he reel'd, I retreated; he recover'd, I advanc'd, again I struck, then trembling, he disgorg'd a Flood of Gore, and stifling with the Stream, bolt upright he rose; I pursued my Strokes, he fainted, he sank, he shiver'd, he died. (p. 5)

As the play moves from one tale of superlative madness to another, we come to understand that all bravery, love, and human accomplishment arise from a brain that is seized by something outside itself, something that the world calls "madness." One of the villains has an interchange with Lord Flame on that topic, and we see the "normal" conception of insanity explained by Urlandenny:

Fla. The Flight takes me in the Head to give you a Description of the War of Angels, the black ones and the white ones; now you are of the dark kind, but they were conquer'd. Urlan. How Prophetick the Man talks, as if he knew our Designs? The Tongues of children, Fools and Madmen have often fortold my Fate. Darn. You are superstitious. Fla. And as I was saying, Army in Array against Army, stood solemn, profound, before the Cloudy Van, Expectation stood in Horrour, and Satan, with vast and haughty Strides advanc'd, came touring, arm'd in Adamant and Gold. Dar. Who do you mimick, my Lord?
Fla. The Devil, Sir.
Dar. I resent it.
Fla. Draw.
Urlan. Hold, he is repeating a Passage in Milton; his Wit is borrow'd, he's a Moon-light.
(p. 6-7)

This conversation, for all its witty exchanges and inside jokes, presents the theme of reality versus madness lying at the heart of the play. Lord Flame knows his Milton and draws from it to describe his vision of war. The quote, however, serves another purpose. To achieve creativity, Johnson seems to ask, must artists, like Milton, be mad? Urlandenny continues to offer advice to Lord Flame and says that sex with a woman is a specific cure for madness.

Urlan. I recommend to thee a Miss, as a Specifick to assuage this mighty Fever in the Brain.
Fla. I am unstain'd, not touch'd with any black Crime, above the World, upon a lofty Mountain, and next Neighbour to the Sun
Urlan. Now condescend the woman lies two Yards below you, go down, tick, toy and play with her, 'twill cool your Blood, and sweeten your four Juices.
Fla. Then how shall I ascend again to my grand Original Height? 'tis up Hill; Woman pulls, Nature hangs heavy upon the feeble soul, and Resolutions weak'n; no, Conscience is an intellectual Caul that covers the Heart, upon which all the Faculties sport in Terror, like Boys that dance upon the Ice, if one cracks, another breaks, then all together plunge in over Head and Ears most horrid. (p. 7)

What Urlandenny sees as a disability and something to be cured in order to join society, Lord Flame knows his madness to be an innocence separating him from evil humanity. Goodness, as Flame says, involves madness, for
that alone lifts him above society. Johnson's depiction of women as a cordial for gaining sanity, as well as a sexual object for men's use at will carries throughout the play. Women are earth-bound at best, and, as Flame sees it, the evil that would take away a man's "innocence."

When a man would join the universe in his pure madness, an affair with woman at first gives him a love madness, but then the condition "pulls" him back and destroys his possibilities for further growth. For that reason, the hierarchy of madness includes love sickness at the lowest level. Women assume an Eve-like image who brings knowledge of good and evil. The spirit Primo warns Hurlothurumbo about this:

*Primo.* Look up, my Lord, you see yon Marble Sky, thro' that is the Way you are to pass, then you come to a Scarlet Flame, that flame compounds the Nature of Woman, and if that Part of Woman has dissolved thee here, how shalt thou be able to march thro' the fiery Element, on which a Woman is made; no, it cannot be, you will descend, you'll yearn to your old Delights, and visit the Virgins in the Night.

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Every Man is honour'd according to his Colour and Brightness; your common Souls are like dissolved Allum, pour'd in clear Water; these are not able to converse with the Sublimes, nor Gloworm shine before the Sun. (p. 44)

But we know that Hurlothurumbo is doomed to lose his power, and, indeed, he joins the rebels against the king after he reveals his symptoms through his lust for women. At one point, just before turning traitor, he argues with Primo and says, "When I see a Lady with a full Chest, flat
Back, falling Shoulders, a long Neck and a languishing Air, every Pulse beats up a March vehemently towards her" (p. 14). By foregoing women's "fiery" passion, men gain the possibility of reaching mental and spiritual heights, not accessible to men who know only human madness associated with love for women. We know the King will prosper for he says that "I myself am tender, yet bold; I often weep in a fine Lady's Presence, but in a moment can conquer that Passion" (p. 12).

Other than this reference, there is no talk in the play of women's mental condition, although the passage gives the idea that she is "fiery," a metaphor for madness. The roles of women are varied, beginning with their ruination of men's finer parts and potential for madness, as we see. On the other hand, love for women offers the common man a chance for madness, albeit love madness is the lowest in the hierarchy and ruins forever his chances to achieve greatness. As Sementory says,

We Women are not worth a wise Man's Observation; our graceless Pride, and covetous Ambition, makes us always poor, and tasteless; were we humble as the purest Spirits, discerning as the Watchers above; we should admire Merit, then find Happiness, and be as rich as Hermitts. (p. 50)

As we see from the quote, women perceive madness quite differently from the noble spirits who appear to men. Sementory states that "Vertue creates Love, Love Fire, and Fire confin'd creates Madness, but give vent,
and all shall be well" (p. 50). Of course, that "vent" or
sexual outlet, is the very act warned against by Primo and
the other spirits. Sementory remains the voice of female
reason and sees her life as adjunct to the hierarchy:

*Sem.* I'm weary of Dress, pall'd with Pleasure,
sick of the event of vain Hopes. Some say that
Marriage is made in Heaven; but 'tis my Opinion,
if all the Harlots were sent to the Grand Turk,
there would be more Weddings celebrated in
Heaven than there are. I perceive the Fire of
the Men is all out.

*Serin.* Very true, Sementory

*Sem.* They gaze upon a Woman, as they do upon a
Bill of Fare after Dinner. (p. 11)

What women want is not really shared by men and
women's lives seem to exist on a separate plane. No
spirits visit them, nor do they have tales of heroism.
They speak in prosaic terms of a life which, if they are
lucky, will offer simple pleasures. Sementory says,
"[F]ame is always at a distance; the man I love is near.
What is fame? A word; that word is wind, the humming of a
bee; but when I sleep by the man I love, no wind can come
to me" (p. 11). In the meantime, the purest men know that
only by circumventing the snares of women will they gain
the madness that will unite them to the soul's heights.
For instance, we can tell that Theorbo is destined for
divine madness, for he says that "Adam before Eve was
made, longed for something he knew not what; I long for
something more than Eve, I know not where" (p. 12). He
obviously is willing to forego women and will be able to
achieve a divinity of the mind. His death is the only one in the play, although it is not really clear if he dies, or if he comes back to life when the king realizes he loves him. While Johnson does not pursue the idea of homosexuality, Theorbo's relation with the king is unusual and, in the death scene, the king embraces the life-like state of Theorbo erected over his grave. At that moment, Theorbo, or is it his ghost? comes out of the forest and walks toward the king, at which point the scene ends.

In the dramatic outcome, King Soarethereal has gained mastery of his passions for Cademore who marries another, and he sees himself in new terms of kingship in a land where there is no marginalizing. The king takes on himself a common humanity and says, "when I see the wound of a Man, that Part of me trembles; and thro' viewing a Cripple, have been seiz'd with Lameness. How Thoughts rise up and pleas'd to strengthen Mercy! telling me I am a Judge, my own Eternal highly honour'd, myself appears before myself, to receive from myself my irrevocable Sentence" (p. 51). The King has been mad and now sees his kinship with others ostracized for their madness. As head of the hierarchy, he must take on all conditions of men and recognizes his responsibility:

I am rais'd above the common Height of Man, lifted up to the rattling Climes of Discord, where Dologodelmo and Hurlothrumbo rumble along the Sky, and says
the Element begins to crack; but as the
Lightning flies before the Thunder­
clap . . . (p. 16)

Baker found the end of the play to be the most poetic
and quotes the description of life after death from act
five, although in the 1812 edition the revisor says that
Johnson's words are taken from "Epistemon's Vision of Hell
and the Elysian Fields, with the various occupations of
many great personages there, in the second book and
thirtieth chapter of Rabelais's History of Pantagruel."
While the plagiarism is obvious, we do gain from the note
that Johnson's education may have been above what might be
generally conceded:

You wake surpriz'd in a World of Light; there
you see Shakespear, Milton, Homer, sprightly
alert, alive, flying swiftly through the radiant
Climes, to visit the Wits of every generation;
the Rich, Poor, the Merry, Mournful, the
pamper'd, hungry Souls are there. Alas, the
Scene is chang'd, you'll not pity them; Queen
Eliz. is in her Hut, selling of fry'd Fritters;
Pompey and Alexander carry Charcoal to feed her
Fires, the Great Mogul, the Czar, the grim
Bashaw, the Emperor, the Grand Turk and Caesar,
are scrambling for the Drops of the Pan, and as
they are wont, are scuffling for Trifles, till
it raises their inextinguishable Rage to
Loggerheads, cutting, flashing, carbonading
Nero's Buttocks. (p. 34)

There is a certain lack of clarity at play's end. It
is difficult to know who is alive and who is dead, for all
the characters continue speaking. In spite of that
indication of instability, he wrote a very sharp Epilogue
which complains about Cibber's patented theatre, dog and
pony shows at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and the opera at
Covent Garden. For instance, the Author and Hurlothrhumbo come on stage to debate the critic who points out the play's weaknesses, especially in plot, for "Rules are not observ'd here":

Cr. Pray, Sir, which is the Hero of your Play?
Au. Hero! Why they're all Heroes in their way.
Cr. Why here's not Plot. or none that's understood.
Au. There's a Rebellion tho'; and that's as good.
Cr. No Spirit nor Genius in't.
Au. Why didn't here a Spirit and a Genius both appear?

(Author drives Critic off the Stage)
Au. Hurlo, proceed---
Hurlo. Troth! he says true enough, the Stage has given rise to wretched Stuff; Critic, or Player; a Dennis, or a Cibber. Vie only which shall make it go down glibber;

.....something hangs on my prophetick Tongue
I'll give it utterance -- be it right or wrong;
Handel himself shall yield to Hurlothrumbo,
And Bononcini too shall cry--Succumbo.
(p. 54-55)

Johnson predates Fielding in his use of the author as actor, as well as the stage business intended to blur the border between reality and fiction. The Epilogue features the author coming forward to discuss the stage events as actual happenings, and at the same time one of the characters comes forward to discuss professional complaints about theatrical London. In addition, the critic also joins the others on stage. He wants the traditional play that the patented theatres specialize in and complains about the newfangled theatrics at the Little
Theatre. Johnson's skillful mixture of reality and fiction involving author and character is the sort of stage management for which Fielding became noted; yet Johnson did it first. His Author appears on stage, in character, yet as himself, and engages with a member of the audience, the critic, while the stage character, Hurlothrumbo, speaks with the author, the critic, and the audience. We observe the serious intelligence governing the play, when the Epilogue allows the playwright to appear in front of the curtain.

In the play proper, Johnson seems to have used his reputation for madness to his own advantage, for his play parades different faces and kinds of madness. Establishing a new hierarchy, the drama ends with complete reconciliation among men, the king expanding social boundaries to include even the revolutionaries. Like Charke, Johnson destroys the margins; but unlike Charke, Johnson includes only men who admit their common humanity in madness, thereby destroying differences of class and condition, but not gender.

Johnson's third play, the second in this study, deals with the idea of social ostracism; including images of Poverty, the Wandering Jew, the Poet, the Poor Beggar-Woman, the work becomes a kind of morality play that features blatant sexuality. The Blazing Comet; The Mad Lovers; or The Beauties of the Poets. A Play, as it is
Acted at the New-Theatre in the Hay-Market, by Mr. Johnson. Author of Hurlothrumbo is Johnson's most serious play and also his most obscene, a point discussed in chapter four on Haywood who played Lady Flame, the female lead. The Dedication to the Duchess of Richmond is tame enough, even though he refers to having "the Quill of an Eagle in my Hand," but he is unable to write because her "fine Perfections touch and wrap me in divine Thoughts, and make me ready to leap up in Extasy, and dip my Pen in the Sun." The second dedication, To the Poets of Future Ages, introduces his class theme:

If you observe, the rich Men have but one way of exceeding us poor Men, and that is, by their Abundance, they have great power to encourage Merit; but are commonly so unfortunate, as to shuffle off the opportunity, and render themselves odious in the Eyes of the Most discerning.

Johnson speaks with an open bitterness that addresses the work's failure to become popular. Johnson blames "the Ladies," and there is from this beginning, a misogynist undercurrent that runs through the play.

The Play being a moral Piece, I was happy in hope, when I thought to perform it in Lent, that it would be a Fish-Feast to the Intellect of the Ladies. But I found myself mistaken in my poetical cookery, till the sixth night. In the days of Queen Elizabeth the Taste of the Fair Sex made a Shakespear . . . [but] if you chance to live in an Age when the Taste of the Ladies wants new Steeling, dip your Pen in the Ink of their Inclination, write in a low Stile, never mount their Intellects upon Eagle-Wings, set them upon the Backs of Bees, and let them fly in
pursuit of butterflies, then you’ll be sure of the Beaus. (p. viii)

His idea seems to be that women have the power to influence theatre rosters but lack the brain power to choose rightly. They therefore are responsible for the demand for shallow offerings and worthy plays by serious playwrights, who hope to make women improve morally and spiritually are rejected. Johnson’s reference to the piece as "moral" and suitable for Lenten performances is strange, for four morality figures can hardly balance the bawdy conversations of Lady Flame and Wildfire.

Nonetheless, the dedication is a complaint, not of a madman, but of a professional writer, however testy, who sets the play in Italy, where living playwrights are treasured. The fiction of the play involves the good Count Sublimo and his rival Nimposto who wants for himself the title of "good." Other figures include Poverty, A Poor Beggar-Woman, an English Taylor in love with Queen Elizabeth, and a Wandering Jew, in addition to the Good Genius Radian, and the Evil one, Orsmadius. As he did in Hurlothrumbo, Johnson deals with the nature of transformation, from bad to good, from sane to insane, from female to male. The medium of transformation is goodness and wisdom; for example, Sublimo is "a Rivulet proceeding from the grand fountain of Wisdom . . . [who] enter’d into the High-born Soul of Sublimo, and there she shines divinely" [sig. B lv]. Other characters must work
harder to achieve goodness, and for them, the "cast-aways" serve as means of salvation.

As Johnson did in the first play, the male characters, even silly Nimposto, are able to reconcile with each other, to the point of entering each other's personalities; yet, transference is limited to males. When Sublimo first hears of Nimposto's jealousy, he puts on a servant's disguise to spy; at the same time, Nimposto puts on his servant's beard in order to gain entrance to Sublimo's home. Both men meet, talk, and become friendly as their disguises allow their transformations into new people. The idea of Sublimo's resurrection as transformation occurs a second time when at the climax of the play, Sublimo prevents Nimposto's suicide:

Great and noble Man, accept of my Life, 'tis nothing to me, you desire to have it, you are greater than Alexander, he like a current Flood of Fire forcing resistless way, burning and destroying all, pleased with the discord Sound of Widows' Howls; but you seek my Life only, then when I offer it, why do you refuse to take it?

Then if I must live, let it be at your House. I will be call'd Nimposto, you Sublimo; stay here, and inherit my Fame because you value it. [sig. G 3v]

Nimposto then will become Sublimo and vice versa, which exchange suggests several ideas concerning the value men place in each other, for neither man would have this conversation with a woman. The social baggage connected with the male gender allows each one to know he might
possibly fit comfortably in the other’s skin. There hangs over the episode a strong homosexual exchange as part of the transfiguration or masquerade.

Gender reversal also occurs in the disguise of Cristele as a priest. Dressed as a man, she now gains freedom of action she has never had before; but she uses it only to spy on men. Lady Flame flirts unwittingly with Cristele in her male disguise and begins a conversation full of innuendo. She points to the clouds and begins free associating:

Now she mounts and whips her flying Steed,
That sprang from the Wind, and 's like the wind for Speed.
He spurs his silly Ass, that soon will find,
The further he pursues, the further he’s behind:
In vain he doth his poor Ass beat and curse,
His Trot is very bad, his Gallop worse. Follow the Dictates of Nature, and marry me. [sig. B 4v-C1]

As the servant tells Sublimo, his sister is "mad with love." Johnson has told us before, however, that women do not become mad with love; to the contrary they are a specific cure for men afflicted with madness. Lady Flame, obviously then feigning insanity, uses her reputation for madness as impulse for activity. Far removed from the static image of woman, such as the bitter Sementory represents, Lady Flame is a "flame" in her actions, uncontrollable and uncontrolled. When Wildfire and Lady Flame finally get together, they both dash about, and even

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speak in terms of motion. One exchange between them suffices:

*L. Flame.* I could love to grant you a little, but oh! 'tis a dangerous thing, you know, for a Woman to play with the Apples of Paradise.

*Wild.* Alas.

*L. Flame.* What is the matter?

*Wild.* A single Body is but a Half-Self: Come, do, let you and I put us two Halves together, and so make a whole one.

*L. Flame.* Of all Creatures in the great Creation, there's nothing constant but the Fowls: two Larks we'll be, and leap from Bough to Bough, then swift to my Bed of Grass I'll fly, but you--

Will spring alert in Air upon Wing, Sprightly amaz'd in Clouds to sing.

*Wild.* From Rapture to Rapture, we'll mount up higher, Then descend like a Globe of Fire. [sig. F 3v-F4]

Throughout the drama, Wildfire and Lady Flame chase each other around the sets, and finally retire to her bedroom, only to reappear, chase each other, and retire again. They represent the cycles of sexual activity, death, and rebirth. Immersed in sexual death, they seek actual extinction when "every Feather [will] shiver with Desire" [sig. F 3v-F4].

With Nimposto mad for Sublimo's reputation, the Taylor for Queen Elizabeth, Wildfire for Lady Flame, Nimposo for Sublimo's goodness, each seems to have been transformed by his individual madness. The Taylor describes the effects of madness which reverses customary objects:
The Day, the Night are both alike to me
Abroad upon the cold bare Earth I lie, to cool;
this Frenzy-Fever in my Brain, dissolves, and
thro' my Eyes gushes out in saltier Streams.
No, no, these are not Tears that Now I shed, I
am not I, my Head is light, light, light, it
will fly away. Now all inflamed I burn, I rage,
I rave; and the in the Midst of Flame consume no
Wit. [sig. F 1]

Against this background of love, sex, madness, evil,
and goodness, Johnson's outcasts, with their potential for
transforming others, wander through the play. Their
treatment by society reveals Johnson's major concern that
only the poor are marginalized for madness. The Beggar
Woman offers a Winter Blessing with all the things her
poverty denies her, "a pure warm House, a roasted Apple,
and a good Bed-fellow" [sig. C 3]. Sublimo alone
recognizes her worth: "I could almost make it appear by
Philosophy, that these . . . are greater, and more refin'd
than you or I" [sig. D 1].

Johnson dwells on these images of the mad poor. The
Wandering Jew and the Taylor roam together, each with his
individual insanity. The Jew beats his breast, keeps his
eyes down on the never-ending road, and says "Ah! that I
could love and die!" Walking beside him, the Taylor
describes his transformation when he measured the Queen
and saw "her naked swelling Breasts" [sig. F 1v]. The
Poet also appears: "Merit is nothing; because those that
are capable to encourage it, seldom have Taste, Generosity
or Friendship." Later he adds "Princes their Poets should
regard, / For few can write, but fewer can reward" [sig. G 2]. And yet, Sublimo recognizes the sacred nature of their obsessions:

Sub. Rise thou as high as he, nay higher, 'Till thou join the Element of Fire; Nay, higher still, 'till ye calmly hear The Musick of a well-tun'd Sphere; Then look down on the lumpish Mass, and thou shalt know The Madness of the World, for grov'ling so below. [sig. D 2]

Madness becomes a universal sanity allowing the beholder to see what passes for "lumpish" sanity. Only the divinely mad may see that reality is the "Madness of the World." As Johnson shows in Hurlothrumbo, however, the insanity of love is the lowest type in the hierarchy; for that reason, Wildfire and Lady Flame are shown to be earthbound in their passion, and yet are still more noble than the glutton Plenty for whom there can be no possibility of divinity. He alone of the play's male characters remains static.

Johnson employs several figures of reconciliation who bring relief to the morality figures, as well as convert the wicked. The angel Radian fights and defeats the devil Orfeus for the heart of Nimposto, thereby reconciling him to humanity. Limpo is a kind of earthly angel "brought . . . down to converse with Virtue" [sig. G 2] and gives gold to the Poet, as well as food to Poverty and the Old Beggar-Woman. Johnson's spokesman, Limpo refers to the

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state of the "Cast-aways," those whom poverty and madness have placed on the margins of society.

