Rebelling against the Tragic Plot:

The Novels of Frances Burney

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Abstract

This dissertation contributes to studies of Frances Burney's prose fiction, by establishing the importance of the combined influence of theatrical models and Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* in shaping Burney's novels. Reading the collection of novels by Burney as a rebellion against the tragic plot into which the acclaimed heroine of Richardson's second novel is ensnared, it argues that Burney's works blend together dramatic and novelistic conventions to produce narratives with ambivalently successful conclusions.

It shows, through analyses of all four of Burney's novels, that the author positions turning points with sentimental crises and peculiar circumstances within the narratives as dramatic climaxes which allow the heroines temporarily to overlook conventional social expectations of women to make important decisions to help them make positive changes in their lives before they resign control once again. In allowing female characters these small freedoms to act for themselves, I argue that there is an underlying message in Burney's fiction that it is necessary for women to become more assertive in order to gain more conscious control of their destiny.

The main thesis of my work is that it is with incremental adjustments in female conduct, and with the blending of the comic and tragic forms, that Burney's fiction dramatizes the ways in which women make the most of their circumstances and resources to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom of choice and expression.

List of Contents

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Introduction

In the preface to her anonymously published first novel, *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), Frances Burney presents herself as a successor to "*the great writers*" and names "*Rousseau, Johnson, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollet*" as her influences.[1] The novel was a success and received critical acclaim from Burney's contemporaries. *The Westminster Magazine* acknowledged that *Evelina* "May prove equally useful and entertaining to the younger part of our *male* as well as *female* Readers; to the latter of whom we particularly recommend it, as conveying many practical lessons both on morals and manners".[2] In the words of an enthusiastic reporter in *The Critical Review*, *Evelina* "deserves no common praise, whether we consider it in a moral or literary light". It is a novel that "would have disgraced neither the head nor the heart of Richardson".[3] Throughout her literary career, Burney remained a respected author and her novels were celebrated for their moral value.

However, there is a stronger connection between the novels of Burney and her predecessor, Samuel Richardson, than their perceived moral value. My work explores the parallels between Burney's novels and Richardson's *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* (1747-1748). I observe that, in Burney's fiction, the heroines and some of the secondary female characters re-enact different aspects of

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[1] Frances Burney, *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World. In a Series of Letters*, ed. Susan Kubica Howard, 2nd ed. (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000), 97, 95.
[2] "Evelina; or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World, 2 Vols," *The Westminster magazine* 6 (1778): 325.
[3] "Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World," *The Critical Review, or, Annals of literature* 46 (1778): 202.

Clarissa Harlowe's experience. However, the *Clarissa* plot is not upheld throughout her narratives. In alluding to the acclaimed heroine of Richardson's second novel, Burney responds to the work of her predecessor but achieves different effects in her own fiction.

I read Frances Burney's collection of novels as a rebellion against the tragic plot into which Clarissa is ensnared. It is important to note that, though Burney is "*softened by the pathetic powers of Richardson*" and draws on the experiences of the victimised heroine of his sentimental tragedy,[4] none of her literary works is tragic in nature. Her heroines are spared from tragic ruin and death even though the novels deal with complex issues such as madness and suicide. However, the endings of her novels are not the happy endings of comedy either. Even in her more light-hearted novels, *Evelina* and *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth* (1796), the plots are not strictly comic. Among Charles Burney's praises for *Evelina*, Frances Burney recorded in her journal her father's opinion that "the scene between her [Evelina] & her Father, Sir John Belmont, is a scene for a *Tragedy*!"[5] In *Camilla*, the narrator stresses that the eponymous heroine and Edgar are brought together by "one inevitable calamity, one unavoidable distress".[6] So, evidently, sentimental scenes and tragic elements are fundamental to Burney's novels.

My work contributes to studies of Frances Burney's prose fiction, by establishing the importance of the combined influence of theatrical models and Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* in shaping Burney's novels. I argue that the

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[4] Burney, *Evelina*, 97.
[5] Journal 1778, Chesington, June 18, 1778. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume III, the Streatham Years, Part 1, 1778-1779*, ed. Lars E. Troide and Stewart J. Cooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 29.
[6] *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, Oxford World's Classics ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 913.

structures of Burney's novels are influenced by sentimental comedy. In reading a novel constructed within the conventions of sentimental comedy, readers are taught to feel sympathy for the characters' plight in the climactic scene preceding the conclusion. In Burney's works, there are turning points with sentimental crises before the narratives draw to a close. As I will show in my analyses of Burney's four novels, these sentimental scenes provide the novels with poignant moments of moral seriousness. They enable female characters momentarily to break free from conventional behaviour associated with genteel femininity, allowing them to defy authority and act for themselves in order to find marital happiness. G. J. Barker-Benfield has argued that women novelists and female readers helped to create "the culture of sensibility", as they "articulated their sense of real and potential victimization by men" in their publications.[7] In sentimental fiction, this victimization is dramatized by the sufferings of the figures of "virtue in distress". Women were believed to have greater sensibility and to be more prone to nervous disorders.[8] Sentimental episodes in Burney's novels, such as Cecilia's temporary madness and Camilla's illness caused by her self-neglect, allow the heroines to escape control and make decisions for themselves. The moments of emotional breakdown found in Burney's works have been discussed by some of her critics. Emily Hodgson Anderson, for instance, has contended that the scenes of collapse and insensibility are Burney's heroines' "paradoxically conscious deployment of unconsciousness" to "channel sufferings through carefully crafted displays" of

[7] G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), xix, xxvi.
[8] Ibid., 27-28.

involuntary breakdown before an intended audience.[9] While I agree that these dramatic scenes are crucial to Burney's plots, I argue that the author positions these sentimental scenes as though they were dramatic climaxes, turning points in the narrative which ensure that its conclusion is not wholly tragic, and that there can be a more ambivalently successful resolution.

Burney's novels are not simply sentimental comedy in prose because their resolutions are not comic. John Mullan has suggested that "the disconnection of [the novel] form from precedent (as it was perceived) allowed it to explore most extravagantly the powers of a language of feeling".[10] Indeed, it is because the novel was a newer and less respected literary genre that it enjoyed more freedom from convention and formal restrictions. Burney's sentimental novels are not strictly comic or tragic. They are given ambivalent endings to reflect the ambivalent nature of human life experience. All of Burney's heroines resign the authority they have given themselves once they have found marital happiness, and the narratives all end with a hint of darkness. Both Evelina and Camilla marry a distrustful mentor-lover who judges them for their every action.[11] The husband of the latter supplants her father and becomes "the repository of her every thought".[12] Burney's second heroine, Cecilia, marries the man of her choice as a "portionless […] HEIRESS"

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[9] Emily Hodgson Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century Authorship and the Play of Fiction: Novels and the Theater, Haywood to Austen* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 46, 76.
[10] John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 15.
[11] See Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 142-143. Spencer states that the lover-mentor figure is one of the important character-types which make up novels of the didactic tradition. For more critical discussion on the "lover-mentor" or "mentor-lover", see also Patricia Menon, *Austen, Eliot, Charlotte Brontë and the Mentor-Lover* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
[12] Burney, *Camilla*, 913.

and enjoys what is described as an imperfect state of happiness, mixed with "some misery" and "partial evil".[13] In *The Wanderer* (1814), the story of Juliet is a "tragi-comedy", with all her sufferings.[14] Though each of her novels seems to celebrate marital happiness, Burney evidently resists giving her narratives a satisfactorily happy ending. Instead, her fiction tells stories of women who pragmatically make the most of the situations they find themselves in.

These women seize temporary agency before they resign control at each novel's end. For example, it is significant that Burney's epistolary heroine signs off simply as "EVELINA" after her marriage at the end of the novel, following a letter in which she refers to herself as "EVELINA BELMONT", a restored heiress.[15] Evelina is setting herself apart from the earlier epistolary heroines created by writers such as Samuel Richardson and Sarah Fielding. In Richardson's first novel, his heroine writes, upon becoming a wife: "I conclude myself […] Pamela B—".[16] Sarah Fielding's heroine also ends her story with Ophelia Dorchester as her signature.[17] Evelina's use of her first name appears to be an act of defiance which emphasises her agency. She succumbs to surveillance and control only after her "fate […] is decided!", having "united herself for ever with the object of her dearest, her eternal affection".[18] Her language suggests that her marriage is what she herself

[13] *Cecilia, or, Memoirs of an Heiress*, ed. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 941.
[14] *The Wanderer, or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Stephen Copley, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 579-581.
[15] *Evelina*, 554, 553.
[16] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Tom Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[17] Sarah Fielding, *The History of Ophelia*, ed. Peter Sabor (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 277.
[18] Burney, *Evelina*, 554.

brought about, by seizing agency to act independently of her guardian's will for a period of time.

Frances Burney is not her "father's daughter", as she is seen by some critics.[19] The secret publication of her first novel is an act of rebellion against her father; and her oeuvre is a rebellion against the tragic plot found in the most influential of the works of her literary father, Richardson. Her works also depict instances of transgressive behaviour which help to make positive changes in her heroines' lives, allowing them temporarily to overlook conventional social expectations of women. In the preface to her first novel, Burney explains that Evelina's "*ignorance of the forms, and inexperience in the manners, of the world, occasion all the little incidents which these volumes record*", stating that it is but "*the natural progression of the life of a young woman of obscure birth [...] for the first six months after her* Entrance into the world".[20] In other words, in this novel as well as her later works, the heroines are excused for their transgressive behaviour because of the peculiar circumstances they find themselves in. This gives the impression that they are not being wilfully disobedient. But I argue that there is an underlying message in her fiction that it is necessary for women to become more assertive in order to gain more conscious control of their destiny.

The changes in female behaviour introduced in Burney's novels are by no means radical, however. Some critics believe that novels became more domestic in

[19] See, for example, Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[20] Burney, *Evelina*, 95-96.

the second half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century.[21] But others resist this kind of interpretation. Harriet Guest argues that, during this period:

> a series of small changes takes place in the position of women, or the way women are perceived; and the cumulative effect of these changes is that by the early nineteenth century it had become possible or even necessary for some women to define their gendered identities through the nature and degree of their approximation to the public identities of political citizens.[22]

These small changes, she points out, could be found in many kinds of discourse.[23] Taking this idea as a basis of my thesis, I argue that some female novelists suggested small changes in female conduct. In their fictional works, transgressive women became quietly revolutionary figures paving the way for heroines to tread more carefully behind them in order gradually to stretch the boundaries of their social limitations.

In all of Burney's works, her heroines are allowed a temporary escape from control to make important choices for themselves when they are faced with peculiar circumstances. So, in her first three novels, we see the introduction of small, and therefore acceptable, changes in female behaviour. But her final work, *The*

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[21] See, for instance, Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 107. She suggests that female novelists were increasingly expected to assume the role of "teachers of young girls". See also Susan Staves, *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19-21. Staves notes that many women writers who produced political and satirical writings earlier in the century turned to domestic literature to preserve their respectability.
[22] Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 14.
[23] Ibid., 15.

Wanderer, the culmination of her thoughts on female difficulties, shows the cost of happiness when the felicity of one woman is sacrificed for that of another. The anti-heroine, Elinor Joddrel, demonstrates that, though transgressive behaviour has its attractions, she ultimately sacrifices herself by trying to initiate too radical a change. In a complementary trajectory, the heroine Juliet Granville cautiously juggles new ideas regarding female conduct with established customs and her transgressions are overlooked because Elinor sets a startling contrast. But even the ending of this final novel suggests that the freedom of Burney's female characters is very limited; it allows the heroine to marry the man of her choice, but it also demands that she submit to the marriage plot and fulfil the conventional role of a wife.

It is with such incremental adjustments in female behaviour, and with the blending of the comic and tragic forms, that Burney's fiction dramatizes the ways in which women make the most of their circumstances and resources to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom of choice and expression.

Theatrical Models

Since this study is concerned with eighteenth-century drama, this section offers a discussion of the main theatrical genres that I will be focusing on in the following chapters. As commentators such as Arthur H. Scouten and Robert D. Hume have pointed out, "The eighteenth-century theatre was a business".[24] Other

[24] Arthur H. Scouten, and Robert D. Hume, "'Restoration Comedy' and Its Audiences," in *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), 81.

than mainpiece plays, the eighteenth-century theatre provided diverse forms of entertainment such as musical drama, pantomimes and other kinds of spectacles.[25] But for the purpose of this study, the focus of this discussion is on the tragic and comic forms that were found on the eighteenth-century stage.

Traditionally, tragedy was seen as a high art form. In the eighteenth century, the revival of Shakespeare's plays began in the 1740s.[26] The theatrical abilities of actors were largely judged by their performances in tragic roles from Shakespeare's plays and other Restoration tragedies.[27] Hume has noted that most of the mainpiece dramatic works that were staged in eighteenth-century London were older plays, and very few new tragedies remained in the repertory.[28] Hume thinks that "little can be said in favour of tragedy as it was produced in this period" because eighteenth-century tragic plays functioned more as popular entertainment than works of literature.[29] Susan Staves, however, believes that "The experiment of writing tragedy in prose was the period's most radical break with dramatic convention".[30] This began with George Lillo's domestic tragedy, *The London*

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[25] Ibid., 330. See also, for example, John O'Brien, "Pantomime," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730–1830*, ed. Daniel O'Quinn and Jane Moody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Vanessa L. Rogers, "Fielding's Ballad Operas and Eighteenth-Century English Musical Theatre," in *Henry Fielding in Our Time: Papers Presented at the Tercentenary Conference*, ed. J. A. Downie (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2008).

[26] Ibid., 316. Hume thinks that the Licensing Act of 1737 brought about the revival of Shakespeare's plays. For studies related to the influence of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century, see for example, Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Peter Sabor, and Paul Edward Yachnin, *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[27] Susan Staves, "Tragedy," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730–1830*, ed. Daniel O'Quinn and Jane Moody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87.

[28] Hume, "Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth Century," 316-328.

[29] Ibid., 316-328.

[30] Staves, "Tragedy," 87.

Merchant: or, the History of George Barnwell (1731). When Lillo wrote this play, he believed that he was creating a new kind of tragedy, focusing on the private lives of ordinary characters.[31]

Another sub-genre of tragedy which is of particular interest to this study is she-tragedy. It is a kind of pathetic tragedy, with a focus on female protagonists and their plight. Jean I. Marsden has stated that she-tragedy had its beginnings in the 1680s, when "serious drama was reinvented with a female face" and dramatists used "the spectacle of female travail as the means to excite audience interest and in many cases to communicate a political agenda".[32] These plays appealed to the sympathy of their audiences by portraying the emotional, and possibly physical, sufferings undergone by distressed female figures.[33] Nicholas Rowe's plays, *The Fair Penitent* (1703) and *Jane Shore* (1714), are amongst the most well-known examples of she-tragedies and they were very popular throughout the eighteenth century. In fact, Rowe invented the term "she-tragedies" himself, and he claimed that his plays were written with the design to "move compassion" while their theatrical representations encouraged audiences to "judge the fair offender, with good nature" and

[31] See George Lillo, *The London Merchant*, in *The Dramatic Works of George Lillo*, ed. James L. Steffensen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 151. In his dedication of *The London Merchant*, Lillo argues that "the End of Tragedy" is to appeal to the pathos of the audience for a didactic purpose. He explains that he is "not confining the Characters in Tragedy to those of superior Rank" because "Tragedy is so far from losing its Dignity, by being accommodated to the Circumstances of the Generality of Mankind, that it is more truly august in Proportion to the Extent of its Influence, and the Numbers that are properly affected by it". Lillo was breaking away from tragic conventions, in creating a play with ordinary characters.

[32] Jean I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 60.

[33] Ibid., 61.

"fellow-feeling".[34] Marsden argues that she-tragedies functioned as moral lessons, in which the conscious decisions and sexual agency of she-tragedy heroines were scrutinised.[35]

In the eighteenth century, stage comedy was also becoming moralised. According to Richard Bevis, traditional comedy, or "laughing comedy" (a term coined by Oliver Goldsmith in 1773),[36] refers to any non-sentimental mainpiece dramatic comedy.[37] Many Restoration comedies were staged in the eighteenth century until around 1760, when their popularity began to decline.[38] Wit and intrigue are important features of laughing comedies.[39] Sentimental comedy, or what some eighteenth-century commentators such as Goldsmith called "weeping" comedy,[40] on the other hand, is a blended form created by dramatists such as Colley Cibber and Richard Steele in an attempt to moralise the stage. Cibber's *Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion* (1696) is generally considered the first sentimental comedy. This sub-genre is part of the sentimental tradition associated with she-tragedies. In her observation of the eighteenth-century stage in her work on sensibility, Janet Todd has stated that "sentimentalism […] clearly touches almost all playwrights" from about 1740 to 1780, and "comedy and tragedy were no longer distinct forms".[41] Such developments led to an emergence of a sub-genre of

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[34] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, ed. Harry William Pedicord (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 74-75.
[35] Ibid., 135-139.
[36] See [Oliver Goldsmith], "An Essay on the Theatre; or, a Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy," *The Westminster magazine* 1, no. 1.
[37] Richard W. Bevis, *The Laughing Tradition: Stage Comedy in Garrick's Day* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 4.
[38] Scouten, and Hume, "'Restoration Comedy' and Its Audiences," 79-80.
[39] David L. Hirst, *Comedy of Manners* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1979), 1-2.
[40] [Goldsmith], "An Essay on the Theatre; or, a Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy," 4.
[41] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986), 36.

dramatic comedy which had the power to draw tears from members of the audiences. In the preface to *The Conscious Lovers* (1722), Richard Steele argues that "any thing that has its Foundation in Happiness and Success, must be allow'd to be the Object of Comedy", and he sees it as "an Improvement" "to introduce a Joy too exquisite for Laughter" and to draw "Tears … flow'd from Reason and Good Sense".[42] In other words, for Steele, the tears of joy excited by sentimental comedy had a moralising effect.

In earlier studies of eighteenth-century drama, critics believed that sentimental comedy became the dominant comic form in the second half of the eighteenth century. For example, Ernest Bernbaum wrote about "the rise of sentimental comedy", seeing this dramatic sub-genre as one which "almost monopolized the stage".[43] Other critics have written against this understanding of eighteenth-century drama,[44] but this view had persisted. Some saw Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan as dramatists who attempted to rescue true comedy from the pollution of sentimental comedy. While Goldsmith's "Essay on the Theatre; or, a Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy" appears to be an attack on sentimental comedy, Hume cautions modern readers

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[42] Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy*, in *The Plays of Richard Steele*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 299.
[43] Ernest Bernbaum, *The Drama of Sensibility: A Sketch of the History of English Sentimental Comedy and Domestic Tragedy 1696-1780* (Gloucester: P. Smith, 1958), 72, 223.
[44] See for example, Arthur Sherbo, *English Sentimental Drama* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1957); Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983); Richard W. Bevis, *The Laughing Tradition: Stage Comedy in Garrick's Day* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980). Sherbo, Hume and Bevis have all shown that sentimental comedy had never been the dominant comic form on the eighteenth-century stage.

against "an uncritical acceptance of the terms of Goldsmith's essay".[45] In this article, Goldsmith defines sentimental comedy as a sub-genre of comedy which encroaches on the province of tragedy.[46] He describes it as a "species of Bastard Tragedy", which appealed to contemporary spectators' curious "delight in weeping at Comedy" and gained popularity because of its novelty.[47] Goldsmith observes that, instead of exposing the vice and folly of the lower classes, sentimental comedy promotes "the virtues of Private Life".[48] Then, dismissively, he remarks that "Those abilities that can hammer out a Novel, are fully sufficient for the production of a Sentimental Comedy".[49] Hume thinks that "Quite probably, the piece is essentially a puff to prepare the way for *She Stoops to Conquer*", and Goldsmith "seems to have been reacting excessively to very temporary phenomena".[50] Katherine Worth has argued that though Goldsmith and Sheridan both attacked sentimental comedy,[51] "Their apparently total dismissal of the new genre requires a closer look" because "Their mockery of the genre did not inhibit either writer from including plenty of full-bodied sentiment on his own account", "moving with the current of

[45] Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800*, 313.
[46] [Goldsmith], "An Essay on the Theatre; or, a Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy," 5.
[47] Ibid., 5-6.
[48] Ibid., 5.
[49] Ibid., 6.
[50] Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800*, 314.
[51] See Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Critic, or, A Tragedy Rehearsed*, in *The School for Scandal and Other Plays*, ed. Michael Cordner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 292-293. Sheridan pokes fun at sentimental comedy in the prologue to *The Critic*. He comments that "In our more pious and far chaster times, / […] / The reformation to extremes has run", and that the muse of comedy, "Thalia, once so ill-behaved and rude, / Reformed, is now become an arrant prude, / Retailing nightly to the yawning pit / The purest morals, undefiled by wit!"

the age rather than against it".[52] As it has been noted by numerous critics, Goldsmith's and Sheridan's works had been influenced by this new comic form.[53]

However, some critics have suggested that laughing and sentimental comedies are not so easily distinguishable. Hume, for instance, argues that "'sentimental' comedy is a complicated phenomenon comprising some fairly disparate sorts of plays", and he thinks that it is difficult to categorise eighteenth-century stage comedies with this limiting dichotomy.[54] He writes that "The later eighteenth century valued sensibility in a way that the later seventeenth did not, and its virtual omnipresence is only to be expected".[55] In other words, the lines between the two kinds of comedy were blurring because of the changing concepts of humour. Hume also thinks that "there is no tidy evolution from 'satiric' to 'sentimental'", and that "If there is a clear trend, it is towards increasing emphasis on what Diderot in 1758 called 'serious comedy' as opposed to 'gay comedy'".[56] This means that the whole genre of stage comedy was transforming and developing from traditional models. Increasingly, comedy was becoming a form that made it possible for dramatists to explore serious social issues.

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[52] Katharine Worth, *Sheridan & Goldsmith* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 4.
[53] See for example, Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800*, 354-355; and Leonard J. Leff, "Sheridan and Sentimentalism," in *Sheridan: Comedies*, ed. Peter Davison (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973), 68. Though Hume agrees that Goldsmith and Sheridan "reacted against excessive emphasis on sensibility", he thinks that "To say that Goldsmith and Sheridan represent a 'return' to earlier modes is to ignore the huge amounts that they took from the thriving comic theatre of their own time". Leff argues that "Sheridan counterbalanced with wit and humor the sentimental exhibitions and expressions that popular audiences usually enjoy" and "he delicately mocked the excesses of sentimentalism while remaining its sustainer".
[54] Hume, *The Rakish Stage: Studies in English Drama, 1660-1800*, 354.
[55] "Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth Century," 324.
[56] Ibid., 323, 327.

In this study, I pay particular attention to the ways that Burney's works were influenced by the drama and the literature of sensibility. Burney believed that she was producing serious works of fiction. All of her novels are concerned with "FEMALE DIFFICULTIES", and they depict scenes of distress.[57] Burney was interested in exploring the social issues encountered by the women in her society. She employed the figure of the suffering and distressed female character found in both she-tragedies and sentimental comedies, because this stock character type has tragic, comic and sentimental possibilities.

The moral value of Burney's novels relies partly on her engagement with Richardson's influential sentimental novel. Richardson and Henry Fielding were the two leading figures who made the novel form a respectable genre in the 1740s. In her letters, Burney described *Cecilia* as "a *serious History*",[58] and she referred to *Camilla* as "A NEW WORK" because she thought "calling it a Novel" conveyed "the notion of a mere love story" and she insisted that it was "not a Romance".[59] In doing so, Burney was attempting to differentiate her work from the average novel and romance, which lost its popularity and respectability earlier in the century.[60] In her works, *Clarissa* is the plot Burney repeatedly returns to. An important feature of Richardson's novels is the language of sensibility. John Mullan has argued that

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[57] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 397.
[58] Letter to Samuel Crisp, April 6, 1782. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume V, 1782-1783*, 43-44.
[59] Letter 171 to Doctor Burney, from Great Bookham, June 18, 1795. in *JL III*, 117. See also J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: Norton, 1990), 25. As Hunter has pointed out, "early on the terms 'novel' and 'romance' appear cosily together, not to imply a distinction but rather to catch, between them, all known fiction and some long narratives whose factitiousness was uncertain".
[60] Ioan Williams, introduction to *Novel and Romance 1700-1800: A Documentary Record*, ed. Ioan Williams (London: Routledge, 2010), 3.

"The fixation of his [Richardson's] texts upon virtue, and upon the association of sensibility with moral rectitude, made plausible the deliverance of narrative fiction from the category of 'romance'".[61] While Richardson was an important influence for Burney and she drew on the experiences of his tragic heroine, each of Burney's novels ends with the marriage of the heroine (except *Cecilia*, in which the marriage takes place before the conclusion of the narrative). In bringing together Richardson's sentimental heroine and marriage, which is an important comic feature, Burney was blending together the tragic, comic and sentimental in her works in order to create ambivalently successful conclusions.

Burney felt strongly about the endings to her novels. In her journal for December 1782, Burney recorded the "general substance" of her conversation with Edmund Burke about her second novel, *Cecilia, or, Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782).[62] She remembered that she was told by Burke that he "wished the conclusion either more happy or more miserable: 'for in a work of imagination, said he, there is no medium'".[63] Hence, he suggested that the novel should adhere to traditional genre theory, which insisted on a clear distinction between tragedy and comedy. But Burney wrote in her journal that in crafting her novel, she was "following Life & Nature as much in the conclusion as in the progress of a Tale", and she then posed the question: "& *when* is Life & Nature *completely* happy or miserable?"[64] The endings to her novels, therefore, convey Burney's views on life.

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[61] John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 58.
[62] Burney, journal for 1782, December 18, 1782. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume V, 1782-1783*, ed. Lars E. Troide and Stewart J. Cooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 193.
[63] Ibid., 194.
[64] Ibid.

Burney thought that "a middle state", where her protagonists are "neither plunged in the depths of misery, nor exalted to *unhuman happiness*", was more natural and convincing.[65] In bringing together the tragic, comic and sentimental, and in depicting the heroines' sentimental distress before their marriages, Burney's fiction shows that women can navigate through their difficulties in order to find contentment in their society.

An Overview: The Structure of the Dissertation

Because my work is concerned with Burney's treatment of Samuel Richardson's second novel in her work, there is a chapter on *Clarissa* before each of Burney's novels is discussed in the following four chapters in the order that they were published.

In the first chapter, I explore the way that Richardson created a different kind of tragic heroine in *Clarissa*. He re-evaluated female identity by making use of the language of heroism, found both in stage drama and religious discourse, to complicate this figure of a transgressive woman and defiant daughter. I argue that he replaced the language of romantic love, passion, vengeance, and violence frequently used by stage heroines in tragedies with that of divine love, resignation, Christian forgiveness, and martyrdom to characterise Clarissa Harlowe's heroism. I also explore the heroine's self-glorification and her use of the language of piety to mask her sin of suicide and vengeance for the injustice she experienced. Finally, Mary Hays' treatment of this novel in *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799) will be evaluated. I offer an interpretation of Hays' rewriting of this influential tragic plot

[65] Letter to Samuel Crisp, April 6, 1782, 43-44.

into a tragedy of her own, in which the ending of Richardson's narrative is stripped of the spiritual triumph which veils the reality of a victimised woman's defeat. This chapter provides the foundation for the rest of the dissertation, exploring the ways that ideas about the heroine and female identity were changing in the eighteenth century. It also gives an understanding of the context in which Frances Burney was writing when she repeatedly responded to Richardson's work and adapted it into her own novels.

The second chapter focuses on Burney's first novel. Before my discussion of *Evelina*, I look at Eliza Haywood's *The History of Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) and consider the influences of both novelistic and dramatic conventions on this work. My analysis shows that Betsy's experiences combine that of the coquette and the sentimental figure of the virtuous wife. I argue that Betsy differs from the heroines of sentimental comedies in her decision to leave her husband in order to save herself from misery. Building on this, I turn to the unfortunate history of *Evelina*'s Caroline Evelyn, which parallels certain aspects of Clarissa's experience. I suggest that, in transferring the sentimental story to the heroine's mother, Burney's novel conveys a morality developed from Richardson's about the destructive consequences of the selfish actions of the libertine but allows the heroine to enjoy marital felicity rather than tragic ruin. I then discuss the active part that Evelina plays in securing the affections of the man she finds worthy and desirable, by disobeying the commands of her paternal figure and giving herself small freedoms in her behaviour without appearing wilfully undutiful, in order to enable herself to seek happiness.

Burney's *Cecilia* is the subject of the third chapter. I discuss the parallels between Clarissa's and Cecilia's sentimentally depicted identity crises, observing the way that Richardson's novel explores the sad consequences of rape for a woman

while Burney's narrative describes the aftermath of a rash and clandestine marriage. I argue that while both heroines become temporarily insane as they try to reconcile themselves to their changed identities, Burney allows her heroine to voice her distress and make her victimisation known through a vocal form of madness. I suggest that the novel, in restoring the heroine to a state of peace rather than death and ruin, questions Cecilia's decision to submit herself to marriage but depicts her acceptance of her lack of control over circumstances, and thereby dramatizes the way in which a woman can find happiness in a situation which is not altogether ideal.

In the fourth chapter, I suggest that in *Camilla*, certain painful situations have been transferred to a secondary heroine to spare the comic heroine from the most distressing misfortunes; but both the primary and secondary heroines are allowed to enjoy a felicitous outcome by the end of the narrative. The first section focuses on the sentimental sufferings of Eugenia. I argue that Burney's novel seems to follow the example of Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless* in its reimagining of the plot of the sentimental comedy, in which the mistreated virtuous wife remains with an unfaithful and abusive husband who promises reform, by allowing her sentimental figure to find happiness in a second marriage. The rest of the chapter is concerned with Camilla's self-representation as a sentimental heroine at the half-way house, her subsequent Gothic moral awakening, and the parent-daughter reconciliations fashioned in the vein of scenes found in sentimental comedies. I argue that while Camilla is a gamestress who portrays herself as a sentimental figure, she is forgiven like the penitent rake of a sentimental comedy and is rewarded for her disobedience with a desirable marriage to the man of her choice.

The concluding chapter is about *The Wanderer*. I argue that, in Burney's final novel which is concerned with propriety and transgression, and women's rights to freedom of expression and career opportunities, the heroine remains respectable because the deviant behaviour of the anti-heroine helps to stretch the boundaries of women's social limitations. Though both Juliet and Elinor have treaded outside the bounds of the domestic sphere, Elinor is punished for her eccentricities and is subjected to a melancholy – though not tragic – ending while Juliet is rewarded with a desirable marriage after a long period of patient suffering. I discuss the way that, even though Burney's final published work also explores ways for women to find peace and happiness by depicting two female characters who take on an even more active role consciously to shape their destiny, it shows the cost of happiness when the felicity of one woman is sacrificed to that of another.

I suggest that Frances Burney's novels demonstrate that there are ways to approach the issue of gender equality without radical reform. Burney's fictions show that women can expand their field of experience without losing their respectability and becoming outcasts of their society, by portraying heroines who try to balance new ideas about female conduct with established customs.

Chapter 1: A Divine Heroine Who is "All Soul": Reading the Tragic Death of the Admirable Transgressive Woman in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*

Because my work is concerned with Frances Burney's treatment of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* (1747-1748) in her novels, I will give my attention to this influential sentimental tragedy before turning to Burney's works. This chapter explores the way that Richardson created a different kind of tragic heroine for the novel in the character of Clarissa Harlowe, re-evaluating female identity by making use of the language of heroism – found in both stage drama and religious discourse – to complicate her status as a transgressive woman. In his consideration of female virtues, Richardson turned the focus from a woman's sexual virtue to her spiritual and moral beliefs. He also replaced the language of romantic love, passion, vengeance, and violence frequently used by tragic heroines in the theatre with that of divine love, resignation, Christian forgiveness, and martyrdom to characterise Clarissa's heroism. Employing the theme of filial disobedience, he constructed a heroine who defines herself in relation to God instead of men, making herself a daughter of her heavenly father instead of her earthly parent. In pairing yet opposing her admirable qualities with her loss of honour, Richardson's Clarissa is a heroine who is both "divine" and "fallen", at once laudable and blameable.[1] This contradiction makes her a thought-provoking

[1] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), 884, 1114.

heroine, whose character and tragedy many writers tried to explore and rewrite in their own novels in succeeding years.

Following the success of *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and the public debates in print about sincerity and hypocrisy which it triggered,[2] Richardson turned to the tragic form and attempted to produce a more solemn work with less moral ambiguity. Though he predicted, in a letter to Aaron Hill, that "the supposed Tragical (tho' I think it *Triumphant*) Catastrophe" would not sell as well as a narrative about "a prosperous and rewarded *Virtue*" such as *Pamela*, he claimed that he was more concerned about his new novel's moral value than its commercial success.[3] Richardson wrote that, "In her [Clarissa's] Preparation for Death, and in her Death, I had proposed to make this a much nobler and more useful Story than that of Pamela; *As all must die*".[4] He believed that, compared to his first novel, *Clarissa* is superior in its lessons because of its positive representation of the common experience of death, which he believed to be something unprecedented.[5] In 1748, responding to Lady Bradshaigh's preference for Lovelace to be made a reformed rake and Clarissa a wife, Richardson explained that he insisted on writing a tragedy about "a Creature perfected by Sufferings and already ripened for Glory" because it produced a more powerful moral effect.[6]

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[2] See Thomas Keymer and Peter Sabor, *'Pamela' in the Marketplace: Literary Controversy and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 10-14.
[3] Richardson, letter to Aaron Hill, January, 1747. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Caroll, Electronic ed. (Charlottesville: InteLex Corporation, 2002), 83.
[4] Ibid., 83.
[5] Ibid., 83, 87.
[6] Letter to Lady Bradshaigh, December 15, 1748. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, 108, 113.

Therefore, Richardson believed in the superior powers of a tragedy in instilling a moral in the minds of his readers. But he also thought that his tragedy was different from precedents such as William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (c.1596), which "may be truly called *Horrid*".[7] He insisted that he was aiming for "a Religious Novel".[8] In the preface to the third edition of the novel published in 1751, Richardson states that his work is "a New Species of Writing", something "more than a Novel or Romance", which should be beneficial to the readers.[9] In appealing to the sensibility of his readers and trying to evoke their sympathy through depictions of the distresses of a persecuted but exemplary heroine, Richardson believed that his sentimental tragedy was morally improving.

However, from his letters to his correspondents, we can see that Richardson frequently had to defend his decision to conclude the narrative with Clarissa's death. Despite Richardson's attempts to control how his works were interpreted, the death of Clarissa in his sentimental tragedy was problematic because it could be interpreted as a wilful act of suicide. In eighteenth-century England, suicide was believed to be the worst crime and sin.[10] It was seen as an unnatural and irreligious act because human lives were believed to be the property of God.[11] In the case of an unnatural death, an investigation would have been made.[12] A suicide given a *non*

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[7] Ibid., 104.
[8] Letter to Lady Bradshaigh, October, 1748. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, 92.
[9] *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady (An Abridged Third Edition)*, ed. Toni Bowers and John J. Richetti (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2011), 30.
[10] Donna T. Andrew, "Against 'Nature, Religion and Good Manners': Debating Suicide," in *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 83.
[11] Ibid., 83, 86-87.
[12] Ibid., 85.

compos mentis verdict, which interprets the act of self-murder as unintended because it was committed in a state of insanity, was granted a Christian burial.[13] But if found *felo de se*, the property of the deceased might be confiscated and the body would be exposed to a public, humiliating burial.[14] In this horrific punishment, a stake would be driven through the heart of the suicide's naked corpse.[15] In leaving one's family in such disgrace in addition to the pain of loss in order to escape from one's personal misery, suicide was generally described as an act of cowardice and selfishness.[16] Because suicide was such an abhorred act in Richardson's day, the nature of Clarissa's death in his "Religious Novel" was controversial and the heroine's story was repeatedly rewritten by novelists in the following decades.

In the first two sections of this chapter, I will discuss Clarissa's self-fashioning, when she plays the part of a virtuous but vengeful tragic heroine but later opposes this version of heroism, adopting the language of piety instead to mask her sin of suicide and vengeance for the injustice she experienced. Building on this, I will consider the important role of Belford in the creation of the myth of the saintly Clarissa, who presents herself as a figure that could be considered a martyr or even a female Christ. I will show how Richardson made Belford at once a guiding reader of Clarissa's story who offers a way to interpret her as an exemplary martyr instead of a sinner guilty of suicide, a rake who becomes a disciple of Clarissa reformed by her example, and her biographer or apostle when he writes about her final days. Finally, I will look at how Richardson's story is used as an intertext by Mary Hays in *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799). Instead of seeing

[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., 122, 85-86.
[16] Ibid., 85.

Clarissa as a saintly woman dying a "triumphant death" to be rewarded in heaven, Hays reads and rewrites her as "The victim of a barbarous prejudice", whose "virtues […] and sufferings [are] alike unrewarded", in her novel which depicts the tragedy of a woman without the protection of rank or fortune.[17] This chapter provides the foundation for the rest of this work, showing how ideas about the heroine and female identity were changing in the eighteenth century, and giving an understanding of the context in which Frances Burney was writing when she repeatedly incorporated elements of *Clarissa* into her novels and responded to Richardson's tragic plot.

Clarissa on Stage:
Acting the Part of a Violent and "Truly Heroic Lady"

In Richardson's novel, Clarissa is interpreted in various ways by different characters, and it is important to consider the way that she presents herself to her readers and to herself because she is a self-conscious letter-writer. Robert A. Erickson suggests that Clarissa's journal-letters are comparable to a Puritan diary, the writing of which is an exercise not only of introspection, self-correction, and self-justification but also self-creation.[18] In this chapter, I am particularly interested in the way that she justifies and glorifies herself with her writing in an attempt to secure herself a favourable posthumous reputation. The novel begins with Anna Howe as the primary reader; but after Clarissa's rape, she has a wider audience in

[17] Ibid., 1498; Mary Hays, *The Victim of Prejudice*, ed. Eleanor Ty (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), 174.
[18] Robert A. Erickson, "'Written in the Heart': *Clarissa* and Scripture," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 2, no. 1 (1989): 44-45.

mind because she is persuaded by her friend to publish her story. When Clarissa says that Anna will have an account of the whole story after her death and that she "shall write with a view to that", she shows that she is concerned for her image and decides to take control of how she wants her story to be read.[19] Instead of simply allowing herself to be seen as the "fallen" Clarissa, she creates a possible interpretation of herself as the "divine" Clarissa. Before the rape and her more conscious effort of self-glorification, Clarissa portrays herself to Lovelace as a "*poor fatherless girl!*", or an unprotected, virtuous maiden.[20]

When Clarissa perceives that Lovelace might take advantage of the situation and sexually assault her, I argue that she adopts and adapts from theatrical models the role of the virtuous tragic heroine. Early in the novel, Lovelace refers to Clarissa as "my Gloriana", probably alluding to the heroine in Nathaniel Lee's *Gloriana, or, The Court of Augustus Caesar* (1676) as well as to Elizabeth I, the virgin queen.[21] When Lovelace quotes the lines of Marius Junior, from Thomas Otway's version of Romeo in *The History and Fall of Caius Marius. A Tragedy* (1680), he is thinking of Clarissa as Shakespeare's Juliet.[22] Both Lovelace and Belford compare Clarissa to Lucretia, in William Shakespeare's narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594).[23]

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[19] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1018.
[20] Ibid., 725.
[21] Ibid., 418; Nathaniel Lee, *Gloriana: Or. The Court of Augustus Cæsar. A Tragedy. As It Is Acted at the Theatre-Royal by His Majesty's Servants. By Nathaniel Lee* (London: printed for W. Feales, over-against St. Clement's Church in the Strand, and the rest of the proprietors, 1734).
[22] Thomas Otway, *The History and Fall of Caius Marius. A Tragedy*, in *The Works of Thomas Otway: Plays, Poems, and Love-Letters*, ed. J. C. Ghosh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932); William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, Updated ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[23] *The Rape of Lucrece*, in *The Poems: Venus and Adonis, the Rape of Lucrece, the Phoenix and the Turtle, the Passionate Pilgrim, a Lover's Complaint*, ed. John Roe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

All three of these women are virtuous heroines who think of their chastity as more important than life itself.