Poverty is a Hell upon Earth, it eclipses the brightest Virtues, and is the very Sepulchre of brave Designs; deprives a Man of the Means to accomplish what Nature has fitted him for, and stifles the noblest Thoughts in their Embryo. How many illustrious Souls may be said to have been dead among the Living, or bound alive in the Obscurity of their Conditions, whose Perfections have render'd them the Darlings of Providence, and Companions of Angels? Yet the insuperable Penury of all things has render'd them amongst the very Cast-aways of the Earth; and those that are not Friends to these Men, are utter Enemies of Heaven. [sig. G 2]

At the end of the play, Johnson has brought healing through the means of a new type of Christianity in which the brotherhood of man is the major tenet. The emphasis on man and brotherhood is significant, for women do not figure in the plan. As Johnson achieves in his first play, men are the medium of reconciliation and the only goodness in the play arises from the dominant male, Sublimo, who removes the boundaries separating the poor and the mad from the prosperous. As the local ruler, he takes on the condition of all men, even to the point of allowing Nimposto to assume his estate and reputation. It is not clear at the end whether or not Sublimo is reconciled with Cristele. Johnson seems to say that she served to help Sublimo gain his elevated state of goodness, and her purpose is therefore served.
As Hurlothrumbo makes plain, women, such as Lady Flame, serve only as sexual objects, actually sexual hindrances whose influence denies man the possibility of becoming ennobled. At the same time, there are certain dramatic elements that provide an enlarged scope of action for women. Beginning with the most obvious, Cristele, whose name proves to be significant, in male disguise has freedom of movement and conversation, and her disguise allows her to see into the truth of Sublimo's situation. Her habiliments are male, but, as a priest, she is more or less protected from the usual expectations of macho behavior. For that reason, Sublimo has confessed to her in her male disguise as he never would have confessed to a woman, revealing his weakness and his abject love. To prevent his suicide, she discloses herself to Sublimo and says, "I am a poor, unfortunate, miserable woman." To win her back, he must "thrust [himself] between [her] and the Everlasting, to be a Wall of Separation; come force from [her] those Sighs, Thoughts and Vows, which I owe to Heaven only" [sig. H 1-H 1v]. She implies, of course, that he must use a specie of rape to free her from Heaven's power. In this type of talk designed to freeze even the most passionate male, she reveals her commitment for the convent. Sublimo says that he will "ask no more of thee, than Heaven allows" [sig. H 1v], and we know that she will return to be immured in a "living death" [sig. F
among the nuns, her womanhood denied. Set apart from the ordinary run of feminine life, Cristele perhaps may be singled out for purity because she is committed to chastity and, rejecting dealings with the world, rejects her femininity:

Crist. Desire me not to leave the convent; is it possible to live in the World, where feverish Furies of the Blood, and youthful green unlimited Passions rage? Can we converse with unclean Intellects, and not receive a Spot? [sig. H 2]

One other woman character in the play also is able to control her own destiny but without giving up her sexuality. To the contrary, Lady Flame relishes her ability to use her body freely. Under the control of her brother, she denies him the power over her life and refuses to marry for riches or power:

I know my Brother would have me marry for Riches, that I may have four Footmen ride behind my coach; their Names are Pride, Lust, Tyranny, and Oppression. For Sin always waits upon Wealth, ready drest and fit for Action. [sig. D 2v]

In her refusal to obey the social dictates for women, she acts on her own impulses. When she finally does choose Wildfire, there is no indication that she even mentions the fact to her brother, much less seeks his permission. Giving herself over to the claims of her feminine nature, she says that she is fulfilling the "Will divine" [sig. D 3]. There seems to be a reference to a higher power that controls women, one that supercedes the
male hierarchy. For all her independence, Lady Flame speaks in prose like an ordinary English woman, saying things such as "Alack-a-day" [sig. G 4v] and, on one occasion, pulling out her "little sword" when she is annoyed [sig. F 3].

The plot involving Lady Flame who frees herself and marries her heart's desire provides the only dramatic resolution. For the other characters, the play just ends without our knowing what is to become of them. The exchange between Sublimo and Cristele occurs at the end and contributes to the irresolution that the play projects. We are not positive what Cristele does, and one reason for the indecisive ending lies with the final voice. The tenets of Christianity are somehow intertwined with Greek mythology when Romondo salutes Sublimo and states that he has "conquer'd the Powers of Darkness."
The play ends with Romondo declaiming an account of a battle between Jove and Neptune:

Neptune diving, darts to his horrid Cell,
Trembling he felt the mighty Pangs of Hell.
Jove again full-blaze the stormy Seas forsook,
From Realm to Realm three ample Strides he took,
Thund'ring up the high Profound, the Worlds above all shook. [sig. H 2v]

This pagan heroism seems to belong to another play, for there is no way to relate it to the actions of The Blazing Comet. In addition, the ending is supplied by one of the lesser figures who has spoken little during the
drama. Perhaps the original ending was lost, and Johnson replaced it hastily for printing purposes, which might account for the odd insertion of the Epilogue immediately after the Dedication. To understand Johnson's final intent, we must therefore return to the play's first pages. There is surely method in this action, for the catchword on the page before the Epilogue is "EPI" indicating that the sequence of pages is not off. Signed "By a Friend," it is short, which makes it difficult to account for its placement, for the final printed page of the play proper constitutes only fifteen lines, with quite enough additional space to accommodate the three-stanza Epilogue.

The opening stanza sets out the purpose:

Wou'd you be great indeed? Relieve the poor.
And open to the Wretched ev'ry Door.

Johnson refers, of course, to those on the margins who exist "outside" the social establishment, structured to contain and exclude. Implying that the purpose of the stage is to correct social wrongs, the poem ends with the idea that only on stage may a man as good as Sublimo be found, for in real life the great are "void of Shame," as they "squander, lewdly jest, dress, whore and game."

Strangely, the epilogue contains an exceptionally bitter regard for the class system which the play does not.
Johnson achieves in this play essentially what he does in the first. He uses his reputation for madness to serve as entree, or excuse, if you will, for his thesis on social wrongs. Johnson deals mostly with men as objects suitable for transformation; women in the play seem earthbound, playing out their assigned roles lacking the potential for madness or a visionary perception of the world. Still, two women escape from the margins, Cristele, as a priest, and Lady Flame, as a mad woman, who appear to have achieved some kind of autonomy, however imperfect.

While the first play establishes a new hierarchy with the king transformed and the social margins blurred, this one, using the traditional social structures, shows what an ideal ruler can be. All doors in Sublimo's kingdom are open, and those great ones who refuse, such as Nimposto, are converted through the example that Sublimo provides. Through the ideal of kingship, Johnson is able to erase margins and to embrace the ones he calls the "Cast-aways."

II William Hatchett

William Hatchett in his plays for the Little Theatre likewise uses the royal hierarchy as his metaphor, for both The Fall of Mortimer and The Rival Father, or, the Death of Achilles deal with power and the nature of
disenfranchisement. Although there appears to be no influence of Johnson on Hatchett's work, nevertheless the probability is great that they were familiar with the other's dramas. The Little Theatre play roster for April 1730 reveals that in one thirteen-day period, Fielding's *The Author's Farce*, Hatchett's *The Rival Father*, Johnson's *The Chesire Comicks* and *Hurlothrumbo* were staged at the theatre, and the rehearsals would perforce overlap. In addition, we know that Eliza Haywood along with Hatchett appeared in *The Rival Father* and Charlotte Charke in *The Author's Farce*, which therefore places at the theatre during the same two weeks five of the playwrights under study.

Of all the group, William Hatchett is the most mysterious. He remains less well-known even than Johnson or Carey, and we may glimpse him in history only a few times. Although he signed the Dedication to his second play, his name does not appear on the title page of the printed version of the plays he adapted, and he is not listed in the actor rosters at the Little Theatre for any of the years under study. Baker's *Biographia Dramatica* identifies him but only in one sentence, which states that Hatchett was an "actor" who "lived on terms of friendship" with Eliza Haywood (I: 208). Baker lists among Hatchett's dramas his adaptations of *The Fall of Mortimer* and *The
Rival Father, or the Death of Achilles, in addition to The Opera of Operas, which he and Eliza Haywood wrote.

Other historical sightings of Hatchett likewise present him in the shadow of Haywood. The event in which Hatchett played a large part and which gives us the most knowledge of his actuality occurs in relation to Haywood's 1749 political pamphlet on the Pretender, A Letter from H---- G----g, Esq. The government investigated the inflammatory document and took depositions from the bookseller Charles Corbett about his distribution of the pamphlet. Corbett mentions Hatchett's role in the affair according to government records held by the London Public Record Office.

Mr. Hatchett (who the Exam has known many Years) came to the Exam Shop & asked him if a Porter had not left Twenty five Pamphlets at his Shop, the Night before from Mrs. Haywood. The sd Hatchett then said they came from Mrs. Haywood who was sick in Bed.

The Exam. has known Mrs Haywood many Years but has not seen her these ten years.

Says he has sold several things wrote and Published by the sd Mrs. Haywood & has paid her servant Maid for them. (qtd by Lockwood "Eliza Haywood in 1749" 476)

Hatchett then in 1749-50 was still associated with Haywood, whether intimately or professionally we do not know, but these depositions make clear that some sort of relationship existed. Haywood during this period had her own publishing firm in Covent Garden, The Sign of Fame, advertised on the back page of her 1742 novel, The
Virtuous Villager, or Virgin's Victory. From indications in the depositions, she printed the pamphlets herself at the Sign of Fame, for Corbett goes on to state that he gave her a professional discount: "to persons in the same Trade a shilling pamphlet is always sold for nine pence & that he was to pay himself nine pence each to Mrs. Haywood" (qtd Lockwood "Eliza Haywood in 1749" 476). With Hatchett seemingly involved in what both Haywood and himself must have known to be seditious publications, it seems quite likely then that Hatchett had connections with Haywood's publishing firm, perhaps as a partner. These documents, however, at the London Record Office show that Haywood alone was arrested for these pamphlets; there is no indication that Hatchett was also jailed.

Aside from these sightings, Hatchett may be known only from his dramas, but as I noted above, Haywood's influence on his life was seemingly so strong, that her influence on his plays may be equally strong. The British Library Catalogue lists after the title of The Fall of Mortimer "[by W. Hutchett?]" for the second edition. Because the play contains a Dedication signed by "William Hatchett" the likelihood that he is the revisor is considerable. Nonetheless, the Bodleian possesses a prospectus dated 7 January 1741, which was drawn up by Hatchett for an edition of his plays and it does not include the title, according to Lockwood ["William
Hatchett, *A Rehearsal of Kings* (1737, and the Panton Street Puppet Show (1748)" 317-318]. Hatchett’s sole authorship cannot now be disproved; however, the feminist tendencies in *The Fall of Mortimer* and *The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles*, especially in the material added to the original, point to Haywood’s influence, if not her authorship.10

Hatchett’s first play, although slight and short, possesses the same strong direction that distinguishes his second drama. *The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles* concerns, as Eliza Haywood tells us in the Epilogue, women as patriots in a world gone mad with war in which old restraints have loosened, and woman are free.11

There was a Time, old Authors tell us, when
Women were Patriots as well as Men:
In every Action of their lives, 'tis said,
The Public Good ran always in their Head

And the Epilogue goes on to compare the modern woman "fenc’d" in her "petticoat of sev’nfold Whalebone," incapacitated by social dictates of womanhood. Her contribution is limited to wearing foreign silks "for the sake of Trade," and they show their principles in "dress."

Would it not, she asks, "be a strange unseemly Sight / to see a File of Females in a Fight?" The answer, of course, is no, for under the silk the potential remains.

In both plays under consideration, Hatchett’s method of dealing with women and power is similar in ways to
Haywood's treatment in her dramas. Like her, Hatchett reverses gender roles and, instead of a romantic hero, places a strong woman at the center of action. Employing a time when the old roles are suspended by war or insurrection, Hatchett allows his female heroes to initiate the solution of a social problem and to affect the course of history. Each of these plays begins with the woman acting outside of the patriarchy and in the process of fulfilling personal impulses, she is able to change the course of her country's history. Seeming to have no prior history, they are alone, isolated, without friends. Briseis is a prisoner, albeit only technically, and Maria is an orphan; each woman's future depends on how well she can handle forces operating against her. Having been betrayed by a man, each must deflect the threat against her sexual freedom.

I want to begin with a study of Hatchett's first play as a way of tracing seminal influences on his later drama. An adaptation of Corneille's Mort d'Achille and Racine's Andromaque, the play is notable for Hatchett's additions to the characterization of the female lead. A view of the plot reveals the slightness of the dramatic fiction; for what the drama really concerns is not war but post-war, not men but women, not chaos but opportunity. With men away fighting, no one has remained to man the hierarchy, with the result that a woman, the prisoner Briseis, has
established her own. During the confusion at the end of the 10-year Trojan War, Briseis, a captured queen, still remains outside of Troy as mistress to Achilles. The breakdown of social order in Troy has affected women as well as family relations, and the same conditions that produce a climate conducive to Briseis's freedom, also have contributed to Achilles's negation of the code. Achilles plays his mistress false, lusts after his son's Pyrrhus's fiance Polyxena, and forces her into marriage. His desire seems based on her submissiveness because she has remained old-fashioned in adherence to her father's rule and because she views her obedience as patriotic. While Polyxena prepares to kill herself during self-enforced marriage, a surprise Trojan attack kills Achilles and Briseis dies with remorse.

From the first, we see the result of the fall of the old order. The old misogynistic traditions involved the iron rules of a militaristic city-state in which baby girls over a certain quota were exposed at birth on the hillside. But now, the long war has depleted the supply of males, and a majority of citizens are women. Hatchett's setting for that reason is unusual, and his play concerns what happens when the margin is removed, the rules lifted, and women placed in the center as equals. Hatchett deals with the inability of men to comprehend the reality of the situation as they persist in acting out the
old responses and traditional pursuits. With consideration of the male backlash, I want to examine Hatchett’s two types of female responses, Briseis the new woman, Polyxena the old stereotype.

Hatchett opens with Briseis in the heroic stance of peacemaker, having used her good offices to bring Achilles to the peace table. She calls herself the "Intercessor," an interesting word, for the times are a type of intercession between two orders, past and future. Unlike the old role of woman as peace-weaver, where her body in marriage was used to seal a treaty, Briseis acts the role of skilled diplomat bringing a masculine approach to a treaty. With militaristic language, she tells about Achilles’s submitting to her advice and the "war" being "hushed" (p. 2). She speaks with security that "I’ve done with my objections. Depend on Peace, if Priam not protracts it" (p. 5). Her name is praised for the treaty, as Alcimes tells Achilles,

[N]e’er Treaty caus’d more gen’ral joy:  
The Trojans Acclamations reach the Camp  
They all participate the precious Good:  
And flock with envy’d Speed to thank the Gods.  
(p. 34)

Visited as if she were one of the local powers, she seemingly holds court in the open, while the men are bivouacked on the margins of the city. She has been openly living with Achilles and has scorned to marry him. At the same time, she seems unwilling to project into the
future when the rules will change. Briseis would need to return to her own war-torn country or remain in Troy where she would be forced to submit to the old rules of gender and powerless femininity and "[d]evote the Hero wholly to your Charms; / and deck your Beauties with the Rays of Empire" (p. 3).

Perhaps for that reason, when Achilles marries Polyxena, Briseis sees the act as much a betrayal of her "power," as of her sexuality. She blames not fate for his actions but rather examines her own actions for the fault.

Myself to be the Ruin of myself!
Myself t' extol the Features that undo me!
Myself to make him listen to her Griefs!
Myself to cause this dreadful Scene of Woes!
But I, like others of my Sex, was vain!
Nor thought a Rival's Pow'r cou'd give me Pain;
Despis'd the danger of untasted Charms;
And push'd the bright Temptation to his Arms. (p. 34)

The lovesick Pyrrhus, Achilles's son who loves Polyxena, has grown up during war time and sees nothing unusual in Briseis's power, and comments on her "woman's charms." Clearly having redefined woman and her social role, he says "What can't the illustrious Briseis do? . . . 'Tis on this wond'rous Pow'r I build my Hopes" (p. 2). At the same time, he is rival with his father Achilles for Polyxena, who has her "Sex's Frailty" (p. 12) and is full of "Female Weakness." She even agrees to marry the killer of her eleven brothers and says to her true love Pyrrhus:
But still I know not, if my yielding Heart
Did not, unbid, anticipate my Duty:
Or if, laid under opposite Restraints,
It had so soon obey'd a Father's Will.

Mine is a dire, unheard-of, monstrous, Fate
But midst such Cruelty, let this console you,
That if I die—I die entirely yours. (pp. 11-12)

What Briseis does not want are the "Rays" of reflected glory, but rather her own powerful dominion.

Achilles's lust for the wimpish Polyxena involves far more than Briseis's scorned love. His insistence on referring to Polyxena as a "Virgin" reminds Briseis that she has given herself sexually to Achilles, and he now spurns her. Hatchett depicts male response to the destruction of social patterns as mixed. Faced with the fall of the old order, they find a failure too in the old code of honor. Achilles, betraying his family and Briseis, becomes the rival of his son for Polyxena. The character of Achilles is complex, however, and he suffers remorse and indecisiveness.

I haste t' enjoy in Polyxena's Arms;
But Pyrrhus and Briseis will be there;
By turns will rend it, when the curs'd Remorse
Of both their ruin, glares me in the Face. (p. 35)

He has renounced "every Tye" to gain her and is hurt at her refusal; at the same time, enough of the old code remains in him that he threatens to destroy her father's kingdom unless she marries him. Ultimately enough of the old power remains, and the male hierarchy is reaffirmed.
with the marriage. Hatchett's ending, however, undercuts any interpretation of a male morality tale, for Achilles dies before he can re-establish the old rules. On the other hand, Briseis also dies and with her dies the potential for change.

The plays Hatchett revised for the stage of the Little Theatre, as we have observed, depict a new kind of heroic drama in which a woman takes on the traditional role of hero. Evincing ability, she uses a moment of historical neutrality caused by an upheaval to free herself and to become part of a new hierarchy. Maria substitutes her own rules for the patriarchy that would sell her, and Briseis establishes her own hierarchy in the absence of traditional government. From their places on the margins of societies where women have no value, the two female heroes invade the center and act out their own wills. While in many ways similar to Haywood's plays featuring women, Hatchett's dramas are different in a special way. One of his major concerns is the money economy by which male society defines and discriminates against women and lower class men. He sets the woman in a society not based on money, as with Briseis, or he provides the woman with money to enter the system as an equal, as with Maria.

Chapter one points out that The Fall of Mortimer opened 12 May 1731 and after sixteen performances was
closed by government forces on 21 July 1731. While the work was not new, the connections it offered to the correlation between Mortimer and Walpole were obvious, for both men were over-reaching, ambitious, and powerful ministers. The plot of all the plays about Mortimer remains the same. In the minority of the young king Edward III, the Queen Mother Isabella and the acting regent Mortimer rule England. Demeaning treaties with Scotland and France, along with bribery, overtaxation of nobles, and removing constitutional rights of common Englishmen have caused grave discontent. A group of nobles, led by Lord Montague, set about to overthrow the "upstart" commoner Mortimer and Isabella, to place Edward III in power, and to restore to the people their lost rights.

Bertelsen, the only critic to deal with Hatchett and his works finds that Hatchett's version differs from earlier plays especially in toning down the erotic nature of Mortimer's relationship with Isabella. Bertelsen quotes Cadwalader's King Edward the Third to suggest the sexual basis of the relationship which in turn ruled England:

Sr. Tho. Dela. There will be a Mortimer in every State; Some Favourite Villain to oppress the Subject ... The King should know how much he is Ecclips't,
Who 'tis that grasps the Scepter in his stead,
And how his Mother lavishly doth waste
The best of his Revenue on this March.
L. Mount. It rests not there, she Prostitutes
her self, Pardon me, for I will not giv’t no
better name;
Is she not grown the Common tale of all?
One Pallace holds ‘em both, one Table feeds ‘em,
Nay, I will speak it, Sir, one Bed contains ‘em:
The Brawny Minion’s dieted on purpose
To do the Drudgery of Royal Lewdness. (qtd
22: 13)

I agree with Bertelsen’s findings that Hatchett’s
work does not emphasize the sexual relationship between
Isabella and Mortimer; indeed, there seems to be almost no
discussion of such a relationship (9-10). On the other
hand, I do not agree with his implication that the work
contains only a political component (8-11). He fails to
see a deeper layer which Hatchett added to the original
and which has not been explored, until now. Not limited
to mere politics, the play is clearly a social protest
that focuses on the nature of disenfranchisement of the
lower classes and of women. The structure and setting of
the play itself suggests such an inside-outside
arrangement, which Hatchett shows to have an economic
basis. Castles contain Mortimer and Isabella, while
ranging outside, for the first time, the nobles of ancient
houses recognize their marginalized status. Beyond them,
the English small tradesmen find themselves without
redress of grievances against heavy taxation also for the
first time. On the outer edge of the margins, the play
features Maria, a woman of the lower classes, who by
political, social, economic, ecclesiastical tradition

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possesses no rights at all. At the beginning of the play, Hatchett reveals that the mainspring of society is money—it is the definition and the determiner, for those who have it are able to exclude and rule those who do not. Mortimer who sees men in terms of so many "marks" has just pushed the nobles too far in his greed. They begin to talk of loss of "ancient tree," but they mean economic loss. The small tradesmen in act 1 also talk of wine and hats but, like the lords, all are feeling the monetary pinch. With the loss of money goes the loss of power, and Hatchett depicts women not so much in terms of power but of their lack of money. In his adaptation of the play, Hatchett adds as a new character, the orphan Maria, sold to Mortimer by her uncle in exchange for gold and a judgeship. Because she is brought to the castle where she observes Mortimer’s dirty work, much of the plot hinges on Maria after her uncle sells her to Mortimer. She is motivated in her actions against Mortimer by her love for Lord Montacute, although too low for his notice because she is on a different economic level and hence from a different class; in an appalling statement indicating that women are marginalized in heaven, she says, "I am no suitable companion / In Life, yet in the Grave, we undistinguished / May mingle Ashes, tho’ our Souls are distant" (p. 43). Maria becomes part of the force against Mortimer, and, acting to protect Montacute, she boldly
spies on Mortimer. The nobles are galvanized into action and combine with the commoners to restore Edward III and destroy the Queen. The drama then is bracketed by two women who have been placed in their roles by men: Isabella and Maria, whose gender alone has placed them where we find them.

The play's Prologue seems to establish the political basis for the drama, saying that "The Monster is cast down: / This saves the People's Freedom, and his own. / Our faithful Annals thus transmit to Fame, / A Villain-Statesman, not the king to blame." But the Epilogue reveals the play as feminist, for it shows liberty in the image of Maria, the "temptation" that Mortimer thinks he can buy:

Tho' weak, oppress'd, yet when provok'd too long,  
She gives convincing Proofs her Arm is strong.

Was Mortimer so vain? Did he suppose  
By little Shifts on Freedom to Impose  
Could nothing serve his rav'rous Appetite  
But that delicious Bit---a Nation's Right?

The play opens with nobles discussing the suspension of English rights: "how are we manag'd by an upstart Knave! / He rides the Privilege of Peers and Commons," (p. 1) but, as I point out above, public becomes private reasons for ridding themselves of the upstart. The nobles argue that Mortimer is in power because the Queen took him as a lover, and he "[b]egan to lord it o'er us by the
Queen’s vile Favour" (p. 2). Mortimer is a "Toad" (p. 5) and "Serpent’s Egg" (p. 8) who, the nobles say, "gluts his private Views, while publick ones, are never thought of, but to feed / His vast immeasurable Lust of Gain" (pp. 3-4). They see him in monetary terms, and their metaphors are economic, such as Sir Del’s when he sees the effects of losing status, of men losing "right" because they are "poor":

There will be Mortimer in every State, some Favourite Villain to oppress the subject, An sell to Knaves what honest Men should have, Who lose their right only for being poor. (p. 2)

Nobles see Mortimer as the great "Colossus" between whose legs "the tallest Ships must pass, / Ere they gain Harbour" (p. 17). He controls such institutions as "Clergy and the Law" so that "You cannot serve Heaven on cushions but you pay for’t" (p. 17). This idea of public and private, the haves and the have nots pervades the play, and the actions of the orphan Maria blend public and private. Although their motives have an economic base, the group of nobles choose to see their uprising as springing from a private reason, like an "Orphan’s Cries," which will "hasten Vengeance" (p. 2).

If men may work their way up the economic ladder, women may only barter their bodies for economic gain. We note that a woman’s sexual favors are at the heart of the play—for sex, Queen Isabella gave Mortimer power and for
sex, Mortimer has bought Maria. To keep his wife happy with money, Uncle Serjeant sells Maria. After the nobles obtain Edward III's ear and place him, though young, in power, obviating the need for his mother's regency, she thinks first of her loss in terms of mathematics: "Have I no Place? Am I a Cypher grown?" (p. 48). A man, however low in the kingdom, would never ask that question, for he had the rights of an Englishman and no matter how debased, could advance up the economic ladder. A woman, even a queen, could not. Isabella's question is, then, rhetorical, and her son knows it, for he responds "Accept of mine," acknowledging that only through the bounty of a male did women possess any rights. Mortimer knows Isabella's vulnerable spot is economics, and he uses it to gain her complete support against the nobles.

Mor. Can she obey, who always did command? 
Can she retire, who ever liv'd in Splendor; 
Nay, thought the World too scanty for her Greatness, 
Accept a private Pension, small Attendance, 
And live by whim whose Soul from her took being 

Queen. That ne'er shall be, and Isabella living; 
Be thou as once, when Spencer, Gaveston, 
The Minions of my Husband, did attempt 
To curb my Will, and I defy'd them all 
No, Mortimer, if I could give him Death, 
Think'st thou this feeble Spawn, his slender Offspring, 
Bred when I wish'd a Barrenness upon me, 
That he shall baulk the Measures of my soul? 
Mort. She fires. [Aside] 
Queen. Can the froward Chit believe, because my son, 
I'd still him with a play thing call'd a Crown,
And live myself on curtesy of State
The fragments of the Grandeur I had left?
Perish ten Sons e’er such a Fit possess me!
(p. 31)

Isabella’s tirade is directed against the monetary system
that excludes her because of gender. To retain power over
her "Grandeur," and void the penury of a "private"
allowance and "small Attendance," she is willing to kill
as she killed before. We need to remember that the first
warning that Mortimer gave concerned her "little" Pension.

Maria as the other woman whose fate involves the fate
of the kingdom also understands the power of money. After
her uncle has in effect sold her to Mortimer, she may not
return to his home, but she has no money to finance her
rebellion. Mortimer has said he is her "Governor," and in
any event she is a nonperson under the law.

Maria. Black as Hell’s
Practice, or the Trade of Perjury.
What to do I know not: If I refuse, I lose his
Favour, and that’s my Bread! If I comply, then
farewell Reputation and Peace of Mind. (p. 32)

Although the Queen’s fate has not been much superior to
Maria’s, nevertheless, the girl whom men call "Temptation"
and "baggage" (p. 32), "a perverse Chit of a wanton
Generation" (p. 33), "peremptory Carrion" (p. 33), and "my
little Wandering Jew" (p. 35), hears her uncle’s words and
knows she functions only as sexual barter:

Serj. Go to, and know your Duty, for I expect
an Obedience as if I were your Father. You’re
my adopted Child, and bound to submit to my
commands, if the ancient Measures of divine
and human Laws are of any force; and if they are
not, I'll make new Ones on this Occasion. (p. 33)

He sees his rights extend over her person and co-opts her body for society, calling it the will of the "divine." He calls to her attention that every agency of civilization recognizes her only as property to be used for gain. The play opens with references to Princess Joan of the Tower, obscenely called "Joan Makepiece" by the apprentices, for she was sold to the Scots to seal the treaty with England. On a lesser scale, but with the same purpose, Maria is the security between Mortimer and Uncle Serjeant, and therefore her refusal is defined as treachery. Uncle Serjeant tells her,

    huswife, huswife, if you won't lie with him, you will with somebody you like better, and I'll make you accept of my Choice, or turn you out of Doors with your load of Virtue, instead of a Portion, and see how the starving your Spirit will agree with the Pride of your Flesh. (p. 33)

Maria must confront her gendered identity even with her beloved Montacute, who tries to buy her favors when she brings him secret information about his arrest. Only when she can identify herself in terms of the hierarchy, as the daughter of a soldier known for his bravery, does Montacute see her as something other than a female for sale. And at the end, Montacute applies for permission to marry from the new king Edward III who says, "She's yours" (p. 63). Yet Hatchett does not end the play there with Maria being passed around once more. Edward "invests"
Maria with Mortimer’s estate which does not give her a title, but it gains her entrance to the economic system and places her in the center of power.

Hatchett sets up reverberations of money as mainspring through his depictions of social classes. The scenes with John Bull as small tradesman reveal they have the same economic motivations as nobles. The language may be folksy, but they cover their economic discontent with patriotism, as they sing at the tavern:

If Mortimer this Peace has made  
For Sake of England, and of Trade,  
May his enemies be few,  
May his Friends be great and True. (p. 9)

If Mortimer’s actions have hurt trade, however, the Framer knows a "good number of us Stocking-Weavers would spare a Day to build Mortimer’s gibbet" (pp. 8-9). The question that Felt, the hatmaker, keeps asking is "Who ... has paid for this Peace?" (p. 8). With pitchforks, and axes instead of swords (p. 58), the tradesmen arm to fight "in Justice to a plunder’d, sinking Nation" (p. 61). The king indicates the restoration of order with a change in metaphors, for he speaks of "nobler principles" and a king should "leave his latest Heirs rich in his Subjects" (p. 63). He seems to be willing to expand social borders to accommodate at least one woman by placing her on equal footing with her husband. We should remember that
Montacute has an empty title, while Maria has the money to finance an estate.

Of the male writers, Hatchett succeeds in providing a variety of women characters. Both good and bad, his women rise above stereotypes and become, for the purpose of the play, real and even likeable. While class does not concern Hatchett as much as, say Lillo, the fate of women in society does. For that reason, his plays possess a contemporary immediacy about women’s rights. His dramas resemble Haywood’s in their employment of a wide range of women characters, including royalty who attempt to ameliorate their situation and escape social bonds. So close are the dramatic concerns of Hatchett and Haywood, it is tempting to see Haywood as a strong influence on Hatchett’s plays.

III Henry Carey

When Henry Carey appeared at the playhouse, he was then rumored to be the bastard son of William Saville, Marquis of Halifax, but his real parentage, his name, date and place of birth are not known. Having had Chrononhotonthologos turned down by Drury Lane Theatre in 1734 after Fleetwood the manager kept the manuscript for eight months, he finally was able to get it staged at the Little Theatre. Playwriting was not his real vocation,
for he considered himself a musician. Earning a living by teaching music in families and boarding schools of the "middling sort," he had published in 1713 two volumes of ballad-type poetry, praised by Addison for its "plain simple copy of nature." All his works bear his imprint because they reveal a complex man in sympathy with lower-class people. Like Johnson, he wrote dramas about the "Cast-aways" on the margins, and they remained the focus by which he viewed society. I want to examine Carey's background for its impact on his dramas, to consider his poetic concerns, as well as to analyze Chononhotonthologos: The Most Tragical Tragedy That ever was Tragediz'd by any Company of Tragedians, The Dragon of Wantley, Amelia: A New English Opera, and The Honest Yorkshireman: A Ballad Farce.

With his background as obscure as many of his fellow writers, the only incontrovertible biographical fact about Henry Carey is his death on 4 October 1743. And yet his dying is as mysterious as his living. According to his obituary, "He got out of bed from his wife in good health, and was soon after found dead." But the registry at St. James Church, Clerkenwell, contains this entry:

Charles Carey inf., Dorrington Street.

In Frederick Wood's words, "when the whole town was echoing his songs, when night after night the theatres
were clattering with applause of his plays, he and his family were sinking deeper and deeper into penury." And one day he killed his six-month-old son and then himself. Kitty Clive and the actors at Covent Garden put on a benefit for his pregnant wife and four (or five) remaining children "entirely destitute of any provision." Isaac Disraeli writes of Carey during this period:

At the time, this poet could neither walk in streets for be seated at a convivial board, without listening to his own songs and his own music for, in truth, the whole nation was echoing his verse . . . while this very man himself, urged by his strong humanity founded the fund for Decayed Musicians, he was so broken hearted, and his own common comforts so utterly neglected, that in despair, not waiting for nature to relieve him from the burden of existence, he laid violent hands on himself; and when found dead, had only a halfpence in his pocket! (Calamaties and Quarrels of Authors pp. 103-104)

Accounting for the suicide, authorities such as Wood refer to Carey's deep depression over the pirating of his works. He was denied credit for many of his own songs and plays, notably "Sally in Our Alley," and Carey remarked that, "Because 'twas good, 'twas thought too good for mine" (qtd Wood Introduction 18). In several of his publications, he refers to the theft of his works and states in the 1729 edition of Poems on Several Occasions that "Some of these offsprings of my brain, wandering forlorn and anonymously, were either adopted by, or assigned to, other fathers" (qtd Wood Introduction 18).
For example, the play *The Honest Yorkshireman: A Ballad Farce* was pirated, printed, and sold under the title *The Wonder: An Honest Yorkshireman* (Wood 38), the popular piece therefore earning money for a bookseller, not Carey. He also held Fleetwood at the Drury Lane responsible for deception. The Preface to the play reveals Carey's resentment:

> The very generous Reception this Farce has met with from the Publick during its Reception in the Haymarket last Summer, and Goodman's Fields this Winter, is a Manifestation of the Bad Taste and Monstrous Partiality of the great Mogul of the Hundreds at Drury, who, after having had the Copy Nine Months in his Hands, continually feeding me with fresh Promises of bringing it to the Stage, return'd it at last in a very ungenerous Manner, at the end of the Season, when it was too late to carry it to any other House.

Although other possibilities exist, we may see Carey's death as the result of his poverty and the literary piracy that denied him the rewards of creation. He became increasingly obsessed with his works being stolen in a wholesale manner. As Wood points out, a system of spies in print shops and dishonest booksellers, such as Curll, made possible a lucrative theft ring. An Irish bookseller bragged that "he could procure from any printing office in London, sheets of any book printing in it, while it was going on, or before publication" (qtd 19). The verse epistle, *Of Stage Tyrants* addressed to
Lord Chesterfield, reveals in these lines the depths of his bitterness:

Pyrate Printers rob me of my gain,
And reap the labour'd harvest of my brain.

And in the preface to *The Honest Yorkshireman: A Ballad Farce*, Carey stated, "I have suffered very largely in this particular, nor do I live a week but I see myself injured of what would support me many months in affluence." In the preface to *The Musical Century* written two years later, Carey states, "It is almost incredible how much I have suffered by having my works pirated, my loss on that account amounting to little less than three hundred pounds per annum." Although his works were staged many times, and his songs sung all over London's theatre district, his profits would have accrued from printed versions and those were pirated.

Other than these public statements relating solely to his work, Carey made no personal references. If, as it was rumored, Carey was descended from the Savile family, then he came from West Riding, the setting of most of his dramatic works, according to Wood's definitive introduction to Carey's collected poems. There is a possibility that Carey even married under the name of "Henry Savile," according to a registry in Rothwell, Yorkshire (Wood Introduction 14). As further indication of kinship, Wood points to the names Carey gave his
children: Henry Savile Carey (b. 2/28/37), George Savile Carey (b. 11/11/38) and William Savile Carey (b. 2/25/40).\textsuperscript{17} We note with interest the child Carey killed was not named Savile, but rather, Charles Claiborne Carey (b. 6/25/43).

Carey was around 56 years when he died and perhaps had been in London since 1713, when he published his first volume of poetry. Far removed from the artificial Augustan verse, Carey’s simple stanzas reflect the tradition of English ballads. We may observe that many of Carey’s poems reflect his dramatic concerns of love, rejection, betrayal, madness, and death. His use of animals as metaphors for human disaster appears in his Mad Songs, written about the same time as The Dragon of Wantley. Reminiscent of Blake’s poetry, one particular verse is worth quoting:

\begin{verbatim}
I have found a way
That shall her scorn repay.
I’ll leave this false, imaginary light
And seek the dismal shades of night.
With goblins and fairies
I’ll dance the canaries,
And demons all round in a ring;
With witches I’ll fly
Beneath the cold sky,
And with the screech owl will I sing.
My love, alas, is dead and gone,
Is dead and gone to me,
And now my senses they are flown,
I have my liberty.
\end{verbatim}

Most of his works, however, do not deal with the surrealism and paganism of these verses. Because Carey’s

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songs emphasized patriotism, the simple life, and the ultimate goodness of the ordinary Englishman, they reflected the concerns of the common people, like Carey poor and cheated. In *The Surly Peasant*, Carey establishes his democratic doctrine:

A Fig for your Sir or your Madam;  
Our origin all is from Adam;  
Then why should I buckle,  
Palaver, or truckle  
To any pragmatical chuckle?

This same type of message made his song ballads popular, probably because, like the plays under study here, they appealed to the broad base at the bottom of society. While Carey is not revolutionary in his approach to government, he writes about a flawed hierarchy which gives power to the wrong sort. Like the male rulers in Haywood's and Fielding's plays, Carey's rulers are not worthy and appear to be playing at a serious game, and their victims, women and the poor, must obey a wrongful system.

Carey's negation of Augustan influences is obvious in his poetry. For example, Carey's most popular song was surely "Sally in our Alley," an anti-pastoral in its substitution of an apprentice and his young street urchin in place of the classic romantic pair, such as Strephon and Cloris. The narrator is a product of the streets, a displaced farm boy indentured to a mean master, and he
sings of serving his apprenticeship of seven years in order to marry Sally.

Of all the girls that are so smart
There's none like pretty Sally.
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.
There is no lady in the land
Is half so sweet as Sally,
She is the darling of my heart;
And she lives in our alley.

Her father he makes cabbage-nets
And through the streets does cry 'em;
Her mother she sells laces long
To such as please to buy 'em;
But sure such folks could ne'er beget
So sweet a girl as Sally!
She is the darling of my heart;
And she lives in our alley.

When she is by, I leave my work;
I love her so sincerely;
My master comes like any Turk'
And bangs me most severely--
But let him bang his bellyful,
I'll bear it all for Sally'
She is the darling of my heart,
And she lives in our alley.

My master and the neighbors all
Make game of me and Sally,
And, but for her, I'd better be
A slave and row a galley;
But when my seven long years are out
O then I'll marry Sally, --
O then we'll wed, and then we'll bed . . .
But not in our alley!

Carey takes as his subject the lowest London citizens, victims of the Enclosure Acts and the mercantile system, whose lives in squalid alleys contrasted obscenely with the merchant princes. Exploited by the economic system, the youngster narrating the piece maintains a
dignified stance and pure love for his sweetheart surely as elevated as the classical tradition. There is no naughty reference to illicit sex; quite the opposite, he looks forward to the marriage bed and feeds his love with cheesecake and ale with no ulterior motive. Although Carey was silent about the identity of Sally, the original may have been Sally Salisbury, a pretty prostitute at Mother Whyburn’s bordello (Carroll 7). Although Carey does not comment about his plays, we are able, nonetheless, to find in his preface comments on this one poem, the concerns and issues treated by his dramas. He said the purpose of the poem was,

> to set forth the Beauty of a chaste and disinterested Passion, even in the lowest Class of Human Life . . . The real occasion was this: A Shoemaker’s ‘Prentice making Holiday with his Sweetheart, treated her with a sight of Bedlam, the Puppet-shows, the Flying Chairs, and all the Elegancies of Moorfields. From whence proceeding to the Farthing Pye-House, he gave her a Collation of Buns, Cheesecakes, Gammon of Bacon, Stuff’d Beef and Bottled Ale. Through all these scenes the Author dodged them, charmed with the Simplicity of their Courtship; from when he drew this little Sketch of Nature.

Critics generally refer to the plays as ballad operas, a form which critics credit him with developing. Probably influenced by the original ballad-opera, *The Beggar’s Opera*, Carey wrote plays with humorous and pastoral elements as well as simple songs based on the ballad-type. Language and speech patterns are realistic, and show a combination of country and city street
influences. The characters are simple folk, trusting and competent. Complications of the plots occur when they are betrayed by the system they have blindly obeyed. Most of the dialogue is spoken, and musical numbers have been inserted to emphasize the action. Unlike opera, the ballad-opera has been designed for the dramatic actor who could sing a little.

Within this format, Carey was able to attack the social establishment, including opera, and to elevate the concerns of common man. As we may observe in the poetry, Carey invests his works, including his ballad-operas with feminism. He had no trouble writing a woman's life, as he does in "Mrs. Stuart's Retirement" and "The Fine Lady's Life," poems which contrast the bucolic and the urban. He uses the point of view of a country girl who envies a fine lady from London and longs for something better than what she has. Carey's sympathies rest with the simple girl, and he harshly judges city life to be a masquerade:

All things borrow'd shapes and dresses wear,  
And no-one's really what he would appear.

Although critics like Wood find that Carey treats women as "pure" and "sacred," we will observe that his dramas feature women depicted as women, neither perfect nor evil (43), as is certainly true of his first play at the Little Theatre.
Like Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, the work pokes fun at pretensions of the upper class by a reversal of social expectations. Carey says in the Prologue that his muse, "Struts in Heroicks, and in pompous Verse . . . . with big bellowing Bombast rend our Ears. / Which, stript of Sound, quite void of Sense appears." The drama attacks the bombast of tragedians acting on London stages.

Although the plot is slender and the play quite short, Carey manages to achieve more than criticism of stage bombast, for this first play establishes the major ideas his dramas continue to explore. He is concerned with the hierarchy and the basic failure of men to live up to their titles. In his study of the concept of masculine superiority and right to rule, Carey resembles Haywood, whose dramas systematically expose the failure of males at the top. While she uses comedy only in one play, Carey dresses his studies in the folksy humor of the ballad-opera; yet the result is similar. *Chronophotontologos* concerns a king who sleeps through war, cannot consummate his marriage, and substitutes theatrical spectacles for reality. A rival king walks on his hands, the queen has "sudden diarrhoea," and the court music resembles the noise of rocks and rolling pins.

The play opens with life at the top. Courtiers stand around to await the king's footsteps and to hear his "profound Profundity of Thought" (p. 6). The grandeur
with which the courtiers Rigdum-Funnidos and Aldiborontiphoscophornio invest the least action of the king contrasts with the reality. Lazy and incapable, he sleeps and snores while his soldiers die, but Aldiborontiphoscophornio says of the royal snorting:

The King in pensive contemplation
Seems to resolve on some important Doubt;
His soul, too copious for his Earthly Fabric
Starts forth, spontaneous, in Soliloquy,
And makes his Tongue the Midwife of his Mind,
Let us retire, lest we disturb his Solitude.
(p. 7)

Unwilling to call the king a coward and failed leader, his courtiers place the best possible face on the royal dereliction of duty. The king sees himself in the same grand terms and equates his power with the universe. When the "Antipodean Pow’rs from Realms below, / Have burst the solid Entrails of the Earth," in order to attack Queerumania, the king says that "One Look from Chrononhotonthologos shall scare them into Nothing" (p. 9). Worthy of combat with the gods, the king rises above humanity. His sleep is not just dozing, but a battle between himself and the God of Sleep.

This God of Sleep is watchful to torment me,
And Rest is grown a Stranger to my eyes:
Sport not with Chrononhotonthologos,
Thou idle Slumb’rer, thou detested Somnus:
For if thou dost, by all the waking Pow’rs,
I’ll tear thine eye-Balls from their Leaden Sockets,
And force them to out-stare Eternity. (p. 7)
To defeat the God of Sleep, Chrononhotonthologos thereupon orders a new reality to be imposed, with the fantasy of the theatre substituting for life's reality.

Instead of Sleep, let pompous Pageantry
Keep all mankind eternally awake.
Let Harlequino decorate the Stage
With all Magnificence of Decoration:
Giants and Giantesses, Dwarfs and Pigmies,
Songs, Dances, Musick in its ampest Order,
Mimes, Pantomimes, and all the magick Motion
Of Scene Deceptiovisive [sic] and Sublime.
(p. 8-9)

The ordinary humanity that the generals represent is replaced by the extraordinary, with humans enlarged or diminished furnished as entertainment. Man, thus distorted, represents the king's alternative kingdom. The "magick Motion" of the stage turns into the world for the king seated under a "rich Canopy," (p. 9) willfully isolated from reality, and obsessed with his theatre of the absurd.