In early Stoic teachings, suicide is considered acceptable under certain conditions. Walter Englert explains that "The Stoics held that it was permissible, perhaps even the duty, of a person who was being forced to perform an immoral or shameful act to commit suicide" and that "human beings are justified in committing suicide to preserve their conception of self".[24] Based on these teachings, Seneca developed his view of suicide and associated suicide with freedom. He believed that suicide provided freedom from circumstances which make a virtuous life impossible.[25] Each of the heroines Lovelace associates Clarissa with practises these principles and finds freedom in death. Each of them would willingly take her own life in order to preserve her virtue; or in Lucrece's case, to achieve a renewed symbolic purity in death. These women are heroic in summoning up the masculine courage to take up a weapon against themselves in the act of suicide for their love of honour. But their suicide is also an act of revenge. Lucrece, for example, hopes that her husband will avenge her death by punishing her rapist after her suicide. The passion, violence and vengeance found in these heroines are characteristics that Clarissa takes on both before and after her rape.

The scene where Lovelace manages to gain entrance to Clarissa's bedchamber anticipates the scene after the rape where Clarissa acts the part of a stage heroine with a blade in her hand. In the earlier instance of Clarissa's attempt to defend her honour, she tries to seize a weapon to harm herself and begs Lovelace

[24] Walter Englert, "Seneca and the Stoic View of Suicide," *The Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy Newsletter* 184 (1990): 3-5.
[25] Ibid., 10.

on her knees to kill her rather than violate her.[26] Without an actual weapon in hand, Clarissa has not fully assumed the role of a tragic heroine, but she adopts the same kind of language to say that, if she had the means, "I will instantly convince you that my honour is dearer to me than my life!"[27] Such a statement shows the close association that Clarissa sees between her sexual virtue and her identity. In Lovelace's account, she has gained "a triumph" in his opinion after convincing him that she is "an angel and no woman!", by showing him a noble resistance against temptation.[28] Though the sinful thoughts of suicide are in conflict with her religion, Lovelace tries to justify her actions when he writes that these thoughts would be far from "her *deliberate* mind" when she is not driven into desperation.[29]

The later incident, given the mocking title of "The history of the Lady and the Penknife!!!" by Lovelace, in which Clarissa more consciously assumes the role of the virtuous tragic heroine, reads as though it were a prose version of a dramatic scene.[30] The women present claim that they "never in their lives […] beheld such a scene".[31] Clarissa is actress-like when she makes a majestic entrance before the audience of guilty persons responsible for her sexual fall; and with "Every tongue silent, every eye awed, every heart quaking", she delivers her soliloquy, addressing each individual in turn.[32] This time, she has a penknife in hand and she threatens Lovelace that she will make herself "a corpse at thy feet" if he dares to approach her.[33] Her words resemble dramatic speech when she exclaims, "I dare die. It is in

[26] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 724-725.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., 727, 726.
[29] Ibid., 728.
[30] Ibid., 952.
[31] Ibid., 951.
[32] Ibid., 949.
[33] Ibid., 950.

defence of my honour. God will be merciful to my poor soul!"[34] Here, Clarissa is described by Lovelace and the others as "the violent lady" and "the truly heroic lady" as she conforms to their expectations of a tragic heroine.[35] When she warns the offenders of retribution, she shows the heightened resentment and thirst for vengeance of a tragic heroine.[36]

However, she is also distinguished from such a heroine because her violence is reined in by her reason. She claims that she "from *principle* abhors the act" of suicide, but she warns that it might become "*necessary*!" if her honour is once again in danger.[37] The fact that she still talks about defending her honour, even though she tearfully acknowledged earlier that Lovelace had robbed her of it, shows that her understanding of her identity has changed, because her honour is no longer simply equated to her sexual virtue.[38] Earlier, Clarissa feels bereft of her identity after her rape, writing that: "I am no longer what I was in any one thing".[39] However, she also recognises that she is more than just her sexual virtue when she adds, "Yes, but I am".[40] Even though she values her virtue as much as any stage heroine, she realises that she has not lost all self-respect after her rape. Because of this, Clarissa stops herself from committing self-harm. Lovelace tells Belford that hers is a more refined kind of female heroism, because it is tempered by reason and religion.[41]

In this scene, Clarissa's initial suicidal intention seems to be accounted for by her temporary derangement. The way that she looks "wildly" and walks back to

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[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 950, 951.
[37] Ibid., 951.
[38] Ibid., 912.
[39] Ibid., 890.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.

her bedchamber with a candle might bring to mind Lady Macbeth, who is driven to insanity by her guilt and is seen sleepwalking with a taper in her hand.[42] When Clarissa loses her mind temporarily after her rape, she expresses a desire to be sent to Bedlam or another private madhouse, and she says that she would even sell her clothes to support herself as long as she would not be "made a show of".[43] To Clarissa, private suffering is preferable to public shame, even if she were to be taken as a madwoman. Her unfinished thought in the same fragment – "A less complicated villainy cost a Tarquin—" – suggests to readers that Clarissa is thinking of her own madness in terms of the temporary insanity of the raving Lucrece, violated by Tarquin in Shakespeare's dramatic poem.[44] Clarissa's reference to this tale at the height of her madness, and the dramatic resonance of the scene involving the penknife suggests that she is deliberately acting a part and taking Lucrece as one of her models. However, she makes herself a figure of both dignity and madness, and a heroine that is at once passionate and calm. So, in this scene, Clarissa makes use of madness as part of her self-representation to gain another "triumph" over Lovelace, showing him her resolution to be independent of him but avoiding the fate of Lucrece.[45]

After this scene, Clarissa stops acting the part of a violent dramatic heroine. In a letter to Anna, Clarissa tells her friend that, were she to commit suicide, it "would have manifested more of revenge and despair than of principle" and she would be "a poor coward" to end her life in such a way.[46] This shows her

[42] Ibid., 951; William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. A. R. Braunmuller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 216-220.
[43] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 895.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., 956.
[46] Ibid., 1117.

disapproval of the heroism displayed by the female protagonists in stage drama and also her recognition that her identity is not simply based on her sexual virtue. In a letter from Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh, he agreed with her opinion that the depiction of "the Distresses [that] come nearer one's Self" is superior to that of "Distresses in unnatural Heroics".[47] Traditionally, tragedies were based on the fall of the great. But Lady Bradshaigh's and Richardson's remarks suggest that there was a shift from theatrical heroism to something that was more bourgeois, private and inward-looking.[48] Increasingly, Clarissa turns from the physical to the spiritual aspect in reconstructing her identity. However, Lovelace's assumption that "Her religion […] will set her above making such a trifling accident [a rape] […] fatal to her" is incorrect because Clarissa would change her self-representation and end her life in another way after an attempt at recovering her good name posthumously, as I will show in the following section.[49]

[47] Letter to Lady Bradshaigh, December 15, 1748. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, 105-106.
[48] Since George Lillo's first domestic tragedy, *The London Merchant: or, the History of George Barnwell*, was first performed at Drury Lane in 1731, it became an important influence on Continental drama. See James L. Steffensen, introduction to *The Dramatic Works of George Lillo*, ed. James L. Steffensen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). See also Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama, 1660-1900. Vol. II. Early Eighteenth Century Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 121. Nicoll writes that this play is considered "the first conscious effort in the new style". Lillo's play is concerned with the private lives of ordinary people.
[49] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 916.

Clarissa's Posthumous "Triumph":
Self-Glorification through Vengeful Forgiveness and Martyrdom

Even when Clarissa gives up the character of the violent dramatic heroine, her vengeance against those who wronged her continues, dressed in the softening language of piety. She realises that she is defeated by the rigid social limitations set by her society for women and that there is no possibility for her to continue with life with dignity after her rape. Her discontent against her family, Lovelace, and society is voiced by her but disguised as Christian forgiveness. Critical studies have already explored how Clarissa uses the language of religion for her own purpose. In Kathleen M. Oliver's reading of Clarissa's distribution of mourning rings in her will, Oliver sees Clarissa making herself a "Protestant saint" and giving "a mark of her favour" to the "devotees of the cult of Clarissa" and "a bit of damnation to all the rest".[50] Anna Deter's analysis of Richardson's engagement with Stoicism suggests that Clarissa's heroism is "dangerously fraught with stoic pride" as she wants to be "memorialized as a timeless exemplar" after her death.[51] To develop from the idea of Clarissa's self-glorification through the language of piety, I argue that, in Richardson's characterisation of Clarissa, he is adapting the figure of the virtuous tragic heroine commonly found in Restoration heroic tragedy under the Christian system.[52] Richardson turns her vengeance into forgiveness, romantic love into

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[50] Kathleen M. Oliver, "'With My Hair in Crystal': Mourning Clarissa," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 23, no. 1 (2010): 46-47.
[51] Anna Deters, "'Glorious Perverseness': Stoic Pride and Domestic Heroism in Richardson's Novels," ibid.26 (2013): 68, 77.
[52] Margaret Anne Doody, *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 105, 108-126. In her analysis of Richardson's *Clarissa*, Doody observes that the power struggle between Lovelace and Clarissa resembles the plots of Restoration heroic drama, in which the characters try to assert their absolute will. Doody points out that Lovelace is

divine love, violence into martyrdom, and stage heroism to Christian heroism. Clarissa's death is a wilful and sinful suicide similar to the kind presented in the theatre, but a myth is created of her as a saintly woman who is taken into heaven by God.

After her rape, Clarissa can no longer identify herself as a virtuous heroine because, in her family's refusal to support her, she has lost the protection of her class status. In the penknife scene, she still finds it necessary to remind those who have betrayed her of her rank and fortune.[53] However, afterwards, Clarissa has to descend from this social position. To facilitate her escape from Lovelace, Clarissa is willing to trick her servant Mabel into exchanging her identity with her and puts on a servant's clothes over her own.[54] As Pamela reminds the readers when she considers leaving the B. household, wearing a servant maid's clothes in public might expose a woman to sexual insults, as she "might come to some harm, almost as bad as what I would run away from".[55] Clarissa has also unknowingly suffered an imaginary sexual insult from a servant when Will steals a kiss from Mabel and jokes that he could "brag he had kissed his lady, or one in her clothes".[56] Furthermore, the way that the heroine cannot be easily told apart from "the awkward and bent-shouldered Mabel" exposes the fragility of Clarissa's class identity.[57] Because

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consciously adopting the roles of the tragic tyrant-lover and the rakish hero of comedy, and he is defeated after his sexual possession of Clarissa, when she abandons the role of the victim-heroine and becomes a "martyr for her faith". She refuses to submit to Lovelace's will and asserts her freedom by preserving her spiritual integrity.

[53] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 949.

[54] Ibid., 967.

[55] *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Tom Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 60.

[56] *Clarissa*, 967.

[57] Ibid., 972.

she is primarily identified as a lady by her dress, her caste can easily be lost when she is without it. Later on, when Clarissa is preparing for her own funeral, she sells one of her best gowns to a gentlewoman at half price.[58] This is significant and, as Belford writes, "it has such a sound with it, that a lady of her rank and fortune should be so reduced".[59] It is shocking that Clarissa is selling her clothes because it suggests that her class identity is lost and that she might even be willing to sell her body to support herself when she is reduced to want. The example of Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724) reminds us that the selling of clothes might precede the sexual fall of a respectable lady of rank. Defoe's protagonist sold her clothes to supply her family; and after taking this step, she became more open to the idea of giving up her chastity in order to provide for herself.[60] Clarissa's willingness to put on a disguise and sell her class identifiers has made her sexually suspect and comparable to the women on the streets.

Having given up the protection of her family and her class identity, Clarissa must depend solely on her moral identity. Because Clarissa's body is defiled, her mind becomes the only proof of her innocence. So, in her self-representation, Clarissa begins to separate her mind and soul from her body. She learns to speak of her identity by shifting the focus from the physical to the mental and spiritual. Clarissa emphasises that the injury she sustained from Lovelace "has not tainted my mind" or "hurt my morals" because "My will is unviolated".[61] Unlike Lucrece who is dressed in black to mourn her violated virtue before her suicide, Clarissa

[58] Ibid., 1126.
[59] Ibid., 1130.
[60] Ibid., 1126; Daniel Defoe, *Roxana, or, the Fortunate Mistress*, ed. Melissa M. Mowry (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2009), 66-68.
[61] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1254.

determinedly makes a statement about her spiritual purity by dressing in virgin white.[62] Adopting a religious language, she claims that she is letting go of "every sense of indignity or injury" and turning to "higher and more important contemplations", because she has given up on all earthly hopes of happiness.[63] She also speaks of losing the burden of her body in order to be "all light and all mind" in heaven.[64] As Lovelace recognises, she seems to become "all soul" in the way that she portrays herself.[65] Before her death, she gives the impression that she has already transcended physicality when she calmly prepares for her own burial.[66]

The language she uses to talk about the body-soul dualism is taken partly from John Norris, who is mentioned in the novel on numerous occasions and described by Belford as "a poetical divine who was an excellent Christian".[67] Norris was a clergyman and philosopher, sometimes considered a Cambridge Platonist, though his philosophies also contain Cartesian elements.[68] His name is one with which both Clarissa and Anna are familiar. When Anna describes her friendship with Clarissa, she does so "in the words of Norris" to express the way that "no *third love* can come in between" them.[69] When Clarissa has left her father's house, Anna sends her money "in my *Norris's Miscellanies*" when she finds that her friend does not have her books and belongings with her, indicating that it is a book which Anna

[62] Shakespeare, *The Rape of Lucrece*, 226, 227; Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1351.
[63] *Clarissa*, 1254.
[64] Ibid., 1348.
[65] Ibid., 949.
[66] Ibid., 1357, 1337.
[67] Ibid., 1129.
[68] Richard Acworth, "Norris, John (1657–1712)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2 May 2015, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20277; Mark Goldie, "Cambridge Platonists (act. 1630s–1680s)," in ibid., 2 May 2015, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/theme/94274.
[69] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 131.

knows Clarissa would enjoy.[70] *A Collection of Miscellanies* (1687) was a popular text which went through nine editions by 1740.[71] Richardson deliberately draws attention to the author's name when "your Norris" and "my Norris" are mentioned again in the following two letters, with Clarissa returning the money to Anna and her subsequent acknowledgements.[72] Norris then becomes an in-joke between the girls as well as Lovelace and Belford. Anna tells Clarissa that she hopes she has "no cause to repent returning my Norris", assuring her friend that "It is forthcoming on demand".[73] Suggestively, this is one of the letters that Lovelace manages to get hold of, and as Derek Taylor noted, he significantly does not recognise the well-known writer's name.[74] Lovelace confides in Belford in confusion after reading Anna's letter: "Now, what the devil can this mean! […] The devil take me, if I am *out-Norrised!*—If such innocents can allow themselves to plot, to Norris, well may I".[75] Believing "Norris" to be a secret code used by the two ladies for scheming purposes, Lovelace later repeats the joke to say that he would not be "*out-Norrised* by a pair of novices".[76] In other words, the name Norris comes to symbolise the practice of virtuous and religious principles in this novel, which Lovelace mistakes for the practice of stratagems.

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[70] Ibid., 512.
[71] John Norris, *A Collection of Miscellanies: Consisting of Poems, Essays, Discourses and Letters, Occasionally Written. By John Norris, M. A. Late Rector of Bemerton, near Sarum. Carefully Revised, Corrected, and Improved by the Author*, 9th ed. (London: printed for Edmund Parker, at the Bible and Crown in Lombard-Street, 1740).
[72] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 513, 514.
[73] Ibid., 529.
[74] Derek Taylor, "Clarissa Harlowe, Mary Astell, and Elizabeth Carter: John Norris of Bemerton's Female 'Descendants'," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 12, no. 1 (1999): 26.
[75] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 634.
[76] Ibid., 691.

Clarissa seems also to be a reader of Mary Astell, who co-authored *Letters Concerning the Love of God* (1695) with Norris. It has long been recognised that Mary Astell is one of Richardson's models for Clarissa.[77] The entry on Astell in George Ballard's *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (1752), though published four years after all seven volumes of *Clarissa* were in print, gives an idea about what Richardson possibly knew about Astell when he was working on *Clarissa*, because Sarah Chapone – the most faithful supporter of Ballard in all his endeavours to publish this collection of biographies since 1736 – was also the person who praised Astell's works to Richardson.[78] Ballard describes her as a "great ornament of her sex and country", who led a religious life and "lived always in prospect of heaven", and she sometimes lived like a hermit, on only bread and water.[79] She was also "regardless of […] sufferings or pain" when she underwent a mastectomy.[80] For several weeks before her death, a coffin and shroud were kept in her room to remind her of her mortality so that she could focus her attention on God and the afterlife.[81] This true story of her exemplary piety and fortitude seems to have

[77] For the first article on this connection between Mary Astell and Richardson's characterisation of Clarissa, see A. H. Upham, "A Parallel for Richardson's Clarissa," *Modern Language Notes* 28, no. 4 (1913).
[78] Ruth Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell: An Early English Feminist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 323, 331, 488; introduction to *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: Who Have Been Celebrated for Their Writings or Skill in the Learned Languages, Arts, and Sciences*, ed. Ruth Perry (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), 21, 26.
[79] George Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain, Who Have Been Celebrated for Their Writings or Skill in the Learned Languages, Arts, and Sciences*, ed. Ruth Perry (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985), 382, 390-391.
[80] Ibid., 391-392.
[81] Ibid., 392. The account of her final days is here reproduced in full to illustrate the similarities between this report and Clarissa's death: "Soon after this [the surgery], her health and strength declined apace, and at length by a gradual decay of nature, being confined to her bed and finding the time of her dissolution drawing nigh, she ordered her coffin and shroud to be made and brought to her

inspired Richardson when he wrote about Clarissa's quiet serenity when she is busying herself with her preparation for her death.

Clarissa develops her theocentrism from Norris and Astell, adopting their language in order to create a myth of a mysterious death decreed by God to disguise her suicide. Anna Howe's monetary present to Clarissa under the cover of John Norris' text reminds readers that Clarissa's wish for independence devoted to the practice of religion cannot be achieved without financial means, and it also tells readers that religious diction could act as a cover for women who are looking for a way to justify their independence in a culture which sees them as the property of men. Rather than depend on the mercy of her unrelenting relations, Clarissa chooses to end her life with dignity without resorting to the violence practised by the violated victim-heroine from Restoration heroic drama to wash away her wrongs in a bloody suicide. Both Dr H and Mr Goddard, the apothecary, can see that Clarissa is wasting away because of self-neglect and believe that "she would recover if she herself desired to recover".[82] However, Clarissa tries to clear herself of "any imputations of […] wilfulness or impatiency, or […] resentments" by disguising the sin of suicide as an early dissolution under divine will.[83] She speaks of withdrawing from the world of senses, and the way that "By various methods [God] deadens all other sensations, or rather absorbs them all in the love of Him", adopting Norris' idea of

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bedside and there to remain in her view as a constant memento to her of her approaching fate, that her mind might not deviate or stray one moment from God, its most proper object. Her thoughts were now so entirely fixed upon God and eternity that for some days before her death she earnestly desired that no company might be permitted to come to her, refusing at that time to see even her old and dear friend the Lady Catherine Jones, purely because she would not be disturbed in the last moments of her divine contemplations".

[82] Ibid., 1127.

[83] Ibid., 1276, 1341.

"a mystical Death", where the believer turns from the physical world to concentrate exclusively on the divine love of God.[84] In her creation of the myth that God is taking her into heaven out of pity, Clarissa presents her slow death as a natural decay caused by grief.[85] She makes herself an admirable character who demonstrates her heroism as she courageously suffers through mental anguish and looks on death with fortitude.

When she is preparing for her death, Clarissa also employs the language of forgiveness. While she says that it is her duty not only to forgive but also to "return good for evil", Clarissa's forgiveness is a form of vengeance to express her resentment towards her violator, her inflexible relations and the judging world.[86] Clarissa's vengeful forgiveness could be better understood in the context of the arguments of Clementina della Porretta, the "Sister-excellence" not only of Harriet Byron in Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-1754) but also of Clarissa Harlowe, because she is another martyr-like figure who has undergone physical torture.[87] Clementina is described by some of the other characters as "the greatest, the most magnanimous, of women", who suffers a "martyrdom" comparable to saints in her refusal of Sir Charles Grandison because of her religious conviction.[88] This saintly woman allows us to understand that there could be vengeance in forgiveness when she tells Grandison that Laurana "has made me great, by putting it in my power to *forgive* her. Let my revenge be in her compunction from my

[84] Mary Astell and John Norris, *Mary Astell and John Norris: Letters Concerning the Love of God*, ed. Derek Taylor and Melvyn New (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005), 119; Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1338.
[85] *Clarissa*, 1276.
[86] Ibid., 1191.
[87] *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, ed. Jocelyn Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 344.
[88] Ibid., 351.

forgiveness, and from my wishes to promote her welfare!"[89] However, she is taught by Grandison to believe that she is "guilty […] of a false piece of heroism" in forgiving and offering "*more* than justice to an unnatural relation".[90] Her heroism is false and the sincerity of her forgiveness is questionable because there is vengeance and an intention to glorify the self. In this final novel by Richardson, Grandison has indirectly exposed, in his gentle reproof of Clementina, the way that the forgiveness and consolation Clarissa offers her unnatural relations and even her rapist is done with an "aim at being *above* Nature", and might not be altogether sincere.[91]

The purpose of forgiveness is to restore amity between individuals, but Clarissa's forgiveness widens the distance between herself and those who need to be forgiven by emphasising her superiority. Clarissa aims to "leave the world in perfect charity"; and she says to Belford, "shall not *charity* complete my triumph?" [92] The word "charity" itself implies a sense of obligation on the individuals she is offering forgiveness to, because it is unearned and undeserved. Though Richardson might have intended to show Clarissa achieving true spiritual growth in her final moments and finding forgiveness in her heart for everyone who contributed to her unhappy situation, it is made clear that she has been harbouring resentment at least until almost the end of her life. In reply to her uncles' demand to know whether she is pregnant with Lovelace's child, she tells them that time will tell and implies that her death will be "a more satisfactory answer to my whole

[89] Ibid., 430.
[90] Ibid., 430-431.
[91] Ibid., 430.
[92] *Clarissa*, 1254, 1330.

family" than a written response.[93] In withholding the whole truth of her rape until after her death, Clarissa is refusing to give her relations an opportunity to be truly forgiven by her in her lifetime. This makes their guilt of refusing to be reconciled to her a burden which they can never be eased of. Clarissa's forgiveness is therefore characterised by Richardson in his letter to Aaron Hill on 10 May 1748 as "a Triumph […] not only over [Lovelace] but over all her Oppressors, and the World besides".[94] The word "Triumph" shows that her forgiveness is offered in contempt.

Her posthumous letters serve to heighten the guilt in the conscience of her wrongdoers while they display the magnanimity of her soul. Her letters might perhaps bring to mind those found in Elizabeth Singer Rowe's *Friendship in Death; in Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living* (1728). In Rowe's fictional collection, which was well-known in the eighteenth century, short stories are told in the form of letters written by heavenly spirits with a surviving concern for the welfare of their loved ones on earth, to remind them to live with the afterlife in mind. These letters offer the living consolation, advice and warning. In a somewhat similar way, Clarissa's posthumous letters to the members of her family are "calculated to give comfort rather than reproach", according to Belford.[95] Her letters to both parents give assurances that she is now the "forever happy" Clarissa Harlowe.[96] Like Narcissus in Letter III of Rowe's *Friendship in Death*, who died as an infant and writes to comfort his mother that she should have "celebrated my funeral rites with songs and festivals" because he is now free from illness and enjoying the bliss of

[93] Ibid., 1197.
[94] *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Caroll, The Eighteenth Century. Electronic ed. (Charlottesville: InteLex Corporation, 2002), 87.
[95] *Clarissa*, 1371.
[96] Ibid., 1372, 1373.

heaven, Clarissa tells her father that he has "reason for joy rather than sorrow" because she is now eternally blessed.[97] Writing to her brother, she cautions him to control his temper "for the sake of your own peace and safety, as well present as future!", just as Cleander in Letter XII of Rowe's work hopes that his "endeavours for [his brother's] reformation" would be more successful now that he is dead and could have "no selfish motives" in his concern for his brother's eternal happiness.[98] So, similar to Rowe's heavenly spirits, Clarissa voices a concern for the welfare and reformation of her loved ones.

However, though she claims that she is "above the spirit of recrimination", there is much bitterness in the tone of the letters.[99] This is shown, for instance, when she identifies her father as "the means of adding one to the number of the blessed", speaks of her brother as "an only son, more worth in the family account than several daughters" and reminds her sister of her "acts of unkindness" and "misconstruction of her conduct".[100] Phrasing her biting reproaches to her relations as blessings, Clarissa asks pardon for her "faults, both supposed and real" as a "poor penitent" even though she is conscious of no fault.[101] While the letters might give the appearance that Clarissa's love for even those who wronged her extends beyond the grave, her consolatory letters serve instead to make them more inconsolable. They also magnify her own glory in showing her capacity to forgive such wrongs.

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[97] Elizabeth Singer Rowe, *Friendship in Death; in Twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living. To Which Are Added, Letters Moral and Entertaining, in Prose and Verse: In Three Parts. In Two Volumes. By Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe*, vol. 1 (London: printed for Henry Lintot, 1746), 11-16; Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1372.
[98] *Clarissa*, 1374; Rowe, *Friendship in Death*, 1, 53-58.
[99] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1373.
[100] Ibid., 1372, 1374, 1375.
[101] Ibid., 1372, 1371.

This is also shown in the conscious effort of Clarissa's self-glorification before her death. Clarissa initially hopes that Lovelace would allow her to "slide quietly into my grave" after her rape.[102] However, later on, her thoughts are centred on what she could do in order to allow herself to "die decently".[103] Instead of thinking about how to continue with life and to support herself in the future, Clarissa spends all the time, money and energy she has to prepare for her own funeral and establish her posthumous reputation. In her preparation, Clarissa assumes the task of summarising and concluding her life in her own words. Her concern for her posthumous image might be owing to her fear of the humiliation of a *felo de se* interment. Though Clarissa tries to divorce her body from her mind in her new representation of herself, she also painstakingly ensures that she has "not left undone anything that ought to be done, either respecting *mind* or *person*".[104] To enforce her unviolated will even after her death, she draws up her own written will and makes clear her desire that her body "shall not be touched but by those of my own sex" so that it cannot again be profaned by the hands of men.[105] She also gives all her real estates to her father but shows goodwill towards those relations who were going against the will of her grandfather in depriving her of her estate and independence.[106] Her intention is the same as Clementina's, to demonstrate her magnanimity in giving up not only her inheritance but also her life for the prosperity of her unnatural relations.

[102] Ibid., 1013.
[103] Ibid., 1343.
[104] Ibid., 1338.
[105] Ibid., 1413.
[106] Ibid., 1329.

After being disowned by her father, Clarissa presents herself as the child of God instead of her earthly father's daughter. She describes herself as "a desolate creature who suffered under the worst of orphanage" because she is cast out of her earthly father's house into the world.[107] Clarissa has given up on her earthly existence and is building her identity in relation to God instead of men.[108] In her letters, the world becomes a liminal place in which she has to undergo sufferings before she could be taken into the loving arms of her heavenly father. When Clarissa explains to Belford the "*religious* meaning […] couched under" one of her letters, she lets him know that she means Heaven instead of Harlowe Place by "my *father's house*" and Jesus by "my *Saviour*".[109] When she says that she will depend on the justice of a superior power and that she is convinced that "HE has forgiven me", Clarissa is implying that her biological father is tyrannical and unnatural.[110] In fashioning herself as the child of God, Clarissa is blaming and disowning her father James Harlowe.

On the expensive and elaborate coffin she has designed for herself, the ornaments and inscriptions she chooses to tell the story of a victim pitied by God.[111] In dating her death back to the day that she left her father's house, she is making a statement that she is already dead while she is still living.[112] She is attributing her death to her father's cruelty in depriving her of all protection and assistance, suggesting that death is her only resting place. She follows the example of Mary Astell in keeping her coffin in her bedchamber to remind herself of her mortality

[107] Ibid., 1275.
[108] Ibid., 1194.
[109] Ibid., 1274.
[110] Ibid., 1372.
[111] Ibid., 1306.
[112] Ibid., 1306, 1413.

and to think only of her divine love for God.[113] While Astell might be considered an exceptional example of piety, resignation and fortitude in making such a preparation for herself because she was an old woman dying from breast cancer and the infections caused by her mastectomy, it is shocking and sinful for Clarissa to "indulge her sad reflections with such an object before her" because she is young and free from any fatal physical injuries or diseases.[114] Clarissa takes pleasure in viewing her coffin because it is a summary that she created of her life, and she can enjoy the idea of death with the consolation that she has gained some control over the way that she is to be seen by those who know her story.[115] While the souls of tragic heroines such as Lucrece are purified by blood, Clarissa presents herself as a matyr who is purified by her underserved sufferings.

Not only is she a child of God, but she also presents herself as a bride ready for Christ and even as a female Christ. In a letter to Mrs Norton, Clarissa refers to her burial-dress – which was bespoken after the humbling experience of selling one of her best suits of clothes – as the "*happiest*" "wedding garments" for a "bridal maiden". [116] After her rape, Clarissa refuses to consider marrying Lovelace, embracing a religious life and thinking of herself as a nun before her death. The name Jesus is also her very last spoken word, as she envisions her death as a union with her Saviour.[117] In leaving her body behind, Clarissa suggests that she would achieve ultimate spiritual perfection with her virgin, unviolated soul.

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[113] Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, 392.
[114] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1352.
[115] Ibid., 1306.
[116] Ibid., 1339.
[117] Ibid., 1362.

In her self-fashioning, Clarissa creates a myth of herself becoming a female Christ who is punished for the sins of others, and dies for the salvation of future generations of women by making public her sad story. When she decides to publish a written account of it after her death, she claims to be doing so "for the satisfaction of my *friends* and *favourers*" instead of for her own sake.[118] She also argues that her story would serve as a warning for others.[119] However, Clarissa's motivation is to "set my whole story in a true light", in exposing the injustice she experienced and clearing herself of blame.[120] Though withdrawn from the world, she makes herself a public figure after her death. Clarissa gives the impression that there is value in her sacrifice, in being able to offer her story as a lesson for others, giving them an example of fortitude but also a warning against the treachery of libertines.

Belford's Guided Reading of *Clarissa*:
Understanding the Heroine as a Female Christ Instead of a *Fair Penitent*

John Belford is Clarissa's disciple. He plays an important role in the glorification of the heroine. Although Richardson refuses to make Lovelace a reformed rake and Clarissa an instrument of his reclamation, he offers a rake reformed by her example in the character of Belford. Clarissa sees Belford as a "*humane*" and Lovelace as an "*inhuman* libertine".[121] She makes the reclamation of Belford the final service she can do for mankind.[122] The acquaintance between them, which Belford describes as "a virtuous, a holy friendship", has changed him for the

[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid., 1254-1255.
[120] Ibid., 1254.
[121] Ibid., 1194.
[122] Ibid., 1337.

better.[123] To him, Clarissa seems to be "a beautified spirit […] sent from heaven to draw me after her out of the miry gulf in which I had been so long immersed"; and a spirit who will soon return to heaven.[124] Belford is a living proof of the beneficial power of Clarissa's story. In addition, in naming Belford her executor, Clarissa has made him her apostle. Not only do her will and legacy of letters go through him, but he is also the letter-writer who concludes the story of Clarissa's life. He is therefore very influential in readers' interpretations of her words and actions.

Belford's reformation begins when he becomes a reader of Clarissa's reading. The heroine's copy of a biblical extract, shown to Belford by Mrs. Lovick, inspires him to try to influence Lovelace when he reflects on the passage.[125] Upon rediscovering the Bible, Belford is now ashamed of having admired "pagan authors" and "ancient poets and philosophers" instead of the "all-excelling collection of beauties".[126] Clarissa has taught him to admire the beauty of morality and spiritual conviction. He learns to see how "miserable yet conceited" he used to be as a libertine.[127] Later in the novel, Belford even quotes two lines from Clarissa's and Anna's shared reading, Norris' *Miscellanies*, to console his dying friend, Belton.[128] This shows that, as Clarissa's executor and disciple, Belford has gained access to the treasury of her beautiful mind and has become closer to her in sympathy than Lovelace, who has only gained temporary sexual possession of her physical body.

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[123] Ibid., 1345.
[124] Ibid., 1275.
[125] Ibid., 1124, 1125.
[126] Ibid., 1126.
[127] Ibid., 1125-1126.
[128] Ibid., 1129. The lines he quotes are: "Death could not a more sad retinue find, / Sickness and pain before, and darkness all behind".

Belford is the most important reader in the novel because he is a guiding reader. His significance has been recognised by some critics. For instance, Adam Budd argues that Belford is an understudied figure who functions as the novel's "editorial hero" and "provides readers with concrete evidence of his moral conversion".[129] According to Budd, Belford writes in an "objective style, one that is not literary, but rather legalistic", which makes him "more reliable as a moral agent".[130] In other words, Belford is not simply a character. He becomes a critic of *Clarissa* as the narrative progresses. This can be seen when he contrasts the heroine to Calista from Nicholas Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* (1703). In the novel, the Harlowes unsympathetically choose to see Clarissa as a morally corrupt woman. Arabella Harlowe speaks of her as "a runaway daughter! living with her fellow" and her uncle accuses her of "free living" with a libertine.[131] To her family, her sexual ruin is "what we have foretold and expected", and requires true penitence.[132] When Belford sets Clarissa apart from Calista, the fair penitent, he is resisting Clarissa's family's interpretation of her as a blameable woman.[133] Rowe's *The Fair Penitent* had been a frequently performed and popular drama since its first performance in 1703.[134] It is also the play from which Eliza Haywood extracted a speech about the falsehoods of unvirtuous women to use as an epigraph for *Anti-Pamela, or, Feign'd*

[129] Adam Budd, "Why Clarissa Must Die: Richardson's Tragedy and Editorial Heroism," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 31, no. 3 (2007): 16, 17.
[130] Ibid., 17.
[131] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1255, 1195.
[132] Ibid., 1109.
[133] Ibid., 1205.
[134] Malcolm Goldstein, introduction to *The Fair Penitent*, ed. Malcolm Goldstein (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), xiv. It was performed almost every theatrical season beginning in 1715 after its first performance in March 1703.

Innocence Detected (1741), her response to Richardson's first novel.[135] By alluding to *The Fair Penitent*, and having Belford compare his second heroine to Rowe's, Richardson was possibly responding to Haywood's association of Pamela with Calista.

In doing so, Richardson enables Belford to teach his readers how to respond correctly to both Rowe's and his own works. Belford plays an important function in helping to mask Clarissa's use of suicide as revenge by contrasting her seemingly pious resignation to the stage heroism of Calista. In his reading of Rowe's dramatic work, Belford condemns Calista as "a desiring luscious wench" without virtue, who cannot be entitled to sympathy or mercy because her "penitence is nothing else but rage, insolence, and scorn".[136] In stark contrast, Clarissa, who humbly asks her parents in a letter for a final blessing with true repentance, is "a penitent without a fault".[137] Belford teaches Richardson's readers to see Clarissa as a virtuous and pious individual who has been ill treated by her family and a rake, but "triumphs over them all" with her superior morality.[138] While he believes that Clarissa's "distress […] must *worthily* affect every heart", he criticises the morality of Rowe's drama, writing, "How […] can the fall of such a one create a proper distress […] ?" and "our poets hardly know how to create a distress without horror and murder".[139]

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[135] Eliza Haywood, *Anti-Pamela, or, Feign'd Innocence Detected*, ed. Catherine Ingrassia (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 51. The epigraph to Haywood's work reads: "Fatally fair they are, and in their Smiles / The Graces, little Loves, and young Desires inhabit; / But all that gaze upon them are undone; / For they are false, luxurious in their Appetites, / And all the Heaven they hope for is Variety. / One Lover to another still succeeds; / Another, and another after that, / And the last Fool is welcome as the former; / Till having lov'd his Hour out, he gives his Place, / And mingles with the Herd that went before him".
[136] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1205-1206.
[137] Ibid., 1180, 1205.
[138] Ibid., 1206.
[139] Ibid., 1205-1206.

In making one of his characters criticise another eighteenth-century tragedy, Richardson asserts the potency of his own tale and its ability to draw tears and educate without the horror of a violent and bloody self-murder. As an admirer of Clarissa, Belford suggests that her story is superior to Rowe's *Fair Penitent*.

Belford is also an important biographer of Clarissa, because he records the fortitude displayed by her in her final days, when she can no longer write for herself.[140] Belford's letters become a gospel, describing the life and teaching of Clarissa, who is presented as a female Christ. He helps to create the myth of Clarissa as a "divine lady!" who is martyred, rather than a woman who has taken her own life.[141] It may be more helpful to think of the conclusion of Clarissa's story in relation to that of the "Lovely Penitent" in Edward Moore's Fable XV, "The Female Seducers", in *Fables for the Female Sex* (1744), rather than to emphasise comparison with Rowe's heroine, who kills herself with a poniard to purify her soul with blood.[142] In Moore's fable, Chastity, having lost her honour and become friendless and wretched, is pitied by the goddess Virtue and invited to leave the censoring world to dwell with her in heaven.[143]

Making reference to one of Rowe's three "she-tragedies" designed to appeal to the audience's compassion and encourage people to "judge the fair offender, with good nature" instead of condemning her; and possibly alluding also to Moore's fable which shows pity for a woman who is guilty of sexual misconduct, Richardson

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[140] Ibid., 1341.
[141] Ibid., 958.
[142] Edward Moore and Henry Brooke, *Fables for the Female Sex* (London: printed for R. Francklin, in Russel-Street, Covent-Garden, 1744), 115-148; Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair Penitent*, ed. Malcolm Goldstein (London: Edward Arnold, 1969), 69, 66.
[143] Moore and Brooke, *Fables for the Female Sex*, 143-148.

encourages a more sympathetic reading of his heroine's suicide.[144] In *The Fair Penitent*, which was written at the beginning of the century, Calista's destination in the afterlife is uncertain when she kills herself, hoping that she could "find with heav'n the same forgiveness / As with my father".[145] Though Rowe gives her little hope for eternal salvation, he shows that even a woman who wilfully transgressed has the potential to act in a heroic and admirable way. This attitude towards both sexual transgression and the sinful nature of suicide seems to have changed a few decades later. In Moore's fable, which was published only a few years before *Clarissa*, Chastity's suicide seems to be implied when Virtue beckons her to "Come, and claim thy kindred skies"; and it is suggested that she could still look forward to the prospect of heaven, and dwell with Virtue even after losing her honour.[146] Even though suicide is not mentioned explicitly by Moore, but implied by this heavenly intervention, the fable suggests that, because sexual virtue is so important to a woman, his protagonist is left with no other choice but to take her own life.[147]

In Richardson's novel, Belford helps to create a similar impression of a divine intervention to explain the problematic death of Clarissa. According to him, unlike Calista, Clarissa "abhors the impious thought of shortening her allotted period" and is "a stranger to revenge".[148] While she is slowly wasting away, Belford dismisses the doctor's and the apothecary's diagnosis of her condition, discouraging readers from seeing her death as a suicide. He expresses his opinion that Dr H and

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[144] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, ed. Harry William Pedicord (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 74-75; Moore and Brooke, *Fables for the Female Sex*, 115.
[145] Rowe, *The Fair Penitent*, 69.
[146] Moore and Brooke, *Fables for the Female Sex*, 143-144.
[147] Ibid., 115.
[148] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1206.