Carey establishes a still more complicated view of the monarchy through his depiction of the king of the Antipodes. He walks on his hands, arse over head, and hence sees reality reversed, but not perverted as Chrononhotonthologos sees it. Foils for the skewed vision the ruling males possess, the Queen Fadladinida, Lady Tatlanthe, and the middle-class General Bombardinion confront the real world. With Carey ridiculing the pastoral as well as the king, Fadladinida observes that,
Day's Curtain's drawn, the Morn begins to rise,
And waking Nature rubs her sleepy Eyes:
The pretty little fleecy bleating Flocks,
In Baa's harmonious warble thro' the Rocks:
Night gathers up her Shades in sable Shrouds,
And whispering Osiers tattle to the Clouds.
What think you, Ladies, if an Hour we kill,
At Basset, Ombre, Picquet, or Quadrille? (p. 11)

The picturesque lambs means less to the queen than
the reality of breakfast tea. When her ladies attempt to
praise her, she gets busy loading the pot with "Green
Imperial, or Pekoe Bohea," and their compliments make her
"Blush" (p. 12). Isolated from the possibility of
interaction with others, the queen and her ladies are
depicted chiefly as lonely and bored. Her activities are
limited to the king's pleasure and, significantly, she
refuses to attend his theatre, thereby refusing to share
his view of the world.

Beloved by her lady-in-waiting, Tatlanthe, who says
"Wou'd I were a Man," the queen falls in love with the
Antipodean king and refuses to share the theatrical vision
of Chrononhotonthologos. Although they speak in glorious
terms about the king's body, the courtiers do not extend
the compliment to Fadladinida. The opposite of the
romantic deification of women, their vision of her is
excremental, and they lie about her absence from the
king's theatre, saying "a sudden Diarrhea's rapid Force,
So stimulates the Peristaltic Motion, / That she by far
out-does her late Out-doings" (p. 16). She is thereby
reduced to her animal nature and denied the elevation
given the king. The fact that her body is employed to
demean her, illustrates the function of the female in
society. The image of the queen’s person continues
throughout the play. Her body is a state possession under
male control but not employed for its purpose. Dismissed
as queen, she is yet a virgin. Going to give herself to
the king of Antipodes, she cannot determine how his body
functions:

How prettily he foots it with his Hands!
Well, to his Arms, no to his Legs I fly,
For I must have him, if I live or die. (p. 20)

Taking his "magic Wand" in her hand, the queen walks
off with the upside-down king. In a sudden scene shift,
Cupid descends, visible only to the queen, and predicts
she will have "two jolly young Husbands your Person [to]
share . . . and twenty fine Babies all lovely and Fair"
(p. 25). Along with this fulfillment of her body, Cupid
predicts widowhood, a fortuitous condition, for only death
can free Fadladinida from her fate at the hands of the
hierarchy.

Ironically, the king conveniently dies as the result
of his failure as a ruler, for he cannot provide for his
household, much less run a country. Furious that the cook
demands to be paid and, short of groceries, offers to whip
up pork hash for the royal dinner, the king stabs him.
Hash’d Pork! shall Chrononhotonthologos
Be fed with Swine’s Flesh, and at Second-hand?

In turn, Bombardinion, the middle-class general, strikes out against the class system and stabs the king: "For Bombardinion has recei’d a Blow, / And Chrononhotonthologos shall die" (p. 27). Calling for a doctor, Bombardidion is appalled at his act, and speaks the most quoted lines of the play:

Go, call a Coach, and let a Coach be call’d; And let the Man that calls it be the Caller; And, in his Calling, let him nothing call, But Coach! Coach! Coach! Oh! for a Coach, ye Gods. (p. 28)

He kills himself and dies fantasizing that the earthly order will be duplicated in heaven. He cries out, "I come! your faithful Bombardinion comes! / He comes in Worlds unknown to make new Wars, / And gain thee Empires num’rous as the Stars" (p. 29).

The defeat of the status quo and the death of the hierarchy have different meanings for the queen. She enters to find the dead bodies of ruling males, the king, the general, and the doctor. When she says, they are "All dead! Stone dead! irrecoverably dead," it is impossible not to interpret her reaction as joyful. Carey ends with this focus on the queen, who promptly establishes her own hierarchy and assumes command, saying "Here! take these dead and bloody Folks away" (p. 31). Choosing two (middle-class) "proper" husbands, she reverses the order of rule and role. Although the male characters are

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cardboard buffoons, Carey achieves in the women dimension and growth. As if she were the tragic hero, the queen is transformed during the course of the play and grows as the result of her knowledge. We may note the moment of change when she moves from static to active; grasping the "magic Wand" of the Antipodean king, she gains thereby knowledge and new vision. If, as seems likely, the "wand" brings sexual knowledge as well as good and evil, then Carey introduces a new twist to the story of Eve the tempter, for he introduces the masculine in that role.

Carey insists upon women's rights, the issue of the epilogue to the 1735 play at the Little Theatre, The Honest Yorkshireman: A Ballad Farce.¹⁹

Ladies, I now must plead the poet's cause;  
He's your old champion;--shall he have applause?  
If value for our sex can recommend,  
He's known by all to be a woman's friend.

Carey calls attention to his feminist stand and, while the reference may simply toady to a particular ladies group at the Little Theatre, similar to the Shakespeare ladies clubs at the patented theatres, he may also establish publicly the social aims of his drama. Although Carey states in the Prologue that his farce "has a double Aim To honour Wedlock and put Fools to Shame," the play does not honor wedlock, at all. To the contrary, Carey examines marriage as travesty and the role of women as marriageable property.
The Honest Yorkshireman: A Ballad Farce concerns identity and rights with Arabella forced, by her uncle Muckwork, to marry Sapsquill. Assisting Gaylove in his battle for Arabella's hand are servants Slango, Blunder, and "pert" Combrush. At the center of this struggle, Arabella is militant in refusing to be a patriarch puppet. She does not want to get married at all, and her opening song defines marriage for women as at best a "Smithfield bargain" (p. 216), with the woman having everything to lose and nothing to gain. Carey establishes the fiction that the males alone prize and value marriage, while women openly call it a form of slavery.

Why should women so much be controul'd?  
Why should Men with our Rights make so bold?  
Let the Battle 'twixt Sexes be tried,  
We shall soon prove the stronger Side.  
Then stand to your Arms,  
And trust to your Charms,  
Soon whining and pining  
The Men will pursue;  
But if you grow tame,  
They'll but make you their Game,  
And prove perfect Tyrants  
Once they subdue. (p. 217)

Of the playwrights under study, only Carey uses the word "Rights" in regard to women. While legal rights were non-existent, Carey must be referring to social rights and to women's claims on society for civil treatment. Arabella defines marriage as one of the inequities, by which society deprives her of "Rights." She becomes the object of the hunt, and when caught in marriage, is
"tamed," "control'd," and "subdued," as if she were a wild animal. Marriage, then, is something done to her and over which she has no control.

On the other hand, Gaylove advocates marriage: "Vice looks so hateful, and Virtue so amiable in my Eye, especially as it is the ready Road to true Happiness, I am resolv'd to pursue its Paths. A regular Life, and a good Wife, for me," and he sings:

Pray where is the Joy  
To trifle and toy  
Yet dread some Disaster from Beauty?  
But, sweet is the Bliss  
Of a conjugal Kiss  
Where Love mingles Pleasure with Duty. (p. 220)

He does not bother to frame his response in sober, God-fearing remarks about the sacred nature of marriage and instead speaks of it in terms of what benefits the man gets: avoidance of the "Disaster" of venereal disease. Indirectly, he makes the same points as Arabella, that marriage is an institution of men, by them, and for them. Carey develops the implications of these ideas when Gaylove persuades his servant Slango to dress and act as a traditional woman in order to attract Sapscull. The attraction works, and Slango, disguised as a woman, is married to Sapscull, who sees the dress and assumes the rest.

Saps: Why, who a murrain have I gotten, then?  
Gayl: My Man, Slango; and I wish you much Joy!.  
Saps: Your Man, Slango! what have I married a Man, then?
Sian: If you don't like me, my Dear, we'll be divorc'd this Minute. (p. 241)

Although at one level we may see this as contemporary stage business, the undercurrents about gender and the nature of sexual attraction are quite serious, for Carey deals with woman as myth and reality. As a mythic woman, Slango is feminine, obedient and flirtatious, eager to marry, just the opposite of Arabella who resents the reality of the social system binding her.

In addition to showing the systematic deprivation of women, Carey includes theatre folk as part of the disenfranchised who, along with women, suffer the hard reality behind the myth. For instance, Sapsceull and his servant have come to London to see the sights and go to the "Play-Housen" where they "see your comical Tragedies, and your Uproars, and Roaratoribusses, and hear Fardinello, that sings solfa better nor our Minster Choirmen." But the real theatre is quite another affair, and the mythic male Fardinelli is in reality a eunuch.

And inside the theatrical glitter is a hungry actor:

There the English Actor goes
With many a hungry Belly,
While Heaps of Gold are forc'd, Bod wot,
On Signior Fardinelli. (p. 234)

At the end, Sapsceull, as much as Arabella, is victimized by the system. After the fake marriage, all he can say is, "who . . . have I gotten, then?" Leaving aside the homosexual implications and the transvestism, we
see Sapscull as a sad figure, alone and deceived. In a society where a fake woman is valued as the real thing, Arabella's future is not promising; there may be nothing like "good Wives" for bachelors, but nobody seems to care if they make good husbands. Whether she marries Gaylove or Sapscull (their names say it all), she is "given" in marriage, and her fortune goes with her.

Women are a kind of nostrum for what ails men, who say things to each other like, "I see you be so happy in a wife, I'll not be Long without one." To which Gaylove says, "You can't be happier than I wish you" (p. 228). We suspect the play's intentions; as someone said of Shakespeare's sonnets, What man ever cared if another man got married? Carey, of course, is carrying off a piece of irony, and the play is not the paean to wedded bliss the Prologue would have us believe. The last verse emphasizes this: for "batchelors," there is nothing like "good" wives--other men's, of course. Nobody really believes the rake or the guardian has been reformed.

The ballad-opera Amelia, with a conflict between two women at its center has a dramatic focus similar to Carey's later work, The Dragon of Wantley. Quite short, the play features the story of Amelia who leaves home secretly accompanied by her husband's best friend, Rudolpho, and becomes a hostage to the unwitting Turkish Grand Visier, Osmyn, holding her husband, Casimir,
prisoner. Using her beauty to entice the ruler, she offers to love him if he will do an act of charity—releasing the Christian prisoner to show his "boasted Mildness." Having achieved her objective, she escapes in the nick of time and returns home, only to have her sister-in-law, Augusta, and recently-returned husband accuse her of infidelity with both Rudolpho and the potentate. Incensed, Amelia tells Rudolpho to keep silent, with the result that Casimir is going to have them executed. Only when the best friend, Rudolpho, swears to his sweetheart Augusta and to Casimir about Amelia's chastity, does the husband believe her.

At the heart of the situation lies the freedom of action Amelia exercised with the result that Augusta precipitates action against her sister-in-law. Breaking the mold of womanhood in order to save her husband's life, she runs smack into the wall of female behavior where only stasis is approved. Amelia knows she is different and "the Immenseness of my Passion / Extends to a far greater Pitch, / Than you can think, or I express" [sig. B 3v]. Choosing to act autonomously, she is assumed guilty of incontinence in tongue and tail. Augusta says,

What, gone! Impossible! it cannot be:  
To leave the Palace thus at Dead of Night:  
Oh false Rudolpho!  
Traitor to Friendship, Gratitude, and Love!  
But much more false Amelia!  
The faithless Spouse of a distressed Husband:  
This conduct will imprint a greater Wound,
Than his Defeat and Loss of Liberty.

I'll by th' immortal Pow'rs that rule above,
To Justice bring the guilty Pair. [sig.C 2v]

By breaking with tradition to save her husband, she
breaks out of the prison of femininity, ironically, only
to release her husband from prison. For her pains, she is
assumed guilty by her husband:

Ah Traitor, wicked and impure!
How can I possibly endure
To see that odious Face?
Oh that my Heart had not been set
On one who could her Truth forget,
To suffer such Disgrace. [sig. E 1]

Augusta is not just hostile, but uses her place in
the female community to destroy Amelia. She is a complex
woman, eaten up with a strange mixture of frustration,
envy, and jealousy. Clearly more intelligent than her
brother, the ruling prince, she must subvert her abilities
and, in so doing, corrupts herself. She knows Amelia’s
most vulnerable spot, the means by which she is defined as
chaste. Restive, Augusta from the first reveals her
nature, jealous even of her brother when Rudolpho rides
off with him and says that Casimir "has your Heart" [sig.
B 2]. Prompted by her own anguish, Augusta feeds her
gullible brother’s suspicions and plots death for Amelia,
for whom the enemy is Augusta. When Amelia begs to see
her husband before she is executed, Augusta only says "Why
is her Death delay’d? / Dispatch her instantly" [sig. E
2]. Although at the end, Casimir is convinced by Rudolpho
and calls Amelia the "Pattern to thy Sex!" [sig. E 4], we know that Augusta thinks no such thing. She equates herself with "Heav'n" and, like a man, is able to perceive women only in terms of their sexuality. Actually, the drama could well be titled Augusta, for Carey studies her behavior as a morally corrupt woman, and alternates scenes of her and the Turkish general with each discussing the enemy and the methods of war. In contrast to the civilized General Osmyn invading Europe, the tortured Augusta conducts a dirty little war against Amelia whose only crime was breaking free.

Although Carey raises all these issues, he ends the play with a quatrain that ignores any of the possibilities the drama suggests: "When Dangers Innocence invade, / Just Heav’n vouchsafes a timely Aid; / And makes with brighter Lustre shine / Virtues conceal’d in Souls divine."

Notwithstanding the final verse, Carey in this short play deals seriously with the social construct of woman.

The Dragon of Wantley (1737) was undoubtedly Carey’s greatest hit, for it ran 67 nights with audiences that included such notables as George II and even Handel whose opera Guistino, also featuring a monster, is one of the targets of Carey’s humor. Most commonly, critics correlate the kick in the dragon’s backside, with the death-blow of Italian opera. Baker says about the Dragon of Wantley:
The Plot taken from the old Ballad of Moore of Moorehall, is worked up into all the Incidents of Love, Heroism, Rivalry, and Fury, which most of the Italian Operas indiscriminately were stuffed with. To help this forward, the Characters were dressed with the utmost Extravagance of theatric Parade; the Machinery truly Burlesque, and the songs, tho' ludicrous to the highest Degree, were set perfectly in the Italian Taste.

The piece is very English, from the ballads to the Yorkshire setting to the social system. Country people are the heroes, and they are able to carry off a victory without any help from the outside. As the ostensible villain, the Dragon offers only musical-comedy threats to the knight and the squire’s family. While he kills, there is no real blood, as we see from the attack that opens the play:

The table shook, the cups began to rattle,
A dismal noise was heard within the Hall,
Away they flew, the Dragon scar’d them all:
He drank up all their coffee at a sup,
And next devour’d their Toast and Butter up.

The Dragon has finicky tastes, and when he first realizes there is a plot against himself, he senses his pursuer: "What nasty Dog has got into the well, Disturbs my Drink and makes the water smell?" When Moore leaps out and says "Boh!" to the Dragon, the traditional battle to the death is completely subverted. The wounded monster sings,

Oho, Mr. Moore
You Son of a Whore,
I wish I’d known your Tricks before.
Defeated by a kick in the rear-end, the Dragon's last words are "Oh, Oh, Oh, The Devil take your Toe" [sig. C 3v].

At another level, however, the work concerns the English system of hierarchies and traditions. The local lord is a drunk who must screw up his courage with "six quarts of ale and one of aqua vitae" [sig. c lv], to take on the dragon. Carey places at the center the woman who activates men, becomes the hero's prize, and defeats her rival, the pretty peasant Mauxalinda.

A reversal of the usual knightly tale, however, the story concerns the women, not as Guineveres, but as victims of the class system. While the threat of the dragon is cute, the social displacement that Mauxalinda the gypsy girl faces is not. Carey arranges this type of duality by which to view the tradition of class and caste role-playing, for the real dragon is the hierarchy of ruling males. Margery's father, the squire, is incapable of protecting his people and lands, and Margery alone has the idea to get Moore of Moore Hall, a knight, to initiate a quest. When they find him, he is carousing with friends, drinking and wenching. The squire entices Moore by describing the Dragon in terms of threat to property, including women:

O Save us all!
Moore of Moore Hall!
Or else this cursed Dragon
Will plunder our Houses,
Our Daughters and Spouses,
And leave us the Devil a Rag on. [sig. B 2]

Margery, the squire's daughter, brings alive the old notion of male duty in ridding the countryside of the dragon, and her father offers her as the prize.

Mauxalinda, seduced and abandoned by the drunken Moore, loses him when he plays out the knightly fiction required of him. Aside from the dragon who is more like a naughty spaniel than a monster, Mauxalinda is the real victim. She says to Margery,

Were you as fine as e'er wore silk or sattin,
I'd beat your Harlot's Brains
Out with my Pattin,
Before you shall take a Man of Mine. (sig. B 4v)

Moore's country girl possesses common sense, pragmatism, and humor. Probably pregnant, she exclaims upon discovering Moore's perfidy: "It's enough to make a maid miscarry" (sig. B 2v). When Margery responds, "Who in the name of wonder, made him thine?" [sig. B 4v], Mauxalinda rushes to stab her but faints in the process. The class system determines her fate, and at the end, there is no pretense that she faces a good life. She is, in fact, forgotten, notwithstanding her role as the natural woman free of the restrictions that warp Margery. Perhaps this bothered Carey, who in the sequel to The Dragon of Wantley, called Margery: or, Worse Plague than
the Dragon, portrays Margery as such a nag that Moore seeks Mauzalinda once again.

In these plays which attack the class system, as well as the social treatment of women and the poor, Carey, like Haywood, clears a space for his victimized character, usually a woman, to act and shows what happens when she is on her own. Fadladinida breaks free, so does Amelia. Both return home to different results, however. Amelia is nearly executed by the system while Fadladinida, in the absence of males, assumes power. In Carey’s depiction of the woman as male puppet, Margery uses the role to instigate male activity; on the other hand, Augusta reveals the corruption implicit in a system where men are only as good as their titles, and women are governed by the myth of the feminine. Mauzalinda, marginalized by her poverty and sexuality, appears to be Carey’s ideal woman in her natural state, free of the artificial system that perverts. Because she loses and rather disappears from the play, Carey emblematizes her as natural goodness destroyed by the system.

IV George Lillo

Of the little band of playwrights at the Little Theatre, George Lillo survives in memory, thanks to Henry Fielding whose final tribute to his friend, quoted below, is universal.20 We do not know exactly when Lillo threw
in his lot with the others at the Haymarket, but from Davies's comments, it must have been just before Fielding's assumption of management in 1736. *The London Merchant* had been a big success at the Drury Lane, but Lillo could not seem to get *Fatal Curiosity* staged at the patented theatres. Thomas Davies in *The Works of Mr. George Lillo and Some Account of his Life* notes that Lillo came to the theatre in 1735-36 because he was "reduced to the necessity of having his play acted at an inferior Play-house, and by persons not so well skilled in their profession" (xv). The portrait that Davies draws of Lillo is endearing and perhaps reveals why Fielding was so fond of him:

Plain and simple as he was in his address, his manner of conversing was modest affable and engaging. When invited to give his opinion how a particular sentiment should be uttered by the actor he expresst himself in the gentlest and most obliging terms, and conveyed instruction and conviction with good nature and good manners. (xvi)

Davies, who appeared as Young Wilmot in the premiere performance of *Fatal Curiosity*, was ideally placed to observe both men and wrote about Fielding's reception of Lillo with "great politeness and friendship . . . and took upon himself the management of the play." Fielding "was not merely content to revise the *Fatal Curiosity*, and to instruct the actors how to do justice to their parts. He warmly recommended the play to his friends, and to the
public. Besides all this he presented the author with a well written prologue" (xvii).21

Although no drawing of Lillo remains and no sure indication of his religion or personal particulars, we know what Fielding, in an unusual reference to a fellow writer at the Little Theatre, wrote after Lillo's death. The tribute was published in the Champion 26 February 1739-40:

His Fatal Curiosity, which is a Master-Piece in its Kind, and inferior only to Shakespear's best Pieces gives him a Title to be called the best Tragick Poet of his Age; but this was the least of his Praise, he had the gentlest and honestest manners, and at the same time the most friendly and obliging. He had a perfect Knowledge of human Nature, tho' his Contempt for all base Means of Application, which are the necessary Steps to great Acquaintance, restrain'd his Conversation within very narrow Bounds; he had the Spirit of an old Roman, join'd to the Innocence of a primitive Christian, he was content with his little State of Life, in which his excellent Temper of Mind gave him an Happiness beyond the Power of Riches, and it was necessary for his Friends to have a sharp Insight into his Want of their Services as well as good inclinations or Abilities to serve him; in short, he was one of the best of Men, and those who knew him best, will most regret his Loss.

For another singular reference to Lillo and the Little Theatre, Fielding wrote a letter to the Daily Advertiser Tuesday 25 May, two days before the opening of Fatal Curiosity.

Sir, In an Age when Tragedy is thought so much out of Fashion, that the great establish'd Theatres dare hardly venture to attempt it, an Author may
probably seem bold who hazards his Reputation with a Set of young Actors on a Stage hitherto in its Infancy; where he is sure, besides the Judgment, to encounter the Prejudice of the Town; and has not only the Chance of not being liked, but of not being heard.

But as to the ill Success of Tragedy in general, I shall not attribute it entirely to the Audience; I cannot persuade myself that we are sunk into such a State of Levity and Childhood, as to be utterly incapable of any serious Attention; or are so entirely devoted to Farce and Puppet shew, as to abandon what one of the greatest Criticks who ever liv’d has call’d the noblest work of Human Understanding.