Mr Goddard are blaming Clarissa because they are incapable of treating her depression.[149] To him, she is comparable to "a dying saint" because of the way that she views death with calm resignation.[150] After witnessing Belton and Clarissa on their deathbeds, Belford says that "it is plain to me […] the saint [is] the true hero".[151] In his panegyrics of Clarissa following her death, he writes, in terms reminiscient of biographies of women such as Astell, that she is "not only an ornament to her sex, but to human nature" in general.[152] When he applauds the "true heroism" of the "sweet and tender" Clarissa, he suggests that one does not have to become masculine to be heroic.[153] Clarissa's heroism is not displayed through heroic deeds but in her inner fortitude, in choosing to become a martyr to maintain her moral integrity.[154] Not only is Clarissa laudable for her heroism, but Belford interprets her also as a true and forgiving Christian who blesses her undeserving relations with her dying breath, instead of a sinner who has given up on life.[155]

After reading Lovelace's accounts of Clarissa's trials, commencing a virtuous friendship with her and reading her reading, becoming a critic of Clarissa's tale by comparing it to other texts, and narrating the conclusion of her story, Belford testifies to becoming a reformed rake because of the influence of this female figure who is at once saintly and transgressive. Being given the role of reader, critic and writer of the text, Belford tries to persuade readers that *Clarissa* is a valuable narrative of distress that could spark a positive change in them. Its morality should

[149] Ibid., 1127.
[150] Ibid., 1332.
[151] Ibid., 1347, 1123-1124.
[152] Ibid., 1363.
[153] Ibid., 1306.
[154] Ibid., 1307.
[155] Ibid., 1342, 1361.

be a "new light" for them, which should lead to their betterment or reformation, as it did with himself.[156] At the same time, in deploring the fate of Clarissa and expressing astonishment at the mysterious ways of heaven in allowing her to suffer, he is asking readers to think sympathetically about the vulnerability of middle-class women against immoral elites such as Robert Lovelace. In contrasting Clarissa with fallen women such as Mrs. Sinclair, Sally Martin and Polly Horton,[157] and in rendering the heroine's private distresses epic and making her early death seem as though it were the result of divine intervention instead of a suicide, Richardson uses a religious language which licenses a positive or even heroic account of sexually transgressive women who insist on maintaining their moral purity.

Mary Hays' *Victim of Prejudice*: Revising the Tragedy of Clarissa

Richardson's *Clarissa* set an example that dominated much subsequent eighteenth-century fiction. In this final section, I look at the way that the story of Clarissa is used by Mary Hays in her novel, *The Victim of Prejudice*, to show how the transgressive heroine in the novel and ideas about female identity had changed by the end of the century. The connection between *Clarissa* and *The Victim of*

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[156] Ibid., 1146.

[157] Ibid., 534-535, 940. Sally Martin and Polly Horton are described as "*Creatures who, brought up too high for their fortunes, and to a taste of pleasure and the public diversions, had fallen an easy prey to his [Lovelace's] seducing arts; and for some time past been associates with Mrs Sinclair*". Lovelace tells Belford that "A fallen woman … is a worse devil than even a profligate man" because she is "above all remorse". According to him, Mrs. Sinclair, Sally and Polly are "continually boasting of the many perverse creatures whom they have obliged to draw in their traces". Because they trangressed, they are now trying to corrupt other women.

Prejudice has been discussed by a number of critics. Eleanor Ty, for example, thinks that Hays "intended her readers to think of *Clarissa* as an inter text to her own novel", and that she reworked Richardson's novel "from a feminist perspective" and "according to her beliefs".[158] In Hays' story, her heroine Mary Raymond does not wilfully try to end her life, but is instead driven to despair in a hostile world which frustrates all her attempts at making a living to support herself. In Hays' rewriting of Richardson's tragedy into a new tragedy, Mary Raymond's approaching death is presented as a defeat instead of a triumph, making Hays' plea for gender equality explicit.

Mary Raymond seems to be named after four Marys other than Hays herself – Mary Raymond's mother, the Virgin Mary, Mary Astell, and Mary Wollstonecraft. The depictions of Mary Raymond's struggle for independence is very likely drawn from her personal experience of the difficulties faced by a woman who attempted to achieve independence in the eighteenth century, having left her family home to live on her own as a single woman.[159] It is not surprising that Hays also chose to associate her heroine with Wollstonecraft, with whom Hays had a close friendship.[160] Although Wollstonecraft was a respected writer and an advocate of women's rights in her lifetime, her posthumous reputation became tarnished when details of her private life were revealed by her husband, William Godwin, in

[158] Eleanor Ty, introduction to *The Victim of Prejudice*, ed. Eleanor Ty (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), xxii, xxiii.
[159] Gina Luria Walker, *Mary Hays (1759-1843): The Growth of a Woman's Mind* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 120-123.
[160] For biographical accounts of their friendship, see Walker, *Mary Hays (1759-1843)*; Janet Todd, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Revolutionary Life* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000).

Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1798).[161] Though Hays could no longer openly identify with or express her admiration for her friend because of the scandal caused by Godwin's publication, Hays had earlier expressed in *Letters and Essays, Moral, and Miscellaneous* (1793) her conviction that "The rights of woman, and the name of Woollstonecraft [sic], will go down to posterity with reverence, when the pointless sarcasms of witlings are forgotten".[162] In Hays' second novel, her heroine is jeered at and driven out of society because of public opinion and similar social prejudices. This protagonist's name possibly also evokes Wollstonecraft's novels, and in particular, her unfinished *The Wrongs of Woman, or, Maria* (1798), in which the themes of female sexuality and the victimisation of women are explored.[163] These are also the main concerns in *The Victim of Prejudice*.

When Mary Hays was writing this novel, there is evidence that she also saw a connection between Astell and Richardson's Clarissa. As Astell's biographer in *Female Biography*, Hays began her research on the earlier writer and 287 other women about three years earlier.[164] She described Astell's death in detail in her work, using the *Biographium Femineum* (1766) and Ballard's *Memoirs* as her sources.[165] Considering how Hays read Richardson's novel "repeatedly in very

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[161] William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Pamela Clemit, and Gina Luria Walker (Letchworth: Broadview Press, 2001). In this biography, Godwin wrote about Wollstonecraft's romantic affairs and suicide attempts, which many of their contemporaries found morally shocking.

[162] Mary Hays, *Letters and Essays, Moral, and Miscellaneous* (London: printed for T. Knott, No. 47, Lombard-Street, 1793), 21.

[163] See Mary Wollstonecraft, *Mary, a Fiction*, in *Mary and the Wrongs of Woman*, ed. Gary Kelly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); *The Wrongs of Woman, or, Maria. A Fragment*. In *Mary and the Wrongs of Woman*.

[164] Walker, *Mary Hays (1759-1843): The Growth of a Woman's Mind* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 222-229.

[165] Hays, "Mary Astell," in *Female Biography*, 239-248.

early life", it seems unlikely that she could have failed to recognise that Richardson based some details of the final scenes of Clarissa's life on Astell's last days.[166] In writing about Astell, Hays disapproves of her "severe abstinence", which she believes to be "inconsistent with the temper of christianity" as it "exhausts the body and hastens its decay".[167] She suggests that this is a possible cause of Astell's breast cancer.[168] Though Hays respects the earlier writer for her self-education and literary achievements, she does not see Astell as an altogether rational individual because she considers it "superstition and scrupulosity" to practise self-denial as a way of devotional worship.[169] Just as she sees Astell as a woman who destroyed her own health, she seems to read Clarissa's death as a result of her wilful self-neglect, and contrasts Mary Raymond's story with hers. Hays' protagonist believes that she has "a right to exist!" and tries to cling onto life even though she is repeatedly denied the means to provide for herself.[170] Instead of being "purified by sufferings" as Clarissa claims she would be when she enters heaven, Hays' Mary becomes "familiarized […] to suffering".[171] She is heroic in the sense that she continues to wander the world and embrace life's challenges for as long as she can after her loss of reputation.

In addition to associating her heroine with Clarissa and Mary Astell, Hays also writes about Mary Raymond's female desire using the biblical Mary and Eve. Even though Hays' heroine is named after the Virgin Mary, she becomes a figure

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[166] *The Idea of Being Free: A Mary Hays Reader*, ed. Gina Luria Walker (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2005), 36.
[167] "Mary Astell," 220.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] *The Victim of Prejudice*, 141.
[171] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1373; Hays, *The Victim of Prejudice*, 150.

resembling Eve. In an early scene, she is betrayed by William Pelham – a Satanic figure who persuades her against heeding the "particular caution" of her guardian, and tempts her to steal "the forbidden fruit" to prove her love for him.[172] This passage is an allusion to the narrative in the Book of *Genesis* in which Adam and Even are commanded by God not to consume the fruit of knowledge of good and evil. Mary has therefore committed the original sin in disobeying her guardian. Pelham later again betrays Mary when he succumbs to the prejudices of society as well as his own ambition and marries another woman.[173] Mary is a woman with desires, but she strives to suppress them in order to remain spiritually pure. She refuses to become the wife of her rapist, Osborne, or the mistress of Pelham.[174] Like Clarissa, she is characterised as "perverse" and Osborne foretells that her "heroic sentiments" will be impracticable for her subsistence because of her ruined reputation.[175] Though she chooses to remain as virtuous as the Virgin Mary, she is exposed to infamy as "a true daughter of Eve!" and is doomed to wretchedness.[176]

Stripping the ending of Richardson's narrative of a spiritual triumph which veils the reality of the heroine's defeat, Hays instead shows how a helpless woman is driven to death because "*injustice* has triumphed" over her and all her endeavours to support herself.[177] Ty has pointed out that, unlike Richardson, Hays "dwells on the sordid details of her heroine's poverty, unemployment, and even starvation", and "uses tragic events to illustrate the injustice of late eighteenth-century social

[172] Hays, *The Victim of Prejudice*, 11-19.
[173] Ibid., 70.
[174] Ibid., 118-120.
[175] Ibid., 118, 120.
[176] Ibid., 70, 14.
[177] Ibid., 172.

customs and laws, and the abuse of patriarchal authority".[178] In other words, Mary's experience illustrates the social reality which an unprotected woman with a ruined reputation faces. The difficulties Mary encounters are ones which Richardson failed to address. Furthermore, Mary does not paint death in as magnificent a light as Clarissa does. To her, it is "a welcome and never-ending repose" after her exhausting struggle for virtuous independence.[179] The indignation felt by Clarissa is expressed explicitly by Mary, who wants to continue with life and does not glorify her approaching death but puts emphasis on her defeat, instead of hiding that under a mask of serene forgiveness.[180]

Rather than replacing the connection with the earthly father and patriarchal society with an imagined one with the heavenly father, Hays emphasises the maternal link in her novel. Embedded in Mary Raymond's tale is a letter written by her "wretched mother" to Mr Raymond, a memoir which she intends for her daughter someday to read and learn from.[181] In the letter written by her mother, though the older Mary acknowledged that she made herself "a monster" by immersing herself in shame after she eloped and became a transgressive woman, she saw herself as a "victim […] of society" because she was not given a second chance to redeem herself.[182] Though the heroine never met the older Mary, the image of her mother – who "seemed to urge me to take example from her fate!" – keeps appearing in her imagination and reminding her to sustain her self-respect.[183] Even though her daughter adheres to the principle given her by Mr. Raymond

[178] Eleanor Ty, introduction to *The Victim of Prejudice*, xxiv.
[179] Hays, *The Victim of Prejudice*, 3.
[180] Ibid., 174, 3.
[181] Ibid., 174, 66.
[182] Ibid., 67, 63, 66.
[183] Ibid., 123, 69.

according to her mother's "dying precepts" to maintain her dignity, the younger Mary cannot escape a similar fate.[184]

Just as Clarissa wishes to publish her letters, Mary intends for her memoir to be read by other "victim[s] of despotism, oppression, or error", with a dim hope that there could be value in her sacrifice if future generations of women could break out of the cycle of wretchedness because of it.[185] She writes: "*I have lived in vain*! unless the story of my sorrows should kindle in the heart of man, in behalf of my oppressed sex, the sacred claims of humanity and justice".[186] Unlike her mother who penned her story just for Mr. Raymond and her daughter, the protagonist makes her own public and she speaks directly to men. Through Mary Raymond, who represents women in general and especially those without family influence or financial independence, Hays boldly argues for career opportunities for women.[187]

In 1798, before *The Victim of Prejudice* was made available in print, Hays published her *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women*. She explains in the advertisement that the work was written with "The professed purpose of advancing and defending the pretensions of women, to a superior degree of consideration in society, to that which they at present enjoy".[188] In this treatise, she argues that, "by gentle means and by degrees", a "gradual reformation" in the education of women would "restore female character to its dignity and independence".[189] In conveying her conviction that women are not naturally inferior,

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[184] Ibid., 69-70.
[185] Ibid., 3.
[186] Ibid., 74.
[187] Ibid., 1, 174.
[188] *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women*. (London: Printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard; and J. Bell, Oxford-Street, 1798), a.
[189] Ibid., a, iv.

and addressing "the men of Great Britain" "in the humble attire of a petitioner", Hays hopes to convince them that "ALL PREJUDICES are inimical to [the] happiness and interests" of mankind and she expresses her hope that British men's "ardent love of liberty, and […] justice with regard to themselves" would be extended to their female counterparts.[190] In other words, Hays believes that the status of women should be improved not only for equality, but also for the benefit of society in general. In the following year, using *Clarissa* as an inter-text to convey her radical ideas through a work of fiction, *The Victim of Prejudice*, Hays allows her virtuous but transgressive Mary Raymond to make an explicit "last appeal!" to men on behalf of all women.[191]

Hays' rewriting of Richardson's novel shows that *Clarissa* remained a relevant and influential text at the end of the century though attitudes towards female identity and female virtue were changing. *Clarissa* transformed the way that transgressive women could be discussed in novels when Richardson created the troubling figure of an admirable, pious fallen woman and disobedient daughter. This novel offers later women writers such as Hays a point of reference on which to develop their thoughts about gender equality. In the following chapters of the project, I will explore the ways in which Frances Burney repeatedly incorporates Clarissa's story into those of her own heroines. While Hays rewrote Richardson's tragedy into another tragedy, Burney's oeuvre of novels rebels against *Clarissa*'s tragic plot. In stripping away the illusions surrounding Clarissa's suicide, Hays allows her heroine to voice her discontent and make a plea for change. Furthermore, in depicting the tragic fate of a victimised woman and appealing to her readers'

[190] Ibid., i, a, v.
[191] *The Victim of Prejudice*, 168.

sympathy, Hays hopes that her work would contribute to correcting the prejudices which prevent women from becoming useful members of society. Burney also explores female difficulties in her novels using plot echoes from *Clarissa*, but her protagonists are "neither plunged in the depths of misery, nor exalted to *unhuman happiness*" at the end of the narratives.[192] In contrast to Hays' work, Burney's fiction tells stories of women who pragmatically make the most of the situations they find themselves in, demonstrating that women can find contentment in their society.

[192] Frances Burney, letter to Samuel Crisp, April 6, 1782. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume V, 1782-1783*, 43-44.

Chapter 2: *Evelina* and *Caroline Evelyn*: Learning from the Sentimental Subplot

In the prefaces to *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778), Burney writes to her father and the public as an anonymous author "happily wrapped up in a mantle of impenetrable obscurity".[1] Her anonymity gives her the courage confidently to characterise herself as a successor of "*the great writers*" and to speak of "*Rousseau, Johnson, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollet*" as her influences.[2] In orphaning herself by becoming nameless and adopting a range of literary fathers, Burney gives herself the authority to make a claim about the merit of her work. She employs the same technique in the story. Her heroine Evelina is an orphan and a "*Nobody*" who is not known by her real surname.[3] Evelina's anonymity allows her greater freedom to act for herself in bringing about her marriage with Orville.

My work shows that Burney's novels have strong connections with Richardson's *Clarissa*. The final section of the previous chapter is concerned with the way that Mary Hays adapted Richardson's tragedy for a tragedy of her own. But in the present chapter, I consider how the sentimental and the comic are blended together in Burney's *Evelina*. I also consider the influences of Eliza Haywood's prose fiction. Haywood is one of the key figures in the history of the novel.[4] Because

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[1] Frances Burney, *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World. In a Series of Letters*, ed. Susan Kubica Howard, 2nd ed. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000), 96.
[2] Ibid., 97, 95.
[3] Ibid., 421.
[4] Eliza Haywood is an exemplary female writer who began writing in the early eighteenth century. In her day, she was successful, well-known and influential,

she had a long writing career, her works reflect the changes found in both the stylistic and thematic aspects of the genre as well as the social changes which took place during the decades that she was writing. Though Burney names Richardson as an influence and integrates elements of Clarissa's story into her novel for the history of Caroline Evelyn, I will show that her novel has also been influenced by Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751).

There is no evidence that Burney had read the works by Haywood, but studies have shown that there are links which can be found between Burney's *Evelina* and earlier work by Haywood. For instance, James P. Erickson discussed many parallel incidents and characters between the two.[5] Though he thinks that both novels support the heroine's conformity to established social rules, he argues that Burney acts on the "neglected possibilities in *Betsy Thoughtless*" and "breaks new ground in her stress on the theme of inadvertency that Mrs. Haywood had

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even though she was not always respected. Her importance in the rise of the English novel, as well as in other genres of writings, has long been recognised. See, for example, Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 7; Dale Spender, *Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers before Jane Austen* (London: Pandora, 1986), 6; Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 12-13. Spencer comments that "Haywood's long career shows that provided she was prolific and versatile, a woman could make her living by writing in the first half of the century". Haywood is considered by Spender as one of the "mothers of the novel", a pivotal female figure who shaped literary history as a pioneer of the new form. Ingrassia argues that "Haywood's significance can better be understood by recontextualizing her within the professionalization of authorship and the development of Grub Street" because the study of her works would "illuminate our understanding of her male contemporaries", such as Alexander Pope and Richardson. Rather than to think of Haywood and other women writers as "part of an alternate literary history", Ingrassia encourages us to reintegrate Haywood into the larger history of English literature.

[5] James P. Erickson, "Evelina and Betsy Thoughtless," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 6, no. 1 (1964): 96-98.

announced, but neglected".[6] He is of the opinion that Burney is more successful in bringing across her moral purpose because her heroine's mistakes proceed from "mere lapses of taste and conduct" rather than wilfulness.[7]

Jane Spencer sees *Betsy Thoughtless* and *Evelina* as didactic novels developed from the same female tradition, which have for their heroine a coquette who has to learn and reform, focusing on the female mind and women's moral growth.[8] She suggests that the tradition is firmly established after the publication of *Betsy Thoughtless*, in which the heroine reforms without the help of a lover-mentor.[9] Suggesting that the novels in the didactic tradition are "not so entirely […] conformist" because distrustful heroes are criticised, Spencer contends that women writers were arguing, on behalf of their sex, "for greater freedom of action on the grounds that female virtue could be trusted".[10] Spencer describes Evelina as "a Betsy Thoughtless with greater delicacy, living in a more vividly rendered social world".[11] Instead of reforming, Evelina gains recognition for her desire to act properly and morally.[12] Though she is "an unconscious coquette", Spencer argues that Evelina's indecorous behaviour allows her "a special kind of power" in being enabled to choose her future husband.[13]

While Spencer considers Haywood and Burney as novelists, Emily Hodgson Anderson is concerned with their shared interests and involvement in the theatre.

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[6] Ibid., 98, 100.
[7] Ibid., 100.
[8] Jane Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 141-142.
[9] Ibid., 144, 152-153.
[10] Ibid., 157.
[11] Ibid., 153.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 153-154.

Both writers had ambitions to become playwrights, but their endeavours to stage their own plays had not met with as much success as their fictional prose. In Anderson's study on Eliza Haywood, Frances Burney, Elizabeth Inchbald and Maria Edgeworth, four women writers who worked in both the genres of novels and plays, she argues that they wrote about theatrical heroines who employ "a strategy of […] 'self-conscious performance'" in order to express their desires.[14] She suggests that, while Haywood calls attention to her heroines' artifice in her earlier works such as *Fantomina*, the didactic and sentimental fiction which appeared later in the eighteenth century – including *Betsy Thoughtless* – employs a subtler emotional expression, by manipulating "spontaneous outbursts of sentimentality".[15] For instance, Burney's heroines "channel [their] sufferings through carefully crafted displays", which are presented as involuntary, to capture the attention of their intended audiences.[16] As I mentioned in the introduction, while I agree that these dramatic scenes are crucial to Burney's plots, I suggest that they had been consciously manipulated by the author to take place when climactic sentimental scenes occur so that the stories do not end in tragedy and the heroines can be restored to a state of peace.

Developing from this line of argument, I suggest that both Haywood and Burney incorporate sentimental comedy in their novels in order to enable their suffering heroine, who is pressured to perform propriety, temporarily to escape control at moments of sentimental crises and seize the agency to make decisions for

[14] Emily Hodgson Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century Authorship and the Play of Fiction: Novels and the Theater, Haywood to Austen* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 22-23.
[15] Ibid., 18, 44-45.
[16] Ibid., 76, 46.

herself at the turning points of the narratives, changing the course of her life for the better. Sentimental comedy is a type of comedy which has a moralising effect and appeals to the pathos of its spectators.[17] This genre of plays brings together the Restoration rake and the sentimental heroine,[18] at a time when the growing middle class created a demand for plays with explicit moral messages.[19] The comedy of manners, a genre closely identified with Restoration drama, is involved with winning in the game of life with wit and intrigue.[20] In these plays, the characters are concerned with the ways that they can cleverly perform and conceal outrageous acts, such as robbery, adultery, rape, and murder.[21] Rakish characters found in libertine plays adhere to "a concept of individual licence".[22] Believing that they are above social control because of their aristocratic privilege, rakes indulge in self-centred, sensual extravagance and violent crimes.[23] The libertine values found in these plays were replaced by morality in comedies produced later in the period.[24] As Brian Corman has pointed out, there are quite a number of post-1688 Restoration

[17] Frank H. Ellis, *Sentimental Comedy: Theory & Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 19; Katharine Worth, *Sheridan & Goldsmith* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 60. According to Ellis, sentimental comedy is "comedy on the stage that arouses sentimental reactions", but Worth defines this sub-genre as "Comedy turned morally circumspect and 'nice'".
[18] Richard Hindry Barker, *Mr Cibber of Drury Lane* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966), 22-23.
[19] Maureen Sullivan, introduction to *Colley Cibber: Three Sentimental Comedies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), xl.
[20] David L. Hirst, *Comedy of Manners* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1979), 1-2.
[21] Ibid., 2.
[22] Gillian Manning, *Libertine Plays of the Restoration*, ed. Gillian Manning (London: Everyman, 2001), xxiii.
[23] Erin Mackie, "Boys Will Be Boys: Masculinity, Criminality, and the Restoration Rake," *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 46, no. 2 (2005): 129-130.
[24] Brian Corman, "Comedy," in *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, ed. Deborah Payne Fisk, Deborah Payne Fisk, and Deborah Christine Payne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 65.

comedies interested in the topic of marital discord.[25] The sentimental comedies written by Colley Cibber – who, arguably, is the playwright who created the dramatic sub-genre – were an effort to reform the stage, resolving the problems of dysfunctional marriages with the reformation of the immoral husband. But Haywood's and Burney's novels do not depict women who find contentment in dysfunctional marriages or the reformations of rakes. Richardson's *Clarissa* is a literary precedent in which a sentimental victim refuses to be united to a libertine. But Haywood's and Burney's fictions do not follow a tragic plot. Betsy and Evelina are both sentimental heroines who escape sexual ruin and a tragic end, and marry respectable gentlemen of sensibility. In both *Betsy Thoughtless* and *Evelina*, the heroine ultimately makes the right choice and finds happiness in a promising marriage.

The present chapter is divided into three sections. Before my discussion of *Evelina*, I will look at *Betsy Thoughtless* and consider its intimate relationship with the plays performed on the eighteenth-century stage. I will show that Betsy experiences the life of a coquette before she goes through a sentimental journey as an unappreciated but dutiful wife to an unworthy husband. Upon the painful discovery of Munden's infidelity, Betsy differs from the heroines of Cibber's sentimental comedies in making the decision to leave her husband and assert her independence in order to save herself from misery. In the second part of this chapter, I turn to *Evelina* and Caroline Evelyn's unfortunate history which has parallels to certain aspects of Clarissa's experience. I suggest that, in transferring the sentimental story to the heroine's mother, Burney's novel conveys a morality

[25] Ibid., 65-69.

developed from Richardson's about the fatal consequences of the selfish actions of the rake at the same time that it allows the heroine to enjoy marital felicity rather than tragic ruin. Finally, I will discuss the active role that Evelina plays in securing the affections of the man she finds worthy and desirable, by disobeying her guardian's commands and giving herself small freedoms in her behaviour without appearing wilfully undutiful. In doing so, she has allowed herself a temporary escape from control and the agency with which to enable herself to marry with dignity. As I have argued, there is an underlying message in Burney's fiction that it is necessary for women to become more assertive in order to gain more conscious control of their destiny.

From Miss Thoughtless to Mrs. Trueworth: The Coquette and the Sentimental Heroine

Because Haywood was an actress and dramatist, as well as a writer of prose fiction, I consider *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* an important fictional model which brings together the conventions of the novelistic and dramatic forms. In this section, I analyse the novel by considering Betsy's name as a convention of both prose fiction and the stage. In giving Betsy a name which declares her dominant unthinking characteristic to her readers, Haywood was inviting them to compare and contrast Betsy to a number of dramatic figures with whom most of her contemporary readers would have been familiar. Betsy is given an opportunity to experience the lives of two types of stock characters in Restoration plays – the coquette and the wronged wife – as Miss Thoughtless and Mrs. Munden, before she earns the title of Mrs. Trueworth. Moreover, the change in the name of the heroine

from Thoughtless to Trueworth after proving her worth is similar to John Bunyan's Graceless becoming Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) because of his faith. In making references to Nicholas Rowe's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714) and Colley Cibber's sentimental comedy *The Careless Husband* (1704), readers are reminded of the similarities between Betsy's circumstances and those of Lady Betty Modish and Lady Easy while being reminded of the fall of Jane Shore. Cibber's story is reworked by Haywood in *Betsy Thoughtless* to present an alternate way of treating the themes of dysfunctional marriages, abusive husbands and infidelity. This novel is an exploration of the possibility for a woman to live an eventful life without losing her respectability, with a heroine who is not destroyed by the bad decisions she has made and is given a second chance to find earthly happiness after she leaves her husband, when she has become worthy of her reward.

Betsy Thoughtless belongs to the didactic tradition. The names of the fictional figures resemble those found in allegories.[26] In the novel, some of the names suggest certain moral qualities of the characters. For example, Betsy Thoughtless is an unthinking heroine in need of correction; Miss Forward is a bad influence embodying a characteristic which is not valued in respectable ladies; Lady Trusty is a wise female advisor Betsy could depend on; and Trueworth is the heroine's worthy lover-mentor. Therefore, the narrative is constructed with some of the key character types which make up novels of the didactic tradition, as discussed

[26] See Roger Pooley, "*The Pilgrim's Progress* and the Line of Allegory," in *The Cambridge Companion to Bunyan*, ed. Anne Dunan-Page (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 82. He explains the way that characters in allegories are "examples of Christian virtue" or vice and their names give a clear indication of their dominant trait.

by Jane Spencer in her study.[27] Because the novel dramatizes the process of the heroine's reformation, some critics believe that Haywood tried to reinvent herself as a moral writer in this work while many others resist this kind of reading.[28] I suggest that the novel can be interpreted in two different ways. One way of understanding it is that Betsy – an erring heroine – modifies her social behaviour, because of her desire to earn the esteem of Trueworth – her lover-mentor – before she is finally rewarded with a desirable marriage. However, Betsy's story could also be read as a female pilgrim undergoing her earthly trials to prove her moral superiority to Trueworth before she is rewarded with his name and becomes the moral centre of his family because her husband fails to live up to the quality suggested by that name. Her maiden name Thoughtless is potentially inspired by the original name of Bunyan's protagonist, Graceless, from *The Pilgrim's Progress*, an allegory of a Christian's life. The name of this character changes from Graceless to Christian after he becomes enlightened by the Bible.[29] He then embarks on a

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[27] Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist*, 142-143. For more critical discussion on the lover-mentor or the mentor-lover, see also Patricia Menon, *Austen, Eliot, Charlotte Brontë and the Mentor-Lover* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

[28] See, for example, Spencer, *The Rise of the Woman Novelist*; Kathryn R. King, "The Pious Mrs. Haywood; or, Thoughts on Epistles for the Ladies (1748–1750)," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 14, no. 4 (2014), 204; *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), 7. Spencer thinks that "Haywood's earlier feminist protest has been lost in her recreation of herself as a new "moral" novelist". In contrast, even though King observes that "Haywood was a superbly performative writer" and is "more than willing to entertain the possibility that […] [she] was nothing loath to remake herself in the image of the virtuous, improving woman writer", King also argues that "from the mid-1730s until her death in 1756 Haywood engaged energetically and at times vehemently in anti-ministerial satire and journalism". King points out that Haywood was in fact meddling with politics in her periodicals and her "complex and sometimes brilliant works of the creative imagination" from the 1740s and 1750s can be fully appreciated only with the understanding of her political engagements.

[29] John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. N. H. Keeble (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 38, 8.

pilgrimage and undergoes the "trial of faith" in order to reach the Celestial City, where he may "receive the comfort of all [his] toil" for eternity.[30] It has been suggested by Roger Pooley that the journey taken by Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress* is "not that of an Everyman figure, but of an elect Christian".[31] Haywood similarly shows in her work that Betsy is not Everywoman, but a virtuous woman with unwavering faith and the fortitude to withstand difficult trials. Betsy's story also contrasts with that of Richardson's Clarissa, in allowing the heroine earthly happiness rather than an everlasting spiritual reward for her virtues.

The changes of Betsy's family name, from Thoughtless to Munden and finally to Trueworth, represent the stages of growth she undergoes because of the individuals she meets and the experience she goes through, before she becomes a truly virtuous and worthy person. In *The Young Ladies Conduct* (1722), John Essex explains that "CHASTITY may be consider'd three different ways": "the Virgin State"; "that of Marriage"; and "that of Widowhood".[32] In addition to this understanding of chastity, Essex states that "this Virtue is never maintained without daily conflicts" because "those who want Resolution, want Chastity".[33] So, women must go through trials to prove their virtue the same way that Bunyan's Christian has to prove his faith. In Haywood's work, her heroine goes through all three states described by Essex, as Betsy Thoughtless and Mrs. Betsy Munden. As a result, reminiscent of the way that Pamela receives her earthly reward of social elevation after her trials, Betsy earns the title of Trueworth only when she has proved herself worthy of it by demonstrating all three forms of chastity.

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[30] Ibid., 38, 131, 130.
[31] Pooley, "*The Pilgrim's Progress* and the Line of Allegory," 86.
[32] John Essex, *The Young Ladies Conduct*, 117.
[33] *The Young Ladies Conduct*, 119.

Along the fictional journey leading to this significant moral growth, in a critical incident which leads to the rupture between Haywood's hero and heroine, Trueworth takes on the role of a lover-mentor. He advises Betsy to forfeit her friendship with Miss Forward and reminds her of the fragile nature of female reputation. He uses a dramatic line by Nicholas Rowe, who apparently is Betsy's "favourite author", to remind her that a woman who transgressed "sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more".[34] He is quoting from *Jane Shore*,[35] which is categorised by Rowe himself in the epilogue as one of the "she-tragedies" he contributed to "the reforming stage"[36] – a genre which is described by Jean I. Marsden as a serious, pathetic, female-centred dramatic portrayal of the sufferings undergone mostly by women who have sinned sexually, either as wilful offenders or victims.[37] These plays were written during the period of 1690 to 1714.[38] Marsden suggests in her study of she-tragedies that Nicholas Rowe's *Fair Penitent* (1703) and *Jane Shore* are among the second generation of dramatic works of this genre, written in the early decades of the eighteenth century, when drama came to be seen as moral

[34] Eliza Fowler Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, ed. Christine Blouch (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1998), 232.
[35] Nicholas Rowe's most popular work and, in general, a hugely successful play in the eighteenth century since its initial production. See Harry William Pedicord, introduction to *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), xiii, xx. In the few years leading up to the publication of *Betsy Thoughtless*, *Jane Shore* still proved popular. See *The London Stage, 1660-1800: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces, Together with Casts, Box-Receipts and Contemporary Comment Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period, Part 4: 1747-1776*, ed. George Winchester Jr. Stone, 1st ed. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965).
[36] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, ed. Harry William Pedicord (1714; London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 74-75.
[37] Jean I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 61-62.
[38] Ibid., 61-62.

lesson.[39] Marsden argues that the stage became "a 'school' of virtue for women" by presenting powerful spectacles of suffering and giving female spectators a warning about the disastrous consequences of sexual sins.[40]

However, the moral lessons behind such tragedies seem to be lost on the thoughtless Betsy. After her disagreement with Trueworth, she is at the theatre to see a performance with Miss Forward. But Betsy is more preoccupied with the gallantries of a few strangers than "the moving scenes" performed on stage; and because of her inattention, readers are never told which play was being performed.[41] To Betsy, tragedies are entertainments rather than serious moral lessons for her to reflect on. Ironically, the episode of Betsy's near-rape experience, which Haywood describes in the caption under the chapter title as an incident which "*Cannot fail of exciting compassion in some readers, though it may move others to laughter*", happens on the night that Betsy has just diverted herself with a tragedy in the playhouse.[42] She has to undergo this adventure because she was heedless of the double warning she received that day: first, from Trueworth in his advice supported by the line taken from Rowe's tragedy; and later, from another tragic play, possibly another she-tragedy. Her experience could have easily taken a tragic turn had she not been spared by the libertine who almost violated her and then comically lectured her, telling her that "a young lady more endangered her reputation by an acquaintance of one woman of ill fame, than by receiving the visits of twenty men".[43] Even though his words are little different from what Trueworth said on the

[39] Ibid., 134, 139.
[40] Ibid., 164-166.
[41] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 236.
[42] Ibid., 235-241.
[43] Ibid., 241.

subject, this dearly bought experience enforces the lesson and gives more weight to the advice offered by her lover-mentor.

After this incident, Betsy Thoughtless becomes more pensive. When she leaves the theatre after watching Colley Cibber's sentimental comedy – *The Careless Husband*[44] – with a good female influence, Miss Mabel, Betsy is "very much affected" and "full of the most serious reflections" on her vanity.[45] Betsy compares herself to Lady Betty Modish and sees Trueworth in Lord Morelove. She believes that Trueworth will wait for her to reform her ways. However, instead of thinking of Betsy as a coquette he could eventually make his virtuous wife, Trueworth begins to consider her as a potentially more dangerous character in his allusion to Rowe's play. He makes the decision to leave Betsy because he sees the possibility of her becoming the next Jane Shore, an adulterous wife, whose wronged but forgiving husband shares in her wretchedness and misery at the end of the play.[46] While Betsy thinks of the courtship between Trueworth and herself as a comedy that would end happily, he foresees a tragic conclusion to their union. Betsy's carelessness of her reputation and refusal to listen to his words of advice make it possible for him to credit Flora Mellasin's malicious misconstruction as an unnamed informer of Betsy's charitable act of supporting a helpless orphan, which is reminiscent of Alicia's betrayal and misconstruction of Jane Shore's intentions in her anonymous letter to Gloster.[47] When Betsy receives the letter from Trueworth to signal the end of his courtship to her, she finds that Trueworth is not Morelove

[44] This play was performed three nights in 1749, three nights in 1750, and once in 1751. *The London Stage, 1660-1800, Part 4: 1747-1776*.
[45] *Betsy Thoughtless*, 286-287.
[46] Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, 69-73.
[47] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 249, 279-284.

when she complains: "'Tis plain he never loved me".[48] In choosing his wife, Trueworth is not a romantic and he marries Harriot Loveit, a woman who chooses to remain in the comfort of security, because she is a much safer option than Betsy.

In contrast to *The Careless Husband*, in which Morelove's constancy is tested by Lady Betty,[49] Trueworth casts off the character of a suitor and comes to represent an ideal for Betsy. He is a prospect regretted by her, because her marriage to him would have led her down an alternate, smoother path in life. Before her marriage, Betsy enjoys her power in courtship and Trueworth feels as though he has been treated as her "slave".[50] In this story, the heroine has to come to terms with the powerlessness of her position as a woman and realise that the choice of a life partner is for the man to make, even though he humbles himself as a suitor. Betsy regrets not recognising Trueworth's value and showing him her own worthiness before she loses his heart to Harriot. His marriage to Harriot is juxtaposed to a sale which took place on the same day, when Haywood concludes the chapter of this life-changing event with: "the sale being over for that day, every one returned to their respective habitations".[51] Betsy loses Trueworth to a higher bidder who knows better how to value his worth, and she is then rushed into marriage with Munden by her brothers because she cannot "expect a second Trueworth".[52] Her fate is not comparable to Lady Betty's, because her hero is not as constant as Morelove, and she succumbs to her family's pressure to settle for a lesser man. She has to go through the emotional

[48] ibid., 288.
[49] Colley Cibber, *The Careless Husband. A Comedy*, in *Colley Cibber: Three Sentimental Comedies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), 170.
[50] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 245.
[51] Ibid., 468-473.
[52] Ibid., 444.

pain of becoming the other leading female figure of *The Careless Husband*, Lady Easy – the virtuous but unappreciated wife – before she is allowed to enjoy her happy ending with Trueworth.

The story of Betsy's first marriage is a reworking of the scenario in *The Careless Husband* in addition to Haywood's own play *A Wife to Be Lett* (1724). When Munden takes off his disguise as a suitor, Betsy is forced to play the part of an obliging wife to a "lordly tyrant".[53] Haywood's Mrs. Graspall and Cibber's Lady Easy both exhibit the kind of patience practised by sentimental wife figures. In *A Wife to Be Lett*, Mrs. Graspall has a mercenary husband who tries to make a cuckold of himself by selling his wife's sexual favours to her admirer Sir Harry Beaumont.[54] To Mr. Graspall, his wife is only "a Grace to my House", a property that he can "let […] out to Hire" for two thousand pounds.[55] Betsy is similarly treated as if she were a commodity by her husband, who thinks of her only as "a necessary appendix to his house" rather than someone he respects or values.[56]

In Haywood's play, she adheres to the pattern of Cibber's sentimental comedies in bringing about a reconciliation between the immoral husband and the wronged wife. When she wrote *A Wife to Be Lett*, Haywood was probably trying to appeal to an audience that appreciated Colley Cibber's comedies.[57] An indication of this is the important role she gave Colley Cibber's son, Theophilus, a young,

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[53] Ibid., 472, 507.
[54] *A Wife to Be Lett*, in *Selected Fiction and Drama of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 44-48.
[55] Ibid., 46, 76.
[56] *Betsy Thoughtless*, 600.
[57] *The Careless Husband* was performed three nights in 1720, four nights in 1721, five nights in 1722, four nights in 1723, and four nights in 1724. *The London Stage, 1660-1800, Part 2: 1700-1729*, ed. Emmett Langdon Avery, 1st ed. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965).

nineteen-year-old actor who was only beginning to receive good roles.[58] He was cast as the fop, Toywell, and he also spoke the prologue.[59] This is significant because his father made his name not only as the playwright of several highly successful comedies, but he was also known for playing foppish parts – such as Sir Novelty Fashion from *Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion* (1696) and Lord Foppington from *The Careless Husband* – which are characters he created for himself to exhibit his talents as a comedian.[60] In *A Wife to Be Lett*, Haywood ends the story in a similar vein as the elder Cibber. Though Mrs. Graspall is disgusted by her husband's sordid nature, the play concludes with her offering him forgiveness for his outrageous behaviour and making him the promise to "ever make it my Study to prove myself a most obedient Wife" and submit to his will once again, after publicly humiliating him and accepting his apology and unconvincing declaration that he has learned his lesson.[61]

In her novel, Haywood explores the possibility of a separation between the abusive husband and the victimised wife. Haywood is, as Anderson argues, under less constraint in writing a novel because it is "a generic form that needed the approval of fewer people in order to circulate and that did not require instantaneous

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[58] Philip H. Highfill, Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800*, vol. 3: Cabanel to Cory (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Univeristy Press, 1973), 242.
[59] Haywood, *A Wife to Be Lett*, 3-5.
[60] Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling, general introduction to *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (Madison, Teaneck, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2000), 12.
[61] Haywood, *A Wife to Be Lett*, 76-78.

popularity to remain in circulation".[62] Therefore, she has greater freedom to conclude her narrative in a more innovative way in *Betsy Thoughtless*. Even though Betsy initially tries to accept her lot after making the wrong choice for a husband, she eventually finds it impossible to continue to be a patient wife when she discovers Munden's amour with Mademoiselle de Roquelair.[63] In Cibber's *Careless Husband*, though the heroine is aware of Sir Charles' unfaithfulness since the beginning of the play, she turns a blind eye to his extramarital affairs and resolves to forgive her husband when he makes it impossible for her to continue feigning ignorance.[64] Eighteenth-century audiences were moved to pity Lady Easy when she "starts and trembles" upon finding Sir Charles asleep with her servant in the scene for which the play is famous.[65] Lady Easy leaves her Steinkirk on her husband's bald head to show him tactfully her awareness of his unfaithfulness.[66] In presenting herself as "an easy Wife" who is always in good humour before her husband, Lady Easy has to tolerate her husband's infidelity unnaturally.[67] At the end of the story, she earns her "Reward" for never abandoning the role she is pressured into playing, as Sir Charles resolves to put an end to his extramarital affairs when he recognises his wife's virtues.[68]

Betsy's situation is similar to Lady Easy's but her reaction is vastly different. Haywood's narrator describes Munden's amour as "*a most shocking instance of*

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[62] Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century Authorship and the Play of Fiction: Novels and the Theater, Haywood to Austen*, 30.
[63] Ibid., 584-589.
[64] Cibber, *The Careless Husband*, 95.
[65] Cibber, *The Careless Husband*, 156-157.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., 160, 157.
[68] Ibid., 159-162.

infidelity and ingratitude".[69] Her novel's heroine then tearfully voices the opinion that infidelity is the "last act of baseness" that a husband could commit.[70] Even Lady Loveit, a woman with a "scrupulous disposition", approves of Betsy's intention to leave him because Betsy's toleration of her husband's affair would be "an example of submitting to things required of them neither by law nor nature".[71] In Haywood's story, a wife cannot and is not expected to try to change the nature of her husband. Betsy decides to throw off the patient wife character to become herself again, rather than to bear the pain of unreasonable servitude without complaint and hoping to find contentment in a dysfunctional marriage.

Betsy is then given a second chance, with the convenient deaths of Trueworth's perfect wife and her own abusive husband. She is enabled to marry, as Haywood advises in the prologue of *A Wife to Be Lett*, "the Worthy, and the Wise" who can "sweetly pay / Your soft Submission".[72] Though Trueworth is not a truly worthy character, because he has shown himself to be a hypocrite in his affair with Flora Mellasin,[73] the novel suggests that he is worth making the sacrifice of submission for, compared to a man such as Munden who does not at all value his wife. Like the intrigue of Fantomina, one of the amatory heroines in Haywood's earlier romances, "which considering the Time it lasted, was as full of Variety as

[69] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 582.
[70] Ibid., 590.
[71] Ibid., 595.
[72] *A Wife to Be Lett*, 4.
[73] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 231-233. Trueworth considers his relationship with Flora Mellasin "a pleasing amusement" which should be "remembered but as a dream".

any, perhaps, that many Ages has produced",[74] *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* and Mrs. Betsy Munden is an eventful one because the heroine learns, first-hand, from the experiences of multiple women – Lady Betty, Mrs. Graspall and Lady Easy – in one lifetime before Haywood's prose version of sentimental comedy concludes with the promise that her suffering heroine has earned the title of Mrs. Trueworth. By the end of her story, Betsy has shown that she is more virtuous than the lover-mentor hero himself, and she becomes the moral centre of the Trueworth family.

"Look not like thy unfortunate mother":
Transferring Clarissa's Story to the Heroine's Mother in *Evelina*

In *Evelina*, the most powerful sentimental element is not found in the suffering of the heroine. Instead, it is integrated into her mother's story. *The History of Caroline Evelyn*, the draft of a novel written by Burney before her fifteenth birthday, is not the narrative she deemed proper to publish.[75] If this early draft of Caroline's story is similar to the one depicted in *Evelina*, the tragedy of the irremediable ruin of a virtuous sentimental figure is not the main narrative Burney chooses to tell. Burney does not have to characterise her heroine as another Clarissa in order to produce a novel that "would have disgraced neither the head nor the heart of Richardson" (a compliment given to her by an enthusiastic contemporary

[74] *Fantomina, or, Love in a Maze*, in *Fantomina and Other Works*, ed. Alexander Pettit, Margaret Case Croskery, and Anna C. Patchias (1724; Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 71.
[75] "Frances Burney: A Brief Chronology," in *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World. In a Series of Letters*, ed. Susan Kubica Howard (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000), 79.

reviewer).[76] Burney's early work was burnt in 1767 to give way to a new heroine, Evelina, who "struggled herself into life".[77] In a subplot of this comic novel, Caroline Belmont writes to Evelina, "look not like thy unfortunate mother", in the hope that her daughter could have a happier life.[78] But readers find out that Evelina looks identical to her mother, and her name is derived from her mother's maiden name Evelyn, suggesting a strong link between them. At the beginning, Evelina seems to be a character destined for ruin when she makes her entrance into the world from the countryside, with "Eve" in her name, an appearance of illegitimacy, and no parental protection. However, her narrative does not end in tragedy. Caroline Evelyn's unfortunate history is made a subplot within her daughter's story, to provide the novel with a poignant moment of moral seriousness. Even though Evelina is the daughter of a disobedient daughter who suffered the ill consequences of her rash decision in trusting a rake, the heroine's disobedience and agency do not lead her to ruin and she is able to find marital happiness in a union with a worthy man.

The subplot about Caroline Evelyn seems to be based on the history of Clarissa Harlowe. At the same age as Clarissa when her story begins, Caroline was almost forced by the tyrannical Madame Duval and her stepfather Monsieur Duval to marry a man she did not know.[79] Out of desperation, she eloped with a rakish young man who "rescued [her] from a forced marriage" only to become a

[76] "Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World," *The Critical review, or, Annals of literature* 46 (1778): 202.
[77] Frances Burney, *The Wanderer, or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Stephen Copley, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 8.
[78] *Evelina*, 478.
[79] Ibid., 103.

"barbarous betrayer" of her trust in denying their marriage, destroying her reputation and giving her the social stigma of an unmarried mother for the rest of her life.[80] Mr. Villars explains in a letter that Caroline's "sufferings were too acute for her tender frame" and she died on the day that she gave birth to Evelina.[81] But the account of Caroline's death that Mr. Villars gives to Lady Howard might be dressed in the same way that Belford chooses to depict Clarissa's suicide as a slow and mysterious death, as I analysed in detail in the first chapter.

Caroline Belmont's death might also be caused partly by despair and self-neglect. In Caroline's letter to Sir John Belmont, many similarities can be drawn with Clarissa's final written address to Lovelace. In Clarissa's carefully-worded posthumous letter, she reminds Lovelace that he is "only […] the cause […] of curtailing a life that might have been agreeable to myself"; but she thanks him for his cruelty because he gave her more years of glory in heaven.[82] Clarissa asks him to repent of his sins; but at the same time, she speaks of the unlikelihood that even his sincere repentance could save his soul, when she writes, "How difficult a grace […] to be obtained where the guilt is premeditated, wilful, and complicated!"[83] The letter ends with her forgiveness and "sincere prayer" that God will have mercy on him.[84]

Caroline's letter to Sir John Belmont, written in the same vein as Clarissa's recriminating letter of forgiveness to Lovelace, is tormenting to him. He says upon

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[80] Ibid., 104, 477.
[81] Ibid., 104.
[82] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), 1426.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., 1426, 1427.

reading it that "Ten thousand daggers could not have wounded me like this letter!"[85] Anticipating Sir John's remorse for her death, Caroline informs him of her willingness to forgive him on condition that he would clear her name by acknowledging their marriage and Evelina as his legitimate child.[86] She has his reformation in mind, hoping her death would teach him to "think with horror of the deceptions you have practised".[87] In assuring him that "my pity far exceeds my indignation" when she thinks of the remorse he is likely to feel, she offers Sir John consolation by letting him know that he will be in her prayers until her death.[88] Caroline Belmont's letter, like Clarissa's, serves to make the reader more inconsolable by reminding him of his baseness and demonstrates her magnanimity in her charitable pity and concern for the soul of a sinner. When Sir John reads it, he exclaims in agony that Caroline is "sainted!" and "blessed!" while he is "cursed for ever!"[89] Caroline follows Clarissa in portraying herself as a saintly woman and in torturing her tormentor with his own conscience.

This subplot plays an important part in the scene which has the strongest emotional effect on the novel's readers (as well as the heroine). Among Charles Burney's words of praise for her novel, Frances Burney recorded in her journal her father's opinion that "the scene between her [Evelina] & her Father, Sir John Belmont, is a scene for a *Tragedy*!" and that it is "wrought up in a most extraordinary manner!"[90] Charles Burney claimed that he "blubbered at it" and that

[85] Burney, *Evelina*, 530.
[86] Ibid., 478.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 479.
[89] Ibid., 530.
[90] Frances Burney, Journal 1778, Chesington, June 18, 1778, in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume III, the Streatham Years, Part 1,*

"Lady Hales & Miss Coussmaker are not yet recovered from hearing it" and are "quite ill".[91] Hester Thrale also told Frances Burney that "Mr Pepys […] says you should try at a Tragedy", mentioning the same scene as one of the passages which he particularly enjoyed.[92] In writing this affecting scene in *Evelina*, Burney seems to have taken for a model the tearful, moving scenes from sentimental comedies such as Colley Cibber's well-known *Love's Last Shift*,[93] which was a successful play known for making its audiences cry during the reconciliation scene between the leading couple.[94] In Cibber's play, Loveless – a rakish husband who perhaps inspired Richardson to name his unrepentant rake in *Clarissa* Lovelace – is converted overnight by his virtuous and patient wife Amanda who acted the part of a courtesan in order to regain his affection as a mistress and then convince him of the happiness of the married state and virtuous love when she reveals her identity to him the next morning.[95] The scene concludes happily, with Amanda accepting her husband with ready forgiveness and "tears of flowing Joy" after being afflicted by his debauchery and neglect for almost a decade, and with Loveless thanking

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1778-1779, ed. Lars E. Troide and Stewart J. Cooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 29.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Hester Lynch Thrale, letter to Frances Burney, from Streatham, December 19, 1778, in Ibid., 207. This letter is enclosed in Frances Burney's letter to Susanna Elizabeth Burney, from St Martin's Street, December 20, 1778.

[93] *Love's Last Shift* is one of the most performed comedies in the eighteenth century. It was presented at both royal theatres. See Viator and Burling, "*Love's Last Shift; or, the Fool in Fashion* (1696)," 33-34. It was more popular in the 1740s, the years leading up to *Clarissa*'s publication, than in the 1770s, the years preceding the release of *Evelina*. See *The London Stage, Part 3: 1729-1747*, ed. Arthur Hawley Scouten, 1st ed. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1965); *The London Stage, 1660-1800, Part 4: 1747-1776*.

[94] Barker, *Mr Cibber of Drury Lane*, 24.

[95] Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift; or, the Fool in Fashion*, in *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (1696; Madison, Teaneck, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2000), 91-95, 101-108.

providence for blessing him with a virtuous wife despite the wrongs he has done her.[96] Loveless' reformation was unconvincing to some of Cibber's contemporaries, which is shown by John Vanbrugh's speedy staging of a sequel to the play – *The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger* (1696) – which imagines the penitent husband of *Love's Last Shift* reverting to his old libertine ways.

Richardson responded to the portrayal of the reformed rake in his second novel, in making the conclusions to both Clarissa's and Lovelace's narratives tragic, and showing the conduct of the aristocratic rake both as self-destructive and damaging to others. Burney's novel shares the moral agenda of Richardson's novel, with its incorporation of elements from both *Clarissa* and the model of the sentimental comedy. There are similarities between Loveless and Amanda's reconciliation scene, and the meeting between the father and daughter in *Evelina*, in the sentimentality displayed in them as well as the alternate kneeling and rising of characters. However, the forgiving wife in Cibber's play is replaced by her daughter and a posthumous letter in *Evelina*. Even after burning his marriage certificate almost two decades ago, Sir John is confronted with the consequences of his actions when his daughter Evelina, who carries the "certificate of [her] birth […] in [her] countenance", forces herself into his presence.[97] The depiction of Evelina begging on her knees for her father, who is overwhelmed by guilt, to spare her a glance and give her his blessings might remind readers of the image of Amanda asking in a suppliant posture for "One kin[d], one pitying look" from Loveless.[98] While Loveless "tremble[s] to behold" Amanda, whose appearance has changed because

[96] Ibid., 106-108.
[97] Burney, *Evelina*, 104, 476.
[98] Ibid., 529; Cibber, *Love's Last Shift*, 106.

of the pain he has caused her,[99] Sir John "cannot bear to look at" Evelina because her face reminds him of his wife, and his responsibility for her anguish and premature death.[100]

In *Evelina*, the rake figure is punished rather than forgiven and rewarded. Amanda's forgiveness of Loveless on condition of his returning love is transformed into Caroline's written forgiveness of Sir John, which is withheld until he has acknowledged their marriage and their daughter.[101] Unlike Loveless, Belmont cannot ask for his wife's forgiveness on his knees, so he prostrates himself before her daughter – "the representative of the most injured of women!" – and hopes to find eternal salvation by making her amends.[102] Rather than being rewarded for his sins in the same way as Loveless, with an unexpected fortune as well as the unceasing love of his loyal and forgiving wife, Belmont follows in Lovelace's footsteps in being a punished libertine.[103] However, he is not subjected to a violent death. Instead, he is tormented by his conscience, and he lives on to become a penitent outcast from society.

Though Burney develops part of her first work's moral lesson from the Richardsonian novel, she makes the ending to her narrative more felicitous. She achieves the same kind of effect as a sentimental comedy with her novel. In the *Critical Review*, the commentator writes that *Evelina* should be recommended to young readers, who "will weep and (what is not so commonly the effect of novels)

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[99] *Love's Last Shift*, 106.
[100] Burney, *Evelina*, 516.
[101] Cibber, *Love's Last Shift*, 106; Burney, *Evelina*.
[102] *Evelina*, 529.
[103] Cibber, *Love's Last Shift*, 57.

will laugh, and grow wiser, as they read".[104] In reworking the emotional scene from sentimental comedies, Burney teaches her readers a serious moral lesson without making her narrative a tragedy. She shows that Belmont's rakish behaviour did not only ruin the life of Caroline, but it also affects the next generation. Evelina had been deprived not only of the material privileges to which his legitimate daughter is entitled, but she was also robbed of her identity for many years of her life. She had to go by the alias Anville and experience the mortification of being considered "a kind of a toad-eater", anticipating the adventures of Burney's fourth heroine, Juliet Granville from *The Wanderer, or, Female Difficulties* (1814).[105] With the knowledge of her mother's painful past, and having experienced the indignations of being treated as a bastard, Evelina cannot readily pronounce her forgiveness for her rakish father whose reformation came too late. When Sir John asks her if she could "own for thy father the destroyer of thy mother", she is speechless.[106] Evelina is reluctant to forgive the reformed libertine, and her acceptance of her father seems to be driven more by her desire to claim her identity than to acknowledge a villain as her parent.

Burney's novel is generically different from Richardson's tragedy even though it is influenced by it. In condensing the Richardsonian novel into small parts of the narrative, and in making Caroline's misfortunes a subplot, *Evelina* is structured after the model of a sentimental comedy rather than that of a she-tragedy. With the emotional scene between the heroine and her father, readers of the novel are exposed to a moment of moral seriousness. They are shown the differences

[104] "Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World," 202-203.
[105] Burney, *Evelina*, 428.
[106] Ibid., 530.

between Caroline's and Evelina's experiences, and are asked to think seriously about the choices that they have made. Instead of dramatizing Caroline's melancholy life in the same way that Clarissa's experiences are captured by Richardson in letters spanning several volumes of a novel, Caroline's sentimental narrative is summarised in short portions of the novel. Evelina learns from her mother's story without having to experience it herself. Because she is not a victimised heroine but the protagonist of a marriage plot, the suffering she goes through is not caused by betrayal and irremediable ruin, but the temporary loss of her social identity.

"I shall have no time to hear from Berry Hill": The Heroine Who Gives Herself Away

In the plots of many eighteenth-century novels, marriage is an important decision for a heroine to make. Richardson's *Clarissa* gives a warning concerning the attractions and dangerous charms of a rake. Many subsequent novels – including Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* – depict heroines who learn to admire and fall in love with moral virtues instead. In many didactic novels, the male protagonist is both a hero who protects the heroine from libertines and a lover-mentor who assists in her moral progress. In *Evelina*, Caroline was made desperate by her mother and stepfather, and she put herself under the protection of a rake. But the heroine of the novel learns to choose a virtuous gentleman. As Evelina's narrative shows, passivity could not have brought about her desirable marriage to the person she considers a worthy man, and it is necessary for her to exercise agency. She does so by disobeying her guardian without appearing to do so wilfully and granting herself

small freedoms to behave in less acceptable ways before she resigns her temporary control to the authority of her lover-mentor.

In Haywood's early fictions, the love interests of her female protagonists are mostly fops and libertines. The male protagonists of Richardson's first two novels are also reformed and unreformed rakes. However, the male protagonist becomes a heroic and admirable man in both Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless*, a novel she produced when she was considered a reformed writer,[107] and Richardson's third novel. Haywood's Betsy Thoughtless and Richardson's Harriet Byron both encounter an incident in which they are almost forced into marriage with a villainous man but are saved and protected by a hero. In the scene which makes Trueworth Betsy's hero, she is almost tricked into marriage with a fortune-hunter, with the help of a false or bribed parson.[108] In *Sir Charles Grandison*, Harriet is abducted by Sir Hargrave Pollexfen from a masquerade and almost becomes his unwilling bride by a dubious clergyman.[109] Both women proved their virtue as a heroine in their attempts to escape, with Betsy almost breaking her arms and Harriet becoming badly bruised.[110] In these two didactic novels, the heroine is saved from rape by a hero. In Betsy's account of her misadventure, she sees herself as another

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[107] See, for example, Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance, through Times, Countries and Manners; with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of It, on Them Respectively, in a Course of Evening Conversations*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Colchester, 1785), 120-121. Reeve describes Eliza Haywood as a reformed writer who "repented of her faults" and "devoted the remainder of her life and labours to the service of virtue" to redeem herself, by turning to moral and instructive writing.

[108] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 424-425.

[109] Samuel Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, ed. Jocelyn Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 150-156.

[110] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 425; Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 158.

Clarissa who is saved from destruction by Trueworth when she refers to Mrs. Modely's lodgings as "the house of that wicked woman who betrayed me" in a similar way that Clarissa speaks of Mrs. Sinclair's brothel.[111] Harriet also seems to be referring to the rape of Clarissa when she recalls the way that Mrs. Awberry and her daughters – figures who might again remind some readers of Mrs. Sinclair and the prostitutes under her roof – "seemed to believe, that marriage would make amends for every outrage".[112] In these two incidents, the heroine does not have to experience sexual ruin and remains virtuous.

Because the hero has rescued the heroine, he engages the heroine's gratitude with his courage. There are many parallels in Betsy's and Harriet's sentiments towards the hero. Trueworth is elevated in Betsy's opinion. He becomes a "generous deliverer" "that heaven has sent to my deliverance".[113] He is now "that worthy man", "that best of men!" to Betsy, just as Harriet's hero is seen by her as "one of the worthiest and best of men!"[114] In both novels, the heroine's submission to the hero through marriage is established by her sense of gratitude and indebtedness to him. With "her heart and head full of the obligation she had to Mr. Trueworth", Betsy thinks of repaying her debt of gratitude to him through marriage.[115] Similarly, Harriet has a "heart bowed down by obligation" and her marriage to Grandison is a result of her admiration and sense of gratitude.[116] She is rescued from a libertine, and she falls in love with the moral virtues shown by Grandison.

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[111] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 429.
[112] Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 153.
[113] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 425, 429.
[114] Ibid.; Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 166, 167, 149.
[115] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 429.
[116] Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 145, 167, 308.

In *Evelina*, Burney creates the hero based on the tradition of the lover-mentor. In Haywood's and Richardson's novels, Trueworth and Grandison are both figured as a lover-mentor figure who is qualified to instruct the heroine in making moral choices. Burney's novel appears to be a response to one particular scene in *Betsy Thoughtless*. The conversation which takes place between Orville and Evelina after he sees her in the company of two prostitutes is a similar scenario which ends on a vastly different note to the discussion between Betsy and Trueworth about her friendship with Miss Forward.[117] Even though Evelina is initially offended when the topic is introduced, Orville manages it so well that Evelina's "pride […] subsided into delight and gratitude".[118] As Evelina herself recognises when she reports the incident to Villars, Orville has handled the situation delicately, showing her that he is "willing to advise, yet afraid to wound" her.[119] Anticipating a defensive reaction, he apologises in advance for his "officiousness" in offering his advice.[120]

In contrast to the prideful Betsy, Evelina becomes Orville's pupil and willingly allows him to guide her. In Haywood's story, Betsy puts an end to Trueworth's lesson as soon as he is finished reciting the lines from *Jane Shore*, and is displeased with his moralistic tone.[121] Trueworth's attempt to instruct the thoughtless is frustrated, and the scene ends with them being angry at each other. Betsy resents Trueworth for departing from the role of a suitor to become "a spy to

[117] Burney, *Evelina*, 366-369.
[118] Ibid., 368.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., 367-368.
[121] Haywood, *Betsy Thoughtless*, 232.

inspect, or a governor to direct my actions".[122] These two roles are ones which Orville successfully takes on before professing his romantic interest in Evelina. Eagerly, he suggests taking the place of her guardian when Evelina tells him that she has no one to turn to for advice.[123] As opposed to Betsy who seems likely to become an ungovernable wife because she is too proud to submit to Trueworth's guidance, Evelina shows Orville that she would make a docile wife when she says in frustration, "There is no young creature, my Lord, who so greatly wants, or so earnestly wishes for, the advice and assistance of his friends, as I do; I am new to the world, and unused to acting for myself, – my intentions are never wilfully blameable, yet I err perpetually!"[124] Not only does this show Orville that Evelina welcomes advice, but she also has a desire to be good. In being or acting as if she is unaware of the implication of allowing Orville – a young man unrelated to her – to take Villars' place in becoming her advisor in her private concerns, Evelina is granting him greater intimacy.

Evelina uses her distance from her guardian to her advantage, in permitting herself more time for her relationship with Orville to grow. In being an orphan and a "*Nobody*", Evelina gives herself more authority over herself than other young girls with living parents would be able to have.[125] The delays in receiving Villars' replies give her a reason to become her own guide. She claims her agency when she tells Villars that she will "endeavour to act as if I was guided by your advice" and assures him that she will make her decisions based on the precepts and principles he taught

[122] Ibid., 233, 234.
[123] Burney, *Evelina*, 442.
[124] Ibid., 442.
[125] Ibid., 421.

her.[126] When she meets Orville again after receiving Sir Clement Willoughby's forged letter, Evelina initially tells Villars that she behaved to Orville in a way that he "would not have disapproved", only to inform her guardian in the same letter of her decision to treat Orville with as much civility as before.[127] Later in the novel, Evelina promises Villars to return to him immediately after he asks her to leave Orville, but she tells her guardian in the next letter that she changed her mind because Mrs. Selwyn advised her to wait for his further directions.[128] In doing so, Evelina manages to create the time and opportunity necessary for Orville to declare his intention to marry her. In describing the scene of their mutual confessions of love, it seems as though much has been concealed by Evelina. She tells Villars that she "cannot write the scene" because it is "too flattering for repetition", only saying that Orville "drew from me the most sacred secret of my heart!" after he declared his affection for her.[129] The initiative that Evelina has taken to bring about a marriage she desired is kept a secret by her.

Evelina also ensures that she would marry into the Orville family with dignity. Even though Orville has already assured her of his intention to marry her regardless of her success in restoring her true identity and fortune, Evelina is unwilling to gain respectability by becoming Lady Orville before she has claimed the title of Miss Belmont.[130] Before being acknowledged as an heiress, Evelina is "a cypher" that is disregarded by many of her acquaintances, and she learned "how

[126] Ibid., 437.
[127] Ibid., 413, 414-415.
[128] Ibid., 459-461.
[129] Ibid., 492.
[130] Ibid., 486.

requisite are birth and fortune to the attainment of respect and civility".[131] Unlike Pamela, Evelina refuses to be indebted to her husband's generosity. She stalls their marriage by claiming that she cannot give herself away. At first, she tells Orville it would be improper for her to marry him before she knows "by whose authority I ought to be guided", acting the part of an obedient daughter to her father.[132] After obtaining the approval of her father, she says that she "should be for ever miserable […] to act without the sanction of Mr. Villars' advice".[133] In delaying her marriage, Evelina hopes that she might be graciously accepted and acknowledged by her father so that her relationship with Orville can begin on a more equal footing.[134] While she claims to be an obedient daughter and ward, Evelina is in reality an independent heroine who relies on her own judgement and acts on her own authority.[135]

Burney enables her modest heroine to actively encourage Orville's courtship of her by attributing any part of her behaviour which might seem improper to her less refined sense of decorum. Orville, who is an authoritative figure in the novel because of his status as the heroine's lover-mentor, encourages readers to think of

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[131] Ibid., 479, 427.
[132] Ibid., 513, 490.
[133] Ibid., 524.
[134] Ibid., 523.
[135] Evelina's independence has been commented on by some critics. See, for example, Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 99, 112, 121. Epstein sees Evelina as "a storyteller with an ulterior motive", who is "forced to act out her innocence" and "learns to manipulate social manners and fashion so that she gains the greatest possible control over her life without offending those who seek to 'guide' her". See also Irene Tucker, "Writing Home: Evelina, the Epistolary Novel and the Paradox of Property," *ELH* 60, no. 2 (1993): 419-439. Tucker discusses the way that Evelina manipulates the epistolary form to defy Villars' authority.

Evelina as he does and to believe that "whatever might appear strange in her behaviour, was simply the effect of inexperience, timidity, and a retired education".[136] This is supported by Burney's explanation in the preface that Evelina's "*ignorance of the forms, and inexperience in the manners, of the world, occasion all the little incidents which these volumes record*", stating that it is but "*the natural progression of the life of a young woman of obscure birth […] for the first six months after her* Entrance into the world".[137] Readers are asked to excuse Evelina for being young, rustic and inexperienced, and to pity her for not having a mother to guide her. To Evelina, her real or feigned ignorance is empowering because it gives her more freedom to behave in less acceptable ways.

As Eliza Haywood did before her, Frances Burney tests the limits of female respectability, in giving her heroine a different role to play in order to exercise her agency, before her identity becomes fixed when "the fate of […] Evelina is decided!"[138] Just as Betsy is rewarded for proving her virtue after undergoing trials and indignities, Evelina becomes socially elevated by the end of the novel. It is because of the peculiar circumstances of her status as an orphan and unacknowledged heiress that Evelina is allowed temporarily to overlook conventional social expectations of women and excused for her behaviour. She earns her real name – Miss Belmont – by playing the role of the dutiful daughter, and is rewarded and honoured with the title of Lady Orville when she assumes the character of a docile wife. Miss Evelina Anville lived almost as various a life as Betsy, in going through the experiences of an orphan, before she becomes an heiress,

[136] Burney, *Evelina*, 486.
[137] Ibid., 95-96.
[138] Ibid., 554.

and finally a wife. Because she has made the right choice and secured for herself a respectable man who values her, Evelina does not have to experience the mundane but gruelling life of an unhappy wife or the life of infamy to which the betrayed victims of libertines are destined. Having seized temporary control and "united herself for ever with the object of her dearest, her eternal affection", and doing so with the title of an affluent heiress, Evelina succumbs to the surveillance and control of her lover-mentor.[139] In Burney's fictional world, the confines of a woman's freedom have been expanded. The novel shows readers that the heroine is untainted by the richness of her experiences and is rewarded for the small freedoms she has given herself in disobeying her paternal figure and relying on her own judgement. Having drawn a lesson from her mother's melancholy life, Evelina has given herself the permission to become more proactive in securing her future happiness and she has achieved a successful outcome.

[139] Ibid., 554.

Chapter 3: Cecilia's Imperfect State of Happiness: A Sentimental Heroine's Recovery from Madness

I have observed that Frances Burney repeatedly draws on the story of Samuel Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe. Burney's novels reflect on the condition of women with allusions to the tragic plot of *Clarissa* (1747-1748). In the previous chapter, I pointed out that in *Evelina*, the history of the heroine's mother – Carolyn Evelyn – bears some resemblance to the tragic fate of Clarissa. The present chapter is a discussion of *Cecilia, or, Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782), which is much bleaker than Burney's first novel. I focus mainly on the episode of Cecilia Beverley/Delvile's temporary state of insanity, which parallels Clarissa Harlowe's loss of reason in certain ways. Here, though the heroine of Burney's second novel experiences the temporary madness of Richardson's sentimental heroine after being abandoned by her husband following their clandestine marriage, her story does not end in death and she is returned to an imperfect state of happiness after her recovery. I argue that, responding to Richardson's tragic plot, Burney has adopted and adapted some aspects of Clarissa's experience to produce a novel which has an ambivalently successful outcome. In this narrative, a sentimentally depicted identity crisis is portrayed, which allows the heroine to make her distress known through a vocal form of madness. Even though Cecilia is restored to a state of peace as a result, Burney resists giving her narrative a satisfactorily happy ending. The novel questions Cecilia's decision to submit herself to marriage but depicts her acceptance of her lack of control over circumstances, dramatizing the way in which a woman can find happiness in a situation which is not altogether ideal.

Compared to Burney's first literary work, *Cecilia* is a very different novel. *Evelina* is a narrative about an orphan girl rising to affluence, when she becomes recognised as a long-lost daughter and an heiress. In Burney's second novel, there is a reversal to this plot. While Evelina gains power by the end of the narrative and is enabled to marry the man she has chosen in a dignified manner, Cecilia Beverley becomes a disempowered heiress because of her love marriage to Mortimer Delvile. Whereas Evelina's "fate […] is decided!" and her narrative ends as soon as she is married;[1] Cecilia's story extends beyond her clandestine wedding, and she continues to face trials and uncertainty. Even when the history of this heiress ends, she has not been fully welcomed into the family and she only regains a small degree of financial independence when she receives an inheritance from the sister of Mrs. Delvile.[2] In other words, the conclusion to Cecilia's narrative is bleaker than that of Evelina.

Between the publications of these two novels, Burney drafted a script of a stage comedy. In Burney's oeuvre, there are two characters named Cecilia. The first figure is a female character named Cecilia Stanley from *The Witlings*, a comedy written in 1779 but which was never performed on stage. The story of this Cecilia is the sentimental strand of the comic plot. In some ways, Cecilia Beverley/Delvile is a rewriting of this earlier Cecilia. Emily Hodgson Anderson has observed that Burney's "novels were always preceded by some type of frustrated theatrical

[1] Frances Burney, *Evelina, or, a Young Lady's Entrance into the World. In a Series of Letters*, ed. Susan Kubica Howard, 2nd ed. (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2000), 554.
[2] *Cecilia, or, Memoirs of an Heiress*, ed. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 939.

endeavour".[3] Because Burney's father and Samuel Crisp thought that stage comedy was too risky a genre for her to venture, Burney's play was suppressed.[4] Burney's two "daddies" both objected to the staging of *The Witlings* when they saw the draft in 1779. Though Frances Burney initially wished to revise the draft, the play was ultimately never performed on the eighteenth-century stage because she submitted to Charles Burney's judgement that "not only the Whole Piece, but the *plot* had best be kept secret, from every body".[5] Burney's father thought that "Many Scenes & Characters might […] be preserved" from the play but he was "not eager" for Burney to write another play, telling her that "In the Novel Way, there is no danger––& in that, *no Times* can affect ye".[6] Indeed, some of the elements from the play had been preserved. This is evident in Burney's second novel. Hodgson Anderson sees *Cecilia* as "a definitive rewriting of characters and events" from *The Witlings* but it is "much darker" than the stage comedy; and the heroine, Cecilia Delvile, "demonstrates what happens to women who are silenced".[7] Indeed, there are certain similarities between the situations of the two Cecilias. Each Cecilia is an heiress

[3] Emily Hodgson Anderson, "Staged Insensibility in Burney's *Cecilia*, *Camilla*, and *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 17, no. 4 (2005): 638.
[4] For critical accounts of the suppression of *The Witlings*, see, for example, Peter Sabor, General introduction to *The Complete Plays of Frances Burney. Volume 1. Comedies*, ed. Peter Sabor and Stewart J. Cooke (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995), xvii-xx. See also Margaret Anne Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 91-98. Doody writes that for Burney, "The need for her father's approval was so strong that she had to persuade herself, even against her own opinion and Murphy's praise, that the play was bad. But there is no evidence that she ever really believed that".
[5] Charles Burney, letter to Fanny Burney, August 29, 1779. in *The Letters of Charles Burney. Volume I: 1751-1784*, ed. Alvaro Ribeiro, SJ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 280.
[6] Ibid., 280-281.
[7] Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century Authorship and the Play of Fiction: Novels and the Theater, Haywood to Austen* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 56.

who loses her wealth in the course of the story and suffers as a result of this, before she is eventually rescued.

However, one important difference between the Cecilia from Burney's play and the heroine of her novel is that Cecilia Stanley is unable to find relief from emotional suffering. Cecilia Stanley from *The Witlings* is a solitary sentimental figure in the comedy. At first, she repeatedly asks for pen and ink as an epistolary heroine such as Clarissa would.[8] However, later in the play, her suffering is expressed through speech, when she walks apart to deliver a monologue about the progress of time.[9] These sentimental outpourings, performed amidst mainly comic and unsympathetic characters, seem out of place. After her lamentation, Miss Jenny comments, "I believe she's talking to herself", and Mrs. Voluble also remarks that Cecilia has "a mighty way of Musing".[10] Even in Act V of this stage comedy, she is not a character to be laughed at, but the "Poor young lady!" who deserves sympathy.[11] However, she is unable to alleviate her emotional pain through tears and lamentations. During her temporary loss of affluence, Cecilia Stanley's "fond, suffering, feeble Heart!" is full and cannot find relief.[12] Without the temporary detachment from reality which Cecilia Delvile experiences, Cecilia Stanley finds that "Woe weaken[s] all faculties but the memory" and that her clear sense of her situation adds to her suffering.[13] Therefore, I think that madness serves an important function in Burney's *Cecilia*.

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[8] Burney, *The Witlings*, in *The Witlings and the Woman-Hater*, ed. Peter Sabor and Geoffrey M. Sill (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), 143, 144.
[9] Ibid., 143.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 149.
[12] Ibid., 158.
[13] Ibid., 159.

In eighteenth-century England, the understanding of madness was changing from that of earlier periods. In the past, insanity was commonly considered diabolic possession; but its general perceptions became secularised during this period.[14] In the long eighteenth century, as Roy Porter has pointed out in his in-depth study, the concept of madness was broad and complex.[15] The changes that took place in the general public's attitudes towards it were subtle and contested.[16] This was a period during which medical professionals were giving more attention to mental illness and its treatment, but Porter stresses that doctors were not the only group that shaped eighteenth-century perceptions of madness.[17] Insanity was not strictly seen in a negative light, because nervous disorders and the English Malady were considered by some as a status symbol and a result of civilization and prosperity.[18] Madness was a visible presence in communities, because many individuals who were mentally deranged were not confined.[19] St Mary of Bethlem (or Bedlam), founded in London in 1247 and rebuilt at Moorfields in 1676, was the only public madhouse in the country.[20] It became a tourist attraction until 1770, and a certain portion of the general public would pay to be entertained by the spectacles of mad people which it offered.[21] In addition, in this period before institutionalization took place, the number of private asylums was growing rapidly.[22] But both the public and

[14] Roy Porter, *Madness: A Brief History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 19.
[15] Roy Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles: A History of Madness in England from the Restoration to the Regency* (London: Athlone Press, Harvard University Press, 1987), x, 17-18.
[16] Ibid., xi.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., 81-88.
[19] Ibid., 119-120.
[20] Ibid., 36-37.
[21] Ibid., 37.
[22] Ibid., 136, 3, 11.

private asylums had a bad reputation.[23] As the century progressed, the mentally deranged were increasingly treated with sympathy.[24]

Figures of madmen and madwomen were very common in fiction. Therefore, in addition to real-life experiences with mad people, the popular understanding of madness would somewhat have been influenced by fictional representations and stereotypes. In her study about madness in William Shakespeare's plays, Carol Thomas Neely argues that dramatic texts are not "passive recipients of externally derived ideological and cultural formations" but "players in culture, history, and ideology".[25] She writes that "dramatic texts represent the mad and their therapies more extensively and fully than do other extant texts" and "since they have the widest audience, they receive the fullest readings".[26] What she has stated of dramatic texts can also be applied to other genres of fiction. In the eighteenth century, as in other historical periods, many people's understanding of insanity and its characteristics would have been somewhat influenced by fiction.

As a novelist with an interest in drama and the experience of writing as a playwright, Burney plays with the conventions and archetypes of the stage and the novel in her creation of this work and the figure of the madwoman. In her study of Frances Burney's fiction, Francesca Saggini recognises that "the madwoman had become a cultural icon" in eighteenth-century arts and literature, and she has pointed out that Burney "relied heavily on the theatrical conventions of her time in

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[23] Ibid., 122-128, 136.
[24] Ibid., 92.
[25] Carol Thomas Neely, *Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), 7.
[26] Ibid.

portraying her mad heroines".[27] As I will show in this chapter, other than the heroine from Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, Burney was influenced by models such as the canonical Shakespearean tragic heroine, Ophelia, and the melancholy figure of the singing maid in Bedlam when she created her mad Cecilia. This novel is also informed by Burney's experience of writing her own first stage comedy. So, with its associations with the tragic, the sentimental and the comic, Burney's *Cecilia* is a blended work.

In *Cecilia*, the heroine is a victimised woman who has been driven mad because of her emotional sufferings. There are certain parallels between Clarissa's and Cecilia's experiences. But by associating Cecilia with the more vocal madwomen, the heroine is allowed a means to voice and to make public her distress and victimisation. Cecilia's insanity does not lead to the tragedy of death or suicide. The heroine is allowed to recover. Cecilia Delvile, like Cecilia Stanley from Burney's own sentimental comedy, is restored to a state of peace after all her sufferings. But though she recovers, her story does not have a true happy ending because her madness has made no material change to the circumstances of her marriage. As I argue throughout my work, Burney's novels are explorations of ways for women to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom of choice and expression. In the case of *Cecilia*, the protagonist is resigned to make the most of the situation she finds herself in and to settle for a happiness which is imperfect.

[27] Francesca Saggini, *Backstage in the Novel: Frances Burney and the Theater Arts*, trans. Laura Kopp (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 137.

Clarissa's and Cecilia's Sentimental Crises

As I showed in the previous chapter, Burney's *Evelina* was influenced by Clarissa Harlowe's tragic tale. In *Cecilia*, Burney also took inspiration from the plot of *Clarissa*. However, the themes and social issues this work focuses on are different from the ones explored in *Evelina*. While the narrative of Evelina, like that of many novel and stage heroines in comedy, ends with her marriage, Cecilia's does not end there. The remainder of her narrative is concerned with what happens after her marriage and it questions whether she has made the right choice. This is unusual for a novel with a marriage plot. In a way, the structure of *Cecilia* seems to follow that of *Clarissa*, which tells of the tragedy following the rape of the eponymous heroine. The episode of madness in *Cecilia* is informed partly by Clarissa's temporary derangement before her suicide. Richardson's novel explores the sad consequences of rape for a woman while Burney's narrative describes the aftermath of a clandestine marriage the heroine is rashly rushed into. Both heroines become temporarily insane, as they try to reconcile themselves to their changed identities.