I am afraid the Truth is, our Poets have left off Writing, rather than our Spectators loving Tragedy. The Modern Writers seem to me to have quite mistaken the Path: They do not fail so much from want of Genius as of Judgment; They embellish their diction with their utmost Art, and concern themselves little about their Fable: In short, While they are industrious to please the Fancy, they forget (what should be their first Care) to warm the Heart.

Give me leave, Sir, to recommend to you and by you to the Town. A Tragedy, written in a different Manner, which the Fable is contriv’d with great Art, and the Incidents such as much affect the Heart of every one who is not void of Humanity. A tender Sensation is, I think, in one of a Humane Temper, the most pleasing that can be rais’d; and I will venture to affirm, no such Person will fail of enjoying it who will be present on Thursday next at the Hay-Market Theatre; where, without the bombast Stile of Kings and Heroes, he will see a Scene in common Life, which really happen’d in King James I’s Time; and is accompany’d with the most natural, dreadful and tender Circumstances, and affording the finest Moral that can be invented by the Mind of Man.

After the premiere of Fatal Curiosity 27 May, the Daily Advertiser notes that the play deserved the greatest applause that has been shewn to any Tragedy for many Years. The Scenes of Distress
were so artfully work'd up, and so well perform'd, that there scarce remain'd a dry Eye among the Spectators at the Representation; and during the Scene preceding the Catastrophe, an attentive Silence possess'd the whole House, more expressive of an universal Approbation than the loudest Applauses, which were given to the many noble Sentiments that every where abound in this excellent Performance, which must meet with Encouragement in an Age that does not want both Sense and Humanity.

Although critics, such as Hume, refer to Lillo as the major practitioner of the Domestic Tragedy, we need to place him in the general context of the genre in order to observe how Lillo's social stance made his works different from the run of the mill domestic drama. One of the first of the genre, interestingly a work that Lillo later may have revised, Arden of Feversham, like its successor, A Yorkshire Tragedy, features the private life and sorrows of lower classes, homely subject matter, which perhaps reflected his religious views. More contemporaneously, Otway's The Orphan, Southern's The Fatal Marriage, Rowe's The Fair Penitent feature the domestic "middle life" that informed Lillo's dramas. One other play, The Fatal Extravagance, ostensibly by James Mitchell but probably by Aaron Hill, shows a demonstrable similarity to Lillo's works. The Prologue, which was signed by Hill, is significant:

The Rants of ruin'd Kings, of Mighty name,
For pompous Misery, small compassion claim.
Empires o'erturned, and Heroes held in Chains,
Alarm the Mind, but give the Heart no Pains.
To Ills remote from our Domestic Fears,
We lend our Wonder, but withhold our Tears.
Not so when, from such Passion, as we own,
some Favourite Folly's dreadful Fate is shown;
There the Soul bleeds for what it feels within,
And conscious Pity shakes at suffering Sin.

In the prologue to his first drama, The London Merchant, Lillo speaks with this same aggressive negation of the old tragic mode in which real sorrow is associated only with nobles and royalty. The domestic tragedies refuse to abide by the dramatic authority to which Goldsmith refers: "tragedy displays the calamities of the great, so comedy should excite our laughter by ridiculously exhibiting the follies of the lower part of mankind." Lillo valorizes the ordinary and cites as real tragedy the sufferings of common man. In the Prologue to his first drama, he seems to cite his place in the continuum of the genre:

Long has the fate of Kings and Empires been
The common business of the Tragic Scene.
As if Misfortune made the Throne his seat,
And none could be unhappy but the great . . .
Stories like these with wonder we may hear;
But far remote and in a higher sphere,
We ne'er can pity what we ne'er can share . . .
Therefore an humbler theme our author chose,
A melancholy tale of private woes;
No Princes here lost royalty bemoan;
But you shall meet with sorrows like your own.

The play places right and wrong as elements of everyday life where middle-class standards of honor and decency must be upheld at their peril. Hudson in A Quiet Corner in a Library states:

Finally, on the side of form, he made an experiment to which not one of his forerunners had dared to set his hand; for while one and all

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these had adhered to verse as the only proper medium for tragic emotion, he adopted prose for the purpose of bringing the domestic interest of his drama into closer harmony with the actual life it was intended to reflect. (147)

Criticism of Lillo has revolved mainly around the kinds of religious or economic ethics informing his dramas. Eighteenth-century tradition, drawn from Theophilus Cibber's Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland and Thomas Davies's biography of Lillo, gave Lillo a background as religious dissenter: Cibber wrote "'Tis said, he was educated in the principles of the dissenters" (5: 338). Davies's biography, written 22 years later, states that "Lillo was a Dissenter, but not of that sour cast which distinguishes some of our sectaries" (I: 9). This tradition continued through the efforts of early editors of Lillo’s works. Adolphus William Ward in his introduction to the 1906 edition of The London Merchant . . . and Fatal Curiosity interprets the dramas on the basis of Lillo’s dissenting beliefs. Hudson’s chapter on Lillo in A Quiet Corner in a Library also promulgates the idea of Lillo as a religious writer, propelled artistically by his Puritan ethics with the usual mixture of religion and mercantilism. Hudson observes that Lillo’s plot and characters, reflect the tone and quality of Lillo’s moral teaching. It is not only Puritan; it is also in the last degree utilitarian . . . [Like Hogarth who contrasted the paths leading to vice and virtue], Lillo . . . enforced the same sublime truth in his own artless fashion. Honesty is
the best policy for all concerned; be honest and you will not be hanged, but may even live to become 'a very eminent merchant.' (156-57)

His references to Lillo's alleged religious fervor notwithstanding, Hudson was the first to note that Lillo's first play was an experiment that broke with tradition:

The point of Lillo's experiment is now apparent, and the resentment of the 'refined part of Town' fully explained. The London Merchant is a deliberate attempt to break down the narrow limitations of tragedy -- to make it more human and to widen its appeal by bringing it into touch with the common realities and interests of ordinary life. (134)

Hudson recognizes the extent of Lillo's daring, not only in the low subject matter but in the dramatic format; he notes that Lillo's assay into realism brought a shift in dramatic structure with prose (resembling normal speech) substituting for verse (133-134).

Allardyce Nicholl in his 1955 work included a section on "Domestic Tragedies, and Plays of Private Woe," in which he dwells on the "progressive and revolutionary" nature of the new tragedies (114-15). Nicholl finds Lillo's The London Merchant and Fatal Curiosity to be a response to the sentimental movement in Europe; he sees that the bourgeois tragedy, such as Lillo's, "pitted its strength against the forces of unreality and classicism in an endeavour to find a new field of tragic emotion" (115). Similarly, Michael Booth calls attention to the European influence. In the Introduction to Eighteenth Century Tragedy (1965) he proposes that
[Lillo] thus became one of the earliest advocates of the suitability of private and domestic life for tragic themes, and in a very real sense anticipated the work of Ibsen by more than a century. Unlike Ibsen, however, Lillo is hopelessly sentimental, and his play is steeped in the ethical benevolism of his time. The London Merchant represented a new kind of play for the eighteenth century, a calculated attempt to change the direction of tragedy. Its value for us lies in this attempt rather than in its merit as a tragedy. (ix-x)

Later criticism on Lillo tends to focus on the religious impulses behind his dramas. William H. McBurney's "What George Lillo Read: A Speculation," (1967) describes Lillo as a religious writer, whose library contained "works of Divinity a flexible category which includes theological controversy and church history and shades off into political biographical studies" (277). On the other hand, C. F. Burgess, "Further Notes for a Biography of George Lillo" (1967), argues that Lillo was not a religious dissenter, but was in fact Anglican. In another article "Lillo Sans Barnwell, or the Playwright Revisited" (1968), he proposes that Lillo's dramatic didacticism resulted from his pragmatic desire to please contemporary audiences, not from any innate Christian principles. Wellwarth's "George Lillo and the Finger-Wagging Drama" discusses Lillo's work along these same lines, as he makes the point of the influence of the middle-class audience with its growing number of Dissenter playgoers.
In the decade of the 1970's, two critics have found a way to blend these differing views of Lillo. Michael Cohen's article "Providence and Restraint in Two Lillo Tragedies" (1971), suggests that Lillo may have combined dramatically both Puritan and Hobbesian views. Likewise, Richard E. Brown's article, "Rival Socio-Economic Theories in Two Plays by George Lillo," holds similar views. He finds Lillo's personal religious beliefs to be irrelevant; rather, he makes the point that Lillo's plays reveal both Dissenting and Hobbesian influences. Quoting Allardyce Nicholl's earlier view of Lillo, Brown goes on to claim that the playwright deals with sophisticated precepts of right and wrong:

[His plays] depict confrontations between Hobbesian and Christian-mercantilist socio-economic theories that may at first appear to resemble . . . black-and-white moral oppositions, but in fact the conflicts reveal the ambiguous quality of human drives and emotions under difficult economic and social circumstances and show that neither theory is adequate by itself to explain human behavior. Thus the plays profoundly justify the claim (previously advanced on other grounds) that Lillo is not merely a practitioner of eighteenth-century melodrama, but an "ancestor of Ibsen," whose historical significance involves his serious presentation of material which is exclusively bourgeois and mercantile. (94)

Harry William Pedicord's essay, "Masonic Theatre Pieces in London 1730-1780," connects Lillo with the "new faith" of Freemasonry, a secret semi-religious order that appears to have constructed its own merchant hierarchy of
nobles and semi-royalty for its middle-class members. The organization threw its weight behind certain stage plays, including *The London Merchant*. Pedicord states that

The fraternal relationship is important when we consider what is known of initial performances of the Lillo tragedy . . . and soon both Drury Lane and Goodman’s fields were offering *The London Merchant* on successive evenings, and stage history eighteenth century . . . . thus with Masonic support *The London Merchant* achieved 204 performances during the century, thirty-two of them bearing specific Masonic advertisements. (158-59)

Trudy Drucker’s Introduction to the Garland edition of the *Works* returns to the early emphasis on Lillo’s personal views. She argues that Lillo was not a Calvinist and that his plays contain examples of his absolute lack of Puritan influence.

The perorations against absolutist religion that occur so frequently in Lillo’s work are inconsonant with the rigidities of Calvinism. For example, it is the Satanic voice in *Britannia* and *Batavia* that urges men to yield their "fatal liberty to err." The room to make mistakes seems intrinsic to Lillo’s concept of moral action. Man must be free in order to be good. (xxviii)

Stephen L. Trainor’s "Context for a Biography of George Lillo" returns full circle, as he seeks to refute Drucker and to prove that Lillo’s personal views as a Dissenter informed his dramas. Saying that the Puritan goal for correction corresponded to Lillo’s aim of correcting morals by calling upon the "passions," Trainor defines Lillo as "our first major Calvinist playwright"
(65). He concerns himself with the moral nature of the works and the influence of Lillo's plays:

A youthful embezzler . . . was so struck by the similarity between his situation and that of Barnwell that he wished death, but was happily reclaimed by his father, became an eminent merchant, and annually presented to the actor Ross ten guineas as a "tribute from one who was highly obliged, and saved from ruin, by seeing Mr. Ross's performance of Barnwell." (qtd Trainor 64)

Until now, Lillo's characters, especially his women, have received little attention, aside from serving as examples in the discussions about Lillo's putative religious views. Trudy Drucker's two-page article, "Lillo's Liberated Women," (1986), makes interesting assertions but does not discuss them. She simply observes that Lillo includes "a sisterhood of independent, assertive, self-propelled personalities moved by the wish to use their good minds to manage their lives. Most succeed admirably." Drucker offers a "Summary" for the article, stating that

Lillo's women, like his men, bring intelligence and determination to their crises of consequential choice. Evidently a believer in human (including female) self-regulation in an ordered world, Lillo shared the enlightened views of a sparkling age dedicated by its most influential thinkers to reliance on reason in the quest for personal and social liberty. (43)

I hope to prove that Lillo achieved in his treatment of women far more than he has been credited with to date. Apparently, Lillo's gender study is a layer that has not
been discussed in print, for the drama has been generally agreed to revolve around the "odious apprentice boy," Barnwell. Most commonly, the work is conceded to be a Christian-mercantilist document about right and wrong. Booth reminds us that the play continued popular into the nineteenth century and was traditionally shown at Christmas for the edification of apprentices who might be facing temptation (Booth ix).23

Nonetheless, the work was viewed from the first as avant-garde. Lillo’s plays contained plots which differed from those mentioned above and which rejected their commonalty of romantic entanglements. Unlike Otway and Steele, he did not include, for instance, Enoch-Arden plot twists or heroic quests; rather, Lillo’s works were invested with a social commentary not contained in the early domestic tragedies. While class, of course, is central to the plays, Lillo’s views on the hierarchy constitute only part of his social vision, for social construction of gender receives equal treatment. One major innovation in Lillo’s dramas concerns his treatment of gender disparity and the social consequences of women’s disenfranchisement. It is this social stand, I argue, that distinguishes Lillo’s plays and that redefines his contribution to the genre of the domestic drama. Probably because he chose to treat women’s marginality, Lillo could not devise his plots in ways similar to Steele and Rowe’s
with their chivalric devices of maidens in distress and men as strong saviors. As I hope to prove in the following discussion, Lillo's women stand at the center of his plays, as their private lives become the public motives for their actions which, in turn, determine the drama's eventual outcome.

Although The London Merchant did not open at the Little Theatre, we need to examine Lillo's treatment of social issues, especially the depiction of women and their role in society, in order to trace the influence on Fatal Curiosity. We need to establish clearly that Lillo did not so much write about the mercantile system as he wrote about the results of the system, especially on people, who for reasons of gender or birth, were simply its victims. The first-named play concerns the temptation and fall of the young and pure apprentice George Barnwell, who becomes the toy of the prostitute, Millwood, a sexual "monster" whose seduction of Barnwell leads to parricide, the "worst" of murders. Barnwell, after stealing his money, kills his master.

Critics such as Hudson and Hume note that Lillo provides Millwood with some bit of humanity. To the contrary, I argue that Millwood functions as the drama's protagonist, herself brought to her condition by a male-dominated society. Ostensibly, Millwood is Eve and good only for tempting men, who would otherwise be pure and
perfect. What the play actually concerns is Millwood’s refusal to be victimized as a woman and a whore. Using for her collateral her body whose femaleness destines her to subjugation, she attempts to become part of the economic system, to gain economic control, and for that, she is punished. Reminiscent of women in Fielding’s The Modern Husband and Haywood’s A Wife to be Lett, Millwood is in the position of having her body "let," but, unlike Haywood’s Susannah Graspal or Fielding’s Mrs. Modern, Millwood herself pockets the profits she earns. In two different episodes, Millwood is revealed to be society’s scapegoat, and the enormity of her treatment is balanced against the murder of the hierarchy, so to speak. At the play’s beginning, we see her as the outsider, the marginal person who can only dream of mainstream life:

Mill. You’ll think me bold.
Barn. No indeed.
Mill. What, then, are your thoughts on love?
Barn. If you mean the love of women, I have not thought of it at all. My youth and circumstances make such thoughts improper in me yet. But, if you mean the general love we owe to mankind, I think no one has more of it in his temper than myself. I do not know that person in the world, whose happiness I do not wish, and would not promote were it in my power. In an especial manner, I love my uncle and my master; but above all, my friend.
Mill. You have a friend, then, whom you love?
Barn. As he does me, sincerely.
Mill. He is, no doubt, often blessed with your company and conversation?
Barn. We live in one house together, and both serve the same worthy merchant.
Mill. Happy, happy youth! Whoe’er thou art, I envy thee, and so must all, who see and know
this youth (aside). What have I lost by being formed a woman! I hate my sex, myself. Had I been a man, I might perhaps, have been as happy in your friendship, as he who now enjoys it; but as it is— Oh! (1.5.17-49)

Millwood’s recognition of her place outside the male construct brings with it the fact that her gender denies her even the common humanity of which Barnwell speaks. Love, in his terminology, occurs between men; he can only think of women in sexual terms. As for loving them, he "has not thought of it at all." What Millwood regrets is this very distinction, which denies women the possibility of being other than a sexual object and prohibits the opportunity to interact with men except on a sexual basis. Her "loss" arises from what she is, not from what she does, and she knows that she would be marginalized even if she were the most pious of women, for she is Other. She is, literally, beneath their notice, just as she is outside their definition of friendship. Barnwell’s friend "Trueman" remarks about Millwood that she possesses "uncommon perfections of mind and body," a description that would seem to make her the mirror image of Barnwell, similarly perfect. He begins to be attracted to her, a feeling which he interprets as "evil" and which he associates with her sexuality. He determines that she would destroy his peace. Without her, he was pure; now that he has met her, she, like Eve, has brought knowledge, and he comes to see that his perfect society is flawed.
In the scene quoted above, she is honest about her treatment and he must begin to understand the knowledge she has brought him. Perhaps it is this shock that makes him uneasy, not only the realization of her sexual appeal. He says, "I feel desires I never knew before. I must be gone while I have power to go" (1.5.57-59).

The evil that constitutes the play resides in society itself and in the construct of the political and economic systems. What evil Barnwell would attribute to female sexual powers and biological determination, Millwood sees quite differently. Lillo uses the space created by potential criminality to allow Millwood to blast society for male domination and hypocrisy: "What are your laws, of which you make boast, but . . . the instrument and screen of all your villainies, by which you punish in others what you act yourselves . . . Thus you go on deceiving and being deceived, harassing and plaguing and destroying one another; but women are your universal prey" (4.18.67). The heart of her argument, of course, deals with this particular aspect: without women and the poor, hierarchies, like laws, would cease to have meaning; the center is valid only in its ability to stave off those who would enter. The depiction of Millwood as a prostitute whose customers include hierarchical leaders gives her inner knowledge of political, economic, social, and moral laws directed against women.
Mill. [M]ay I curse your barbarous sex, who robb'd me of em, ere I knew their worth, then left me, too late, to count their value by their loss. Another and another spoiler came; and all my gain was poverty and reproach. My soul disdained, and yet disdains, dependence and contempt. Riches, no matter by what means obtained, I saw secured the worst of men from both; I found it therefore necessary to be rich; and to that end I summoned all my arts. You call 'em wicked; be it so. They were such as my conversation with your sex had furnished me withal.

Thor. Sure, none but the worst of men converse with thee.

Mill. Men of all degrees and all professions I have known, yet found no difference but in their several capacities; all were alike wicked to the utmost of their power. In pride, contention, avarice, cruelty, and revenge, the reverend priesthood were my unerring guides. (4.17.11-25)

She recognizes the double standard of sexual behavior which she turned around and used to become a merchant, thereby invading the male territory of economics. She is no fool and sees that money "no matter by what means obtained" makes "the worst of men" acceptable and part of the establishment. Why then can a woman not achieve the same, through joining the money economy? Millwood has turned social hypocrisy to her own use and sells the only commodity she has. Referring to the men as "spoilers," Millwood places the blame on those merchant explorers who, like Thorowgood, pillage new lands. They left her as she said with "poverty and reproach." Only when she began to engage in sex as a commerce was she able to right the equation, enter the money economy as a way to validate her
gender. She speaks of herself in terms of worth, as a commodity which she has the right to use. Putting a price on her sexual parts and skill, she has calculated supply and demand correctly, for she has a plethora of customers. In her vision of economic survival, she embodies the marketplace and, indeed, Lillo seems to contrast her with Thorowgood the merchant. Millwood evaluates men only by their parts. Here, Lillo resembles Fielding and Haywood in their association of penis and scepter. Millwood's evaluation would, of course, rearrange the hierarchy for as she says about the men at the top and those not: she as "yet found no difference but in their several capacities" (4.17.23). One may argue that Lillo's reference concerns mental or physical capacities, but I think not. Millwood's occupation would make her a prime judge of one specific male capacity, totally unrelated to mind or morals. She makes reference to her particular knowledge, when she says that sex, "like darkness and death, blackens all objects and levels all distinction" (4.18.31-32).

Lillo obviously presents society through the viewpoint of Millwood. She sees the emperor, in this case the merchant, when he has no clothes, and her contempt leads her to say, "I hate you all: I know you, and expect no mercy. Nay, I ask for none: I have done nothing that I am sorry for: I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you does every day" (4.17.41-45).
Critics have generally assessed Millwood as simply evil. For instance, Brown calls her "Hobbesian" in her self-interest, while Thorowgood is Mandevillian in his belief that profit and brotherhood coexist in trade (98). Millwood, of course, is sentenced to die for her crime, which, like Alice Arden's, really is her usurpation of the hierarchy through the murder of a ruling male. To the last, Millwood is not repentant as men would have her, rejecting even Barnwell's pleas to repent before she dies. Lillo treats Millwood's heroism seriously, and it seems impossible to ignore the feminism he invests in this character. She passes on the responsibilities of the feminist cause to "future Millwoods" whom she foresees as refusing to acknowledge social definitions that play into the systematic disenfranchisement of women.

Women, by whom you are, the source of joy,  
With cruel arts you labour to destroy:  
A thousand ways our ruin you pursue,  
Yet blame in us those arts first taught by you.  
O may from hence each violated maid,  
By faltering, faithless, barbarous man betrayed,  
When robbed of innocence and virgin fame,  
From your destruction raise a nobler name;  
To right their sex's wrongs devote their mind,  
And future Millwoods prove, to plague mankind.  
(4.18.69-70)

Lillo's Fatal Curiosity, perhaps because it premiered at the Little Theatre or perhaps because Lillo's anti-establishment sympathies were somehow vaguely perceived, did not enjoy popularity. Fielding gave it every advantage and as good a cast as he could gather, including

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Charlotte Charke who developed the role of Agnes. As Battestin points out, Fielding’s staging was a tribute to Lillo:

Though *Pasquin* continued to be performed until July, the production of Lillo’s *Fatal Curiosity* probably marked the end of Fielding’s first season as manager at the Little Haymarket. It could scarcely have been a more impressive debut, especially for a young man not yet out of his twenties. In just three months he had injected new life into the London theatre—with *Pasquin* rivaling the popularity of the Italian castrati and Rich’s harlequinades; with *Fatal Curiosity* reviving the moribund form of tragedy by shrewdly discerning the potential of more realistic plots and characters. (Henry Fielding: *A Life* 207)

Fielding himself wrote the Prologue in which he makes the point of Lillo’s innovations:

But from this modern fashionable Way,
To Night, our author begs your Leave to stray.
No fustian Hero rages here to Night;
No Armies fall, to fix a Tyrant’s right:
From lower Life we draw our Scene’s Distress:
--Let not your Equals move your Pity less!
Virtue distrest in humble State support
Nor think, she never lives without the Court.

I propose that the drama did not fare well for the reason that it lacked the comfortable, surface morality of *The London Merchant* and thereby revealed the layers of unpalatable protest underneath. In Sarah Fielding’s novel, *The Adventures of David Simple*, a group of ladies may represent the consensus when they make this point about Lillo:

Certainly that fellow [Lillo] must be something very low, for his distresses always arise from poverty; and then he brings his wicked wretches,
who are to be tempted for money to some monstrous action, which he would have his audience pity them for. (2.2)

The very fact that Lillo dealt with "Equals," and the current unalterable economic system was too close for comfort. A view of the plot demonstrates the differences between Lillo's earlier play and Fatal Curiosity, for the latter creates a world of economic and social reality of decay and rottenness. Based on a true story, the play is set in Penryn, a coastal town where the citizens lure ships to disaster in order to steal the goods and thereby become part of the mercantile system. A merchant who has lost all his money, Old Wilmot and his wife Agnes are ignored by their former friends and, unwilling to accept their fate, live in the shambles of their fallen grandeur, served by the one servant, Randall, who will not leave. Their only son, whose business successes could have restored them to society, is presumed dead on a trading voyage and is mourned also by his sweetheart Charlotte. Just as Old Wilmot and Agnes are planning to commit suicide, Young Wilmot after seven years returns a rich merchant and hides his real identity from his parents to increase the surprise. Agnes, aided reluctantly by Old Wilmot, kills the young man to obtain his casket of jewels, and, too late. they discover him to be their son.

While there is no one single image of the established merchant prince that we find in The London Merchant, Lillo
achieves the depiction through a series of characters, most of whom we do not see. Agnes, appearing in worn and unfashionable finery, refers to her rich "friends" who will no longer acknowledge her, and we are permitted to view the wealthy merchants indirectly through Agnes’s eyes:

’Tis Misery enough to be reduced
To the low level of the common herd,
Who born to begg’ry, envy all above them;
But ’tis the curse of curses, to endure
The insolent contempt of those we scorn.
(1.3.109-113)

Their changed condition affects the married pair differently. Agnes is arrogant still, and "her faded dress . . . As ill conceals her poverty, as that Strain’d complaisance her haughty, swelling heart" (1.2.98-99). Having grown philosophical with his poverty, Old Wilmot also describes the type of man who succeeds economically and politically:

Dost thou aspire to greatness, or to wealth,
Quit books and the unprofitable search
Of wisdom there, and study human kind
No science will avail thee without that;
But that obtain’d, thou needst; not any other.
This will instruct thee to conceal thy views,
And wear the face of probity and honour,
’Till thou hast gain’d thy end; which must be ever
Thy own advantage, at that man’s expense
Who shall be weak enough to think thee honest
---------------------------------------------------
The world’s before thee—be a Knave, and prosper.
---------------------------------------------------
The world is all a scene of deep deceit,
And he who deals with mankind on the square,
In his own bubble, and undoes himself.
(1.1.132-151)
While his father has fallen, Young Wilmot has successfully carried out a trading voyage. He is the young merchant prince who is so dark he now appears to be one of the natives he has enslaved; his change is actually a metamorphosis for his face seems to bear the mark of Cain: "the eternal summer regions, / Have marr'd the native hue of your complexion" (1.3.115-116). We know that the profit he brings in jewels is blood money which will destroy anyone who touches them. Young Wilmot, accompanied by a close friend, does not speak much and enters well after the play is underway, but his sentiments reveal him to be a stereotype, who after his first voyage already sermonizes the merchant ethics, saying that "the world is ev'ry wise man's country" (1.3.27). His clothing and even his manner sets him apart; he is no longer English but rather a merchant prince. There are several indications of his loss of humanity. He does not turn over the jewels immediately to his parents, but rather waits for no good reason, saying "so pleasure when it flows / In torrents round us more extatick grows" (2.3.92-93). There is an inescapable cruelty in the delay, and his words to his parents are tinged with superiority. Lillo shows us that the casket of riches brings disaster to all who treasure it. As Agnes says, the jewels would expel "The cold neglect of friends; / The galling scorn, or more provoking pity / Of an insulting world--Possess'd
of these, / Plenty, content, and power might take their
turn, / And lofty pride bare its aspiring head / At our
approach, and once more bend before us" (3.1.19-24).

While *The London Merchant* only features a jade as a
woman character, *Fatal Curiosity* incorporates a series of
women who portray other feminine roles in the male
baggage: wife, mother, maid. The maid is pure and fair,
for Charlotte, the sweetheart, is identified by her sexual
chastity, and does not really rise above her image.

In the soft bosom of that gentle maid,
There dwells more goodness, than the rigid race
Of moral pedants, e'er believ'd, or taught.
With what amazing constancy and truth,
Doth she sustain the absence of our son,
Whom more than life she loves! (1.1.53-58)

Lillo, however, invests his dramatic meaning in Agnes
for she is the social scapegoat. At first glance, she
does not seem to resemble Millwood in *The London Merchant*;
yet, there are strong points of similarity. Agnes, whose
"fatal curiosity," like her son's, dominates the action of
the play, kills to regain her status, and knows that only
money counts in this society. Like Millwood, she
comprehends that she is a loser, not only marginalized as
a woman but, now, as a poor woman. So far from adhering
to the male stereotype of wife and mother, Agnes does not
even bother to reject the notion; she no longer sees
biology as a limiting factor. Her husband sees her womb
as "steril" (2.3.66) for she is past child-bearing, which
makes her useless in the male culture. It is interesting that her husband calls attention to her post-menopausal condition, because she does not even refer to the fact, does not see it as a limitation. She feels perfectly capable of performing the killing and finds that "'Tis less impiety, less against nature, / To take another's life, than end our own" (3.1.36-37). When Old Wilmot realizes that he cannot distinguish between "the less or greater" crime and says that "O! what could move [the young man] / To put thy life and fortune in the hands of wretches mad with anguish!" (3.1.114-116). Agnes turns on him with her real complaint: "Barbarous man! Whose wasteful riots ruin'd our estate, . . . . Thou cruel husband! thou unnatur'al father! / Thou most remorseless, most ungrateful man, / To waste my fortune, rob me of my son; / To drive me to despair, and then reproach me / For being what thou'st made me" (3.1.130-134). She is, of course, correct. Neither conscience nor religion plays a part in her decision for she, like Millwood, subscribes to the merchant ethic of "money at all costs." She refuses to remain a loser, and all she needs is money to push her way into the system. She could say along with Millwood, "I have done nothing I am sorry for; I followed my inclinations, and that the best of you does every day."

Even two hundred years later, we may see why the play was just too uncomfortable for the audience. There are
issues that hover over the play, concerning the system which places so much money in the hands of the few, and grinds down its victims to the point of desperation. Lillo seems to ask what ever happened to honor and a modest competency? Young Wilmot as the up-and-coming merchant is an unpleasant character who feels that money gives him the right to determine what is best for his inferiors, including his parents. One of the play's strong messages deals with the role of son in bringing about his own death, at the hands of losers in the system. Agnes is killed by Old Wilmot who says to her, "Die thou first. / I dare not trust thy weakness" (3.1.243-244). The comment is strange and bears several interpretations, the first being that like Eve, she is too evil to live. He apparently is afraid she will not kill herself, and he speaks in cosmic terms, implying that he is God's executioner for "Heaven" is "incens'd." He eventually kills himself and, dying, says, "we brought this dreadful ruin on ourselves. Mankind may learn." But the faithful servant responds, "The most will not." At the end, the murder is not caused by the losers' poverty, but by their desperation to regain their status in the system. As Genest wrote in 1832, "This T[ragedy] is peculiarly interesting" (3: 236).

Lillo's dramatic concerns reveal his influence on the domestic tragedy. His characters are ordinary citizens...
without wealth or power, who try to exist in a system careful to exclude on its own terms. Possessing no traditions of class and caste, the merchant princes promote the economic bases, which replace the traditions of the aristocracy. The merchant, then, becomes for Lillo the villain of the piece, unable to see Millwood as part of the problems the new aristocracy of money has created and must face.

While critics have viewed masculine interests at the center of the dramas, a closer look shows Lillo’s focus on the disenfranchised. For instance, The London Merchant is really not a morality play about avoiding the wiles of loose women, but rather concerns the woman herself as victim. She resides at the center, and her fate discloses more about the British mercantile system than the fate of Barnwell.

In conclusion, this chapter on Johnson of Chester, Hatchett, Carey, and Lillo reveals the strong similarities in their dramatic concerns and their approaches. Critical of the new society, yet not nostalgic for the old traditions, they study social reality by focusing on characters victimized by their gender or class. Because of this emphasis, Johnson’s and Carey’s comedies possess the same serious import as Hatchett’s and Lillo’s tragedies. Their works at the Little Theatre show the forlorn and hopeless state of the "Cast-aways," as Johnson
of Chester calls them. Without offering a solution to the social dilemmas depicted in their dramas, the playwrights resemble each other in their employment of women to embody the social message their plays present. Her treatment by unworthy males who rule only by virtue of their masculinity reveals just how flawed the social system has grown. The playwrights approach the image of femininity similarly, and each uses a female iconoclast as his touchstone for truth.
END NOTES FOR CHAPTER SIX


2 Citing *The Daily Post*, Cross states that the popularity of *Hurlothrumbo* began to fade in February 1730 and was replaced by *The Cheshire Comics*, or the *Amours of my Lord Flame* which lasted only a few nights. *Hurlothrumbo* was then revived, along with *The Beggar's Opera*. Cross states that business was so bad that the theatre cut back to three performances a week (79-80). Baker's account, as I have noted, contradicts Cross's assertions.

The Index for *The London Stage* contains still more contrary information about the two plays. The Index cites *Hurlothrumbo* with the subtitle *News from Terra Australia Incognita*, and lists the following performance dates.

- 1729: March 29, April 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 189, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 30; May 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 19; December 18 27 29 31; 1730: January 29, February 18 23; March 13; April 20; 1731: August 20; 1732: March 2; May 1; 1734: May 21; 1735: April 18; 1737: January 10; 1741: May 15. Only two performances (18 April 1735 and 10 January 1737 at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields) occurred at places other than the Little Theatre.

3 Fielding, in a passing reference to Johnson, mentions *Hurlothrumbo* as the talk of the town. Fielding also includes the anecdote of Johnson and the bishop, when the prelate said that he "could not taste the excellence of [the] piece" and Johnson replied that his play should be read with a fiddle in hand because he had written it that way. (*Tom Jones* 4.1).

Even as late as 1737 Johnson's name and fame were current. Byrom states that the postmaster Illingworth was being investigated for misdirecting a letter to "Mr. Johnson alias Lord Flame." The postboy, on the other hand, recognized the name and took the letter to "Johnson's the jeweler, where his letters are always left." The London gossip said that Illingworth's part in the confusion was "owing to Mrs. Jolly's refusing to take Mr. Johnson for her dancing master" (II: 1: 174-75).
Byrom makes the first reference to Johnson's being a dancing master, for in the 2 April 1729 entry, he states that "Mrs. Hyde must let the brother teach, for Hurlothrumbo as the matter stands will hardly be quitted while it brings a house, and consequently more money into the author's pocket than his teaching would do of a long time. I think it all one which brother teaches, Let our young lady learn of him; but, however, I suppose Johnson himself may be down as soon as this whim, as your bishop says, is over" (1: 2: 349-50). In addition to indicating that Johnson taught dancing, Byrom also suggests that Johnson had a brother who also taught dancing, a fact that Baker does not mention.

In the same section, Byrom includes the epilogue to Hurlothrumbo, which is the same as the printed epilogue entitled "Epilogue by Mr. Byrom." Byrom himself does not specifically claim the epilogue, although, as I stated, he goes to the trouble of writing out all the verses in his journal. Richard Parkinson, who edited the journal in 1832, seems to think that Byrom wrote the epilogue for he mentions in a footnote that "It may perhaps be a question whether Byrom did not supply more than these lines [e.g. "Ye sons of Nonsense, read my Hurlothrumbo . . . "] and the epilogue to this whimsical extravaganza" (1: 2: 355).

Byrom's journal contains one other mention of Johnson that is puzzling. He wrote a journal entry 24 April 1735, that Johnson had called on a "recently married" man (unnamed) and had indicated that "he was much sick about his play, not having been performed well" (1: 2: 590). This would indicate that Johnson staged a play between 1732, when The Blazing Comet was produced, and 1738 when Johnson staged All Alive and Merry, but Scouten's listing contains no play by Johnson in 1735.

The printed version of Hurlothrumbo includes a listing of "Persons of the Drama" but does not include the actors playing the roles. In one instance, the name of the character as it appears in the cast list at the beginning differs from the name of the same character as she appears in the text. "Sermentory" in the cast list is spelled "Sementory" or "Sem." in the text.

Stating that "there are some beauties, in the midst of numberless absurdities, that would do honour even to our first-rate geniuses," Baker's account in Biographia Dramatica consists in large part of repeating Johnson's bon mots from Hurlothrumbo. The examples that Baker provides make Johnson sound like an early Oscar Wilde. To give only three:

Pride is the serpent's egg, laid in the hearts of all, but hatched by none but fools.
He that lives in pleasure runs up a score, and he that is afflicted is paying debts.

A coquet is a whore in the soul, a harlot for the devil.

6 The signature lettering for Hurlothrumbo is inconsistent and not sequential. For that reason, I employ for citations the original and consistent numbering found at the upper right-hand corner of each page.

7 The Blazing Comet was printed soon after the play was staged. The 1732 edition printed by James Crokat contains the following cast. Men: Sublimo, Mr. Campbell; Nimposto, Mr. Cole; Wildfire, Mr. Johnson; Limpo, Mr. Jones; Plenty, Mr. Mynns; Romondo, Mr. Morris; A Wand’ring Jew, Mr. Giles; An English Taylor, Mr. Mason; A Poor Poet, Mr. Mason; Poverty, Mr. Cross; Radian, Mr. Mason; Orsmadius, Mr. Giles. Women: Lady Flame, Mrs. Haywood; Cristele, Mrs. Palm; Calsine, Mrs. Morse; Symphony, Mrs. Fitzgerald; A Poor Beggar-Woman, Miss Dancy.

8 The Index for The London Stage shows that The Blazing Comet had a short life. In 1732, there were eight performances, all staged at the Little Theatre: March 2, 3, 6, 8, 27 and April 19, 20, and 26.

9 Information on Hatchett’s life and works appears in Baker’s Biographia Dramatica (1: 208; Lockwood “Eliza Haywood in 1749: Dalinda and Her Pamphlet on the Pretender”; Notes and Queries 234 (December 1898): 475-477); Lockwood “William Hatchett, A Rehearsal of Ktings (1737), and the Panton Street Puppet Show (1748)” Philological Quarterly 68 (summer 1989): 315-323; Hume Henry Fielding and the London Stage 60, 61, 68, 233.

10 Whicher’s The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood attributes the pamphlet to her, chiefly on the basis of an article in the Monthly Review January 1750. (98 and 189). As Lockwood correctly states, the New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature also attributes the work to her (2: 147). The title of the pamphlet, but not the writer, appeared among the December publications noted in the London Magazine (December 1749).

The pamphlet was published under the title, A Letter from H-----G-----q, Esq: One of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber to the Young Chevalier, and the only Person of his own Retinue that attended him from Avignon, in his late Journey through Germany, and elsewhere: Containing Many remarkable and affecting Occurrences which happened to the P----- during the course of his mysterious Progress To a Particular Friend. (London: Printed, and sold at the
Royal-Exchange, Temple-Bar, Charing-Cross, and all the Pamphlet-Shops of London and Westminster, 1750).

11 In the John Johnson collection of the Bodleian Library, his prospectus states that he will print by subscription of five shillings and "The Copies being ready, they will be put to the Press as soon as the Author shall procure a sufficient Number of Subscribers to defray the Expense of the Impression." As Lockwood points out, he was unable to do so. The prospectus lists the following:

I  The Chinese Orphan. A Tragedy.
II The Distrest Father. A Tragedy.
III The Politician Out-witted: or the Poet's Wedding. A Comedy
IV The Rehearsal of Kings. A Dramatic Satire.
V  A Miracle the Plot: Or the Humours of Kennington-Commons. A Farce.
VI Mr. Bayes in Recitativo. A Burlesque Opera.

With some Occasional Poems and Translations never before Published. (qtd Lockwood "William Hatchett and A Rehearsal of Kings (1737) and the Panto Street Puppet Show (1748)" 318)

We see that the list does not include The Fall of Mortimer and The Opera of Operas, the only ones that made Hatchett's name at all current. Lockwood states that "The Distrest Father" probably refers to The Rival Father.

Lockwood's article agrees with Hume's assertion that Fielding did not write The Rehearsal of Kings, but Lockwood goes further and states that William Hatchett may have written the piece. Both critics quote Aaron Hill's letter to the unknown playwright. Because Lockwood makes a case for Hatchett's authorship, it is worthwhile to quote the letter written in response to the playwright's request for a prologue and epilogue, dated 28 February 1737. The document with comments is from Hill's Works (1: 239-41) and reprinted by Jack Richard Brown in his article cited below:

I See clearly, by some names among your performers, that you are not in so much danger as I apprehended, on that quarter. But, I am afraid, you are in more, than you imagine, on another; and that is, from the choice of our subject, and allegorical remoteness of your
satire. What I mean is, that the necessity your prudence was under, to disguise your design with caution, has so perplexed it with doubtfulness, that I am fearful, in the hurry of action, some of the most meaning allusions, in your piece, may be mistaken for scenes, which want any meaning at all; while, on the other side, among the few, who can penetrate purpose, and unravel the satire, as fast as they hear it, you will find some persons malignantly disposed, upon a supposition, that royalty, in general should never be the mark of contempt.

From these apprehensions, I am compelled to depend on your good-nature for excuse, as to the Prologue and Epilogue: I have good reasons for declining every hazard, of being considered in a light this would very unseasonably shew me in.

... I am heartily sorry, I had not sooner an idea of your plan; and flatter myself, I might have had the good fortune of persuading you to change it, for some other, not only of less dangerous provocation, but more promising likelihood, to fall in with the publick capacity ...

Upon the whole, if it were possible, in so short a time as is left you, to substitute any other of your pieces, in place of this Rehearsal of Kings, I am convinced, you would avoid a disappointment, and perhaps, a mortification.

(qtd "From Aaron Hill to Henry Fielding?" Philological Quarterly 18 (1939): 85-88.)

12 Scouten's The London Stage Part three indicates only three performances of the play: 8, 9, 22 April 1730.

The printed edition of The Rival Father; or, The Death of Achilles listed the following cast: Men: Achilles, The Author; Pyrrhus, Son of Achilles, Mr. Mullart; Alcimes, Mr. William Hallam; Antilochus, Mr. Jones. Women: Polyxena, Daughter of Priam, King of Troy, Mrs. Mullart; Briseis, Captive Princess of Achilles, Mrs. Haywood; Ilione, Mrs. Clark; Phenicia, Mrs. Jones.

Being mentioned by name in the Prologue and herself speaking the Epilogue as well as having the female lead, Eliza Haywood seems conspicuous from the first. The Prologue has a strange reference to her. While stating "'Tis needless on each Character to dwell," the Prologue, spoken by Mr. Jones, continues:

Our unskill'd Author too, who ne'er before
The Warrior's Truncheon graspt, nor Buskin wore,
Your Favour for his first Attempt t' engage,
Assumes, hard Task! Achilles on the Stage.
To play Briseis while Eliza deigns,
All will be Real, that she only feigns.

We feel that she cannot have it both ways. Is the feminist depiction real, or she only feigning? There seems also to be the question of the playwright's name which somehow does not get mentioned in the prologue, although Haywood's does.

The tone of the Prologue jars with the formal analytical "An Apology by way of Preface; To that Useful Branch of Literature, the Critics" which opens the work. Hatchett achieves in it a seven point argument, in which he establishes his reasons for altering the original, as well as defending his observation of theunities of time and place.

13 Scouten The London Stage Part Three shows the following performances of The Fall of Mortimer: 1731: 12, 13, 14, 17, 21, 24, 26, 27, 28 May: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 14, 30 June. The seventeenth performance advertised for 21 July was not given.

Schneider's Index for The London Stage is confusing in its contradictory references to Hatchett and the plays. It lists nothing under "Hatchett, William" for the year of 1731 when The Fall of Mortimer was produced.

Independent confirmation of Scouten appears in clippings found in Boxes 1077 and 1076 of the Theatre Museum. The following appears to be the first advertisement for the play. A clipping from the Craftsman 8 May 1731, is contained in Box 1077 at the Theatre Museum of The Albert and Victoria Museum. It reads:

For the Benefit of the Author
By the company of Comedians
At the New Theatre in the Haymarket.
On Wednesday Next, the 12th of May, will be
Presented The Fall of Mortimer
An Historical Play, alter'd from Edward III of
Montfort With a new Prologue and Epilogue.
Tickets delivered out and Places taken at Mr.
Fribourg's Raper Snuff Shop under the Theatre.