In Richardson's novel, Clarissa's mental breakdown takes place at the same time that she has an identity crisis. After her rape by Lovelace, she becomes a deflowered heiress who has lost her value on the marriage market. Having been robbed of her virginity, Clarissa sees no hope for future happiness. As Leslie Richardson has pointed out, in this historical period, a woman with a blemished reputation would have "lost her credit", and she "can no longer circulate, or communicate, with her neighbor".[28] She would become socially invisible and have

[28] Leslie Richardson, "'Who Shall Restore My Lost Credit?': Rape, Reputation, and the Marriage Market," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 32 (2003): 25.

to live in shame. Clarissa refuses to marry her rapist, as Miss Friendly does in Mary Davys' *The Accomplish'd Rake, or Modern Fine Gentleman* (1727),[29] in order to repair her sexual reputation. Rather than condoning Lovelace's crime, she wishes to be sent to a madhouse with her only material possessions – her clothes – which serve as status symbols. In Clarissa's letter to Lovelace, written when her reason was temporarily lost because of the effects of the opiates she was tricked into consuming, she tells Lovelace, "My clothes will sell for what will keep me there, perhaps as long as I shall live".[30] Clarissa would rather lose her reputation and her life for the sake of her personal identity and integrity.

As I discussed in the chapter on *Clarissa,* the self-representation of Richardson's tragic heroine changes in the course of the narrative. Before and immediately after her rape, Clarissa plays the part of the virtuous but vengeful and violent stage heroine. But she later opposes this version of heroism, adopting the language of piety to mask her sin of suicide and vengeance for the injustice she experienced. The form of her madness has changed when the language of romantic love, passion, vengeance, and violence is replaced with that of divine love, resignation, Christian forgiveness, and martyrdom to characterise her revised heroism. She refuses to be treated as a commodity to be circulated by men, and she resigns her material body to a coffin she has purchased for herself with her clothes. As I have shown in the first chapter, Clarissa's selling of her clothes is significant because her identity is closely tied to them. For the rest of the novel after her rape,

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[29] Mary Davys, *The Accomplish'd Rake, or Modern Fine Gentleman*, in *The Reform'd Coquet, Familiar Letters Betwixt a Gentleman and a Lady, and The Accomplish'd Rake*, ed. Martha F. Bowden (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999).

[30] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), 895.

she tries to demonstrate that her value is not defined by the marriage market, but by something spiritual. Clarissa uses religious diction to assert her identity as a child of God with an immaterial soul. What Clarissa manages to purchase with what is left of all her worldly possessions is, therefore, her dignity as a human being.

Similarly, Cecilia becomes insane when she experiences an identity crisis. The location she finds herself in when she is in a state of madness is significant. Max Byrd has pointed out that the city became the site of madness because this nervous disease was increasingly seen as something brought on by civilisation and progress.[31] In Burney's novel, Cecilia runs mad when she is in the city. This episode takes place once she is married to Delvile, after deciding to forfeit her vast fortune for love, and has been harassed by Mr. Eggleston's deputy to transfer all her possessions to him.[32] She appears on the streets when she becomes "an HEIRESS, dispossessed of all wealth!" and "a bride, unclaimed by a husband!"[33] At this point of the narrative, she has become a commodity in the urban market. After the disgrace of agreeing to a clandestine marriage, and having been abandoned by her husband shortly afterwards, Cecilia has lost her market value.[34] She has become a woman without a dowry and her virginity is rendered suspect regardless of whether hers was a consummated marriage or not. This part of the novel is set in a commercial environment, suggesting that Cecilia is re-entering the marriage market at a time when she no longer knows her own identity or value.

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[31] Max Byrd, *Visits to Bedlam: Madness and Literature in the Eighteenth Century* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1974), 131.
[32] Burney, *Cecilia*, 897, 853-857.
[33] Ibid., 869, 868-869.
[34] Ibid., 858, 857.

It is significant that Cecilia's temporary insanity begins in a scene involving a financial dispute, with a coachman demanding his pay and Mr. Simkins trying to ensure that she is being dealt with honestly.[35] There is a hint of sexual danger, when a predatory stranger enters the scene to harass Cecilia with his unwelcome advances.[36] In other words, the coachman and the stranger represent two imminent issues that are fighting for her attention while she is unsure of her husband's whereabouts. As a dispossessed heiress and an unprotected woman who has been left to fend for herself, the future before her is uncertain. In this scene, she is reminded of the financial difficulties she is about to face and the potential danger of sexual ruin, were she to become widowed. Insanity is the only way for her to detach from the stress and reality that she feels unprepared for.

After escaping from these figures, Cecilia finds herself in a pawnbroker's shop, a place where goods are pledged and resold, and she is evaluated by the characters as if she were an object. Having lost her identity as a rich and independent heiress, Cecilia has lost her autonomy and becomes powerless. She is not appreciated for her virtues as an individual and is seen only in monetary terms. She is mistaken for "a woman of the town", then a madwoman from Bedlam, and finally a gentlewoman from a private madhouse because of the finery she has on.[37] The people there decide that she is a worthy investment because of the way she is dressed, confining her with the aim of getting a pecuniary reward.[38] The merchants in the pawnbroker's shop in *Cecilia* are not well-meaning individuals motivated by charitable motives. Cecilia is labelled as mad before she truly becomes so and she

[35] Ibid., 895.
[36] Ibid., 894-895.
[37] Ibid., 897-898.
[38] Ibid.

is confined without her consent in a cell-like chamber.[39] They treat her words as the "ravings of a madwoman, and listened not to what she said" because they are already immune to stories of human suffering.[40] The place Cecilia finds herself in is "a place of confinement" rather than a place of compassionate treatment.[41] Despite the merchants' recognition of Cecilia's social station, she is objectified and treated with cruelty.

The parallels between *Clarissa* and *Cecilia* show that marriage does not provide much security for women. The fate of the married woman who is abandoned or cheated into a sham marriage by a dishonest man is not much better than that of a victim of rape. Susan Greenfield recognises that both heroines are situated in an urban environment. She sees the similarity in their situation and points out that, "Like Richardson's Clarissa, Cecilia is an heiress who discovers that a woman's fortune is ephemeral and incapable of promoting her benevolent ideals".[42] Greenfield interprets Cecilia's madness as "driven by her economic ruin" and as her way of asserting her "individuality" and escaping from a world with which she feels that she has lost connection.[43] Initially, both Clarissa and Cecilia believe that their intrinsic worth lies in their education, refinement, and moral virtues. They both become disillusioned when they finally understand the fragility of their social status. They realise that they are defined by their property and have no identity without their inheritance. Clarissa learns that even peace and dignity must be purchased with the clothes on her back, while Cecilia finds that her value as an individual is

[39] Ibid., 897, 900-903.
[40] Ibid., 898-899.
[41] Ibid., 898.
[42] Susan C. Greenfield, "Money or Mind? *Cecilia*, the Novel, and the Real Madness of Selfhood," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 33 (2004): 54.
[43] Ibid., 54, 60.

measured by her family name and the dress she has on. So, both Richardson's and Burney's novels reveal the precarious position women occupy in society and the way that they are seen as commodities to be exchanged. Their experience of this is what drives the two heroines into a state of insanity.

But despite the parallels between Clarissa's and Cecilia's sentimental crises, their distinct forms of madness achieve different effects in their respective narratives. In the eighteenth century, there were two very well-known visual representations of madness. They are the sculptures, *Melancholy Madness* and *Raving Madness* (c.1676), carved by Caius Gabriel Cibber, which adorned the entrance of Bethlem Hospital at Moorfields in London.[44] As previously mentioned, Bethlem was not simply a mental hospital, but it also admitted visitors. The sculptures were therefore notable landmarks of the capital city. *The London Guide* (c.1782) describes them as "two finely executed marble figures, as large as life, one representing Raving, and the other Melancholy Madness".[45] In *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian* (1740), the actor-dramatist writes of his father's two sculptures as "no ill Monuments of his Fame as an Artist".[46] Not only

[44] Currently, this once iconic pair of sculptures are on display in the Bethlem Museum of the Mind, Bethlem Royal Hospital in Beckenham, which opened in 2015. See Maev Kennedy, "Beyond Bedlam: Infamous Mental Hospital's New Museum Opens," *Guardian*, Feb. 18 2015. For an in-depth analysis of these sculptures, see Jane Kromm, *The Art of Frenzy* (London: Continuum, 2002).
[45] *The London Guide, Describing the Public and Private Buildings of London, Westminster, & Southwark; Embellished with an Exact Plan of the Metropolis, and an Accurate Map Twenty Miles Round. To Which Are Annexed, Several Hundred Hackney Coach Fares, the Rates of Watermen, &C*, (London: printed for J. Fielding, No, 23, Pater-Noster-Row, [1782?]), 41.
[46] Colley Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian, and Late Patenter of the Theatre-Royal. With an Historical View of the Stage During His Own Time. Written by Himself* (Dublin: re-printed by and for George Faulkner, 1740), 5.

were they among Cibber's masterpieces, they were also iconic sculptures in England at the time.

Even though spectators probably would not have been able to admire the details of these visual depictions of raving and melancholy madness because the sculptures were fourteen feet above ground,[47] these contrasting male figures were very important representations of the two different images of insanity which existed in the popular imagination. The figure of *Raving Madness* is more frightening and repulsive, with visible anguish on his face. He is shackled and restrained because he is uncontrollable, violent and dangerous. *Melancholy Madness*, in contrast, is free from restraint. He is more sedate, and he has a blank expression on his face. It has been recognised by historians and critics that the distinction between melancholy and madness was unclear in the eighteenth century.[48] Melancholy was seen by some as a "fashionable disease" for the socially privileged, along with conditions such as spleen, nerves and the vapours.[49] So, this figure is also associated with fashionable melancholy, which was considered aristocratic, intellectual, artistic and creative. In comparing the two visual representations of insanity, one clear distinction between them is in whether their distress is outwardly expressed or more internalised.

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[47] Kromm, 88.

[48] See, for example, Byrd, *Visits to Bedlam: Madness and Literature in the Eighteenth Century*, 118, 126-128. For an extensive study on the state of melancholy in the long eighteenth century, see Allan Ingram, Stuart Sim, Clark Lawlor, Richard Terry, John Baker, and Leigh Wetherall Dickson, *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[49] Clark Lawlor, "Fashionable Melancholy," in *Melancholy Experience in Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century: Before Depression, 1660-1800*, 25.

These two figures are helpful in understanding the madness of Clarissa and Cecilia. In Richardson's novel, Clarissa's insanity becomes increasingly internalised. It is quiet and epistolary. In Clarissa's letter to Lovelace after her rape, she asks him to furnish her with pen, ink and paper when she is kept in a private madhouse, because writing would be "all my amusement".[50] In Richardson's day (as in other historical periods), there were many published memoirs by individuals who had recovered from madness.[51] These accounts had certain commercial value.[52] Allan Ingram suggests that there is a "pattern of madness" in the eighteenth century, with "physicians and their patients variously erasing and redefining the line to be perceived between sane society and its rejects".[53] There are, therefore, two sides to the story about madness. While the medical community published treatises based on their observations of mad behaviour, many individuals identified as mad wrote about their personal experiences.[54] These marginalised individuals did not allow medics to speak for them. In Richardson's novel, Clarissa imagines herself as a member of this disempowered minority and she feels a similar need to tell her story, refusing to have her voice taken away even though she believes that she has been robbed of all the joys of life.

Immediately after her rape, while she is still intoxicated and her mind is temporarily disordered, Clarissa turns to the written word in an attempt to reconcile

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[50] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 896.
[51] For instance, see the memoirs reprinted in collections such as Dale Peterson, *A Mad People's History of Madness* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982) and Allan Ingram, *Patterns of Madness in the Eighteenth Century: A Reader* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998).
[52] Allan Ingram, introduction to *Patterns of Madness in the Eighteenth Century: A Reader* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998), 2.
[53] Ibid., 6.
[54] Ibid.

herself to her changed identity. Lovelace tells Belford that, after writing fragments of letters and poetry, she grows more "solemn and sedate".[55] Clarissa is not simply looking for emotional relief, but she also wants to be in control of the narrative when she gives an account of the incidents from her perspective. She is writing against the narrative created by members of her family, which imagines her as an eloped daughter who has brought sexual ruin upon herself. It is important to her to vindicate herself, by depicting herself as a victim rather than a wilful offender. The torn-up scraps of paper she has scattered around her desk are her frantic attempts to chronicle and understand what happened to her. Lovelace observes that "there are method and good sense in some of them, wild as others of them are; and that her memory, which serves her so well for these poetical flights, is far from being impaired".[56] Mad language generally allows the writer more freedom of speech, and opens up another world of possibilities and expressions. In Clarissa's madness, she experiments with different ways to speak for herself. She addresses different people – Anna Howe, her different family members, Lovelace, and herself – in various fragments. Adopting a different voice in each piece of writing, and calling herself the "proud Clarissa Harlowe!" in one fragment but a "poor suffering girl" and "the humbled creature" in others, she is sometimes protesting against injustice while she becomes more introspective at others.[57]

Even though, in Richardson's fiction, Clarissa's writings are preserved for private circulation and publication, they do not help her in her immediate situation. Clarissa's madness is quiet and concealed under a mask of tranquillity, but as I have

[55] Ibid., 898.
[56] Ibid., 889.
[57] Ibid., 889.

shown in the first chapter, it is also vengeful and self-destructive. She dresses revenge under the guise of forgiveness, and she glorifies the self as she prepares for her own burial. Her suicide is the consequence of her despair and melancholy madness. In *The English Malady*, a medical treatise published in 1733, Dr. George Cheyne writes, "I greatly suspect, (and have actually seen it in some) that most of those who make away with themselves, are under the Influence of [the] distracting *Evil*" of the "most sinking, suffocating, and strangling *Nervous* Disorders".[58] The story of Clarissa illustrates the dangerous and erosive effects of pent-up negative emotions. Clarissa's self-harm and subsequent death are the result of her internalising of her emotional pain. *Clarissa* portrays the sentimental tragedy of a woman sinking into despair, losing hope for prospects of future earthly happiness once her sexual virtue is lost.

Cecilia's Vocal Form of Madness

While Richardson depicts the tragic suicidal madness of a persecuted woman in his novel, Burney paints a different picture of insanity in *Cecilia*. In contrast to Clarissa's quiet, epistolary version of irrationality, Burney's heroine is more vocal in her madness and she demands to be heard. Burney has drawn on models of the vocal madwoman in the canonical character of Ophelia and the figure of the madwoman in Bedlam to characterise her own deranged heroine. Cecilia's

[58] George Cheyne, *The English Malady: Or, a Treatise of Nervous Diseases of All Kinds, as Spleen, Vapours, Lowness of Spirits, Hypochondriacal, and Hysterical Distempers, &C. In Three Parts. Part I. Of the Nature and Cause of Nervous Distempers. Part Ii. Of the Cure of Nervous Distempers. Part Iii. Variety of Cases That Illustrate and Confirm the Method of Cure. With the Author's Own Case at Large. By George Cheyne, M.D. Fellow of the College of Physicians at Edinburg* (London: printed for G. Strahan in Cornhill, and J. Leake at Bath, 1733), 3.

loud distress allows her sufferings to be immediately published and made known. It is ultimately because she ceases to suffer in silence, and her emotional pain and distress are outwardly expressed, that her life is preserved and her story concludes more happily than Clarissa's.

Fiction frequently featured female characters who were driven mad because of love. In the eighteenth century, the causes of madness were understood to be wide-ranging. In William Black's *Table of the Causes of Insanity of about one third of the patients admitted into Bedlam* of 1810, "Love" is recorded as one of the explanations of madness as well as "Misfortunes, Troubles, Disappointments, Grief".[59] At the time, women were believed to be more prone to nervous diseases because of their delicate nerves, greater sensibility and more uncontrollable passions.[60] Shakespeare's Ophelia is a well-known example of a woman who becomes mad after her lover's abandonment. In addition, in the eighteenth century, the maid of Bedlam was a popular recurring theme. There were contemporary ballads with similar titles that had varying endings. Songs with this theme unanimously depict a young woman singing about the man she loves, who went to sea. In a song called "The Maid in Bedlam" published in *A Collection of New Songs*, the fates of both the madwoman and her lover are uncertain in the end.[61] But in the version found in *The Old Horse's Garland*, the protagonist enjoys a happy ending

[59] Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles*, 33.
[60] Ibid., 105-108; G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 27-28.
[61] "The Maid in Bedlam," in *A Collection of New Songs. Containing 1. Gramachree Molly. 2. Corydon and Cynthia. 3. The Maid in Bedlam. 4. Billy and Nelly. Num. Xvii* ([Worcester]: Printed for S. Gamidge, at Prior's Head, in Worcester, [1765?]), 5.

when her beloved hears her song outside the walls of Bedlam and appears before her to make amends for all that she has suffered.[62]

A similar but more woeful figure can be found in Henry Mackenzie's renowned novel of sentiment, *The Man of Feeling* (1771). Out of all the patients Harley has encountered in Bedlam, his interaction with a certain young woman has the most profound impact on him. This woman seems to stand apart from the female Bedlamites around her because she has "something of superior dignity", being a genteel lady.[63] He is so deeply affected by her sad tale that he stands "fixed in astonishment and pity" before leaving with tears in his eyes.[64] She is comparable to the maids of Bedlam in the songs in that she also became mad after losing the man she loved, but she is a more tragic figure because she is mourning his death even in her madness. In the ballads, the songs of the young maids of Bedlam are about mutual love and their hope for the return of their beloved. Variations of lines such as "I love my love, because I know my love loves me" are common in these songs.[65] However, when the madwoman in Mackenzie's novel is moved by Harley's sensibility to tell him about her Billy, the song she sings to him is not about mutual love. She tells Harley that "when I am saddest, I sing" and her song is about the corpse of her beloved in his grave.[66]

With Cecilia bewailing the imagined death of her husband in her insanity and her mention of singing, contemporary readers would have been reminded not

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[62] "The Maid in Bedlam," in *The Old Horse's Garland. Composed of Several New Songs. 1 the Old Horse 2 Plato 3 Maid of Bedlam 4 Maiden's Choice* ([London?]: [1775?]), 6.
[63] Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, ed. Kenneth Slagle (New York: Norton, 1958), 21.
[64] Ibid., 23.
[65] "The Maid in Bedlam," in *A Collection of New Songs*, 4.
[66] Henry Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, 22.

only of Ophelia's bawdy songs but also the songs of lamentation of these female Bedlamites who were also driven mad because they were disappointed in love. In Cecilia's madness, she mentions singing about her husband. In the reunion scene with Mortimer, Cecilia recognises the name Delvile and remembers that she "repeated it and sung to it".[67] Her madness is sentimentalised in a similar way as these fictional madwomen. The Bedlamite in *The Man of Feeling* and other singing madwomen are depicted as objects of pity. They are still young and beautiful, but are wasting away in the lonely cells of Bedlam, hoping for freedom and the return of the men they loved. While there is an example of a happy ending in one ballad, the future seems bleak for some of these women and it is unclear for many of them whether there is hope for their recovery.

These works of fiction give the impression that, in the eighteenth century, in Bedlam and elsewhere, there were many women who were driven mad because of controlling parental authorities. In ballads, the mad maiden complains about the cruelty of either her own parents for putting her in Bedlam or the parents of her beloved for sending him to sea.[68] In *The Man of Feeling*, Mackenzie emphasises in the title of the chapter on Harley's visit to Bedlam that the most important scene centres around the "DISTRESSES OF A DAUGHTER".[69] As Harley and his companions are observing this Bedlamite, the keeper informs them of the woeful tale of a woman who was born into affluence but reduced to this sad state because of the cruelty of her father, in forbidding her to marry for love.[70] In *Cecilia*, the

[67] Burney, *Cecilia*, 907.
[68] "The Maid in Bedlam," in *The Old Horse's Garland*, 5; "The Maid in Bedlam," in *A Collection of New Songs*, 4.
[69] Mackenzie, *The Man of Feeling*, 19.
[70] Ibid., 22.

heroine is also an object of sympathy and a victim of parental cruelty. It is because of her father-in-law's disapproval that Cecilia agreed to a clandestine marriage with Mortimer and is reduced to a deplorable financial state, which has led to her madness.

With the example of Ophelia, Burney allows Cecilia to express her sense of injustice vocally. In various interpretations of *Hamlet* (1609), critics such as Gabrielle Dane read the madness of Shakespeare's Ophelia as her liberation from paternal and fraternal control, when she breaks her silence finally to speak for herself.[71] Dane argues that, "Having found an irrational voice, the mad Ophelia […] undermines authority, speaking ambiguously, through pun, allusion, riddle, even veiled threat".[72] Madness, therefore, allows Ophelia to voice her opinions publicly, in her songs and fragmented thoughts. Because Ophelia "speaks things in doubt / That carry but half sense", she cannot be held responsible for the "Dangerous conjectures" made by her listeners.[73] The ambiguity in Ophelia's speech provides food for thought for her audience, both on and off stage.

Similarly, Cecilia's mad speech seems to make half sense and it expresses her fears regarding her uncertain future. While she appears to be deploring the imagined death of her husband, Cecilia also utters expressions such as "no one will save me now! I am married, and no one will listen to me!"[74] Her marriage to Delvile makes her feel powerless, and the rational statements uttered in her madness convey her regret at making the wrong decision in marriage and her anxiety about her future

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[71] Gabrielle Dane, "Reading Ophelia's Madness," *Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 10, no. 2 (1998): 419.
[72] Ibid., 413.
[73] William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, ed. Philip Edwards, Updated ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 205.
[74] Burney, *Cecilia*, 902, 903.

fate. Cecilia also rejects her newly adopted family name in her madness. When she tells Delvile that he is "quite unknown to me", her husband asks her, "is it me or my name you thus disown?"[75] In renouncing her husband's name, Cecilia is refusing to accept her marriage and her new identity as a Delvile. She is also questioning whether he is a man for whom it was worth giving up her family name and inheritance.

Cecilia desires to have an audience and she draws attention to herself not only with verbal expressions, but also through physical violence. Readers are informed that, "though naturally and commonly of a silent and quiet disposition, she was now not a moment still".[76] Burney writes that Cecilia "grew suddenly […] violent", and "the temporary strength of delirium giving her a hardiness" and "a stubbornness, wholly foreign to her genuine character".[77] Though her madness is a form of suffering, it has allowed her momentarily to stop paying attention to appearances and to voice her despair in a way she has never done before. Earlier in the novel, Cecilia's tears were "preservers of her reason", because they allowed her to relieve her emotional pain quietly.[78] Eventually, tears are no longer enough of a relief for her, and Cecilia's emotions become uncontrollable. The heroine can no longer suffer in silence and her sentimental crisis must become known.

Because Cecilia is among strangers when she becomes mad and her madness takes on a vocal, violent form, her suffering is made public instead of hushed up. Unlike the hero of the ballad in *The Old Horse's Garland* who finds his Nancy

[75] Burney, *Cecilia*, 906, 907.
[76] Burney, *Cecilia*, 901.
[77] Ibid., 904.
[78] Burney, *Cecilia*, 848.

because of her song,[79] Delvile finds Cecilia because of an advertisement. It is because her story is published in a newspaper that Albany finds her and brings her husband to her.[80] So even though her complaints are not heard by her unsympathetic keepers, they are eventually responded to. In the advertisement titled "MADNESS" in the *Daily Advertiser*, Cecilia is identified as "a crazy young lady" who is cared for "out of charity".[81] Though she has not told them her name, the people at the pawnbroker's mention in the advertisement that she "talks much of some person by the name of Delvile".[82] In fact, Cecilia has done what Clarissa has threatened Lovelace that she would do when she says, "I may be apt to rave against you by name, and tell of all your baseness".[83] In this way, this anonymous mad lady in *Cecilia* is associated with the ancient family name of Delvile. Through her vocal form of madness, Cecilia has exposed the family of people who persecuted her, made her sacrifice her inheritance and patronym, but did not recompense her by taking care of her basic needs. The Delviles have driven a young woman into a state of insanity. Even though the details are not publicised, the family is named and shamed in a public way.

Therefore, Cecilia has shown through her mental breakdown that she is not an object but a human being with her own voice. The proud Delviles are publicly disgraced when their family name becomes associated with the pawnbroker's shop. Mortimer's father is "instantly brought to terms" when his name is "coupl[ed] […] with a pawnbroker's!"[84] It must also be shameful for him to have a madwoman

[79] "The Maid in Bedlam," in *The Old Horse's Garland*, 4, 6.
[80] Burney, *Cecilia*, 901, 905.
[81] Ibid., 901.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 895.
[84] Burney, *Cecilia*, 931.

associated with his family in an advertisement. Before the 1774 Act for Regulating Private Madhouses, discretion was generally observed by keepers of these institutions because the families of these lodgers generally wished for their identities to be kept private.[85] For a man with such concern for his family name and reputation, the publicity of Cecilia's madness would be particularly disgraceful. The heroine is accepted into the Delvile family because of this sense of shame; and it is because of the vocal nature of Cecilia's madness that she is reunited with her husband and her marital happiness is restored.

An Object Lesson for *Cecilia*'s Reformed Husband

Cecilia's identity crisis has the moralising effect of sentimental literature. The depiction of the heroine's emotional breakdown leads to Mortimer Delvile's moral growth. G. J. Barker-Benfield has argued that women writers helped to create "the culture of sensibility", which he also refers to as a culture of reform.[86] He has proposed that the literature of sensibility features figures of the victimised woman and the rake for "the reform of men on women's terms".[87] This can be seen in this episode of *Cecilia*'s narrative. In the chapter on *Clarissa*, I mentioned that Richardson did not allow Lovelace to reform; but the heroine's example makes Belford – the guiding reader of Clarissa's story – a reformed libertine and her disciple. In Burney's *Cecilia*, Delvile is not a rake figure, but he becomes a reformed husband by the end of the narrative after witnessing the emotional sufferings of his wife.

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[85] Porter, *Mind-Forg'd Manacles*, 152, 137-138.
[86] Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility*, xix, xxvi.
[87] Ibid., xviii, xxvii.

Frequently, in eighteenth-century fiction, there are instances where the sight of the mentally ill or visits to Bedlam offer characters opportunities for moral reflections. Encounters with mad people were object lessons for the sane. In Sarah Fielding's *The History of Ophelia* (1760), Bedlam provided dreadful examples for Ophelia to begin "moralizing on this Scene" on the consequences of allowing reason to be overpowered by the passions.[88] The epistolary heroine explains to her correspondent that "it made so deep an Impression on my Mind, that I can never recollect it without falling back into the same Train of Reflections".[89] In Burney's *Camilla* (1796), Eugenia is taught to value reason over beauty when she is brought by her father, Mr. Tyrold, to a small house in a village to be shown a beautiful idiot. For Eugenia, this young woman turns from an object of envy to one of pity when her madness reveals itself.[90] Such an object lesson, Mr. Tyrold explains, is "not only striking at the moment", but it would "make an impression that can never be effaced".[91] The lesson is made more forceful in such a way, and Eugenia thanks her father for performing this "kind task" because it enables her always to keep this "spectacle of human degradation" in mind to remind herself of the "lighter evils" of her physical deformity.[92] In both *The History of Ophelia* and *Camilla*, the sight of mad people is unforgettable and provides food for thought for some of the important characters.

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[88] Sarah Fielding, *The History of Ophelia*, ed. Peter Sabor (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 207-208.
[89] Ibid., 208.
[90] Frances Burney, *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, Oxford World's Classics ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 309.
[91] Ibid., 310.
[92] Ibid., 311.

Similarly, the Delviles from *Cecilia* are taught a lesson when they encounter the heroine at the height of her madness. In these scenes, Burney chose not to aestheticize Cecilia's madness. At the time that *Cecilia* was written, stage representations of Ophelia from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* were becoming more visually appealing. As Susan Lamb observes, eighteenth-century stage and visual representations of Ophelia were wilder, associating her with "straw, flowers, loose hair, dishevelled white dress, and trademark 'frenzied' expression".[93] In 1772, however, Ophelia was played by Jane Lessingham, "in [a] decorous style, […] to convey a polite feminine distraction", according to Elaine Showalter.[94] In John Bell's 1775 edition of Shakespeare's plays, the print of Lessingham is not "a mainstream Ophelia" at the time and she resembles a pastoral shepherdess.[95] This Ophelia looks neat, with carefully-arranged long hair and a clean gown with a flowery design. According to Lamb, the picture "marked a rising trend" in this period.[96] In other words, the initially wild image of Ophelia was cleaned up and she started to become more visually appealing roughly in the mid-1770s. Ophelia's insanity took on a more composed character, as Hardin Aasand points out.[97] Despite

[93] Susan Lamb, "Applauding Shakespeare's Ophelia in the Eighteenth Century: Sexual Desire, Politics, and the Good Woman," in *Women as Sites of Culture: Women's Roles in Cultural Formation from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Susan Shifrin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 113.
[94] Elaine Showalter, "Representing Ophelia: Women, Madness, and the Responsibilities of Feminist Criticism," in *Shakespearean Tragedy*, ed. John Drakakis (London and New York: Longman, 1992), 285.
[95] Lamb, "Applauding Shakespeare's Ophelia in the Eighteenth Century: Sexual Desire, Politics, and the Good Woman," 114.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Hardin Aasand, "'The Young, the Beautiful, the Harmless, and the Pious': Contending with Ophelia in the Eighteenth Century," in *Reading Readings: Essays on Shakespeare Editing in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Joanna Gondris (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998), 226.

her madness, she is still "Pretty Ophelia!", an appealing character on stage.[98] But at the time that the iconoic mad heroine on stage became more sentimentalised, Burney's novel did not paint a pretty picture of insanity. The once composed and beautiful heroine is savage rather than genteel. Cecilia's "changed complection, and the wildness of her eyes and air" are depicted.[99] In her illness, Cecilia undergoes a physical transformation, which robs her of her loveliness. Readers are told by Henrietta Belfield that her face is "all fallen away!"[100] Cecilia becomes unrecognisable and physically altered when her emotional suffering becomes physically manifested on her body. Her inner turmoil is recognised only when it becomes so intense and unbearable that her body is destroyed by it.

The sight of the mad Cecilia has a powerful effect on the Delviles. In the scene of his reunion with his insane wife, Mortimer stands "cold and almost petrified", and looks on powerlessly when Cecilia is in a mad fit.[101] After becoming witness to the "scene of woe", Cecilia's father-in-law is moved to a temporary pity and he is haunted by the image of the heroine's "changed and livid face", a visual reminder of his inflexible cruelty.[102] The sight of Cecilia's mental turmoil inspires guilt and pity. The Delviles both recognise that, although they did not "mangle and destroy" Cecilia physically, they are responsible for her emotional suffering.[103] While the father's remorse is short-lived, Mortimer Delvile is taught to reform his ways because of the lesson that is forcefully impressed on his mind when he witnesses the raving mad state his wife is forced into.

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[98] Ibid., 207.
[99] Burney, *Cecilia*, 905.
[100] Ibid., 915.
[101] Burney, *Cecilia*, 905.
[102] Burney, *Cecilia*, 912.
[103] Ibid., 906.

The reformation of Mortimer differs from that of the rake figure. In the previous chapter, I discussed the sudden reformation of Loveless from Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). In *Clarissa*, Richardson responds to this portrayal of moral improvement when he refuses to allow Lovelace, his libertine character, to become a reformed rake. In December 1748, Richardson writes to Lady Bradshaigh:

> I am sorry that it was supposed that I had no other end in the Publication of so large a Piece […] but the trite one of perfecting a private Happiness, by the Reformation of a Libertine, who sinning against the Light of Knowlege, and against the most awakening Calls & Convictions, was too determined a Libertine to be reformed, at least till he arrived at the Age of Incapacity.[104]

This passage shows that Richardson finds the reformation of rakes such as Loveless unconvincing and insists on writing a tragic ending for his character, stating that Lovelace's punishment by death would serve as a moral "*Warning*".[105] But the story of Clarissa's abduction by a rake has been reinterpreted by Sarah Fielding in *The History of Ophelia*. Critics have already noted certain parallels between Fielding's work and *Clarissa*. Isobel Grundy, for instance, recognised that "both Richardson's abduction plot and his forced-marriage plot are thoroughly, though sympathetically and respectfully, rewritten and answered" in *The History of Ophelia*.[106] Fielding's

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[104] Richardson, to Lady Bradshaigh, December 15, 1748. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Caroll, Electronic ed. (Charlottesville: InteLex Corporation, 2002), 103.
[105] Ibid., 103.
[106] Isobel Grundy, "'A novel in a series of letters by a lady': Richardson and some Richardsonian Novels," in *Samuel Richardson: Tercentenary Essays*, ed. Margaret Anne Doody and Peter Sabor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 232.

narrative has a felicitous conclusion and the rake character is given a chance to reform his ways.

In this novel, Ophelia Lenox accepts Lord Dorchester as her husband even though he has been guilty of kidnapping, duelling, and licentiousness. She makes this decision despite having warring emotions of love and aversion for him.[107] Ophelia follows in Pamela's footsteps in becoming happily married to a reformed rake who has been scheming against her for a large part of the narrative, ending her narrative with Ophelia Dorchester as her signature.[108] Lady Dorchester tells her correspondent that she now rests secure in "a State of Happiness" because her husband's reformation has withstood the test of time.[109] But looking back, Ophelia admits that she made a "dangerous Trial" out of "Imprudence" and she "feared Reverses" for a period of time following their union.[110] This ending questions whether a rake's repentance and promised reformation can be relied upon. But Lord Dorchester is not another Lovelace, nor has he followed in the footsteps of Loveless, who was reimagined by John Vanbrugh as an unreliable reformed rake in *The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger* (1696).[111] Lady Dorchester herself acknowledges that it is only because of her good fortune that her story ends felicitously when her

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[107] Fielding, *The History of Ophelia*, 237.
[108] Samuel Richardson, *Pamela, or, Virtue Rewarded*, ed. Tom Keymer and Alice Wakely (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Fielding, *The History of Ophelia*, 277.
[109] Fielding, *The History of Ophelia*, 276.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift; or, the Fool in Fashion*, in *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (Madison, Teaneck, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2000); John Vanbrugh, *The Relapse; or, Virtue in Danger. A Comedy*, in *The Relapse and Other Plays*, ed. Brean Hammond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

marital happiness was built on a shaky foundation, in accepting an unprincipled man.

Compared to Lord Dorchester, Mortimer Delvile's repentance is more convincing. Even though Delvile is not a Grandisonian hero, having engaged in a duel against his own principles because of his temper,[112] he is not a rakish figure. Despite being associated with characters such as Lord Dorchester and Lovelace, the reformed and unreformed rakes, Delvile is not a stock character. He is a more psychologically complex figure who is capable of moral growth. Unlike the Shakespearean and Richardsonian heroine, Cecilia is revived when Delvile finally finds the courage to face her, to show her love and affection once again, and to offer an apology for all that she has suffered on his account.[113] His reformation is not the sudden fifth-act reversal of the rake in sentimental comedies. He is a man of sensibility, without the self-indulgence of the sensitive male figure created within the "cult of sensibility" in the literature of the 1740s to the 1770s.[114] Delvile admits that he has treated Cecilia "inhumanly"; but unlike the typical reformed rake figure who sheds tears, shows excessive grief, claims repentance and promises reformation, Delvile sedately wishes Cecilia either a speedy recovery or a painless death.[115] In this novel, the couple experiences the wedding ceremony twice.[116] However, it is at this trying time that Mortimer Delvile shows a true appreciation of the marriage vows. He tells Cecilia that she is "dearer to my tortured heart in this calamitous state, than in all thy pride of health and beauty!"[117] Here, he has made

[112] Burney, *Cecilia*, 844-845.
[113] Ibid., 918-919.
[114] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986), 4.
[115] Ibid., 918.
[116] Ibid., 625-629, 831.
[117] Ibid.

the decision to love his wife unconditionally, in sickness and in health. This scene is more touching than the over-sentimentalized scenes of promised reformation found in sentimental comedies, and it offers a moment of moral seriousness.

Mortimer Delvile ultimately redeems himself. It is the kisses and embraces he offers Cecilia in this scene, perversely reminiscent of the power of a "true love's kiss" in fairy tales, which sets the process of the heroine's recovery in motion. Cecilia recuperates magically just several paragraphs later.[118] At the beginning of her temporary insanity, Cecilia's recovery has already been hinted at when the narrator says that what she is suffering from is a "temporary or accidental alienation of reason".[119] Incredibly, when the heroine awakes, "her sensibility was evidently returned", "her recollection seemed restored, and her intellects sound".[120] This seems to be a miracle of some kind. It appears as though Cecilia's subconscious mind is soothed when Delvile gives her reassurances of his love; and she seems to be revived by the knowledge that she is no longer abandoned and that she has a secure future with this man who has partially redeemed himself. She ultimately recovers her intellects, with no remembrance of her madness.[121] In other words, Cecilia has learned to forgive and forget after all her sufferings.

[118] Ibid., 919.
[119] Burney, *Cecilia*, 900.
[120] Ibid., 919, 920.
[121] Ibid., 920.

Cecilia's Imperfect Happiness: The Novel's Ambivalent Ending

The ending to Cecilia's narrative differs from that of Clarissa and many other fictional madwomen, which tragically end in death. The suicides of these tragic heroines are sometimes seen as a triumph. In interpreting Ophelia's death, for instance, Barbara Smith argues that madness both enables and exculpates the heroine's suicide, and Gabrielle Dane sees self-murder as "the only possible route to autonomy" for Ophelia.[122] However, it is problematic to see the sentimentally depicted deaths of victimised women such as Ophelia and Clarissa as an empowering option when they are pushed to the extremity of taking their lives. In Burney's second novel, the narrative about the victimised madwoman does not end in death or suicide, but recovery and reconciliation. However, the conclusion to this novel is not a true happy ending, because Cecilia is not a comic heroine.

Burney had strong views about this ending and she refused to make changes to it. In a letter dated 6 April 1782, in response to Samuel Crisp's objections to the ending of *Cecilia*, Burney told him that she believed that, compared to other works of fiction found at the time, her novel achieved a different effect when she wrote:

> I must frankly confess I shall think I have rather written a *Farce* than a *serious History*, if the whole is to end, like the hack Italian Operas, with a Jolly chorus that makes all parties good, & all parties happy! […] I think the Book, in its present conclusion, somewhat *original*,

[122] Barbara Smith, "Neither Accident nor Intent: Contextualizing the Suicide of Ophelia," *South Atlantic Review* 73, no. 2 (2008): 109-110; Dane, "Reading Ophelia's Madness," 423.

> for the Hero & Heroine are neither plunged in the depths of misery, nor exalted to *unhuman happiness*,—Is not such a middle state more natural? more according to real life, & less resembling every other Book of Fiction?[123]

Burney then let Crisp know that she would not alter the ending according to his wishes because she felt strongly about preserving it as it was when she told him, "You find, my dear Daddy, I am prepared to fight a good Battle here", and "if I am made give up this point, my whole plan is *rendered* abortive, & the last page of any Novel in Mr. Noble's circulating Library may serve for the last page of mine, since a *marriage*, a *Reconciliation*, & some sudden expedient for great *Riches*, concludes them all alike".[124] Compared to the time when *The Witlings* was suppressed, Burney was firmer in her refusal to change the ending of *Cecilia* despite the objections of her "daddies". This time, she had more confidence in her own authority as the author of her work. She was determined that the conclusion should rest in a "middle state". She believed that what she produced was a serious novel, which followed nature and real life. She took pride in her perceived originality of her novel, and trusted in her creative judgement.

The narrative of this novel is a reversal of the plot found in *Evelina* and comedies such as Richard Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* (1722). In Steele's popular sentimental comedy, Indiana rises from the status of a nobody to that of an heiress, recovering her rank and fortune at the end of the story when she is reunited with her father. This elevation makes her "a Present worthy of" her loved object

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[123] Burney, letter to Samuel Crisp, April 6, 1782. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume V, 1782-1783*, 43-44.
[124] Ibid.

once she becomes acknowledged as an heiress.[125] So, she has gained the freedom to marry an eligible gentleman of her own choice. Comic endings rely heavily on "wondrous / Turns of Providence" such as this.[126] Similarly, Burney's first heroine also restores her status as an heiress, which allows her to marry into the Orville family with dignity. In contrast, Cecilia descends from an empowered to a disempowered position, losing her wealth and independence because of her marriage.