See also notices about The Fall of Mortimer from Fog's Weekly and the Daily Advertiser which I quote in Chapter One of this study. Lance Bertelsen has independently of my finding also discovered a clipping of the 1245 July 1731 Craftsman, but he does not indicate the source of the clipping. As I note below, the source of the clipping I quote is Box 1077 held by the Theatre Museum of The Victoria and Albert Museum.
Wed. night [21 July 1731] when the Company of Comedians at the theatre in the Hay-Market was going to perform the Fall of Mortimer the High Constables, with several petty constables came with a warrant from several justices of the Peace, to seize Mr. Mullet, who plays the part of Mortimer, and the rest of the Performers; but they all made their escape. 24 July 1731 The Craftsman.

The Theatre Museum's Box 1076 labeled "Haymarket Scrapbooks 1714-1812" contains a portion of an unsigned hand-written letter on letter-size paper which contains the heading "Haymarket Theatre 1731" with no other date. It states that on

20 August the constables of Middlesex went to the New Theatre in the Haymarket, in order to apprehend the Actors and Players there upon a Warrant signed by several of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace against them as Rogues, and Vagabonds, but they all made their escape.

The "Dramatis Personae" in the printed edition lists the following cast (who so successfully escaped). Men: King Edward III, Mr. Peterson; Mortimer, Earl of March, Mr. Mullart; Lord Montacute, Mr. Lacy; Sir Thomas Delamore, Mr. Jones; Sir Robert Holland, Mr. Furnival; Serjeant Eitherside, Mr. Reynolds; Earl of Leicester, Mr. Watben; Earl of Exeter, Mr. Dove; Earl of Berkley, Mr. Hallam; Turrington; Nevil, Mr. Cross; Sly, Mr. Davenport; Secret, Mr. Hicks. Women: Isabella, Queen Mother, Mrs. Mullart; Maria, in Love with Mountacute, and Niece to Serjeant Eitherside, Miss Price.

According to all we know now, The Fall of Mortimer was the only stage production for 1731 considered seditious enough to involve the Justices of the Peace; therefore, it is possible that the letter refers to a final performance of the drama was staged on 20 August. If so, this performance has escaped notice by critics, until now, for the consensus establishes a 21 July performance to be the final one.

14 The historical Mortimer was a baron during the civil warfare occurring in the rule of Edward II. Accused of a political and romantic relationship with Edward's queen Isabella, he was instrumental in deposing Edward II and placing the princeling on the throne as Edward III. Edward II and his alleged paramour, the homosexual Gaveston, were killed in 1327 at the instigation of Mortimer and Isabella, history presumes. Christopher
Marlowe's *Edward II* dramatically depicts the fall of Edward.

Mortimer, as acting regent for the young king, arranged a series of treaties with Scotland and France. English loyalists against Mortimer's overreaching power resented the treaties, the illegal taxation, the corruption, and set in train a revolt. Mortimer, sensing an overthrow of his government, took refuge in a castle, but his destroyers found a secret tunnel and surprised him. Mortimer was executed at Tyburn four weeks later.

Bertelsen in "The Significance of the 1731 Revisions to *The Fall of Mortimer*" finds that the 1731 play was based on John Cadwalader's 1691 edition of *King Edward the Third, with the Fall of Mortimer*. Two other editions also may have influenced the 1731 drama, namely Ben Jonson's *Mortimer His Fall* (1640), which John Wilkes published in 1763 as *The Fall of Mortimer*. The other influence on the 1731 edition is the 1691 play generally attributed to William Mountfort, who, according to Bertelsen, was not the playwright (8-10).


In his review of Carey's life, Wood finds that the wrong Savile perhaps has been ascribed as Carey's father. Referring to Miss H. C. Foxcroft's work on the *Life and Letters of George Savile*, Wood states that in all likelihood George, not William, was the father (13). Although a definitive letter, which could have answered the question, is missing, the dates of George Savile's life, including his death in 1695, would seem to make him the father and, therefore, Carey a posthumous child. If this was the case, it might account for the patronage Carey received from the Savile family. See endnote #17 below.

16 Wood states that Kitty Clive, under her stage name of Restor, had appeared in many benefits for Carey, and at this time, arranged and starred in a production at Covent Garden Theatre to aid the whole family. The fate of Carey's wife and children is not known.

17 There were several points of contact between Carey and the Savile extended family. He dedicated *Poems on Several Occasions* to Dorothy Countess Burlington. Further, he dedicated *Teraminta* to her husband, the Earl of Burlington. Carey dedicated *Of Stage Tyrants* to Lord Chesterfield, whose grandfather was George Savile and
dedicated *The Musical Century* to Viscount Bruce, the son-in-law of William Savile (Wood Introduction 13).

18 Carroll cites the influence of the poem in Britain and America. *Sally in our Alley* was produced on a London stage in the early twentieth century, and in 1920 the American playwright, Jerome Kern, wrote a musical comedy, called *Sally* which was staged in New York by Ziegfeld. It was made into a film which starred Marilyn Miller in 1929 (Carroll 7).

19 The play contains a second Epilogue "spoken after the Third Night, in the Summer Season at the Haymarket." As this connects the Haymarket with Fielding and another writer in the works under study, the passage deserves quoting:

```
We see with pleasure the indulgent Town
Won't let their Veteran Bard be quite cast down:

Spite of Stage-Tyrants, and their partial Scoff,
He stood his Trial, and came nobly off.
I told him, if the Ladies did befriend him,
He'd gain his Point, success would sure attend him.

This little House, this Season of the Year,
The Town so thin, might give the Man 'some Fear,
But full of Hopes, he follow'd Fortune's Care,
Better to act it here, than not at all.

Why do our angry Grandsire's [sic] vent their Rage,
And persecute so free this once lov'd Stage.
Lost to all Taste of customary Joys,
Those old Men quite forget they once were Boys.
Fielding and Oates may pray for London's May'r
He's granted them a Holiday this Fair.
```

This addition continues the idea of victimization, from himself as author at the mercy of "Stage-Tyrants" to the misery of a summer production in the small, hot Little Theatre, to Fielding's bargaining with the city for play privileges at the fairs. Although attendance was markedly improved, the Haymarket by 1736 was rather notorious from the social dramas acted there. As Carey states "Better to act it here, than not at all." But he was in the company of Fielding and Lillo; therefore, the remark may reveal his opinion of fellow playwrights.

In spite of his advantages of good birth and an education at Edinburgh University, Thomas Davies became an actor at Drury Lane and the Little Theatre; he was later a respected bookseller who wrote a Life of Garrick as well as The Works of Mr. George Lillo, with some Account of his Life, which provides some of the only references to the Little Theatre and its denizens. Becoming a special friend of Dr. Johnson, Davies may have been the only person at the Little Theatre who was acquainted with both Samuel Johnsons. In 1736 when Fielding took over the management of the Little Theatre and also directed Lillo's play, Davies was given the role of Young Wilmot in Fatal Curiosity. In that special position of observer, Davies included in his work on Garrick comments about Fielding and Lillo, constituting the only first-hand references to the playhouse and to the men's friendship that we have.

From Davies, we know that the play was not popular, Fielding's attention notwithstanding. Davies accounts for it by saying that "[it failed because of] its being brought on in the latter part of the season, when the public had been satiated with a long run of Pasquin, [but] it is with pleasure I observe that Fielding generously persisted to serve the man he had once espoused; he tacked the 'Fatal Curiosity' to his Historical Register which was played with great success in the ensuing winter."

In his article, "Further Notes for a Biography of George Lillo," C. F. Burgess attempts to provide corrections to the facts of Lillo's life and to straighten out the question of his religious identity. Arguing that Lillo was Anglican, he cites the marriage record held by the Church of England of one Elisabeth Lillow and Mr. van Hinxthoven, who, according to Burgess, were George Lillo's mother and stepfather. Burgess claims:

In view of the evidence of the document at Lambeth Palace, it may now be possible to lay the ghost of Lillo's Puritanism. Lillo was indeed born and baptized a Puritan, but he was not, as Cibber asserted and Davies assented,
brought up as a Puritan. At the time of Elisabeth Lillo's second marriage in 1697, her youngest son, George, was less than six years old. During his formative years, his mother and his step-father were members of the Established Church and it is logical to suppose that the rest of the Lillo family shared the religious beliefs of their elders. (427-28)

Many of Burgess's assertions are based on Drew Pallette's work, "Notes for a Biography of George Lillo," which includes baptismal records of Austin Friars church for "Joris van Lilloo" who became, the article asserts, George Lillo. Pallette also cites a marriage record of John and Mary Lillo and draws several conclusions about Lillo: that he was born in 1691, that he was baptised in the Dutch Reformed Church, and that he became Anglican upon his mother's second marriage.

23 Booth does not give credit to Hudson, who makes this point in "George Lillo" in A Quiet Corner in a Library. Hudson quotes Charles Lamb's On the Tragedies of Shakespeare, that London apprentices were forced to listen at Christmas time to "the nauseating sermon of George Barnwell" (qtd Hudson 121). Hudson remarks that the tradition of its Christmas staging was so strong that even important actors, such as Kemble and Siddons, appeared in it. Hudson's evaluation of the piece includes its history in the nineteenth century; he points to growing ridicule, especially in the novels of Thackery and Dickens. One publication (Rejected Addresses) contained the following poetic attack:

George Barnwell stood at the shop door.  
A customer hoping to find, sir,  
His apron was hanging before,  
But the tail of his coat was behind, sir;  
A lady so painted and smart,  
Cried, Sir, I've exhausted my stock o'late,  
I've got nothing left but a groat;  
Could you give me four penn'orth of chocolate.  
(qtd Hudson 121)

It is clear that the satirist is making fun of Millwood, but the joke depends on the listener's acknowledging her status as a merchant who speaks in terms of her "stock" being depleted.

24 Booth mentions that Millwood is a "sexual vendor, and when she seduces George, she is turning her only asset to profit." He does not pursue the point of Millwood as merchant, nor does he draw the same conclusions about
Millwood’s function in the play. Although Booth and I share this one observation, I do not mean to imply that his approach to Millwood’s character is feminist.

25 Hudson quotes the "egregious Rymer" for his rules of tragedy, which includes the question of who kills whom in tragedy: "[I]f I mistake not, in poetry no woman is to kill a man, except her quality gives her the advantage above him; nor is a servant to kill his master; nor a private man, much less a subject, to kill a king, nor the contrary. Poetical decency will not suffer death to be dealt by each other by such persons, whom the laws of duel allow not to enter the lists together." Therefore, by allowing the murder of Thorowgood by Millwood, Lillo depicts a social, as well as literary transformation occurring.
CONCLUSION

Staging works unacceptable to the establishment, Henry Fielding, Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Charke, and company produced a series of protest dramas between 1730 and 1737. Their iconoclastic theatre proved so popular with certain audiences that Fielding, as manager, announced his intention in the 4 February 1737 Daily Advertiser to build a new playhouse, later modifying the plan to enlargement of the Little Theatre. Unfortunately, the Licensing Act intervened, and the group of writers dispersed.

For a time, however, they succeeded in showing personal freedom as the ultimate force and revealing society to be a mighty collection of ugly villains. The playwrights at the Haymarket deliberately ruptured theatric traditions and boldly presented plays which challenged not only the mainstream theatre, but the current social system. The monopoly of the ruling class on the theatre required on stage as in life, exclusion on gender and class lines, thereby insuring unchallenged dominance. Negating the age-old doctrine that tragedy properly concerns the great man, and comedy reviles the low-born, the playwrights at the Little Theatre in both their tragedies and comedies reversed the tradition and
placed at the forefront the plight of the disadvantaged and the disenfranchised. They enlarged the province of the theatre to include the ordinary human with real problems. By this means, they displaced the aristocratic concept of theatre based on class distinctions and brought in its place a realistic appraisal of the systematic exclusion by class and gender. Fielding, Haywood, Charke, Lillo, and the others rejected these claims, audaciously elevated the plight of social victims, and made ludicrous the pretensions of the great and powerful.

The period from 1730-37 displayed the intertwinings of social, economic, political, and theatrical influences on the English population. As we noted in chapter one, the economic advances and middle class plutocrats joined with the aristocracy, greatly enlarging the ruling class. The gap separating the disenfranchised from their masters grew wider, and the populace felt the exploitation implicit in the new economic and social system of privileges. Riots in the playhouses, in the streets, and on the docks demonstrated the depths of discontent. Passage of the Gin Act, the Smuggling Act, and the Westminster Bridge Act contributed to the unrest, along with the growing number of deployed soldiers patrolling the London streets day and night. All this activity made London appear to be a city under siege from its own government, imposing order from the top through the use of
force and censorship of stage and press, venues where the little man could be heard. The lower classes, with no representation in government, undoubtedly beheld the censorship with dismay for it meant the loss of every Englishman's one right—to petition for redress of grievances, which the imposition of restrictions, especially the press, denied them. Never described as sensitive, George II nevertheless felt the dangers that the populace presented to the status quo: "I am very glad to be got away, for I have seen of late, in London, so many hungry faces every day, that I was afraid they would have eat me at last" (Hervey Memoirs III: 751).

At a time when England's economy increased the number of rich and of poor, the lower classes suffered poverty-in-the-midst-of-plenty. Having no options except working for pittance or begging or thieving, the poor, especially massed together in London, were perceived as an offence against the prevailing social philosophy. Along with the church and other governmental institutions, the licensed theatres were intent on maintaining the power structure. The Drury Lane and Lincoln's-Inn-Fields stoutly featured plays that extolled the great and the wealthy, and that offered views of life as it is lived by the upper classes.

The dramas at the Little Theatre mirrored on stage the domestic turmoil in the streets. While I do not suggest cause and effect, it does seem obvious that there
was a correlation between the projections within the theatre and the actuality in London among the disadvantaged. At a time when the vocabulary was the vocabulary of the upper half, the Haymarket playwrights forced an identification of the lower half, as part of the definition of "English people." The licensed theatres featured plays in which the lower orders were portrayed only as adjuncts to the rich and called simply "the poor," but the Little Theatre staged productions which featured the concerns of the powerless, as well as demeaned the pretensions of the ruling males. The playwrights were concerned with the same general issues, and each one dramatized the plight of an individual made impotent by the system.

As part of the Little Theatre group, Fielding demonstrated a willingness to see beyond the limitations surrounding him. Fielding did not confine himself to dramatic presentations of poverty, as the sole indication of social deprivation. The lower orders inform his plays; nonetheless, this group is only part of Fielding's message, for women in society become his major means for observing the polite world. In his dramatic satires, Fielding sides with the character at the mercy of other men as well as measures reality of the individual against the ideal of individual freedom that society pretends to honor. Fielding achieves his darkest laughter in the wide
gulf between the real and the ideal, for he never accepts the social norm as ideal. What causes the discomfort of critics who call Fielding a panderer to the lower classes is perhaps Fielding's exposure of vice as power and power as vice, both restricted to the upper-class male. Although the father-figure, whether king, lord, husband, justice, or god, is not the focus here, we note that he is the enemy in every play and the force to be reckoned with. Whatever wrong ensues he is accountable and whatever crimes the victims commit, he is ultimately responsible. Compared to the wrongs implicit in the system, the vices of victims become minor details of plots.

Fielding's dramas offer no happy ending, no resolution, nor do they show how to right the wrongs and topple the top. Haywood and Charke arrange for their victims to succeed and provide an area where they may battle with the powers over them, but his people have no such arena. The comedies are quite dark for the very reason that they can only succeed in raising consciousness that gender and class warfare rages on, intense and inevitable.

Haywood's contribution to the writers' group at the Little Haymarket seems distinct. Whether acting in Fielding's plays or revising The Opera of Operas, Haywood could be counted on to make central the woman in society. If Fielding attacked the what-is of the social contract
and engaged in his own class war, Haywood portrayed the victim of the social contract, as no longer a victim. Haywood clears a space for her women in which they are able to act and to become whatever lies within them, according to their feminine potential. Freed of controls, Haywood's individual characters are the new heroes. Even in The Opera of Operas, Haywood plays out the microcosm/macrocosm with the male-dominated state and home in shambles, and order destroyed. Seeing the social contract as it would be and could be under feminine order, Haywood gives the dramatic leads to women, who function as a fresh version of the hero, rebalancing the scales in favor of women. They wear the metaphorical avenger's cape as they curtail male force. Subverting the models of seventeenth-century tragedy, these women change and grow spiritually as well as psychologically as the result of their suffering. Haywood invites us to witness the injustice imposed on women by their sex alone, even as we see the protagonists' valiant redressing of wrongs. In supplanting the traditional romantic hero with a woman who controls the action in the comedy and in the tragedies, Haywood rejects the patriarchal pattern that, for instance, her mother lived by. Notwithstanding the fact that her women do not succeed in substituting a new and feminized social order in place of male-dominated society, they see the possibilities. With no mothers, no advice to
govern and restrict, the protagonists become pioneers who explore new ways of responding to the exigencies of living well within a hostile social order.

Because Charlotte Charke lived, wrote, and acted the role of the outcast ostracized for her gender and class, her presence at the playhouse advanced strongly dramatic possibilities for fellow playwrights, Fielding and Lillo. She was, then, an enabling force as well as the embodiment of the revolution. The stage at the little Theatre brought together Charke with Fielding who employed her duality as part of his dramatic message. Cast in leading male roles in his 1736 and 1737 dramas, Charke received thereby public validation of her social defiance, allowing us to view her relationship with Fielding as symbiotic. While I am not suggesting that Fielding only wrote his dramas for Charke, the impact of the later dramas would have been considerably lessened had Charke not appeared in the leading male roles. Her very presence on stage allowed him to address dramatically the issue of gender roles and social definitions, otherwise not possible. Charke appeared only in those dramas by Fielding and by George Lillo. For him, she developed the heterosexual female characters of Millwood in The London Merchant and Agnes in Fatal Curiosity, thereby extending her definition of the defiant woman at odds with society. Her
contribution to the Little Theatre group therefore ranges from writer to actor to actress.

Works of the other playwrights, Johnson of Chester, Hatchett, Carey, and Lillo, reveal the influences of Fielding and even Haywood, but at the same time Lillo, especially, develops a new mode of dealing with social injustice. For Johnson, madness becomes the agency of change by which humans may reject social status quo; this awareness allows for a new interpretation of his plays. What has been perceived as the dramatization of his own lunacy, is actually social commentary by which he reforms the hierarchy into a benevolent system with a philosopher king. Like Johnson, Carey sees contemporary rule as the dragon that would consume the populace, but his dramas do not possess the ultimate happy ending of Johnson’s works. Instead, the ruling classes continue their depravity, as Carey sees it. Hatchett also deals with the hierarchical elite as the villain, and his dramas concern the corruption of power. He employs women as helpless pawns in the struggle for control, and seems to suggest that a new order, governed by the female principle, could replace the current system. Like Haywood and Charke, Hatchett clears an area for his women characters to act and allows them to develop in the absence of male control. Their growth is temporary, and at the play’s finish, they are once again on the margin. For this reason, his plays

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project a dark realism not present in Haywood's dramas where women protagonists, however briefly, succeed in sabotaging a system in which men are the unworthy inheritors of power and control.

To conclude, the dramas at the Little Theatre reflected on stage the agitation in the streets. Although critics have singled out Fielding as a precipitator of the Licensing Act, they have dwelled on his dramas as political commentary and have ignored Fielding as part of a protest movement which included other members of the writing group. He, along with Haywood and the others, go to extremes to prove that "social" and "moral" are unfortunately identical terms. While their characters vary considerably in makeup and in life experiences, one element is fundamental to them all: attempts to satisfy completely their individual needs and goals lead to complete estrangement from the social order with its definition of Reason. When their men and women achieve any sort of peace, the accomplishment has occurred against all odds, and in spite of society. Having rejected the usufructs of obedience to the norm, the individual possesses a virtue unlike the one society portrays as proper. The construct of wrong arises within society whose rules of behavior become the force against which the hapless individual, made powerless by gender or class, must contend.
Outcast and marginalized themselves, Fielding, Haywood, Charke, and the other playwrights employed the stage to decry the social system that sought to exclude them. They became the voices of unreason which dominated the stage at the Little Theatre for seven years, and their plays mirrored closely the reality of the streets. This group played a part in precipitating the closure of the theatre, for the hierarchy was shaken but not destroyed yet. As the advent of the Romantic age elevating the private and the ordinary affirms, however, the social system which the Little Theatre playwrights dramatized and protested had received a mortal blow.
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APPENDIX A

THEATRICAL BACKGROUND

The study of productions at individual patented theatres is meant to provide a background by which to view the Little Theatre offerings, and to show London’s theatrical environment over the eight year period. Figures in the tables reflect every performance of any given play at the three major theatres. The discussion of each playhouse makes reference to certain dramas and parenthetically includes the number of performances but does not mention every play that comprised the study. I have not distinguished here among comedy, tragedy, or ballad opera because the genre of plays at the patented theatres is not under consideration.

The bases of this tabulation include Scouten’s The London Stage, Part Three 1729-1747, and Nicoll’s A History of the English Drama, volume two, Early Eighteenth-Century Drama, in addition to information gathered from the collection of diaries, cuttings, and playbills in Archive Boxes 1077 and 1076 held by Theatre Museum, Covent Garden, London. I want to be clear about my use of Scouten’s play lists, which I have numbered, collated, and categorized for Drury Lane, Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields and Covent Garden theatres.

Table 4: Mainpieces, Drury Lane Theatre, 1729-37

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-1660</th>
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Beginning with the Drury Lane theatre, we note for instance in the 1729-30 season, among the 175 dramatic presentations, that the 94 Restoration and post-Restoration (1690-1709) plays, both tragedy and comedies, account for over half the total number. Plays written 1710-20 and the post-1720 split the rest of the evening performances with the "new" plays after 1720 having the larger share, for example, Benjamin Martyn’s Timoleon (15), James Thomson’s Sophonisba (10), and the comedies such as Miller’s The Humours of Oxford (7), Griffin’s Whig and Tory (1), Hawker’s The Country Wedding and Skimmington (2), and Gay’s Phebe; or The Beggar’s Wedding (2) exhibit less emphasis on the politics than on old bawdy Restoration-type of dramas.