She marries into the Delvile family in an undignified manner. While the fortune of Burney's Cecilia Stanley is partially restored before her marriage to Beaufort,[127] Cecilia Beverley only regains some financial independence some months after she has become a Delvile. The happy ending of Burney's first Cecilia comes about because Censor, a character who is wholly unrelated to the heroine, offered her a sum of five thousand pounds to spite Lady Smatter, so that she cannot "boast[] […] that she received a Niece wholly unportioned".[128] Cecilia later also discovers that her situation with the banker is not as desperate as she imagined.[129] In other words, her happiness is dependent on the implausible events which frequently occur in comedies. Burney has taken this part of her own stage comedy and rewritten it in another literary form with a second Cecilia. This element from comedies can be found near the end of the novel when the death of the sister of Mrs. Delvile brings Cecilia an expected fortune. Even so, Cecilia's independence is

[125] Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy*, in *The Plays of Richard Steele*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 376-377.
[126] Ibid., 377.
[127] Burney, *The Witlings*, 170-171.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid., 170.

partially restored "through his own family" rather than through her relations.[130] Cecilia has therefore regained very little power and dignity by the end of the novel. There is a feeling of regret about her lost wealth, when readers are informed that "at times, the whole family must murmur at her loss of fortune", and "at times she murmured herself to be thus portionless, tho' an HEIRESS".[131] In her evaluation of this ending, Margaret Doody writes that "Cecilia may be a survivor after all, but she is not much of a success".[132] Indeed, though Cecilia Delvile's temporary raving madness allowed her to express her emotional anguish in a vocal manner, it has made no substantial change to her less-than-ideal situation. Julia Epstein observes that, at the conclusion of the novel, "Burney's lovers begin to take possession of something like happiness, in a Burney novel 'happiness' simply means the calm possession of mutual knowledge, the lifting of the veil of secrecy and misunderstanding".[133] This happiness does not come without inconveniences. Cecilia is not fully welcomed into the Delvile family after sacrificing her inheritance and independence for love.

Cecilia Delvile's story ends with her observation that happiness must be imperfect in human life and we are told that she is "grateful with general felicity, bore partial evil with chearfullest resignation".[134] Her felicity came through the power she had to choose to spend the rest of her life with a man she can be happy with. She has chosen love over status, wealth and power. The ending is not the true happy ending of a comedy, but an ambivalent conclusion. She was forced to resign

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[130] Burney, *Cecilia*, 939.
[131] Ibid., 941.
[132] Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*, 142.
[133] Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 173.
[134] Burney, *Cecilia*, 941 .

her false sense of power when she lost her status as a wealthy heiress; and by the end of the narrative, she has accepted her lack of control over circumstances. After recovering from her madness, Cecilia makes peace with her changed circumstances as a portionless wife and makes the most of her imperfect state of happiness, finding contentment in a situation which is not altogether ideal.

Chapter 4: The "Two Recovered Treasures": The Comic Heroine and Sentimental Secondary Heroine in *Camilla*

I draw attention throughout my work to the ways in which Frances Burney's heroines and secondary female characters re-enact different aspects of Clarissa Harlowe's experiences. I have argued that Burney's collection of novels is a rebellion against the tragic plot into which Clarissa is ensnared. In the second chapter, I suggested reading the mother of the eponymous heroine in *Evelina* (1778) as the first version of Clarissa in Burney's oeuvre. This sentimental heroine of the novel's subplot was reduced to misery and left to an early death after she eloped with a rake. I stated that the sentimental experiences of female suffering have been assigned to a minor character so that Evelina can learn about her mother's melancholy life without having to undergo the same experiences. It also serves to provide a poignant moment of moral seriousness in the narrative. In *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth* (1796), a similar narrative technique has been employed. Certain distressing situations have been transferred to a secondary heroine. Eugenia Tyrold, the sister of the protagonist, is the true sentimental figure of the novel. Camilla Tyrold is a comic heroine, but the sentimental crisis she experiences at the half-way house before the novel draws to a close might remind readers of Clarissa's self-neglect before her death.

Camilla is one of Burney's more light-hearted novels, but these sentimental scenes provide it with poignant moments of moral seriousness. I have argued in the second chapter that the sentimental comedy was incorporated into Frances Burney's

Evelina so that the eponymous heroine can escape control temporarily to make important, life-changing decisions for herself at a time of crisis so that she can experience lasting happiness. Camilla is also allowed momentarily to break free from conventional behaviour associated with genteel femininity when she writes a note to Edgar. This instance of transgressive behaviour helps to make a positive change in Camilla's life, allowing her to find marital happiness. Even though Camilla is excused for her violation against modest female behaviour because the peculiar circumstance and her illness give the impression that she is not wilfully disobedient, there is an underlying message in this novel that it is necessary for women to become more assertive in order to gain more conscious control of their lives. Camilla is characterised as a gambler who is taking a risk. At the half-way house, she gambles for the forgiveness of her parents when she imitates Clarissa in her attempt to stage a deathbed scene. In the end, Camilla is forgiven and rewarded for taking this risk. She wins the affection of the man she desires after she is chided for the self-indulgence of her sensibility.

In this sentimental crisis, Gothic elements are used to create suspense and terror for the purpose of moral didacticism before the heroine's predicament is resolved. The narrative of *Camilla* was influenced by Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794). It is evident, when we look at Burney's familial letters from 1794 to 1795, that the author had Radcliffe's novel in her thoughts when she was working on *Camilla*. In May 1794, Burney told her father that she was "glad for Mrs. Radcliffe & her £500" when her fellow writer sold the copyright of her novel to the publishers G. G. and J. Robinson of Paternoster-row.[1] In the following

[1] Frances Burney, letter 143 to Doctor Burney, from Great Bookham, May 9, [1794]. in *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay). Volume*

year, when she was still in the process of writing, Burney made several mentions of *Udolpho*. In considering printing her new novel by subscription, she decided to introduce it to potential subscribers as "A NEW WORK" rather than by its title, writing jokingly, "Why should not I have my mystery, as well as Udolpho?"[2] Afterwards, to give her brother Charles Burney an idea of the length of her novel, she wrote that there would be "4 [volumes] large as Udolpho", "4 *Udolphoish* volumes".[3] Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom recognised that Burney "intended to manipulate still another reaction—terror" in *Camilla*, incorporating Gothic elements into it because of her awareness of "the selling power of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels".[4] However, Burney was not simply interested in the commercial success of *Udolpho*.

While she made use of Gothic conventions in her story, she believed that *Camilla* was achieving a different effect from Radcliffe's work and other novels. The reason that Burney wanted her book to be known as "A NEW WORK" is that she thought "calling it a Novel" conveyed "the notion of a mere love story".[5] She insisted that her work was "not a Romance" because it contained "sketches of Characters & morals, put in action".[6] In other words, she was confident that *Camilla*

III: Great Bookham 1793-1797. Letters 122-250, ed. Joyce Hemlow, Patricia Boutilier, and Althea Douglas (1972), 63.

[2] Letter 171 to Doctor Burney, from Great Bookham, June 18, 1795. in Ibid., 117-118.

[3] Letter 174 to Charles Burney, from [Great Bookham], July 5, 1795, and letter 178 to Charles Burney written conjointly with M. D'Arblay, from Great Bookham, July 15, 1795. in Ibid., 126, 137.

[4] Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, introduction to *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), xvi.

[5] Burney, letter 171 to Doctor Burney, from Great Bookham, June 18, 1795. in *JL III*, 117.

[6] Ibid.

contains a moral seriousness absent in the average novel. When Burney was working on *Camilla*, the Gothic romance was gaining popularity. However, it was not a respected literary genre because it was associated with both novels and romances. Before Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding changed the literary landscape with the publications of their celebrated novels, the heroic romance was already losing its appeal and respectability in the early decades of the century.[7] Commentators such as Ioan Williams have suggested that this antiquated, elevated and aristocratic literary genre which was popular in the previous century was rejected in favour of more realistic representations of ordinary life.[8] After the novel was made respectable by Richardson and Fielding in the 1740s, it became a popular form of prose fiction. But by the 1790s, the Gothic romance became the dominant genre in the literary market.[9] As Ian Duncan pointed out, "The eighteenth-century Gothic novel is the first modern British fiction to identify itself as a distinct kind under the name of 'romance'".[10] This is significant because the revival of romance took place at a time when it was believed that this literary form had negative effects on its readers.[11] In the eighteenth century, female readers of romance were caricatured in periodicals and works such as Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* (1752).

The Gothic romance is a distinct genre of novels. In the preface to the second edition of *The Castle of Otranto, A Gothic Story* (1764), Horace Walpole writes that

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[7] Ioan Williams, introduction to *Novel and Romance 1700-1800: A Documentary Record*, ed. Ioan Williams (London: Routledge, 2010), 3.
[8] Ibid., 3-4.
[9] Ian Duncan, *Modern Romance and Transformations of the Novel: The Gothic, Scott, Dickens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 20.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Williams, 5.

the composition of his work is "an attempt to blend the two kinds of Romance, the ancient and the modern. In the former, all was imagination and improbability: in the latter, nature is always intended to be, and sometimes has been, copied with success".[12] The Gothic romance therefore incorporates both romance and the novel. While novelists and critics of the eighteenth century stressed that novels imitated nature,[13] no such claims were made for the Gothic novel. In fact, Ann Radcliffe writes in the opening chapter of *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) that the narrative is "like a romance of imagination, rather than an occurrence of real life".[14] Unlike the novel, Gothic romance is not realistic fiction. Critics such as Duncan have recognised that the Gothic romance "marks a decisive alienation of novelistic representation from its official province, 'real life and manners, and the time in which it is written'" – as recognised by Clara Reeve in her *Progress of Romance* in 1785 – but "never quite completes the passage into an alternate version of reality".[15] Gothic novels are, hence, works of imagination often set outside of contemporary British life, in a foreign past, but they also reflect on the society of their writers' day.

This genre was developed from the sentimental tradition. In his consideration of the revival of romance in the last decade of the eighteenth century, David H. Richter suggested that the Gothic "might […] be thought to be a later, and

[12] Walpole, Horace. *The Castle of Otranto, A Gothic Story*, ed. Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 7.
[13] Williams, 3.
[14] Ann Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, ed. Chloe Chard (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 7.
[15] Duncan, 20-21.

more extreme, version of the sentimental novel".[16] He points out that the female Gothic shares certain characteristics of sentimental fiction, in its portrayal of the undeserved sufferings of a persecuted heroine.[17] By this time, novels of sentiment such as *The Man of Feeling* (1771) were already out of fashion. From the time that Richardson published his sentimental novels in the 1740s to the period in which Henry Mackenzie's novel became popular, sensibility had developed into a tear-demanding "cult of sensibility".[18] Since the 1780s, sentimental literature came to be criticised and ridiculed because sensibility was increasingly seen as a cult that supported self-indulgence rather than compassion for the sufferings of others.[19]

Though sentimental literature was no longer in vogue, the language of sensibility still had value in fiction. In the 1740s, the language of sensibility was an important feature in Richardson's novels. John Mullan has stated that "The fixation of his [Richardson's] texts upon virtue, and upon the association of sensibility with moral rectitude, made plausible the deliverance of narrative fiction from the category of 'romance'".[20] It was Richardson, Fielding and Smollett who paved the way for novels to become respected as works with literary, aesthetic, and moral value. Later in the century, as G. J. Barker-Benfield has argued, female novelists helped to create "the culture of sensibility", which "became a culture of reform" for

[16] David H. Richter, "The Gothic Novel and the Lingering Appeal of Romance," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, ed. J. A. Downie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 476.
[17] Ibid., 479.
[18] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986), 4.
[19] Ibid., 140-144.
[20] John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), 58.

both men and women.[21] This shows that when sentimental elements are employed in a novel sparingly and effectively, emotional scenes and the portrayal of female distress have positive moral effects.

During this time when sentimental literature was out of fashion and the Gothic novel became popular, Burney insisted on writing what she believed to be serious works of literature. The didacticism of Burney's novels relies partly on her engagement with Richardson's influential works. Her incorporation of Gothic and sentimental elements into her novel shows her acute awareness of contemporary literary trends. But her work also shows a careful balancing of comic and tragic elements. In *Camilla*, Burney reserves Gothic terror for the most poignant moments of the story, for the purpose of instilling a moral lesson in the minds of both her heroine and her readers. In such a way, Burney manages to preserve the moral didacticism of the Richardsonian novel in her work.

The first section of this chapter focuses on the story of the secondary heroine. In the subplot of *Camilla*, the sentimental figure of Eugenia suffers the misfortunes experienced by Richardson's heroines, and she later becomes unhappily married to a villain. But she is given a second chance and is restored to a state of peace. The pseudo-Gothic experience of Eugenia as a wife is resolved much like Betsy Munden's happy escape from her undesirable marriage. Because Haywood was an actress, dramatist, and writer of prose fiction, I see *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) as an important model which brings together the conventions of the dramatic and novelistic genres. Burney seems to be following

[21] G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), xix, xxvi.

the example of Haywood in writing against and reworking the plot of sentimental comedy, in which the mistreated virtuous wife remains in wedlock with her unfaithful and abusive husband who promises reform, when Eugenia is conveniently freed from the control of Bellamy and finds happiness in a second marriage.

In modelling the felicitous ending of the secondary heroine of the novel after Haywood's narrative, Burney clearly has another resolution in mind for her primary heroine. This is the subject of the rest of the chapter. I will look at Camilla's self-representation as a sentimental heroine, the subsequent Gothic awakening of her conscience, and the parent-daughter reconciliations fashioned in the vein of scenes found in sentimental comedies. The final part of the chapter explores Burney's comic treatment of the serious and disturbing lover-mentor tradition. I argue that while Camilla is a gamestress figure who presents herself as a sentimental heroine, she is forgiven like the penitent rake of a sentimental comedy. She then readies herself to become the docile wife of Edgar after achieving her end to marry the man of her choice.

As I argue throughout my work, Burney's novels dramatize the ways in which women make the most of their circumstances and resources to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom of choice and expression. *Camilla* shows that it is a gamble to exercise agency, but it also shows that the heroine is rewarded with marital happiness for taking a risk. However, Camilla's agency is temporary. While this novel seems to celebrate marital happiness, there is a hint of darkness in its happy ending when the heroine resigns control. This ambivalently successful resolution in *Camilla* is a rebellion against Richardson's tragic plot. Though Burney exposes both young women to

sentimental experiences in the main plot and the subplot, this novel is different from *Clarissa* in that *Camilla* achieves its moral purpose without sacrificing its two heroines to a tragic end. Rather, both Camilla and Eugenia become the "two recovered treasures" of the Tyrold family and they are both allowed to enjoy marital felicity with the man of their choice.[22]

Eugenia Bellamy's Deliverance from the Pseudo-Gothic House: A Warning Lesson in the Sentimental Subplot

Critics such as James P. Erickson believe that *Evelina* is a novel influenced by Eliza Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless*.[23] Erickson has pointed out that some of Evelina's misadventures seem to mirror those of the coquettish Betsy. In this section, I suggest that Betsy's sentimental experience as a married woman informs that of Eugenia in *Camilla*. The role of sentimental heroine has been transferred to Eugenia. In the beginning, Eugenia undergoes some of the misfortunes experienced by Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe and Harriet Byron; but her story is enriched with Betsy's experience when she is trapped in an unhappy marriage. She becomes the mistreated wife in Radcliffe's Gothic romance. But just as Haywood's heroine is released from misery, Eugenia eventually finds happiness in a second marriage with the man she has always esteemed. This "virtue in distress" tale is made a subplot which serves as a warning for the heroine.

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[22] Frances Burney, *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, Oxford World's Classics ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 892.

[23] See, for example, James P. Erickson, "Evelina and Betsy Thoughtless," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 6, no. 1 (1964).

Eugenia seems to be a character designed to be made a sacrifice for the heroine. She is someone who "seemed marked by calamity", having to go through "strange, and almost continual trials".[24] Not only did she become scarred by smallpox and crippled as a child, she also becomes the target of a fortune-hunter when she reaches a marriageable age. Even though Eugenia is the least desirable of all three sisters to potential suitors because of her physical appearance, disability and learning, she attracts the attention of designing men because she is a rich heiress. Her father, Mr. Tyrold, later laments that "no evils […] have proved to her so grievous as the large fortune".[25] The heroine, Camilla, who was the original recipient of this inheritance, appears to have escaped a terrible fate when her uncle, Sir Hugh Tyrold, reluctantly makes her less fortunate younger sister the heiress of Cleves.[26] It is not uncommon for young women in fiction to be made preys and victims because of their wealth. In Richardson's second novel, Clarissa incurred the displeasure of her parents and uncles as well as the envy of her siblings because her grandfather left her a fortune large enough to make her independent.[27] In *Camilla*, the heroine is spared from a difficult trial because her sister is the affluent heiress and the sentimental figure of the narrative.

The abduction of the unfortunate Eugenia by Alphonso Bellamy is the blended experiences of Clarissa and Harriet Byron from Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-1754). Eugenia repeats Clarissa's mistake when she consents to a secret meeting with Alphonso Bellamy, who, Lovelace-like,

[24] Burney, *Camilla*, 804.
[25] Ibid., 807.
[26] Burney, *Camilla*, 30-31.
[27] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady*, ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), 77-78.

lingers outside her home and writes her clandestine letters.[28] The narrator tells the readers that, "Having read no novels, her imagination had never been awakened to scenes of this kind", which seems to suggest that Eugenia would have been able to recognise his sordid motive if she had read novels such as *Clarissa* and learned from the fictional heroine's tragic experience.[29] Even after Bellamy's first scheme to carry her off in a post-chaise is frustrated by Edgar, Eugenia is still not alerted to her danger.[30] She does not take Edgar's advice to acquaint her father of all circumstances related to Bellamy, believing that she can judge her admirer's character for herself.[31] As a result, she is kidnapped by the mercenary Bellamy at the opera, in an incident reminiscent of Harriet Byron's abduction by the rakish Sir Hargrave Pollenfex at a masquerade.[32] Rather than giving a minute account like a Richardsonian heroine, there are "scenes […] she declined relating" to her father.[33] Eugenia only tells Mr. Tyrold that Bellamy used force to overpower her when she attempted to free herself and cry out for help.[34] She is made a "weeping bride" and "a sacrifice to deceit [and] violence" because of her simplicity in believing that she is admired by Bellamy in spite of her unattractiveness.[35] For Eugenia, there is no Charles Grandison to come to her rescue. The man she loves, Frederic Melmond, fails as a hero when he reaches her after she is already married to Bellamy.[36]

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[28] Burney, *Camilla*, 315-317; Richardson, *Clarissa*, 256-370.
[29] Burney, *Camilla*, 315.
[30] Ibid., 335-338.
[31] Ibid., 339-342.
[32] Ibid., 797-808; Samuel Richardson, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, ed. Jocelyn Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 116-130.
[33] *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 150-168; Burney, *Camilla*, 805.
[34] *Camilla*, 805.
[35] Ibid., 804.
[36] Ibid., 801-802.

Burney's portrayal of Eugenia's life as a married woman differs from Haywood's sentimental depiction of Betsy's unhappy first marriage. Eugenia's experience is Gothic in nature. While Mrs. Munden's life is never in danger even though her experience as a wife is miserable, Eugenia is married to a seemingly more dangerous Gothic villain. Mrs. Bellamy lives in a constant state of fear. Even though she is not imprisoned in a Gothic building, Eugenia jumps at every noise and recognises the sound of the footsteps of her husband.[37] When Bellamy threatens to lock Eugenia up and attempts to force her to demand a large sum from her uncle,[38] the incident seems designed to remind readers of Montoni's threat to confine his wife in the east turret of the castle if she would not submit to his power and sign her property over to him in Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*.[39] However, such domestic abuses were not fictional constructions confined to Gothic novels. Historical studies show that the beating and starving of wives, and the threats of or their actual confinements were a social reality in early modern England.[40] There were cases where husbands were deliberately cruel to force their wives to supply more money, either from their families or their individual settlements.[41] Deborah Russell has brought attention to the fact that there is a body of novels with a tangential connection with the genre of Gothic fiction, which situate their narratives in domestic settings, that deserve critical evaluation.[42] In *Camilla*, Burney

[37] Ibid., 841, 844, 846.
[38] Ibid., 886-887.
[39] Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée, New ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 305, 308.
[40] Lawrence Stone, *Road to Divorce: England 1530-1987* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 198-199.
[41] Ibid., 141.
[42] Deborah Russell, "Domestic Gothic: Genre and Nation in Charlotte Smith's *The Old Manor House*," *Literature Compass* 10, no. 10 (2013), 774.

manipulates the Gothic mode and shows, through Eugenia's domestic Gothic experience at Belfont, that her contemporaries did not have to look far to find instances of such atrocious cases of domestic violence and the victimisation of virtuous women at the hands of villainous male figures.

Being married to a tyrannical man, Eugenia seems destined for a life of misery or even an early death. Eventually, however, she is rescued from this tragic fate. After Eugenia's marriage, in her letter to Camilla, she expresses grief for her powerless condition when she asks, "Does anything else remain that is yet in my power?"[43] As a wife who is constantly fearing for her life, Eugenia "seemed a picture of death" to Camilla when she visits her at Belfont.[44] However, the scenes of domestic unhappiness are dispelled like a Gothic illusion for Eugenia. Just as Betsy's deliverance happens only after she goes through a period of undeserved sufferings at the hands of a tyrannical husband, Eugenia is rescued from the terrible fate of Madame Montoni and she survives this ordeal.[45] Once Eugenia is taken out of Belfont, her Gothic experience quickly comes to an end.[46] She is rescued by a postillion, an unlikely hero who secretly followed her and her husband when he perceived that she might be in danger and causes Bellamy accidentally to shoot himself with his pistol.[47] Eugenia is able to rediscover happiness when she is rescued from her marriage just as Haywood's Betsy is released from bondage. Eugenia is given a second chance. She swoons rather than dies, and her rescuer takes her back to the real world when she is escorted back to Etherington.[48] Burney

[43] Burney, *Camilla*, 808.
[44] Ibid., 859.
[45] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 374-375.
[46] Burney, *Camilla*, 842.
[47] Ibid., 886-887.
[48] Ibid.

reveals after Bellamy's death that his real name is Nicholas Gwigg.[49] Just as Montoni becomes "a clod of earth" without "the power, or the will to afflict", the villain in *Camilla* loses his Gothic power in death when he is stripped of his foreign alias Alphonso Bellamy.[50] Bellamy's "violent exit" is reminiscent of Lovelace's "violent death", but justice is done by his own hand and Eugenia is released from her marriage vows.[51]

After Bellamy's death, Eugenia comes close to becoming a female philosopher when she begins drafting a radical work, but she abandons this writing project when she agrees to a second marriage to a man she has always esteemed. Initially, she intends to remain a widow; and Clarissa-like, Eugenia begins to conclude her story in writing when she pens her memoir.[52] Having "no hope for new happiness", she decides to live as though she "had passed the busy period of youth and of life, and were only a spectatress of others".[53] However, Burney does not condemn her to such a melancholy ending. In Haywood's novel, Betsy is eventually united with Trueworth. She is "rewarded with […] happiness" in a second marriage when "she had rendered herself wholly worthy of receiving it".[54] Eugenia similarly finds happiness in a second marriage. She is revived when she is persuaded by her family to marry Melmond, the man she wished to be united to.[55] She can enjoy the comfort of domestic life after her escape from Belfont, and she receives "the recompence of every exerted virtue, and the solace of every past suffering" after her

[49] Ibid., 893.
[50] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 580.
[51] Ibid., 892; Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1489.
[52] Burney, *Camilla*, 912.
[53] Ibid., 887, 912, 905.
[54] Eliza Haywood, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, ed. Christine Blouch (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1998), 634.
[55] Burney, *Camilla*, 912.

unhappy experiences.[56] Both Haywood's and Burney's sentimental figures are rewarded only after a long period of trials and distress. In making Eugenia's saviour a minor character instead of her future husband, Burney does not conform to the lover-mentor tradition in her portrayal of Eugenia's relationship with the unheroic Melmond. Rather, "the heroic Eugenia" is the mentor of Melmond, having taught him to appreciate intellectual beauty rather than physical perfection.[57] Though Melmond is one of the "lords of the creation, mighty men!" Eugenia reproaches in her unfinished memoirs for "the value you yourselves set upon external attractions, […] and the indifferency with which you consider all else", he ultimately learns to appreciate her merits.[58] The "voluntary seclusion" Eugenia initially designed for herself when she was made a widow, to develop her radical "philosophical idea", anticipates the unhappy fate of Elinor Joddrel in Burney's *The Wanderer* (1814).[59] But in this novel, the secondary heroine is made "unexpectedly happy" after undergoing the experiences of a persecuted sentimental and Gothic victim.[60]

In this novel, Burney's secondary heroine, Eugenia, fulfils an important function as the sentimental figure who endures painful experiences and spares Camilla from misfortunes. Her experiences combine those of the sentimental heroines in Richardson's novels and the abused wife from Gothic literature. However, Eugenia survives these adventures like a Haywoodian heroine. She is spared from death; and she remains chaste and respectable after her difficult trials and rich life experiences. She learns about the dangers of the world, but she also

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 811.
[58] Ibid., 905.
[59] Ibid., 912, 905-906.
[60] Ibid., 912.

learns to hope anew for future happiness. Though her husband is a failed hero, she finds happiness in his companionship. Eugenia's story is an important subplot for Camilla to learn from, helping her in her own pursuit of happiness.

Camilla at "the half-way house":
The Heroine's Spiritual Awakening and Sentimental Repentance

Though the most distressing sentimental misfortunes have been transferred to Eugenia, the comic heroine Camilla is not exempt from calamities. The heroine's moral growth takes place when Camilla runs into debts and causes Mr. Tyrold's brief imprisonment. At first, she acts the part of a sentimental heroine and attempts to imitate Clarissa in staging her suicide in order to gamble for the forgiveness of her parents. But she becomes spiritually awakened by the Gothic terror of seeing a human corpse. In portraying Camilla's repentance of her earlier misconduct and sinful suicidal thoughts, Burney blends together conventions from she-tragedies and sentimental comedies to construct her sentimental scenes in order to bring about Camilla's tearful reconciliation with her family as well as her marriage to Edgar.

Camilla's Gothic encounter takes place at an inn named "the half-way-house".[61] Its location "upon a cross road" suggests that the heroine is at a turning point and has a difficult decision to make.[62] Like Belfont at which Eugenia resided as Bellamy's wife, the half-way house is not a typical Gothic setting. In *Udolpho*, when Emily St Aubert first enters the sublime castle, she feels "as if she was going into her prison".[63] Camilla is not imprisoned in a Gothic castle but she

[61] Ibid., 859.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 227.

makes her room at the half-way house resemble a prison cell, believing that she is banished from home after her father was disgracefully thrown into prison on her account.[64] She punishes herself by refusing food and rest.[65] In this episode of the novel, she is imitating Clarissa. Camilla laments that she has "become an alien to my family" and she feels as if she is "hovering between life and death".[66] When Clarissa is willing herself to death in a rented room far from home, she describes her state of being forsaken by her parents as "the worst of orphanage".[67] She considers her current shelter a probationary point between life and death. In her self-representation, she has to undergo bodily and emotional sufferings before she can be released from this undeserved pain. When Camilla tells her family in writing that she is "at the half-way-house where I shall wait for commands", it could be interpreted as a metaphor that she will either be ordered by her parents to return home or be summoned to death by God.[68]

The first part of Camilla's stay at this inn is a parody of Clarissa's suicide. Because she cannot pay the innkeepers in full, Camilla leaves her prized locket from Edgar and a gift from her uncle with them as pledges of future payment. In early modern England, women's clothes and other ornaments were treated as paraphernalia, a category of women's property that they could call their own.[69] These sentimental objects, given to Camilla as gifts, are personal items that she could dispose of. Like Clarissa who has to sell her clothes in order to bespeak her

[64] Burney, *Camilla*, 823, 838-839.
[65] Ibid., 883.
[66] Ibid., 876.
[67] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1275.
[68] Burney, *Camilla*, 863.
[69] Susan Staves, *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990), 148.

coffin and burial-dress, Camilla is "driven to extremity" and has become "indifferent to appearances" when she parts with her trinkets in order to support herself.[70] But Burney is careful in ensuring that Camilla's fall is not of a sexual nature and she is only troubled by financial embarrassments. Camilla does not have to sell her clothes, and so she remains redeemable. Though this transaction is not as shocking as the selling of her clothes, Camilla reflects on her situation with shame and tears when she exclaims to herself, "how little do my friends conjecture to what I am reduced!"[71] It is later revealed that Camilla's story has become the gossip of the inn. Edgar finds out about Camilla's plight when the landlady shows him the locket "pledged by a lady in distress!"[72] So in the story told by the innkeeper, Camilla has become a sentimental heroine.

This agrees with her own self-representation. In her room, Camilla indulges in suicidal thoughts and writes a number of letters to her family to appeal to their pity when she tries to make them believe that she is dying. To a readership familiar with the story of Clarissa, Camilla's plight would appear light in comparison. Camilla would seem dramatic when she speaks to herself as if she were a sentimental heroine. Her words even resemble dramatic speech. For instance, she exclaims, "How may I support my heavy existence? and when will it end?" and "How early is my life too long!"[73] She makes light of life and death when she says, "O Death! let me not pray to thee also in vain!"[74] It is a clear allusion to *Clarissa* when Camilla expresses her disbelief that she has been "abandoned at an inn where

[70] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1126-1127, 1130; Burney, *Camilla*, 860, 864.
[71] *Camilla*, 865.
[72] Ibid., 901.
[73] Ibid., 860, 861.
[74] Ibid., 862.

she had confessed she thought herself dying".[75] Many lines in her messages to her family would have reminded contemporary readers of Clarissa's letters. Camilla wants her parents to believe that their forgiveness might come too late when she blesses her family and writes, "the brevity of my career may, to their kindness, expiate its faults".[76] In her next desperate letter, she tries to appeal to their guilt. To give them a sense of urgency, she hints at the regret they would feel after her death in telling them, "I ask not now your forgiveness; I know I shall possess it fully", and asking them to bless her ashes.[77] In drawing parallels between Camilla's and Clarissa's experiences, Burney renders Camilla's perception of her life as a "brief, but stormy passage" ludicrous to many of her readers.[78]

Though initially, Camilla is calmed by the soothing thoughts of death and the expectation of parental forgiveness,[79] her story diverges from *Clarissa*'s narrative when it turns into a Gothic experience in the chapters titled "*A Spectacle*" and "*A Vision*".[80] In contrast to the manner in which Clarissa gazes upon a personally-designed coffin with serenity, Camilla again wishes for life when she unveils a terrible "*Spectacle*" – the visage of a bloody corpse.[81] In Radcliffe's Gothic romance, Emily St Aubert confronts a "dreadful spectacle" on two occasions.[82] She believes these "spectacles" would confirm her suspicions about Montoni's character. Radcliffe, in the essay "On the Supernatural in Poetry" published posthumously in 1826, argues through the fictitious character of W——

[75] Ibid., 867.
[76] Ibid., 863.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 866.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 865, 874.
[81] Ibid., 871.
[82] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 320.

that "Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and awakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them".[83] She believes that the difference between the two lies in the "uncertainty and obscurity" of terror, which "excite the imagination".[84] In this novel, the "spectacles" have indeed awakened Emily's imagination. She begins making conjectures about the murders committed by Montoni, fearing for her life, and trying to understand the Gothic villain's intentions.[85] But readers find out later in the novel that Emily was wrong in her conjectures about both of the corpses she had seen.[86] Emily's discoveries are unhelpful for her self-preservation. Montoni's mind remains a mystery. As Terry Castle pointed out, "With so much information withheld from her […] it is difficult to see how she 'develops' as a character at all".[87] Emily's encounters with the corpses are not instrumental to her growth.

In *Camilla*, however, the Gothic "*Spectacle*" stimulates the moral growth of the heroine. The terror triggered by this incident is different from the time when she was initially informed of her father's imprisonment in a chapter entitled "*The Operation of Terror*".[88] In the earlier incident, Camilla swooned.[89] The fear of incurring the serious displeasure of her parents for the first time drove her to desperation, and almost to madness. She wished for death, "in common with every

[83] Radcliffe, "On the Supernatural in Poetry," *The New monthly magazine and literary journal* 16, no. 61 (Jan. 1826): 149.
[84] Ibid., 150.
[85] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 662, 348.
[86] Ibid., 662, 365. The first one is not a preserved body of Signora Laurentini but a wax figure. The second is the body of a soldier instead of her aunt Madame Montoni.
[87] Terry Castle, introduction to *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), xiv-xv.
[88] Burney, *Camilla*, 823-827.
[89] Ibid., 823-824.

youthful mourner, in the first paroxysm of violent sorrow", in the hope that she could be spared from the consequences of her actions.[90] At the half-way house, however, the feeling of terror upon seeing Bellamy's corpse awakens Camilla's conscience rather than her imagination. In making herself confront a dead body as "a call to her own self-examination", Camilla realises that she has been courting death without being either mentally or spiritually prepared for such a solemn and awful event.[91] Unlike Emily who faints upon seeing the "spectacle", Camilla does not become insensible though she "sunk upon the floor".[92] She is no longer trying to escape from reality. Her terror turns her attention inward. Before she saw the corpse, "her head was confused".[93] But terror leads to mental clarity. Her "Conscience […] took the reins from the hands of imagination" and "a mist was cleared away".[94] Camilla recognises her "egotism".[95] She remembers her duty to her family and to God.

In her "*Vision*", a second Gothic scene created by her imagination, she is reproached by her conscience for her sinful way of thinking. It takes the forms of personified Death and "A voice from within".[96] Death is no longer a comforting idea but a frightening figure because the sight of the corpse "brought death before her in a new view".[97] Her feeling of peace is "converted into an awe unspeakable, undefinable" when she thinks about God and futurity.[98] Such is the effect of the

[90] Ibid., 838.
[91] Ibid., 871-873.
[92] Radcliffe, *Udolpho*, 348; Burney, *Camilla*, 871.
[93] *Camilla*, 867.
[94] Ibid., 872.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid., 874.
[97] Ibid., 873.
[98] Ibid., 872.

sublime. In her assessment of Gothic fiction, Angela Wright argues that Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) is influential to the development of the aesthetic of terror in Gothic literature by linking it to sublimity.[99] In Burke's work, he explains that terror is "a source of the *sublime*", which is "the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling".[100] He also states that power is a "capital source of the sublime".[101] The supreme power of the divine inspires human beings with a "sacred and reverential awe" and "a mixture of salutary fear".[102] Upon seeing "the immense volumes of Eternity" spread before her in her terrifying dream, Camilla experiences this awe and fear when she recognises the vastness of the universe and a grand design beyond her comprehension.[103] Both veneration and guilt are evoked in Camilla's reinforced recognition of a higher power.

This Gothic nightmare leads to her moral and spiritual growth. Camilla realises that she risked sinning against God in her desire to escape from her offended parents. Feelings of "horrour" and "repentance" are triggered in Camilla.[104] When Death admonishes her for appearing before him, with her "task unfulfilled" and her "peace unearned", she recognises the cowardice of suicide and she remembers her connection with others.[105] Her experience dramatizes John Locke's advice that "he that is a good, a vertuous and able Man, must be made so within", instead of putting

[99] Angela Wright, *Gothic Fiction*, ed. Nicolas Tredell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 39.
[100] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, ed. Paul Guyer, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 33.
[101] Ibid., 57.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Burney, *Camilla*, 875.
[104] Ibid., 873.
[105] Ibid., 875.

on "a counterfeit Carriage, and dissembled Out-side, put on by Fear, only to avoid the present Anger of a Father".[106] Camilla learns that she has to become a moral agent who does good for her own sake rather than merely to please her parents. When she awakens from this Gothic nightmare, Camilla realises that she has more work to do in her earthly existence in order to earn spiritual peace.[107] In this novel, Burney uses Gothic sublimity for a moral purpose. Camilla's sublime experience is instrumental to her spiritual growth.

Though Camilla's situation cannot justly be compared to Clarissa's because Richardson's heroine is a victim of rape, criticism of Clarissa's suicide is nevertheless offered in the narrator's censures of Camilla. As was mentioned in the first chapter, in the eighteenth century, suicide was believed to be a sin and the worst of crimes.[108] Self-murder was considered unnatural because it was against the law of self-preservation, and irreligious because human lives were believed to be the property of God.[109] If a suicide was given a *felo de se* verdict, the corpse would be subjected to a public, shameful interment because the act of suicide was considered a conscious and wilful decision.[110] A *felo de se* burial was held at the crossroads, with a stake driven through the heart of the suicide's naked corpse.[111] Such horrific public spectacles were performed to deter others from committing the same

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[106] John Locke, *The Educational Writings of John Locke: A Critical Edition*, ed. James Axtell and G. R. Elton (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 146.
[107] Burney, *Camilla*, 876.
[108] Donna T. Andrew, "Against 'Nature, Religion and Good Manners': Debating Suicide," in *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery, and Gambling in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 83.
[109] Ibid., 83, 86-87.
[110] Ibid., 85.
[111] Ibid., 122.

offence.[112] In Richardson's depiction of Clarissa's suicide, the heroine is extremely careful about her self-representation so that her death would not be considered self-murder. She dresses her sinful and wilful act of suicide in religious language and makes it appear as though the causes of her death are illness and melancholy. In *Camilla*, an interpretation of Clarissa's death is given when the heroine reprimands herself for her wish to become "a self-devoted corpse", who has "not fallen, indeed, by the profane hand of daring suicide, but equally self-murdered through wilful self-neglect".[113] Camilla criticises herself and is criticised for treating the subjects of life and death too lightly, forgetting her duty to her parents, and manipulating their emotions to obtain their pardon. Reflecting on her wilful suicidal intention at an inn significantly situated "upon a cross road" with the corpse of someone who killed himself by accident, Camilla realises that even a man such as Bellamy "may be criminal, […] with less guilt" than herself.[114] Camilla acknowledges her sinful attempt as self-murder, understanding that God would not be deceived no matter what kind of language she uses to disguise her actions.

Though Camilla repents of her culpable design, her planned drama has already been set in motion. Since her arrival at the half-way house, Camilla has been preparing to make herself a spectacle for her parents, having starved and deprived herself of sleep because she was "apprehensive her friends might find her too well".[115] In doing so, she hopes to render herself an object of pity, in showing her parents that she has punished herself sufficiently. As Jean I. Marsden argues, in a

[112] Ibid., 85-86.
[113] Burney, *Camilla*, 873.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid., 866.

she-tragedy, penitence must be physically manifested on the body of the heroine.[116] The penitent protagonist must become a humiliating "spectacle of […] penance" on display.[117] In Nicholas Rowe's iconic she-tragedy, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714), the eponymous heroine becomes a "piteous sight" in the final scenes of the play, looking "Submissive, sad, and lowly".[118] Her appearance convinces her wronged husband of her true penitence and he comes to her assistance.[119] In *Camilla*, Edgar intrudes on the death-bed scene Camilla has prepared for her parents. He is overcome by his tender feelings of love and pity for Camilla when he finds her "weak and half famished" form and offers her his assistance to restore her to her home.[120] Unlike the tragic heroine Jane Shore, Camilla does not die and is saved by Edgar.[121]

Burney extends this sentimental episode by furnishing two more scenes of parent-daughter reunions. Sentimental drama is characterised by the deliberate use of repetition and the prolongation of situations and themes.[122] In the reunion between the mother and daughter, Mrs. Tyrold already finds Camilla's emotional excess unbearable and asks her not to "excite […] new terror" and to compose herself.[123] As if Burney anticipated her readers would become tired of the characters' sentimentalism when Mr. Tyrold makes his appearance, the narrator

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[116] Jean I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660-1720* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 150-151.
[117] Ibid., 160.
[118] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, ed. Harry William Pedicord (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 59-60.
[119] Ibid., 69-70.
[120] Burney, *Camilla*, 877-879.
[121] Ibid., 889.
[122] See Arthur Sherbo, *English Sentimental Drama* (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1957), 32.
[123] Burney, *Camilla*, 882.

prepares them for Camilla's renewed repentance with the descriptions that "her emotions became again uncontrollable; her horrour, her remorse, her self-abhorrence revived".[124] But in opposition to Richardson's tragic novel, Camilla's parents are kind and forgiving. Their daughter was only temporarily orphaned because of a series of misunderstandings and accidents. When Camilla is restored safely to them, she is still their "dearest Child" and "darling girl!"[125] Fictional reunions between parents and children are not uncommon in sentimental literature. Richard Steele, writing of the sentimental scene of reunion between Sealand and his long-lost daughter in the preface to his influential *Conscious Lovers* (1722), argues that "any thing that has its Foundation in Happiness and Success, must be allow'd to be the Object of Comedy", believing it "an Improvement" "to introduce a Joy too exquisite for Laughter" and to draw "Tears […] flow'd from Reason and Good Sense".[126] Instead of laughing at the follies of stage characters at their expense, Steele encourages the sympathetic and joyful tears of the audience. This was written in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Since the 1780s, tear-provoking sentimental literature was beginning to fall out of fashion. But these pathetic scenes in *Camilla*, modelled after those found in sentimental comedies, play an important role in the narrative even though sentimental conventions are mocked.

Camilla's sentimental crisis gives her otherwise comic narrative an episode of moral poignancy. At the conclusion, she is chided for her excessive sensibility, and her suicidal intention could not be treated lightly in the novel. When she is

[124] Ibid., 884.
[125] Ibid., 884, 885.
[126] Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers. A Comedy*, in *The Plays of Richard Steele*, ed. Shirley Strum Kenny (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 299.

reunited with her mother, Mrs. Tyrold reprimanded her for her "willing despair" and for forgetting her duty to her parents, in her intention to leave them with "never ending regret".[127] Camilla's repentance is not the sudden fifth-act conversion commonly found in sentimental drama,[128] because the Gothic scenes have prepared the ground for her reformation, giving her time for private reflections before she confronts her offended parents. To bring under control the emotional excess that has been building up since Camilla found out about her father's imprisonment, Burney ends the scene with a solemn prayer led by Mr. Tyrold.[129] Camilla, who had been indulging in sentimentalism, "Awfully, though most gratefully" "checked her emotion, and devoutly obeyed" her father when she joins him in his devotion.[130] The conclusion to this pathetic scene, in which Camilla is restored to "the gentlest tranquillity", serves a religious end by demonstrating the soothing and sobering effects of faith in the face of affliction and even the painful emotional excess brought on by joy.[131]

In *Camilla*, Burney once again privileges sentimental comedy over tragedy. For Richardson, "Terror and Fear and Pity are Essentials in a Tragic Performance".[132] While Burney makes use of all three emotions, she converts them into joy at the end. When Camilla leaves the half-way house, she says to her mother, "this house must give me always the most penetrating sensations: I have experienced in it the deepest grief, and the most heart-soothing enjoyment that ever,

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[127] Burney, *Camilla*, 882.
[128] Sherbo, *English Sentimental Drama*, 35.
[129] Burney, *Camilla*, 885.
[130] Ibid., 885.
[131] Ibid., 884.
[132] Samuel Richardson, letter to Lady Bradshaigh, December 15, 1748. in *Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson*, ed. John Caroll, Electronic ed. (Charlottesville: InteLex Corporation, 2002), 105..

perhaps, gave place one to the other in so short a time!"[133] This statement reveals much about Burney's art in structuring this novel. She makes her characters and readers feel sadness, terror, regret and pity in quick succession, but she transforms them into happiness. Mrs. Tyrold says that "Misfortune […] is not the greatest test of our philosophy!" but joy has the power to overwhelm us.[134] Rather than torturing the heroine with one terrifying experience after another, Camilla is made happy after "one inevitable calamity, one unavoidable distress" at the half-way house.[135] After experiencing terror, sorrow and joy, Camilla transforms from "a picture of death" to "A PICTURE OF YOUTH".[136] Camilla is reborn with a new identity. The growth of Camilla that takes place here is instrumental to her transition from Miss Camilla Tyrold to Mrs. Mandlebert. Camilla does not have to die and become a spectacle to give Burney's readers a warning lesson. Rather, she is "*A Picture of Youth*", or one of Burney's "sketches of Characters […], put in action", to convey a moral. Unlike Clarissa who is sacrificed for the benefit of Richardson's readers, Camilla is a heroine who is allowed to grow and benefit from her lessons.

"The conspiracy is so complex":
A Woman's Gamble for Agency and Happiness

Camilla appears to follow the convention of the didactic tradition in depicting the correction of an erring heroine by a lover-mentor. The penitence Camilla shows in the scenes discussed in the previous section is characteristic both

[133] Burney, *Camilla*, 890.
[134] Ibid., 896.
[135] Ibid., 913.
[136] Ibid., 870, 913.

of the sentimental tragic heroine and the reformed rake in sentimental comedies. While Camilla is an orphaned and friendless sentimental heroine in distress in her self-representation, she could also be interpreted as a gamester and a rake – two stock character types in stage comedies. When the narrator tells the readers that Camilla's "danger was the result of self-neglect, as her sufferings had all flowed from mental anguish", we are taught to understand that she is a sentimental heroine only in her imagination.[137] Unlike the sentimental protagonist of a she-tragedy who is doomed to a terrible fate because of her misconduct, Camilla corrects herself at the half-way house and is forgiven like the financially ruined rake who promises reformation in a sentimental comedy. She is rewarded for her filial disobedience when she is bestowed upon Edgar Mandlebert by her father. The authority over the erring heroine is handed from one generation of men to the next. Though the story ends with Camilla resigning her control to Edgar and submitting to become a pupil to the lover-mentor of the didactic tradition, she has achieved the great end of happiness by securing a desirable husband for herself.

Camilla is characterised as a rake because of her extravagance. Camilla's "culpable misconduct" is her spending habits.[138] Many rakes in Restoration comedies are deeply in debt, because they enjoy whoring and gaming.[139] Gambling was considered a "fashionable vice", a form of selfish indulgence which ruined the individual because gaming debts were the cause of many cases of suicide.[140] Unsurprisingly, the female gamester was portrayed even more negatively than her

[137] Ibid., 893.
[138] Ibid., 830.
[139] Yota Batsaki, "*Clarissa*; or, Rake Versus Usurer," *Representations* 93 (2006): 34.
[140] Andrew, "Deserving "Most the Cognizance of the Magistrate and the Censor": Combating Gaming," 176-177.

male counterpart in eighteenth-century society. The true story of Frances Braddock, who hanged herself in Bath in 1731, appeared in print several times in the eighteenth century as a warning for those women who might be tempted to try her fortune.[141] As has been recognised by Jessica Richard, Camilla is portrayed as a female gamester. Richard's analysis of *Camilla* is based on "the mutually informing relationship" between the novel's female gambler, Mrs. Berlinton, and the heroine, drawing on the similarities between Mrs. Berlinton's gambling and play debts and Camilla's shopping and trade debts.[142] The conclusion drawn by Richard is that Camilla "becomes a wife because of literal and figurative gambling".[143] The importance of risk-taking in this narrative has been recognised, but Camilla is not depicted as a transgressive character.

She is portrayed as a modest young woman who takes this risk only because she is under peculiar circumstances. When Camilla writes to her family and Edgar while she neglects to take care of herself in order to convince them that she is determined to die, Camilla is gambling for her family's forgiveness and her happiness with Edgar by putting her life on the line. The locket mentioned in the previous section is a raffle prize which was presented to her by Mrs. Arlbery who wished her "equally brilliant success, in the next, and far more dangerous lottery".[144] It becomes a stake when she uses it as a pledge at the half-way house. In her gamble, Camilla follows Clarissa's example in being a disobedient daughter and finds her voice in writing, opposing her father's previous advice for her to "retire to be

[141] Ibid., 197-199.
[142] Jessica Richard, "The Lady's Last Stake: *Camilla* and the Female Gambler," in *The Romance of Gambling in the Eighteenth-Century British Novel* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 123.
[143] Ibid., 113, 123.
[144] Burney, *Camilla*, 105.

chosen" and remain silent about her feelings for Edgar.[145] She oversteps the bounds of female modesty in her address to Edgar after he forfeited his claim on her heart. But she justifies to herself that she could, "at such a period, with innocence, with propriety, write one poor word" to Edgar, confessing to him that he is the "dear and sole possessor of my heart!" in a letter "*Not to be delivered till I am dead*".[146] Burney only allows Camilla to reveal her feelings when "her mind was disturbed", so that her innocence and modesty could be preserved.[147] But while the heroine is depicted as a daughter who disobeyed her father unintentionally, the narrative shows that she is rewarded for following the dictates of her heart in the important article of marriage. When Edgar intrudes on the private conversation between the mother and daughter regarding Camilla's feelings for him, Camilla is "Almost fainting with shame and surprise", feeling as if she were "disgraced".[148] When Camilla expresses her dismay that her letter of confession reached Edgar, Mr. Tyrold says that "all has been beautifully directed for the best".[149] Though Camilla has seized the agency to act for herself and directed the scenes of her own play, she has also acted appropriately ashamed and satisfied the social expectation for young women to retain their virgin modesty. She has managed to be open and sincere with her feelings without appearing unfeminine and forward.

After achieving this desired outcome, Camilla willingly relinquishes the power she has given herself and becomes the pupil of Edgar, a lover-mentor who acts as a substitute of her father. Edgar is the ward of Mr. Tyrold. The relationship

[145] Ibid., 355-362.
[146] Ibid., 870.
[147] Ibid., 869.
[148] Ibid., 896.
[149] Ibid.

between Edgar and Camilla has incestuous implications. He has been a "brotherly character" to her since childhood.[150] Mr. Tyrold is his "truly paternal guardian" and Mrs. Tyrold is "more than Mother!" to him.[151] They both have a secret wish for a yet "nearer affinity" with Edgar, hoping that he would marry Camilla and become their son-in-law.[152] Edgar's mind was moulded by the heroine's father, who "superintended the care of his education".[153] In other words, he was trained to take the place of Camilla's father. Indeed, Edgar is a father-like figure to the heroine. When Camilla asks for a clergyman at the half-way house because she is "overpowered with tender recollection of her Father", Edgar comes into her room and begins a prayer with, "Father of Mercy".[154] He is therefore a representative of Camilla's earthly, spiritual and heavenly fathers. Furthermore, Edgar is tutored by the misogynistic Dr. Marchmont "doubtfully to watch her every action, and suspiciously to judge her every motive" before he proposes to make Camilla his wife.[155] Under the watchfulness of Edgar, Camilla remains "*under the Eye of a Father*" – the Lockean gaze.[156]

This disturbing web of relations between the characters is integrated by Burney into a light-hearted comedic scene in which Edgar and Mr. Tyrold secretly listen to Camilla's conversation with her mother. Before Edgar emerges from his hiding place, Camilla and Mrs. Tyrold hear "A buzzing noise", "a struggle and a dispute".[157] These depictions read like stage directions for a laughing comedy or the

[150] Ibid., 339.
[151] Ibid., 900, 896.
[152] Ibid., 904, 120, 344.
[153] Ibid., 17.
[154] Ibid., 877.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Locke, *Educational Writings*, 203.
[157] Burney, *Camilla*, 896.

laughing portion of a sentimental comedy. For instance, in a scene from Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer; or, The Mistakes of a Night* (1773), Mr. Hardcastle and Sir Charles Marlow watch young Charles Marlow interact with Kate Hardcastle behind a screen in order to ascertain the young man's inclination for her before advancing their marriage.[158] In *Camilla*, there are instead two generations of women being spied on by two generations of lover-mentors as the heroine confides in her mother about her feelings for the hero. Each man is "the accomplice" and "dear fellow-culprit" of the other.[159] The transfer of power from father to future husband is undertaken in a comic tone. Camilla's playful remark that "The conspiracy is so complex, and even my Mother so nearly a party concerned, that I dare not risk the unequal contest" reveals how powerless she is in opposition to the power of the mentor figures.[160] Though Camilla is disturbed because Edgar "authorized yourself to overhear my confessions to my Mother", she is pleased with the outcome nonetheless.[161] Edgar claims that he feels "shame and regret" for his distrust, but it seems unlikely that he will resign his role as a monitor of her every action.[162]

The narrative concerning Camilla seems to follow that of a female gamester whose behaviour is corrected by her generous lover or husband. Andrew observed that attitudes towards gambling might have changed in the course of the century, because dramatic representations of fashionable gaming were generally comedic until the mid-century, when plays such as Edward Moore's tragedy *The Gamester*

[158] Oliver Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer; or, the Mistakes of a Night*, ed. Tom Davis (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1979), 89-92.
[159] Burney, *Camilla*, 897, 899.
[160] Ibid., 902.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid., 896.

(1753) appeared on stage.[163] Burney adheres to the early-century portrayal of the gamester, making Camilla a female gambler who is rewarded for her disobedience. While a she-tragedy's sentimental heroine is condemned to death after committing a sin, a rake can be forgiven and might even be rewarded in sentimental comedy. An example of this is the financially ruined Loveless from Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696). He is forgiven by his generous wife, Amanda, and rewarded with an unexpected fortune when he promises to reform by her virtuous example.[164] In Burney's novel, Camilla the female rake is pardoned by her parents and rewarded with Edgar, whose "first care […] was to clear every debt in which Camilla had borne any share" as soon as he becomes her husband.[165]

Though Edgar also had a lesson to learn in becoming more trusting, Camilla submits to the power of her lover-mentor and promises to reform under his guidance.[166] While her parents believe that only under the guidance of Edgar is Camilla's "gaiety no longer to be feared", Camilla has already reformed by herself at the half-way house, where her imagination is reined in and her conscience is awakened.[167] But willingly, Camilla makes Edgar "the repository of her every thought".[168] Having learned from Eugenia's unhappy experience about the powerless position of women, Camilla allows herself to be governed by Edgar. Her sister's misfortunes show her that even an heiress' independence cannot protect her

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[163] Andrew, "Deserving 'Most the Cognizance of the Magistrate and the Censor': Combating Gaming," 178-180.
[164] Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift; or, the Fool in Fashion*, in *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (Madison, Teaneck, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2000), 106-107.
[165] Burney, *Camilla*, 910.
[166] Ibid., 896.
[167] Ibid., 913.
[168] Ibid., 913, 903.

from danger. Camilla realises that it is essential to seek the protection of a worthy man after witnessing the abuses experienced by Eugenia.

Edgar is not a perfect Grandisonian ideal, but he is her own choice. This is important to Frances Burney, who married Alexandre D'Arblay in 1793 notwithstanding her father's disapproval of the match, believing that "Happiness is the great end of all our worldly views & proceedings; & no one can judge for another in what will produce it".[169] In Burney's fictional world, it is not selfish for a woman to pursue happiness. Rather, it is her self-denial and self-neglect that are considered as such. When Eugenia refuses to go through the humiliating process to seek legal separation from Bellamy,[170] Camilla silently blames her sister for being "self-devoted".[171] Eugenia is thought selfish for causing her loved ones pain by suffering in silence rather than trying to improve her circumstances. Camilla, at the half-way house, also accuses herself of being "self-devoted" when she contemplates and attempts suicide. Self-murder was frequently described in the eighteenth century as an act of cowardice and selfishness because the individual's family was left to suffer not only sorrow but also the disgrace of a *felo de se* burial.[172] After the two sisters are safely restored to the family, Sir Hugh Tyrold gives the insight that "it is but melancholy at best, the cares of the world; which if you can't keep off now, will be overtaking you at every turn".[173] Both young women have to learn to

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[169] Letter 120 to Mrs. Waddington, from [Phenice Farm, near Great Bookham], August 2, [1793]. in *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay). Volume II: Courtship and Marriage 1793. Letters 40-121*, ed. Joyce Hemlow and Althea Douglas (1972), 179.
[170] *Camilla*, 842.
[171] Ibid., 808.
[172] Andrew, "Against 'Nature, Religion and Good Manners': Debating Suicide," 85.
[173] Burney, *Camilla*, 892.

move on and move forward after making bad decisions or suffering from unmerited calamities. *Camilla*'s message seems to be that all women deserve to be happy. As the heroine demonstrates, they may have to disobey authority figures in order to make themselves so. One of the most important lessons of the novel appears to be that a woman's personal happiness is what she owes to herself and her loved ones.

Chapter 5: The Two Wanderers: The Transgressive Heroine and Anti-heroine in Frances Burney's Final Novel

In *Evelina* (1778), *Cecilia* (1782) and *Camilla* (1796), there are many parallels between the experiences of some of the female characters and those of the heroine of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*. But in *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties* (1814), the final novel by Frances Burney, the explorations of the themes found in *Clarissa* are more subtle. The subtitle of this work, *Female Difficulties*, highlights the key concern of all of Burney's novels. In the previous chapter, I mentioned that Eugenia, the secondary heroine of *Camilla*, anticipates Elinor Joddrel, the anti-heroine of Burney's final novel. The memoir which Eugenia begins writing after she becomes a widow of Alphonso Bellamy, seems to be a radical work, in which she intends to develop her "philosophical idea".[1] However, this writing project is abandoned when Eugenia finds domestic happiness, in marrying Frederic Melmond. Burney's next novel, *The Wanderer*, is a more extended exploration of some of the more radical ideas related to women's condition.

In her final literary production, Burney comes full circle and returns to the incognita plot she employed in *Evelina* with significant differences. The narrative ends with the heroine's affectionate marriage, only after depicting the difficulties encountered by a single woman who attempts to achieve independence and whose

[1] Frances Burney, *Camilla, or a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward A. Bloom and Lillian D. Bloom, Oxford World's Classics ed. (1796; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 905-906.

attempts to support herself are repeatedly frustrated. This narrative is concerned with propriety and transgression, and women's rights to freedom of expression and career opportunities. Elinor, the anti-heroine in *The Wanderer*, is an unconforming woman, who does not ultimately become domesticated, but is exiled for her deviant behaviour. But the heroine, who is transgressive in her own way, remains respectable because Elinor's behaviour has helped to stretch the boundaries of women's social limitations. Even so, like Burney's previous protagonists, Juliet ultimately submits to the marriage plot and returns to the domestic sphere.

In some critical studies of the text, it has been argued that Elinor is a parody or caricature of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Hays, or one of the fictional characters created by either writer. For instance, Tara Ghoshal Wallace and Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez both suggest that Burney adopted certain radical ideas about female difficulties but distanced herself from the female writers she was indebted to, by creating the character of Elinor Joddrel. Wallace interprets Elinor as a caricature of Wollstonecraft.[2] She argues that, "While Wollstonecraft's scandalous life and opinions are embodied in the antiheroine, the social critique articulated in her posthumous novel [i.e. *The Wrongs of Woman, or, Maria* (1798)] weaves through the heroine's trajectory, replicated and revised".[3] In her view, in making a heroine "who patiently suffers under [patriarchal] constraints, Burney strategically offers social conservatism a way to sympathize with the wrongs of woman".[4] Fernández Rodríguez instead sees Elinor as a caricature of the protagonist in Mary

[2] Tara Ghoshal Wallace, "Rewriting Radicalism: Wollstonecraft in Burney's *The Wanderer*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 24, no. 3 (2012): 491.
[3] Ibid., 493.
[4] Ibid., 499.

Hays' *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (1796), but she argues that Juliet Granville shares many similarities with Emma.[5] *The Wanderer* is interpreted by her as "a new version of Hays's female difficulties".[6] So, both Wallace and Fernándex Rodríguez suggest that radical women writers are fictionalised in *The Wanderer*.

At the time that it was published, *The Wanderer* was seen as a novel with anti-Jacobin sentiments. A reporter of *The Gentlemen's Magazine* expected that the novel "will have its use, and serve as an historical antidote of any lurking remnants of poisonous doctrines".[7] The anti-Jacobin novels published in the 1790s were British works written in response and seemingly in opposition to the French Revolution. Matthew O. Grenby has shown in his extensive study that, taken as a body of works which became "an established and coherent genre", anti-Jacobin novels "seemed to have absorbed and recapitulated conservative sentiments almost by default".[8] Grenby has shown that anti-Jacobin novels dominated the literary market by the end of the 1790s and cannot be considered propaganda because the works appealed to the tastes of readers who already sympathised with the sentiments found within them.[9] Furthermore, critics have warned against reading anti-Jacobin novels simply as conservative works that condemned the principles of the French Revolution and resisted social change. Claudia L. Johnson has pointed out that "It

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[5] Carmen María Fernández Rodríguez, "From Hays to Burney: An Approach to Female Difficulties in Early Nineteenth-Century English Fiction," *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense* 16 (2008): 51-52.
[6] Ibid., 58.
[7] "66. The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties. By the Author of "Evelina," "Cecilia," and "Camilla." In Five Volumes. Longman and Co.," *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical chronicle, Jan. 1736-Dec. 1833* (1814): 579.
[8] Matthew O. Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3, 1.
[9] Ibid., 3, 9.

does not suffice to denominate writers as 'conservative' or 'radical' according to whether they were 'for' or 'against' the French Revolution" because their treatments of the subject were far more complex than it might seem.[10] Kevin Gilmartin has also called attention to "the range and complexity of counterrevolutionary expression" as well as their "enterprising and productive (rather than merely negative or reactive) presence".[11] He has argued that these novels were "counterrevolutionary in the sense that they were unapologetically committed to a project of social renovation […] in order to block revolutionary designs".[12] In other words, anti-Jacobin novels do not fully embrace the existing social structure or serve simply to defend it.

They contain progressive ideas and function to challenge the social system even though radical figures are caricatured and the bad consequences brought about by their new philosophies are depicted. In Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801), for instance, there is a cross-dressed woman in the character of Harriet Freke. Deborah Weiss has argued that, in this novel, Edgeworth sympathises with Mary Wollstonecraft's intellectual ideas even though she makes use of the popular character type of the female philosopher commonly found in the literature of the 1790s and early 1800s.[13] She has suggested that there are in fact two female philosophers in the novel; and Harriet Freke acts as "a false female philosopher who

[10] Claudia L. Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), xxi.
[11] Kevin Gilmartin, *Writing against Revolution: Literary Conservatism in Britain, 1790-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 3, 9.
[12] Ibid., 3.
[13] Deborah Weiss, "The Extraordinary Ordinary Belinda: Maria Edgeworth's Female Philosopher," *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 19, no. 4 (2007): 446.

appears to be a caricature of a caricature" of Wollstonecraft,[14] who was mocked for her scandalous private life following the publication of William Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1798) after her death.[15] Weiss considers Harriet Freke a foil for the heroine, a "revised female philosopher" who is conventionally feminine.[16]

In my analysis of Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*, I also discuss the function of Elinor Joddrel as the heroine's foil. However, I argue that Burney's treatment of the characters of Juliet Granville and Elinor is complex. The relationship between the heroine and her foil is not a simple opposition. Elinor is not simply a caricature, but she takes on a more central role as an anti-heroine and serves as a contrast to the heroine. She is not simply condemned and mocked, but she is treated with a degree of sympathy. The title of Burney's final published fictional work is significant because this is the only novel in Burney's oeuvre which does not take the heroine's first name as its title. It is not only because Juliet is introduced to the readers as an Incognita, but the wanderer of the title refers to Elinor as well as the heroine. For a large portion of the novel, the heroine, Ellis/Juliet, is not a domestic figure. She is presented to readers as a pious pilgrim enduring the "cruel trials" of life, and she is ultimately rewarded for her patience and virtuous

[14] Ibid.
[15] William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Pamela Clemit, and Gina Luria Walker (Letchworth: Broadview Press, 2001). Mary Wollstonecraft was lampooned in works such as Richard Polwhele, *The Unsex'd Females; a Poem, Addressed to the Author of the Pursuits of Literature* (New-York: Re-printed by Wm. Cobbett, 1800). In its preface, "unsex'd females" is defined as "literary ladies, in Great Britain, who had thrown aside […] modesty, […] and who, with unblushing front, had adopted the sentiments and the manners of the impious amazons of republican France" (v).
[16] Weiss, 460, 459.

efforts.[17] Her foil, Elinor, also describes herself as a "poor forlorn traveller" "languish[ing] to give up the journey altogether", because she feels defeated.[18] So, the heroine and her foil are both wanderers. Ellis/Juliet and Elinor are characterised as two transgressive women facing female difficulties; and they both try to escape the social limitations imposed on them by their society and attempt to gain autonomy.

The options and experiences available to most eighteenth-century women, at least for those who remained respectable members of their society, were limited. To a certain extent, many female authors were, consciously or unconsciously, writing against limiting beliefs related to female conduct out of a desire to expand the field of experience available to their sex. The female difficulties explored in *The Wanderer* are women's lack of freedom of expression and their difficulty in finding work. The two wanderers are characterised as female performers. In their adventures, Burney uses performance to allow her two wanderers to expand their fields of experience. In the long eighteenth century, acting was not considered a respectable occupation for women, as many historians and literary historians have shown. For instance, Laura J. Rosenthal has recognised that actresses and prostitutes had "intertwined reputations", because both groups put their bodies on display for a living.[19] This is because, as Felicity Nussbaum has pointed out, it was difficult to

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[17] Frances Burney, *The Wanderer, or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Stephen Copley, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 861.
[18] Ibid., 782.
[19] Laura J. Rosenthal, "Entertaining Women: The Actress in Eighteenth-Century Theatre and Culture," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730-1830*, ed. Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 159-160. Rosenthal explains that the "exposure of female bodies to the male gaze tended to associate actresses with prostitution regardless of their behaviour off stage" (159).

"reconcile actresses' economic agency with feminine virtue".[20] Despite their disrepute, actresses were powerful public figures with a career and a voice. They were also becoming more respected as professionals in the entertainment industry as the period progressed. Though no argument has been made in *The Wanderer* to give women equal career opportunities as men, the novel does advocate the idea that women should be allowed new possibilities and more freedom so that they can have a degree of control over their lives. However, this autonomy is only acceptable when it is involuntary. While Juliet reluctantly ventures out into the public world as Ellis to support herself because she has no other choice, Elinor stages her own theatricals to give herself the freedom to voice her desire and to pursue a man.

In the previous chapter, I observed that the primary and secondary heroines of *Camilla* are both restored to a peaceful state at the conclusion of the novel and they are both allowed to enjoy marital contentment. However, *The Wanderer*, which contains a culmination of Burney's thoughts on female difficulties in her more mature years, presents a rivalry between two women. This novel, like Burney's previous works, explores ways for women to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom, by depicting two female characters who take on an even more proactive role consciously to shape their destiny. But it also shows the cost of happiness when the felicity of one woman is sacrificed to that of another. Though both Ellis and Elinor tread outside the bounds of the domestic realm, Elinor is punished for her eccentricities and is subjected to a

[20] Felicity Nussbaum, *Rival Queens: Actresses, Performance, and the Eighteenth-Century British Theater* (Philadelphia, Oxford: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 12.

melancholy – though not tragic – ending while Juliet is rewarded with a desirable marriage after a long period of patient suffering.

I argue that Elinor Joddrel serves as a contrasting figure to be sacrificed for the benefit of the heroine. Juliet's conduct appears more acceptable only because Elinor is made a contrast to her. In eighteenth-century novels, transgressive women function as revolutionaries in female manners. They brought about change because of their unconventional behaviour. These figures became foils for respectable women, as Aleksondra Hultquist suggests, and novelists "displac[e] actual tales of seduction onto" them so that the heroine can learn from their transgressions without experiencing them first-hand.[21] Furthermore, Felicity Nussbaum has argued that "the cult of domesticity in England" was consolidated by inventing "the 'other' woman of empire" and associating native transgressive women with foreign forms of female sexuality.[22] Female desire was therefore represented as a moral infection from without. Nussbaum suggests that prostitutes and exotic women were sacrificed in order to preserve the rest of the women who represented domestic Englishness.[23] The respectability of domestic women was therefore protected by transgressive women, because they provided a contrast and negative example for other members of their sex to measure themselves against. Transgressive women lived with a bad reputation and were punished while domestic women enjoyed the increasing

[21] Aleksondra Hultquist, "Haywood's Re-Appropriation of the Amatory Heroine in *Betsy Thoughtless*," *Philological Quarterly* 85, no. 1/2 (2006): 143, 149.
[22] Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 1.
[23] Ibid., 19.

tolerance towards female sexuality that they brought about. In novels, some of these transgressive characters are martyr-like figures that are both condemned and pitied.

Though many women writers thought that changes were necessary in order to improve women's lot and to make them more useful citizens, Burney's final novel suggests that such changes have to be made gradually. The basis of the main argument of my work is developed from Harriet Guest's suggestion that there was an accumulation of "a series of small changes […] in the position of women, or the way women are perceived" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[24] I argue in the present chapter that Burney's novels do not support a radical reform in female conduct. In Burney's fictional world, transgressive women function as revolutionary figures who pave the way for their heroines to tread more carefully behind them, negotiating for incremental changes in what was considered acceptable female behaviour in order gradually to stretch the boundaries of the social limitations placed on their sex. These developments were by no means smooth or easy because it takes time and patience for sustainable changes to take place. There were also obstacles along the way, because of deeply-rooted beliefs and customs as well as differing ideas about the ideal condition for women. In *The Wanderer*, the anti-heroine Elinor shows that, though transgressive behaviour has its attractions, it is unadvisable for a woman to shock society by becoming public and vocal because a revolutionary figure sacrifices herself by initiating too radical a change. In contrast, Juliet Granville is a heroine who cautiously juggles new ideas about female conduct with established customs. It is because Elinor sets a startling

[24] Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 14.

contrast that she remains respectable. Juliet ultimately finds that the independence she desires is unachievable. The only freedom that she has gained is to choose her life partner after her adventures and rich life experiences, but it is a freedom which demands that she submit to the marriage plot and fulfil the conventional role of a wife at the end of the novel. In the following section, I will first turn my attention to Elinor and discuss the role played by the unconforming foil in bringing about the happiness of the heroine.

Elinor Joddrel:
The Fall of an Anti-heroine

Elinor Joddrel is a character developed from *Camilla*'s Eugenia, who is unconventional not only because of her deformity and unattractive appearance, but she is also an unpublished radical female writer with an unfinished work. Elinor is not a learned lady. Rather, she is depicted as a young woman who has been influenced by the little knowledge that she has about the French Revolution and the idea of liberty, and radical texts on the rights of women. The themes of madness, suicide and performance, which Burney explored in her previous novels, are revisited in this novel, in the portrayal of Elinor. In juxtaposing such an unconventionally vocal and theatrical woman with the heroine, the fictional world presented by Burney does not depict solidarity between women. Instead, women are competitors in the marriage market. The heroine is rewarded with the hero while the anti-heroine is martyred. In contrast to *Camilla*, in which the primary and secondary heroines support each other, *The Wanderer* casts light on the grim reality

of female difficulties. Burney shows that, behind the felicity of one woman, there might be the downfall and melancholy fate of another.

As I have mentioned, Elinor is an unconforming female figure who is characterised in a similar vein to caricatures found in anti-Jacobin literature. In Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*, in a chapter entitled "Rights of Woman", readers find out that Harriet Freke's mind is uncultivated, and she cannot hold an intellectual argument against Mr. Percival and Belinda.[25] Harriet Freke is not a representation of Mary Wollstonecraft even though Edgeworth alludes to the title of her work. As Weiss has argued, she is "a caricature of a caricature".[26] She claims to be "a champion for the Rights of Women" and states that "the present system of society is radically wrong", but says that she is "not tinker general to the world" when Mr. Percival asks her what she would suggest for its improvement.[27] While she prides herself in her ability to think for herself, her arguments are feeble and empty. She does not exercise her reason, and is simply arguing for the sake of being argumentative. In Mary Hays' *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, the protagonist expresses that she does not have the "talents for […] a reformer, of the world", but proposes that a radical reform would be possible if women had the courage and determination to fight for liberty.[28] While female characters such as Emma Courtney are concerned about empowering women as a group, it is clear that Harriet Freke is using a surface knowledge of radical ideas about women's rights for her

[25] Maria Edgeworth, *Belinda*, ed. Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 225-234.
[26] Weiss, 446.
[27] Edgeworth, *Belinda*, 229, 230.
[28] Mary Hays, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, ed. Marilyn L. Brooks (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2000), 149.

own purpose. Rather than help improve women's lot in society, she is a disruptive figure with the "courage to be bad", in her refusal to be "a *mere* woman" who conforms to social expectations.[29] She is only interested in granting herself the freedom to behave in an unconventionally unfeminine way. While Harriet Freke is a disruptive female character who is mocked for her eccentricities, Elinor functions as Juliet's rival and serves as her foil. Her eccentricities benefit the heroine by expanding the boundaries of women's social limitations.

Before *The Wanderer*, Burney began exploring the theme of female rivalry in one of her dramatic tragedies. Burney's depiction of the rivalry between Juliet and Elinor is developed from her exploration of the tension between heroine and foil in one of her court tragedies, *Hubert De Vere* (1790-1797). In this play, because both women are in love with the same man and only one of them can be with the hero, the other has to become disappointed. The rustic maid is sacrificed to complete the happiness of the high-born heroine in this tragedy. When Cerulia's hopes for marital felicity are disappointed, she loses her will to live. Her death is a wilful suicide, but it is described as a "soft […] exit".[30] Even though she dies of self-neglect, she is loved and regretted by everyone in her community. She becomes the centre of the final scene, when the play ends with the hero, heroine and a group of weeping village maids crowding around her to lament her death.[31] While *Hubert De Vere* has a tragic ending, it is clear that the union between the hero and heroine

[29] Edgeworth, *Belinda*, 226, 227.
[30] Frances Burney, *Hubert De Vere. A Pastoral Tragedy*, in *The Complete Plays of Frances Burney. Volume 2. Tragedies*, ed. Peter Sabor and Stewart J. Cooke (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1995), 161.
[31] Ibid., 163.

will follow. Therefore, in this play, we can see that Burney was exploring a plot in which the happiness of one woman is built upon the misery of another.

In *The Wanderer*, instead of an amiable female rival, Burney creates an unconventional anti-heroine as a foil for the heroine. Elinor is unapologetically vocal. She does not shy away from exciting the "notice and wonder" of her audience and drawing attention to herself in public.[32] Elinor is influenced by the stage drama she has seen, referring to her love declarations and suicide attempts as acts and scenes of a play.[33] She makes herself the director and actress of her own morbid and Gothic theatricals, taking on different dramatic roles to express her devotion to Harleigh. She first appears on stage as a widow, mourning for a love which is unreciprocated.[34] Later in the novel, in a rewriting of the scenes in which Clarissa bespeaks her own coffin and burial-dress,[35] Elinor has prepared a coffin for herself and puts on a white dress "of the materials, used for […] a shroud", ready to become Harleigh's devoted corpse.[36] She blurs the line between performance and reality, in showing genuine feelings of her affection, pain and despair. Her props are real weapons and her staged performances are actual suicide attempts. In Elinor's orchestrated scenes, Clarissa's "triumphant death" is secularised when Elinor makes suicide the "triumphant antidote to woe!" and imagines her corpse becoming "food

[32] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 361.
[33] Ibid., 161-162. For example, Elinor says, "The second act of the comedy, tragedy, or farce, of my existence, is to be represented tomorrow. The first scene will be a conference between Ellis and Albert, in which Ellis will relate the history of Elinor".
[34] Ibid., 359-360.
[35] Richardson, *Clarissa*, 1363, 1304, 1306. Clarissa makes "her happy preparation" when she orders her own burial-dress and coffin, which she calls her "*palace*", and looks forward to her heavenly reward.
[36] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 583, 579-581.

[…] for worms!" in contrast to Clarissa's portrayal of death as the glorification of the soul.[37] Suicide, as mentioned in previous chapters, was considered a heinous crime and a sin in Burney's day. In this novel, Elinor's attempts to kill herself are not sympathetically portrayed.

Though Elinor and Cerulia from *Hubert De Vere* are both women driven to suicide because of love, Burney's portrayal of Elinor differs from her treatment of Cerulia. The secondary heroine of Burney's pastoral tragedy is depicted as a sweet woman, who died as a "hapless victim at / Misfortune's shrine".[38] Elinor, in contrast, has rendered herself unfeminine and undesirable. Because the man was usually the active pursuer in a romantic relationship, Elinor's behaviour makes her unattractive to Harleigh. Her declarations of love are not accidents produced at a moment of agitation, as in *Camilla*, when the heroine writes a note to Edgar Mandelbert in her illness.[39] Elinor's expressions of her desire are theatrical displays which are vocal and deliberate. She oversteps the boundaries even further than Emma Courtney, whose confessions of love and desire are in the form of private though outrageous letters. Significantly, there is a brief instance in the novel in which Elinor dresses as a man, before she throws off the disguise to reveal another costume. Her otherness is doubled because she has disguised herself as "a strange figure, with something foreign in his appearance".[40] Elinor appears as a man while the feminine and appropriately "ashamed, embarrassed, confused" Juliet appears on stage, dressed as a beautiful Greek goddess, about to perform on a harp.[41] Despite

[37] Ibid., 783, 580.
[38] *Hubert De Vere*, 163.
[39] *Camilla*, 869-870.
[40] *The Wanderer*, 356, 359.
[41] Ibid., 358.

Juliet's adoption of multiple disguises, she always appears as a woman. But Elinor's cross-dressing indicates that she is trespassing into the masculine role. While women in breeches were not an uncommon spectacle on the theatrical stage because the cross-dressed actress became fashionable, this practice was becoming increasingly condemned and seen as travesty by the end of the eighteenth century.[42] In Edgeworth's *Belinda*, Harriet Freke's continual cross-dressing is intended to shock others, in an attempt to challenge gender boundaries. The cross-dressing of the theatrical Elinor is also a disruptive act designed to shock rather than to surprise and delight her intended audience. When Elinor makes herself a public spectacle, she is not an object of desire. Even when she is dressed in women's clothing, she looks "wild and menacing", as she brandishes a weapon in her hand.[43] Not only is Harleigh not flattered by Elinor's attention, but he is "ashamed" to be the object of her affections because her declarations of love are made publicly.[44] In aggressively fighting for her rights to control her destiny and her freedom of expression, her "heroic tenderness" and "masculine spirit" make her unattractive and undesirable to Harleigh.[45] By the end of the novel, Elinor has lost Harleigh's good opinion because of her behaviour.

The madness that Elinor displays in her theatrical scenes is similar in nature to that of characters such as the rival of the protagonist in Nicholas Rowe's *The Tragedy of Jane Shore* (1714). In this play, Jane Shore becomes entangled in a love triangle and is led to her death after being betrayed by her jealous false friend,

[42] See Kristina Straub, *Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth-Century Players and Sexual Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 127.
[43] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 359.
[44] Ibid., 361.
[45] Ibid., 360, 862.

Alicia. This secondary female character has been driven mad because she was disappointed in love and she wants vengeance on the heroine, whom she calls her rival.[46] In her final appearance, she rushes off the stage, seemingly to commit suicide, in a fit of madness. Many of Burney's contemporary readers would have been familiar with Rowe's influential play. The destructive character of Alicia would have informed them that the consequences of female jealousy and rivalry could have tragic consequences for both women and the object of their affections.

However, Burney's novel does not end with Elinor's death. Instead, there is a moment of overt didacticism in the novel when Elinor is finally convinced by Harleigh to give up her "principles" and "long-cherished conviction!", and to repent of her sin of self-murder.[47] Though Elinor thinks that she is superior to the rest of her society because of her advanced way of thinking, she eventually has to discover "the fallacy of her new system" the hard way and acknowledge that customs were "established, after trial, for public utility".[48] She is disillusioned and decides to embrace a religious life. The hero, the mouthpiece of society, tells Juliet (and the readers) that Elinor will one day "return to the habits of society and common life, as one awakening from a dream".[49] A review in *The Gentlemen's Magazine* supports his conviction. The writer encourages readers to "suppose she returns to the good old maxims from which she had been perverted", believing that the novel will "serve as an historical antidote of any lurking remnants of poisonous

[46] Nicholas Rowe, *The Tragedy of Jane Shore*, ed. Harry William Pedicord (1714; London: Edward Arnold, 1975).
[47] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 792-794.
[48] Ibid., 863.
[49] Ibid., 863.

doctrines".[50] However, Elinor's function in the novel is not as simple as it is described in this review.