The 1730-31 season at the Drury Lane exhibits considerable change with pre-Restoration through Post-Restoration play performances accounting for 123 evenings, out of a total of 198. The first group includes histories, tragedies, and comedies, for example, Shakespeare’s Hamlet (2), Henry VIII (5), Timon of Athens (2), Macbeth (3), King Lear [revision by Nahum Tate] (1), The Tempest [revision by Davenant and Dryden] (4), Othello (1), Henry IV part I (2), Henry IV part II [revision by Betterton] (4); and Beaumont and Fletcher’s A Wit Without Money (3). Tragedies, particularly Lillo’s new type of domestic tragedy involving the life and anguish of an ordinary man, show a mixture of influences from classical to contemporary, as witnessed by Mallet’s Eurydice and Johnson’s Medea.

The same trend continued with the 1731-32 season at the Drury Lane; of the 190 evenings of theatre, 127 performances derive from the first three categories and only 59 are "new" plays, post-1720. We may note the continuing pattern of certain stock dramas from the pre-Restoration and Restoration appearing annually such as Shakespeare’s Hamlet (3), Henry IV part I (1), Henry VIII (4), Othello (3), Macbeth (2), The Tempest [revised by Davenant and Dryden] (2); Howard’s The Committee (3); Fletcher’s Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (5); and Beaumont and Fletcher’s A Wit Without Money (3). The most significant change appears in the kind of offerings post-1720, because Henry Fielding’s plays appeared in 1732 when Drury Lane had begun systematically to increase their use of light and musical afterpieces, an idea probably copied from the Little Theatre’s successful use of a double bill consisting of a main play followed by a number of songs, dances, comedies, or musical offerings. The Drury Lane management placed on a double bill productions like Gay’s What D’Ye Call It (1), Coffey’s The Devil to Pay (64), Fielding’s The Lottery (29) and The Mock Doctor (11) late in the season along with other "new" plays. One exception is Lillo’s The London Merchant (12) which was produced in
the fall of 1731 for reasons not clear. The post-1720 roster includes significant additions with increased number of comedies, for instance, Fielding’s *The Modern Husband* (14), *The Tragedy of Tragedies: or, The Life and Death of Tom Thumb* (3), *The Old Debauchees* (7); Fettiplace Bellers’s *Injur’d Innocence* (6); Hill’s *Athelwold* (3); Boaden’s *The Modish Couple* (3); Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (11).

The 1732-33 season experienced a drop in the number of plays perhaps the result of competition at the new Covent Garden Theatre, or the Little Theatre, or the popularity of Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields’ pantomimes. The number of plays written before 1710 accounted for 117 evenings, while 41 performances comprise the 1710-20 and post-1720 categories, for instance, Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (2), *Henry IV Part I* (2) and *Part II* (4), *Hamlet* (7), *Henry VIII* (4), *Othello* (1), *King Lear* (1), along with Fletcher’s *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (3) and Jonson’s *The Alchymist* (2) constituted about half of the period’s offerings.

The 1733-34 season was marked by the walkout of the actors’ troupe and the roster of plays was naturally affected; nonetheless, the management produced 138 evenings of theatre. The greatest number of performances occurred in the 1690-1709 category with 37 productions, in the 1710-1720 with two productions, and in the post-1720 plays with 44 productions. Although one play is a tragedy, the remainder are comedies. The lack of serious, experienced actors probably dictated the high number of the latter, as shown by the type of plays in the 1690-1709 group, such as Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (4) and *The Recruiting Officer* (1), while there was only one tragedy, Rowe’s *The Fair Penitent* (2). The post-1720 offerings included plays and musicals, with one, Eliza Haywood’s *The Opera of Operas*, a most popular work, enjoying a long life of forty-four performances, although the play, undoubtedly a pirated version, was only shown at the Drury Lane in 1733 on three evenings.

The 1734-35 season witnessed a resurgence of activity at the Drury Lane with a total of 201 stage productions, although the types of plays followed the pattern of traditional Drury Lane offerings we have observed. It is significant for our findings that the number of plays from Pre-Restoration through 1709 came to 139 with 48 Restoration plays and 42 Pre-Restoration works. The longest running plays from the latter group included Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (7), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (8), *Henry VIII* (5), *Henry IV Part I* (3); Jonson’s *The Alchymist* (4), *Volpone* (2), and *The Silent Woman* (2); Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (2), *A Wit Without Money* (1), and *The Scornful Lady* (2). The 1690-1709 group included the usual fare of multiple
comedies for this theatre, such as Southerne’s *The Fatal Marriage* (2), Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (1), *The Constant Couple* (3), and *The Recruiting Officer* (1); Vanbrugh’s *The Relapse* (4) and *The Provok’d Wife* (2). The post-1720 productions included the works of Fielding who in 1735 took over the management of the Little Theatre and whose plays thereafter appeared only seldom at Drury Lane. Of the works selected for the Drury Lane stage in the 1734-35 season, there were 53 evenings of "new" works, among them Fielding’s *The Miser* (6) and *The Universal Gallant* (3), Lillo’s *The Christian Hero* (4), Miller’s *The Man of Taste* (28) and *The Mother-In-Law* (5), and Junius Brutus (7).

The 1735-36 season incorporated 195 productions, of those the greatest number, 149 plays, derived from the Pre-Restoration, Restoration, and 1690-1709 groups. They included Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (6), *Othello* (2), *King Lear and His Three Daughters* (2), *Henry IV Part 1* (3), *Macbeth* (3), *Hamlet* (4), *Henry VIII* (5). The 1690-1709 plays showed an increase in certain works, notably Farquhar’s *The Twin Rivals* (9), although the other plays from this period follow the usual pattern, like Vanbrugh’s *The Relapse* (4), Steele’s *The Tender Husband* (2), Cibber’s *The Double Gallant* (4), Rowe’s *Tamerlane* (2). The number in the 1710-1720 group decreased slightly and included Addison’s *Cato* (6) and Philips’s *The Distrest Mother* (1). On the other hand, there is a definite change occurring in the post-1720 group. Hill’s *The Tragedy of Zara* (14), Connolly’s *The Connoisseur* (1), Miller’s *The Man of Taste* (7), Fielding’s *The Miser* (6), Lillo’s *The London Merchant* (1), C. Cibber’s *The Provok’d Husband* (2), Steele’s *The Conscious Lovers* (9), constitute the only "new" plays for the season, with some 14 fewer performances than the previous year.

For the 1736-37 theatre season, Drury Lane maintained the same number of plays offered, as in previous years. With 198 productions, the management increased the number of Pre-Restoration plays, having a total of 56 plays from that era. Thomas Shadwell’s *The Squire of Alsatia* accounts for ten nights, in addition to others, such as Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (5), *Julius Caesar* (5), *The Tempest* [adapted by Davenant] (8), *Hamlet* (5). The 1710-20 productions included an increase in the usual plays with one addition. The number of performances of two tragedies in the old-style pathetic school, namely Addison’s *Cato* (5), and Philips’s *The Distrest Mother* (2), were exceeded by Charles Johnson’s *The Wife’s Relief* (8), a Restoration-type comedy. Among the plays written post-1720 were Fielding’s *The Miser* (5), Steele’s *The Conscious Lovers* (7), Cibber’s *The Provok’d Husband* (2), Miller’s *The Mother-In-Law* (3), *The Man of Taste* (2), *The Universal Passion* (10), Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (11), Hughes’s *The Siege of Damascus* (6).
Table 5: Mainpieces, Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields Theatre, 1729-37

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pre-1660</th>
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</table>

Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields’s roster of plays for eight years is similar in many ways to Drury Lane’s, except for the numerical discrepancies brought about by the move to Covent Garden theatre. The productions are conservative, with the post-1720 works similar in theme and content to the types of Restoration productions mounted at the theatres. Given the similarity in theatres we have considered so far, the idea of a cartel among managers of patented theatres seems quite likely. Hume demonstrates that there was a fairly formal arrangement to split revenues by assigning equally numbers of "hit" productions among the theatres (Henry Fielding and the London Theatre 1728-1737 13).

A study of Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields theatre reveals a similarity to Drury Lane theatre during the period, although differences do exist. For instance, the Pre-Restoration and Restoration offerings comprise only 74 productions, while the 1690-1709, 1710-20, and post-1720 plays were featured on 113 evenings. The list of Pre-Restoration dramas was similar to Drury Lane’s and featured Shakespeare’s King Lear (3), Macbeth (4), Hamlet (3), Henry IV Part 1 (3), The Merry Wives of Windsor (6), Julius Caesar (1), and Measure for Measure (2), and Jonson’s Volpone (2), Beaumont and Fletcher’s The Maid’s Tragedy (2) and a new offering, Fletcher’s The Prophetess (3). The category of Restoration plays also featured the same mix of old and new, such as Congreve’s The Old Batchelor (2), and The Double Dealer (3), Behn’s The Rover (3), and Ravenscroft’s The Anatomist (9) The 1690-1720
group contained Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (5), *The Recruiting Officer* (4), Vanbrugh’s *The Mistake* (5), Aesop (2), *The City Wives Confederacy* (4). During the 1730-31 season, the Pre-Restoration was represented by Shakespeare’s *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (7), *Measure for Measure* (3), *Hamlet* (3), *King Lear* (2), *Macbeth* (2). The periods between 1690 and 1720 provided the greater number of plays. From the category 1690-1709, 49 plays were produced. Although Centlivre’s *The Gamester* was the only new piece, the increased number of productions shows a rise in demand for certain dramas. For instance, the following plays enjoyed extraordinarily long runs for Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields: Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (4) and *The Recruiting Officer* (4), Vanbrugh’s *The Mistake* (5), C. Cibber’s *Love Makes a Man* (3); Norris’s *The Royal Merchant* (4); Centlivre’s *The Busy Body* (3). At the same time, the sharp drop in 1710-1720 plays is also evident. Bullock’s *A Woman’s Revenge* (5), and Addison’s *The Drummer* (2) comprise the sole offerings. Although the previous year’s productions numbered 24, one play each for Fenton and Charles Shadwell, two for C. Cibber, Addison, and Sewell accounts for the difference between the two seasons. The greatest change occurs in the post-1720 category which produced 52 evenings of mostly dramatic musicals, an increase of eleven over the previous year. Among the offerings were Theobald’s dramatic opera *Orestes* (6), Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (9), Fielding’s *The Coffee-House Politicians* (4), and Lillo’s *Sylvia* (3).

In the period under study, the 1731-32 season is the last financially successful season for Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields until the 1736-37 season. With a total of 173 evenings in 1731-32, plays written before 1690 comprise half the total number and show the conservative nature of the theatre. Among the early dramas were Shakespeare’s *Othello* (3), *Macbeth* (4), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (5), *King Lear* (2). Restoration plays included old productions but an increase in number of shows, such as Wycherley’s *The Country Wife* (4); Betterton’s *The Amorous Widow* (4); Otway’s *Venice Preserv’d* (2); Behn’s *The Rover* (2) and *The Emperor of the Moon* (1). The only new production, Dryden’s *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal*, was performed a single time. The 1690-1709 category accounted for 61 performances for the season. This really unusual number included, as in the previous season, no new productions but large increases in performances of old standbys, such as Tate’s *Duke or No Duke* (9); Norris’s *The Royal Merchant* (5); Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (6), *The Constant Couple* (3), *The Recruiting Officer* (2). The 1710-1720 plays dropped in number to four performances for the season, Addison’s *The Drummer* (2) and Bullock’s *A Woman’s Revenge* (2) comprising the entirety. Likewise, the post-1720
plays constitute only 24 of the season. The afterpieces give further evidence of the traditional focus of the theatre offerings; for instance, we note the drop in their numbers: C. Cibber's *Damon and Phillida* (1), *The School Boy* (1); Egerton's *The Maggot* (1); Gay's *What D'Ye Call It* (2); Scarlatti's *Telemachus* (1); Fielding's *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (4).

The season 1732-33 shows the theatre in decline, as it offers only 60 productions. The period 1690-1709 produced 23 performances and the period 1710-1720 accounted for only eight, including Addison's *The Drummer* (1) and his opera *Rosamund* (7). Among the post-1720 group, most productions were operas.

After the 1732-1733 season, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields went into a three-year eclipse, offering no more than 26 dramas any one season. The season 1733-34 witnessed 12 theatre evenings, not including the 51 opera performances. Among the plays was one Pre-Restoration, Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (1); from the Restoration period appeared Otway's *The Orphan* (1) and Howard's *The Committee* (1). The 1690-1709 group included C. Cibber's *The Careless Husband* (1), Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy* (1), Farquhar's *The Stratagem* (1), Tate's *The Island Princess* (1). Performances of post-1720 plays included Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (2); Fielding's *The Miser* (1), with the category also accounting for Fielding's *The Lottery* (4), Carey's *The Contrivances* (2), and Coffey's *The Devil to Pay* (1).

Season 1734-35 showed an increase with 26 performances, which included from the Pre-Restoration period Shakespeare's *Othello* (1), Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (1) and Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (1). From the Restoration, a new production, Otway's *Caius Marius* (2) and from the 1690-1709 group Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (2) and *The Stratagem* (1), Centlivre's *The Busy Body* (1), C. Cibber's *She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not* (1). The greatest number derive from the post-1720 category with C. Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* (1), Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (2), Fielding's *Don Quixote In England* (1), *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (2), Charlotte Charke's *The Carnival* (1). In addition to the play productions were pantomimes *Arlequin Astrologue, Statue, Enfant, Ramoneur, Negre and Skelette* (1).

The season 1735-36 featured one opera, one concert, and 15 evenings of drama of which two were Pre-Restoration (Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1) and *Henry IV* Part 1 (1)); two, Restoration [Howard's *The Committee* (1), and Otway's *The Soldier's Fortune* (1)]. The 1690-1709 group included Vanbrugh's *The Confederacy* (2), Southerne's *Oroonoko* (1), Centlivre's *The Busy Body* (1), and Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer* (1) and *The Beaux Stratagem* (1). The 1710-20 is represented by only Addison's *Cato* (1), while
the post-1720 group contains Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1), Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1), Fielding's *The Tragedy of Tragedies* (2), and C. Cibber's *The Provok'd Husband* (1). The afterpieces derive mostly from the latter group, such as Drury's *The Rival Milliners* (2), Fielding's *The Mock Doctor* (2), Ward's *The Happy Lovers* (1), Hippisley's *Flora* (1), Aston's *Cleora* (1), Coffey's *The Devil to Pay* (3), Langford's *The Lover His Own Rival* (1) with a performance of Farquhar's comedy, *The Stage Coach*, from the 1690-1709 category.

The season of 1736-1737 included a total of 147 evenings of drama. The Pre-Restoration and Restoration periods produced only 26 evenings, including Shakespeare's *Henry IV* Part I (2) and *Hamlet* (3). The 1690 to the Post-1720 group accounted for 121 performances of dramas, such as Lillo's *The London Merchant* (3), Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (6), Fielding's *Pasquin* (2), as well as performances of new works, such as Johnson of Chester's *All Alive and Merry* (7), Lynch's *The Independent Patriot* (3), Hewitt's *A Tutor for the Beaux* (3), and Havard's *An Historical Play* (6) and *King Charles I* (14), Odell's *The Woman Captain* (2).

Table 6: Mainpieces, Covent Garden Theatre, 1732-37

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Covent Garden Theatre opened 2 December 1732, but the abbreviated 1732-33 season nonetheless produced 119 evenings of drama. Performances of Pre-Restoration plays included *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (4), *Hamlet* (2), *Othello* (2); Jonson's *Volpone* (3); Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (1) and Restoration plays constituted 18 of the dramas, with 16 evenings of comedy and 2 of tragedy, Wycherley's *The Plain Dealer* (6) and *The Country Wife* (3); Congreve's *The Way of the World* (4) to suggest a few.

The 1690-1709 plays received more productions with C. Cibber's *She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not* (3); Farquhar's *The Constant Couple* (3), *The Stratagem* (1), while the 1710-1720 group consisted of Theobald's *The Fatal Secret* (3).
The largest number, 57, came from the post-1720 plays: Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (23) and *Achilles* (20), Hill's *Fatal Extravagance* (3); and Drury's *The Fancy'd Queen* (2).

Covent Garden's second season featured 141 evenings of drama with the preponderance of plays written after 1690. The Pre-Restoration and Restoration account for 68 performances of plays, such as Shakespeare's *Othello* (6) and *Hamlet* (5); Jonson's *Volpone* (5); Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (6). Among the 1690-1709 plays were Farquhar's *The Stratagem* (3), *The Recruiting Officer* (4), while 1710-1720 plays included Morris's *The Royal Merchant* (3), Addison's *Cato* (3) and *The Drummer* (1), in addition to Rowe's *Tamerlane* (2). Post-1720 works were few and, aside from Gay's anti-establishment works, the new plays were patterned on Restoration comedies: Gay’s *The Beggar's Opera* (5) and *Achilles* (2), C. Cibber’s *The Provok'd Husband* (3), and a new play, Popple’s *The Lady's Revenge* (4).

The season 1734-35 presented 107 evenings of drama, with the Pre-Restoration and Restoration works accounting for 49 productions and 58 plays written after 1690. The first two groups contained the usual dramas such as Shakespeare's *Othello* (9) and the Restoration dramas offered similar fare: Congreve’s *The Way of the World* (4); Etheredge’s *She Would if She Could* (4); Wycherley’s *The Country Wife* (2), and *The Plain Dealer* (2); Ravenscroft’s *The London Cuckolds* (2). Among the 1690-1709 dramas were Rowe’s *Jane Shore* (4) and *Tamerlane* (4); C. Cibber’s *The Double Gallant* (4), Centlivre’s *The Busy Body* (3); and one new revival, Trapp’s tragedy *Abra-Mule* (5). The 1710-1720 dramas provided only five performances, four of which were tragedies: Addison’s *Cato* (3) and *The Drummer* (1), and Philips’s *The Distrest Mother* (1). The group of new plays post-1720 included two new ones, Cooper’s *The Rival Widows* (6) and Popple’s *The Double Deceit* (2), along with Gay’s *The Beggar's Opera* (4).

The 1735-1736 season at Covent Garden theatre witnessed an increase in the number of productions to 149. Of that number, the Restoration and 1690-1709 exhibited the greatest increase, as if there were some kind of conservative backlash in management and audience. The Pre-Restoration group accounted for only 22 evenings: Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (3), *Othello* (3), *Macbeth* (5), *Julius Caesar* (1), in addition to Fletcher’s *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife* (4). The Restoration plays numbered 43 and included Congreve’s *The Way of the World* (6); Dryden’s *All for Love* (5); Ravenscroft’s *The London Cuckolds* (2); Otway’s *The Orphan* (3). The 1690-1709 category produced 56 plays for this season, including Steele’s *The Funeral* (7); C. Cibber’s *Love's Last Shift* (4), Farquhar’s *The Stratagem* (4), *The Recruiting Officer* (3), *The Relapse* (2), *The Inconstant* (2), *The Constant Couple* (3);
Vanbrugh’s The False Friend (4), The Mistake (4). The 1710-20 group consisted of only seven, including performances of Philips’s The Distrest Mother (4) and Norris’s The Royal Merchant (3). C. Cibber’s version of Shakespeare’s Richard III was scheduled but dismissed, and post-1720 plays comprised 21 productions, namely Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera (7) and Acis and Galatea (2), C. Cibber’s The Provok’d Husband (6), Steele’s The Conscious Lovers (4) and Popple’s The Double Deceit (2).

The last season before the Licensing Act, Covent Garden Theatre presented 172 evenings of theatre, in mainstream tradition. Pre-Restoration, Restoration, and 1690-1709 plays provided 146 productions, only 26 written after 1710. In the earlier categories, there were no new revivals, there was simply more of everything; for instance, Shakespeare’s Macbeth (5), Hamlet (3), Othello (3); Fletcher’s Rule a Wife and Have a Wife (4). The Restoration group produced 54 of the season’s offerings: Wycherley’s The Plain Dealer (3); Dryden’s All for Love (5); Congreve’s The Way of the World (6); Lee’s The Rival Queens (7). The 1690-1709 plays featured in 54 productions, including Farquhar’s The Stratagem (4), The Recruiting Officer (3), The Constant Couple (3); C. Cibber’s Love’s Last Shift (5); Vanbrugh’s The Mistake (4), The False Friend (4). The same conservatism in the season’s roster is obvious even in the plays written after 1710, for none challenged social concepts, except for Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera, and by 1736, its revolutionary themes had dulled with time and repetitions, making the play an institution even in conservative theatres. Others in the post-1710 group included Addison’s Cato (1); Philips’s The Distrest Mother (4), C. Cibber’s The Provok’d Husband (6), Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera (7) and Acis and Galatea (2), Steele’s The Conscious Lovers (4).

The state of the London theatre, as reflected in the tables for Drury Lane, Lincoln’s-Inn-Fields, and Covent Garden theatres, demonstrates the background against which the Little Theatre operated. Generally, we observe a relatively small number of performances of any one play and the startling lack of contemporary dramas, aside from the plays written in the Restoration style. Social and economic factors, in addition to such influences as the ladies’ clubs, determined largely the seasons’ production rosters.
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If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

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VITA

Polly Stevens Fields was born in Fayetteville, Tennessee. In 1978, she graduated from Vanderbilt University, with an English major and a history minor. She has followed a career in teaching since that time. In 1990 and 1991, she received fellowships given by the Department of English for research in England. Her major field of interest is early modern literature with emphasis on underrepresented writers of the Enlightenment. Currently, she teaches at Southeastern Louisiana University.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Polly Stevens Fields

Major Field: English


Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

October 20, 1992