Elinor is a mocked caricature of a woman with avowed progressive sentiments, but she is treated with sympathy by both the narrator and the heroine. Though it might be easier to pity a woman such as Cerulia, the suffering and despair of Elinor should not be undermined, even though her behaviour is rendered ridiculous. She is a woman labouring under the feeling of great injustice and the pain of unrequited love, and she is driven to madness and suicide. However, she is seen as a threat to society because of her eccentricities and theatrical nature. But as Gilmartin has pointed out, "the anti-Jacobin novel typically purged its Jacobin rogue through the *deus ex machina* of state repression rather than through any countervailing agency shaped within its own narrative design".[51] Elinor's exile is voluntary because she feels defeated. In Edgeworth's *Belinda*, the departure of Harriet Freke is described as a "deplorable yet ludicrous situation" and her injuries are treated unsympathetically when the narrator tells the readers that she has received "just punishment" for her actions.[52] In Burney's novel, though the heroine remains mostly silent during Harleigh and Elinor's conversations, she is "full of tender pity" for Elinor and "deplored her fate with the sincerest concern; and ruminated upon her virtues, and attractive qualities".[53] While Harleigh seems unable

[50] "66. The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties. By the Author of 'Evelina,' 'Cecilia,' and 'Camilla.' In Five Volumes. Longman and Co.," *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical chronicle, Jan. 1736-Dec. 1833* (1814): 579.
[51] Gilmartin, *Writing against Revolution*, 17.
[52] Edgeworth, *Belinda*, 312, 343.
[53] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 796, 797.

to find any pity in his heart for Elinor, Juliet understands the pain of being unable to speak her mind and express her feelings.

Juliet's appreciation of Elinor's merits is reminiscent of the ways in which Amelia Opie's transgressive heroines are silently respected by those around them despite their sexual misconduct. In *The Father and Daughter* (1801), Agnes Fitzhenry's friend, Caroline, criticises the "ill-judging and criminal severity" with which society condemns the otherwise amiable women, believing that they should be allowed the opportunity to redeem themselves and be cleared of the stigma through penitence and reformation.[54] When Agnes returns to her native town to visit the poor, she is comforted to find that there are those who would give her "well-earned blessings" for what she did for them in the past despite her sexual misconduct.[55] She is recognised essentially as the same person, that "fallen as she is, she is still Agnes Fitzhenry".[56] Similarly, in *Adeline Mowbray, or, the Mother and Daughter* (1805), the eponymous heroine is not a deluded victim of "wicked seductions", but her sexual transgression is overlooked by some people in her town and she is seen as a charitable "pitying angel" to them.[57] Opie's protagonists have become outcasts of society, but there are characters who think well of them and appreciate them for their good qualities and charitable nature. Even so, readers are told that, "for the sake of other young women", women such as Agnes should not

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[54] Amelia Alderson Opie, *The Father and Daughter* in *The Father and Daughter with Dangers of Coquetry*, ed. Shelley King and John B. Pierce (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2003), 139-140.
[55] Ibid., 129, 130.
[56] Ibid., 122.
[57] *Adeline Mowbray, or, the Mother and Daughter: A Tale*, ed. Anne McWhir (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2010), 195, 257, 155.

be reintegrated into genteel society.[58] Adeline herself believes that she would have become "a dangerous example" were her respectability restored.[59] Fallen women must therefore remain secluded. They are publicly condemned for their sexuality but silently respected and regretted by other women for their good qualities, fortitude and sacrifice.

Elinor, who is also an unconventional and openly desiring woman, is treated with silent understanding by Juliet. But she must become isolated, because those who are concerned about their own reputations can only sympathise with and admire women such as Elinor from a distance. In Mary Hays' first novel, Emma Courtney describes herself as a "comfortless, solitary, shivering, wanderer, in the dreary wilderness of human society".[60] Elinor is another wanderer, with her unwillingness to blend in with the crowd and an ideology that is not accepted by her society. Emma is aware of the price of being different from other women, musing that "those who have courage to act upon advanced principles, must be content to suffer moral martyrdom".[61] But she tells her adopted son Augustus Harley junior that the "generous efforts" and "struggles, of an ardent spirit" "will not be lost", because these heroines will be remembered by future generations for "daring to trace, to their springs, errors the most hoary, and prejudices the most venerated, emancipate the human mind from the trammels of superstition, and teach it, *that its true dignity and virtue, consist in being free*".[62] *Emma Courtney* conveys the belief that the solitary efforts and sacrifices of the courageously vocal and eccentric women will

[58] *The Father and Daughter*, 123.
[59] *Adeline Mowbray*, 257.
[60] Hays, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, 148.
[61] Ibid., 221, 163.
[62] Ibid., 116, 221.

eventually benefit and liberate the female sex in the future. In *The Wanderer*, Elinor also realises and accepts that she has to "suffer martyrdom!" for standing apart from other women.[63] But Elinor's motive is more self-serving than Emma's. Her sense of injustice makes her "proclaim my sovereign contempt of the whole race of mankind!"[64] Without thinking at all about improving the female condition as a whole, she is only concerned about her own freedom of expression and desire to win the affections of Harleigh.

Juliet recognises Elinor as a martyr who is sacrificed because of her radical stance, despite all her other good qualities. Elinor is admirable for her courage to walk alone, even though she clearly longs for an emotional connection with another human being. Elinor herself thinks of her story as a "tragi-comedy".[65] By blending together the comic and tragic traditions, and in caricaturing the sufferings of an unconventional woman, Burney makes it unclear whether Elinor is a figure to be pitied or ridiculed. By the end of the narrative, Elinor realises her mistake and the role she has made herself play for the benefit of her rival. She finally understands that she has become her "own executioner!" and Juliet's "victim" in serving as a contrast to her. In her final encounter with the heroine, Elinor feels "involuntary admiration" for Juliet's "dignified patience" and blames herself for her "distracting impatience" to learn the feelings of Harleigh, which destroyed her chances with him.[66] She believes that she could have won his affections if she had transgressed with more moderation, and behaved more conventionally. In her attempts to be

[63] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 796.
[64] Ibid., 361.
[65] Ibid., 579-581.
[66] Ibid., 796.

different and defiant, she has become a mad character who is larger than life, rather than her authentic self. She has become a caricature. She finds that her courage to stand out and speak out only serves to make her an outcast from society and destroy her prospects of a happy life.

After her many attempts to kill herself, Elinor's body carries scars from her self-inflicted wounds in her struggles to set herself free from the constraints imposed on her by her society. It becomes impossible for men to appreciate her battered body as a feminine body. Not only is she unable to secure the affections of her object of desire, but her potential for marital happiness is destroyed because she has become an undesirable woman with a tarnished reputation. Elinor has become so completely "unsex'd" that she cannot obtain the companionship she craves. The novel ends with Elinor alone. She is a solitary figure on the path of life, and she seems unreformed as she continues to see herself as a separate entity from "the common herd", still indulging in misanthropic musings.[67]

In secluding Elinor Joddrel from genteel society and depicting her disillusionment at the end, this final novel by Burney distances itself from radical fiction while it explores and adopts some of the progressive ideas about female conduct and women's freedom of expression. Elinor, who has actively tried to shape her destiny, is ultimately defeated. She has led herself to her downfall by her eccentricities. Elinor wishes to make herself a tragic heroine in the scenes directed by herself, but her suicidal designs are thwarted. She is also a tragic heroine who is prevented from death. Because her story does not end in the restful death she wanted for herself, the tragedy of her life is that her spirit has to be broken. But Elinor does

[67] Ibid., 873.

not demonstrate the regret and repentance of Opie's Agnes Fitzhenry or Adeline Mowbray. Elinor has to cling on to a hated existence and suffer the mortification of her disappointment. Her romantic desire remains unfulfilled, and the vision that she had for her life has not been realised. She is forced to accept that her rival has won the affections of the man they both wanted. Immediately after her lament that "even Elinor!" must find that "she has strayed from the beaten road, only to discover that all others are pathless", the narrator begins to conclude the narrative with the statement: "Here, and thus felicitously, ended […] the DIFFICULTIES of the WANDERER".[68] It is clear that the difficulties ended only for one of the two wanderers in the novel. At the conclusion of the novel, the anti-heroine is still in denial, believing that she is meant to lead an extraordinary life. It takes great courage to be different, but the risk she took has not paid off. The heroine is allowed a happy ending while the anti-heroine is reduced to misery and solitude because her way of thinking is not accepted by the man she loves or the rest of society. Though Elinor is not standing up for all women, she has paved the way for Juliet to wander with more freedom in her own search for liberty.

Ellis / Juliet Granville:

A Wandering Incognita's Achievement of Domestic Happiness

Juliet Granville begins her journey as a married woman. Her escape from a French commissary's marriage plot in order to preserve herself from his pursuit is reminiscent of Clarissa's elopement from home in an attempt to prevent her forced marriage to Solmes. Burney's heroine seems to be destined for misery as she

[68] Ibid., 873.

embarks on an adventure fraught with danger and female difficulties. However, this seemingly tragic figure is ultimately allowed to enjoy domestic felicity with the man of her choice, after she has endured a period of suffering and proved her moral integrity. When she is put under trials as a solitary wanderer, she tries to provide for herself and achieve independence through hard work. Though she has wandered away from the domestic sphere before her marriage, her virtuous character is not compromised and she does not become classified as a transgressive woman. Juliet has gone on an adventure and experienced life outside the domestic sphere but remains respectable, for her world of possibilities has been expanded by women such as Elinor. But ultimately, her story ends with marriage. She finds that it is the best option for women to find contentment in her society.

Burney characterised Juliet in a similar way to the heroines in her own dramatic tragedies. In her plays, women are often found in a dilemma in which their filial feelings are warring with their romantic inclinations. Geralda from *Hubert De Vere* is in love with the hero but she married Glanville in order to save her uncle's life, and she is reconciled with De Vere after her husband's death.[69] Adela from *The Siege of Pevensey* (1790-1791) also has to make the difficult decision to sacrifice herself to De Warrene for the sake of her father, but she is saved from this cruel fate and ultimately marries the man of her choice.[70] In Burney's final novel, Juliet has a similar experience. She was forced to marry a French commissary in order to save her guardian.[71] She shares with Burney's tragic heroines the characteristics of self-denial and sacrifice. Burney's fictional worlds reveal an understanding of

[69] *Hubert De Vere*, 129-130, 131-132.
[70] *The Siege of Pevensey*, 221-222, 228.
[71] *The Wanderer*, 740-745.

women as commodities for men. Their happiness was frequently traded for the benefit of men. But as I discussed in the previous chapter, the secondary heroine of *Camilla* has been rescued from lifelong misery by the end of the narrative. Eugenia Tyrold has to experience an unhappy marriage before she is united with her first love after her husband passed away. The earlier parts of the histories of Geralda and Eugenia might give the impression that they are martyr figures doomed to a melancholy fate, but Burney gives them a happy ending after they have earned their well-deserved happiness through patience and resignation to suffering. But unlike these female figures, Juliet takes on a more active role in creating a happier future for herself. Juliet refuses to submit to the will of the French commissary, runs away and wanders alone in an attempt to escape a life of misery.

Even though Juliet is characterised as a tragic heroine, and her escape from France seems to be an allusion to Clarissa's flight in Richardson's tragedy, she is given the happy ending of a sentimental comedy. In Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift; or, The Fool in Fashion* (1696), for instance, it takes years of patient, uncomplaining suffering before the virtuous heroine is rewarded. Amanda has been neglected by her wandering husband for almost a decade before he reforms and allows her to experience the joys of marriage.[72] I think that Burney takes this kind of story as a model when she constructs the plots of some of her fictional works. This can be seen in *Hubert De Vere*. Even though this play is classified as a tragedy by Burney, it is clear in the end that the heroine Geralda will be rewarded with

[72] Colley Cibber, *Love's Last Shift; or, the Fool in Fashion*, in *The Plays of Colley Cibber*, ed. Timothy J. Viator and William J. Burling (1696; Madison, Teaneck, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Associated University Presses, 2000), 46, 106-107.

felicity, despite having been misunderstood by the hero for many years, when the truth behind her first marriage is revealed to him.[73] Burney again uses this kind of plot as a framework for her final novel. In Cibber's play, the virtuous Amanda demeans herself to act the part of a courtesan in order to win back the wandering affections of her rakish husband.[74] Her performance is acceptable only because she does this for her husband and her sexuality is demonstrated privately to him. In *The Wanderer*, Juliet has to become an unwilling performer on the stage of life as Ellis, but her virtuous character is retained and she is rewarded for it after a period of patient suffering.

When she is undergoing her long period of trials, Juliet's namelessness connects her to the transgressive women found in earlier eighteenth-century fictional works. The understanding of her association with this character type is important for the full appreciation of the complexity of Juliet's characterisation. Juliet is treated by many characters in the novel with suspicion and distrust because she has resorted to disguise and concealment for self-preservation. She possesses the same ability as Daniel Defoe's resourceful anti-heroines from *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana* (1724) to reinvent herself repeatedly. She is introduced to readers as an Incognita.[75] This is an identity assumed by women such as the protagonist in Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina* (1724) and Flora Mellasin from *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751) in their amorous adventures. Furthermore, Ellis, the name she later adopts, is similar in function to names such as Moll Flanders and Roxana. She was named by a new acquaintance, in a way reminiscent

[73] Burney, *Hubert De Vere*, 124-132.
[74] Cibber, *Love's Last Shift*, 91-95.
[75] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 22.

of the incidents in which Defoe's Moll Flanders and Roxana are given another name, when they became notorious in their social circles.[76] Moll Flanders was named by her enemies when she became "too well known among the trade" as "the greatest artist of [her] time".[77] Defoe's other anti-heroine "had the Name of *Roxana* presently fixed upon" her because of the impression she made when she performed a dance in a Turkish dress.[78] These names are, therefore, an indication of their infamous reputation.

Ellis has become a stage name Juliet uses to conceal her identity and reinvent herself in her adventures. When Ellis considers the option "To wander again alone, to seek strange succour, new faces, and unknown haunts", it might remind readers of Defoe's anti-heroines, who are constantly giving themselves new identities when they are looking for fresh beginnings in new circumstances.[79] The livelihood of these transgressive women depends on their ability to constantly reinvent themselves to deceive others. In one instance of disguise in *Moll Flanders*, the protagonist confides in the reader: "I […] go quite out of my knowledge, and go by another name", and "drest me up in the habit of a widow, and call'd myself Mrs. *Flanders*".[80] She appears to have little emotional investment in her relationships and is unconcerned about the deception that she practices. While this narrative was presented as a cautionary tale, Defoe's work reveals the social reality of the

[76] Ibid., 81-83.
[77] Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*, ed. Paul A. Scanlon (1722; Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2005), 223.
[78] *Roxana, or, the Fortunate Mistress*, ed. Melissa M. Mowry (1724; Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2009), 195.
[79] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 363.
[80] Ibid., 94.

difficulties faced by women without financial security. Juliet's associations with these disreputable female figures are a threat to her genteel status.

In fiction, transgressive women are frequently depicted with characteristics of actresses. Because actresses were, as Nussbaum pointed out, powerful figures who were "among the first of their sex to achieve social mobility, cultural authority, and financial independence by virtue of their own efforts",[81] they became the perfect model – for writers exploring new possibilities for female conduct – from which to create female characters who could break free from conventions. Therefore, capitalising on the link between the actress and the prostitute, acting and disguise were made common features in fictional portrayals of transgressive women. Anti-heroines in fictions such as Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* are equipped with qualities of independence, resourcefulness and agency to behave against social expectations with less regard for public opinion. Transgressive women who possess these powerful characteristics function as advocates for gender equality in their works, exploring previously untrodden paths while demonstrating that women are talented and intelligent individuals.

Ellis is a reinvented figure of these disreputable women. Though she is associated with performance and disguises, her respectability is preserved. When the other characters are organising a private theatrical of John Vanbrugh and Colley Cibber's *The Provoked Husband; or, a Journey to London* (1728),[82] her performance in it is acceptable only because she is forced into it. Readers are told

[81] Nussbaum, *Rival Queens*, 7.
[82] John Vanbrugh, and Colley Cibber, *The Provoked Husband* (London: Arnold, 1975). It was a popular and successful play throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

that this activity is "repugnant […] to her inclinations and her sense of propriety".[83] Private theatricals were popular social rituals, especially since the second half of the eighteenth century.[84] Some of these events involved large numbers of people and had print publicity. Gillian Russell has pointed out that "the term private was understood to mean an occasion that was not open to the paying general public and therefore outside forms of regulation such as licensing and censorship that governed the commercial theatre".[85] Though the theatrical in *The Wanderer* is a small, private production, it is at this event that Juliet becomes known in the community. The play has been given some print publicity, as readers are told that Mrs. Maple instructs her servants to write "Lady Townly by Miss Ellis" on the playbills.[86] While private theatricals provided opportunities for many people to enjoy taking part in amateur acting, there were moral concerns related to these activities because some people believed that there was "potential for fashion and luxury to dissolve social distinctions", in allowing servants to act alongside those who were more socially privileged.[87] It was also believed that private theatricals could cause disruptions in families and communities, as there was "an association between private theatricals and adultery that was an eighteenth-century commonplace".[88] It is therefore understandable that Ellis finds it inappropriate to perform with a community of

[83] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 91.
[84] Gillian Russell, "Private Theatricals," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730–1830*, ed. Daniel O'Quinn and Jane Moody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 192; "Sarah Sophia Banks's Private Theatricals: Ephemera, Sociability, and the Archiving of Fashionable Life," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 27, no. 3 (2015); and Sybil Rosenfeld, *Temples of Thespis: Some Private Theatres and Theatricals in England and Wales, 1700–1820* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1978).
[85] Russell, "Private Theatricals," 192.
[86] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 91.
[87] Russell, "Private Theatricals," 195.
[88] Ibid., 201.

actors to whom she is unrelated, and especially with Harleigh as Lord Townly and herself as Lady Townly.

However, it is in being forced to participate in this private theatrical that Ellis discovers her talent for acting and is initiated into the community. When Ellis is not on stage, Elinor accuses her of using "delusory arts" to perform the kind of feminine behaviour that men prefer to see.[89] As a woman who is concerned about her reputation, Ellis is forced to act a part. Her usual pristine and proper image is a mask she protects herself with. However, when Ellis is on stage, she seems more comfortable, acting with "ease" as "a wholly new character" with "gay intelligence" and "lively variety".[90] Ellis has "studied the character" and given such an animated performance that "the play seemed soon to have no other object than Lady Townly".[91] The character Ellis portrays is more attractive than her proper and reserved self, which suggests that her true self might be more similar to the character she plays. It is when they are acting together that Harleigh becomes "enchanted" by Ellis.[92] But more significantly, as Russell has noted, "Private theatricals enabled women of the elite to define a public role for themselves without the stigma of involvement in the professional stage".[93] It is in her exhibition of her theatrical talents that Ellis attracts the notice of Lady Aurora Granville and Lord Melbury, who are unaware that Ellis is their half-sibling. Their admiration initially allows Ellis to establish herself in the community, enabling her to begin her career in private teaching.

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[89] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 796.
[90] Ibid., 94.
[91] Ibid., 94, 92.
[92] Ibid., 96.
[93] Russell, "Private Theatricals," 199.

The concealment of Juliet's identity allows her the freedom to take on roles that are not normally available to women of her background. It has allowed Ellis to expand her field of experience and explore new possibilities. But in contrast to the autonomous but dishonest women such as Moll Flanders and Roxana, Ellis tries to navigate the world as a working woman and make a living through respectable means. In the course of the narrative, she has brief careers working as a music teacher, a harp performer, a seamstress, a milliner, and a companion.[94] Because of this, by the end of the novel, she has "attained […] knowledge of the world", realising that "labours and hardships can be judged only from experience!"[95] One of the female difficulties she has to face is that she has not been brought up for employment. In Burney's day, the genteel "accomplishments" of a young lady were generally cultivated for the purpose of entertaining small circles of acquaintances and guests in private.[96] When Ellis is teaching young women to play the harp, she soon realises that her musical skills as an amateur performer do not qualify her to become a competent instructor. Even though she is able to play the instrument confidently, she understands that "all she knew upon the subject had been acquired as a *diletante*, not studied as an artist".[97] She finds that it requires "not alone brilliant talents, [...] but a fund of scientific knowledge" to give instruction.[98] Because of her social rank, Ellis' education has not prepared her for any trade.

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[94] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 275, 355-359, 92-96.
[95] Ibid., 456, 404.
[96] See for example, Alan Richardson, *Literature, Education, and Romanticism: Reading as Social Practice, 1780-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 79-80; Deirdre Raftery, *Women and Learning in English Writing, 1600-1900* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), 55.
[97] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 287-288.
[98] Ibid., 288.

In the long eighteenth century, women writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Hays and Hannah More wrote about the inadequacy of women's education and the need for change in order to allow women to become more useful citizens and better educators of their children.[99] Ellis considers the limited career choices she has because of her education when she exclaims:

> How few, […] how circumscribed, are the attainments of women! and how much fewer and more circumscribed still, are those which may, in their consequences, be useful as well as ornamental, to the higher, or educated class! those through which, in reverses of fortune, a FEMALE may reap benefit without abasement! those which, while preserving her from pecuniary distress, will not aggravate the hardships or sorrows of her changed condition, either

[99] See Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, in *Political Writings*, ed. Janet Todd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Mary Hays, *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women* (London: Printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-Yard; and J. Bell, Oxford-Street, 1798), iv; and Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*. *Vol. I* (London: printed for T. Cadell Jun. and W. Davies, 1799), 97-98. Wollstonecraft observes that "from the education, which [women] receive from society, the love of pleasure may be said to govern them all" and she argues that women should be educated as "rational creatures". Hays' *Appeal* is an "attempt to restore female character to its dignity and independence". In contrast, More also believes that female education should be reformed but she situates women in the domestic realm, arguing that "though a well bred young lady may lawfully learn most of the fashionable arts, yet it does not seem to be the true end of education to make women of *fashion dancers*, *singers*, *players*, *painters*, *actresses*, *sculptors*, *gilders*, *varnishers*, *engravers*, and *embroiderers*. Most *men* are commonly destined to some profession, and their minds are consequently turned each to its respective object. […] The profession of ladies, to which the bent of their instruction should be turned, is that of daughters, wives, mothers, and mistresses of families. They should be therefore trained with a view to these several conditions".

> by immediate humiliation, or by what, eventually, her connexions may consider as disgrace![100]

With few employable skills, the best option for genteelly educated women who have fallen from their privileged social stations is to take on the roles of governesses or teachers of music and fine art. But Ellis discovers that it is even more difficult for an unprotected woman without social connections to find employment. To procure pupils as a music teacher, Ellis must either have the recommendation of an influential individual or become a "public artist" in order to acquire fame.[101]

Ellis almost becomes a public performer when she finds herself driven by necessity to agree to perform at a subscription-concert. In one of the meetings, she learns that entertainers are not held in very high regard by those around her. Ellis remains silent when Miss Bydel remarks that "one should not pay folks who follow such light callings, as one pays people that are useful!", and expresses that she has more respect for butchers, bakers and tradesmen.[102] These comments show Ellis that her genteel accomplishments in music and fine art, cultivated with both time and effort, are seen only as frivolous and luxurious pastimes rather than practical skills. Even though Mr. Giles defends entertainers for the "pain and toil[,] labour, and […] difficulty" they put themselves through in order to amuse others to earn "a hard and fatiguing maintenance", Miss Bydel and all those who are present are unmoved by his speech.[103] It becomes clear to Ellis that the talents, effort and professionalism of public performers are not appreciated and respected.

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[100] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 289.
[101] Ibid., 284-287.
[102] Ibid., 323-324.
[103] Ibid., 325.

In the long eighteenth century, it was even more difficult for female performers to earn public respect. In *The Wanderer*, Ellis is reluctant to perform at the concert even though it is "held in private houses".[104] She is concerned that her relations "may resent any measures that may give publicity to [her] situation".[105] The remonstrances of Harleigh in their conversation and his subsequent letter represent to Ellis that it is unsuitable for her to appear on stage as a performer. When Harleigh tries to dissuade her from performing at the concert, he warns her of the danger of "deviating […] from the long-beaten track of female timidity".[106] He asks her to consider the impropriety of this "irremediable" step, and its effects on those to whom she is related and those to whom she might one day wish to be related.[107] He tells Ellis that, even as an independent man, he has to consider the "ties from which we are never emancipated; ties which cling to our nature, and which, though voluntary, are imperious, and cannot be broken or relinquished, without self-reproach; ties […] which, […] teach us what is due to our connexions".[108] Reminding her of her duty, Harleigh appeals to her to spare herself and her family from future embarrassment and disgrace by observing "the prejudices, the weaknesses of others", "the received notions of the world, the hitherto acknowledged boundaries of elegant life!"[109] When Ellis finds that even "so singularly liberal" a man such as Harleigh objects to her public performance, she realises that the opinions of others regarding her public appearance might be even

[104] Ibid., 296.
[105] Ibid., 304.
[106] Ibid., 343.
[107] Ibid., 336.
[108] Ibid., 339.
[109] Ibid., 343.

more severe.[110] She recognises that this single step might damage her reputation. Ellis never performs at the concert because her apprehensions cause her to faint on stage and the event is then disrupted by Elinor's appearance.

After this incident, when Ellis is re-evaluating her career options, she rejects the possibility of becoming a professional actress. She explains to Elinor that she is "satisfied with attempting any sort of public exhibition".[111] Ellis says, "Much as I am enchanted with the art, I am not going to profess it!"[112] She thinks that, because the stage is "so replete with dangers and improprieties", it is inappropriate for a woman to perform for money unless she is driven by necessity to do so.[113] Elinor expresses her disappointment that, even though her rival's "theatrical abilities" are "of the first cast", Ellis does not venture to make use of her talents when she says: "you blight them […] yourself, with anathemas, from excommunicating scruples […] and render them dangerous".[114] Elinor is frustrated that Ellis is burying her talents because she is unable to break free from social limitations, saying, "Oh woman! poor, subdued woman! thou art […] dependant, mentally, upon the arbitrary customs of man […] !"[115] Ellis decides to embark on a career path which would be considered proper for women. Although she is a gifted amateur artist, she abandons music and acting for professions that are more mundane, hoping to make use of "the useful and appropriate female accomplishment of needle-work" to make a living.[116]

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[110] Ibid., 338.
[111] Ibid., 400.
[112] Ibid., 398.
[113] Ibid., 398-399.
[114] Ibid., 288, 398.
[115] Ibid., 399.
[116] Ibid., 78.

Even in this more "appropriate" field of work, Ellis encounters various difficulties, and she soon learns that her hopes for independence and self-sufficiency are an elusive dream that cannot be realised. When she is working as a seamstress and then a milliner, Ellis is unable to support herself.[117] Ellis learns that "Every species of business […] required […] some capital to answer to its immediate calls, and some steady credit for encountering the unforeseen accidents, and unavoidable risks".[118] Not only is she constantly in debt, she realises that she cannot enjoy job security unless she binds herself to a milliner or mantua-maker for three years.[119] She is disappointed whenever it "seem[s] like an approach to the self-dependence, that she had so earnestly coveted".[120] Her experience illustrates how difficult it is for a woman without family and property to achieve financial independence through respectable means in the public realm.

The novel then explores the degradation of dependency Ellis experiences when she works in the household of a wealthy employer. Longing for security and a "safe and retired asylum", Ellis agrees to becoming a companion in the household of Mrs. Ireton, who abuses her power and delights in humiliating her.[121] Initially, Ellis has resigned herself to this state of servitude and tries to convince herself that "the exertion of talents in our own service can never in itself be vile. […] They who simply repay being sustained and protected, by a desire to please, a readiness to serve, a wish to instruct […] have [a] just […] claim to respect and consideration, for their services and their labours". It is this "simple, yet useful style of reasoning"

[117] Ibid., 401.
[118] Ibid., 425.
[119] Ibid., 455.
[120] Ibid., 451.
[121] Ibid., 288.

which serves to support her when she is feeling defeated, and she "blesse[s] her happy acquaintance with Mr Giles Arbe".[122] But ultimately, Ellis becomes disillusioned when she finds that her hard work would not earn her any respect, and she would remain known as a "toad-eater" because of her dependency.[123] When she again meets Mr. Giles at Mrs. Ireton's house, he disapproves of Ellis' occupation as "a very mean way of getting money", embarrassing her before company by comparing her to a slave, a machine and a parrot.[124] He reminds her that she "ought to hold up [her] head", for "Nobody is born to be trampled upon", because "we are all of us equal, rich and poor".[125] Insensitive though Giles Arbe may be, he has spoken up for her and expressed what she would not say for herself because of decorum and pride. He has also awakened Ellis' sense of indignity, in being the "humble companion" and "dependent" of a tyrannical woman.[126]

Throughout her career as a wanderer, Ellis encounters many individuals who are unsympathetic to her plight and she has never been paid fully for her labour. When Ellis is working as a music teacher, Giles Arbe takes it upon himself to become Ellis' representative and tries to collect payments from her pupils. He later tells Ellis that he asked her pupils, "if she owes you neither place, nor profit; neither pleasure, nor honour, I should be glad to know upon what pretence you lay claim to her Time, her Trouble, her Talents, and her Patience?"[127] But Ellis recognises this not simply as a problem faced by women like herself, but a universal problem

[122] Ibid., 490.
[123] Ibid., 484.
[124] Ibid., 521, 524.
[125] Ibid., 521, 522.
[126] Ibid., 477.
[127] Ibid., 300.

experienced by all those who labour, when she says: "O could such a question […] be put more at large for all the harassed industrious, to all the unfeeling indolent!––what reflections might it not excite! what injustice might it not obviate!"[128] Their difficulties stem from the lack of social sympathy and consideration shown by those who are socially privileged. Gillian Skinner has pointed out that "Juliet, as Lady Townly, gives a proleptic performance of a reformation in attitude that the very people watching her performance need themselves to learn, as their careless lack of interest in paying her what they owe later illustrates".[129] At the private theatrical, "All were moved, tears were shed from almost every eye" when Ellis appears as Lady Townly in the final act of *The Provoked Husband*, with a "state of […] mind accorded with distress", as she considers her uncertain future.[130] But most of these same individuals are unmoved by the true distress experienced by Ellis afterwards. The fictional world of *The Wanderer* is a hostile environment, where most people turn a blind eye to the sufferings of others.

Giles Arbe's vision of an ideal, utopian society, in which all human beings are equals, and in which everyone is given what one deserves and is respected for one's hard work, is worlds apart from the reality Ellis experiences. The novel shows that though Mr. Giles' principles are moral truths, they have no place in his society. In fact, readers are told by the narrator that "The attempt of Mr. Giles […] produced no effect, save that of occasioning his own exclusion".[131] Giles Arbe is compassionate and righteous, but he has little social awareness and his beliefs have

[128] Ibid.
[129] Gillian Skinner, "Professionalism, Performance and Private Theatricals in Frances Burney's *The Wanderer*," *Romanticism* 18, no. 3 (2012): 299.
[130] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 96.
[131] Ibid., 326.

little practical implications. In the society depicted in Burney's novel, Ellis' "melancholy wanderings" are unproductive.[132] The independence she is striving for is always out of reach. Ellis frequently finds that she has "the world to begin again; a new pursuit to fix upon; new recommendations to solicit; and a new dwelling to seek", and she is always left "in the same utter indigence as when she began her late attempt".[133] She is unable to find an occupation that would provide her with a sense of personal and creative fulfilment, and the work she has been able to support herself with for short periods of time has been "mechanical" "labour without interest".[134] But more importantly, Ellis is met with little social sympathy by most of the strangers she encounters, and she realises that she cannot support herself with dignity, self-respect or enjoyment.

Although Burney's novels are all explorations of female difficulties, *The Wanderer* shows the evolution in Burney's treatment of this theme since the publication of *Evelina*. *Female Difficulties* is the boldest and most radical of all of the subtitles of Burney's novels, and it might bring to mind titles such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman* and Mary Hays' *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799). Indeed, Juliet's experience bears certain similarities to that of Mary Raymond from Hays' work. While Mary is trying to protect herself from Osborne's persecutions after her rape, Juliet is trying to conceal herself from her illegitimate husband after her forced marriage to him. Alone and unprotected, Hays' and Burney's heroines both attempt to venture into various trades. In *The Victim of Prejudice*, Mary tries to make a living from illustrating, embroidery and copying,

[132] Ibid., 527.
[133] Ibid., 456, 276.
[134] Ibid., 275, 425.

and then explores the possibilities of working as a domestic servant and a companion. In *The Wanderer*, Ellis begins each employment opportunity with "the hope of self-dependence".[135] Mary similarly begins looking for work eagerly "anticipating the dignity of INDEPENDENCE" and "an active, useful life".[136] But the two heroines are both disappointed in their quests. Ellis and Mary both come to the same realisation that it is almost impossible for a woman without social connections, especially one whose reputation is rendered suspect, to navigate the world and make a comfortable living. Having experienced both rejection and exploitation, all their attempts are ultimately frustrated and their hopes to support themselves are disappointed. Unable to find even "the base means of subsistence" through industry, Mary becomes "a burthen to myself" and "The victim of a barbarous prejudice".[137] As I discussed in the first chapter, Hays' rewriting of *Clarissa* strips the ending of Richardson's narrative of the spiritual triumph which veils the reality of the victimised heroine's defeat. Mary is depicted as a tragic heroine who hopes that her story would "kindle in the heart of man, in behalf of my oppressed sex, the sacred claims of humanity and justice", as she is slowly wasting away.[138] *The Wanderer*, however, is not a melancholy tale. Ellis is rescued from penury and distress once her identity as Juliet Granville is reclaimed.

Juliet has learned through experience that female difficulties and prejudices are social realities, especially for wanderers. Her foil, Elinor, does not understand this. She suggests to Ellis that the solution to "FEMALE DIFFICULTIES" is simply

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[135] Ibid., 220.
[136] Hays, *The Victim of Prejudice*, ed. Eleanor Ty (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), 138, 159.
[137] Ibid., 141, 171, 174.
[138] Ibid., 174.

to act against the majority and strip herself of her gendered character and all social restrictions when she says: "Put aside your prejudices, and forget that you are a dawdling woman, to remember that you are an active human being and your FEMALE DIFFICULTIES will vanish into the vapour of which they are formed".[139] Because Elinor is in a socially privileged position, she has the financial independence to make the conscious decision to defy social expectations. Juliet, in contrast, has struggled to survive on her own for a large portion of the novel as Ellis, and she has experienced the reality of these female difficulties. She recognises that she must remain a respectable member of society if she wishes to find happiness or contentment. Margaret Doody has observed that "Elinor's major points about women's rights are never rebutted by any other character, and Ellis seems implicitly to agree with many of them".[140] While Ellis does indeed seem to agree with Elinor about the potentials of women, she also sees the validity of Harleigh's point of view that they are never independent of the invisible ties that bind them to other members of society and they must consider the prejudices of others. While Elinor positions herself against other members of her society, Ellis understands that independence is unachievable. This is shown when she exclaims: "how insufficient […] is a FEMALE to herself! How utterly dependant upon situation—connexions—circumstance! how nameless, how for ever fresh-springing are her DIFFICULTIES, when she would owe her existence to her own exertions!"[141] From her experience, Ellis learns that many circumstances are out of the control of a lone woman in

[139] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 397.
[140] Margaret Anne Doody, introduction to *The Wanderer, or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Margaret Anne Doody, Robert L. Mack and Peter Sabor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), xxx.
[141] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 275.

society. In her state of security, Elinor has not experienced the plight of unprotected women without financial resources. But for a woman such as Ellis, who has to work for her own bread and has experienced penury, it is clear that the ingrained beliefs and prejudices of society are not as easily surmountable as Elinor imagines.

Because of this recognition, Juliet wanders with more restraint; and consequently, she is able to find felicity in marriage after a harrowing journey. Chloe Wigston Smith suggests that "*The Wanderer* tries to develop alternatives to the marriage plot through Juliet's multiple attempts to support herself, but her many financial failures imply the impossibility of doing so".[142] After her venture into the public realm, Juliet finds that only in marriage would she be able to live with respectability, dignity and security. In *Clarissa*, the protagonist rebels against her family's marriage plot only to be drawn into Lovelace's intricate power plot. In Burney's novel, Juliet has traded the misery of a forced marriage for another set of problems and hardships. In the end, feeling exhausted in her wanderings, she chooses to submit to the novel's ultimate marriage plot. But it is an affectionate marriage. Harleigh is the most liberal-minded man Juliet has met. He is the only person who makes her feel respected and understood during the time that she is mistaken for "a pauper", "vagabond", "needy travelling adventurer", and "mere female fortune-hunter" by others.[143] Juliet realises that autonomy is impossible, and the ending to this narrative suggests that marriage was the safest option for women living in eighteenth-century England.

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[142] Chloe Wigston Smith, *Women, Work, and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 178.
[143] Burney, *The Wanderer*, 101, 75.

Juliet is not a tragic heroine or an anti-heroine. She is not a typical heroine at all. She is resourceful, and she shares the characteristics of actresses, transgressive women and anti-heroines. She is a cautious heroine who acts with "the chastened garb of moderation", but she is also an interesting character who is at once proper and defiant.[144] Though she does not reveal her thoughts or express her feelings openly, she is a woman with moral integrity. She presents herself as an apologetic and reluctant wanderer, who is forced to overstep boundaries of genteel femininity in order to support herself. For a large portion of the narrative, she is forced to navigate the world independently. After five volumes of adventures and a life as rich as a "female Robinson Crusoe", Juliet has proven her worth by remaining sexually and morally untainted.[145] Having experienced female difficulties as an impoverished, unprotected woman who has to wander about alone, Juliet is integrated back into genteel society. However, *The Wanderer* is not a novel that describes the success of an independent working women. Juliet has tried to make an honest living using her genteel accomplishments, but her attempt to establish her career is fraught with difficulties, indignities, mortification and degradation. Her labour does not earn her any respect from those around her, and she is exploited by most of the customers she has served and the employers she has worked for. But she has, nevertheless, learned through living an eventful life and enjoying the richness of experience. She is rewarded after all her trials and sufferings. She has earned peace through her hardships, having demonstrated her worthiness and

[144] Ibid., 861.
[145] Ibid., 873.

independence. As a result, she is allowed to enjoy the rest of her life in a state of financial security with a life partner she has chosen for herself.

As in her first novel, *Evelina*, the heroine of Burney's final published work is a long-lost heiress of an affluent family whose genteel identity is restored. At the end of the narrative, Juliet becomes named and domesticated once again. Her experience has taught her to appreciate her hard-earned security. Juliet is willing and content to confine herself in a small social circle, where her genteel accomplishments are enjoyed by few. After bringing about her affectionate marriage to a man she chose for herself, Juliet no longer has to reinvent herself after her identity is reclaimed and becomes fixed. She is allowed to live in domestic comfort, enjoying the contentment of a peaceful life and the dignity of being the mistress of her own home. Though the heroine's gifts and talents will become buried, and her marital happiness comes at the expense of her foil's, this wanderer has found contentment and achieved an ambivalently successful outcome.

Conclusion

I have argued that Frances Burney's fiction dramatizes the ways in which women make the most of their circumstances and resources to find peace, if not happiness, in a dignified manner in a society which restricts their freedom of choice and expression. I have shown in the preceding chapters of this study that, in her novels, Burney repeatedly alludes to Samuel Richardson's tragic plot but draws on theatrical conventions to structure the narratives so that they arrive at ambivalently successful conclusions. Before the novels draw to a close, her heroines and some of her secondary female characters experience peculiar circumstances and sometimes

sentimental crises which enable them temporarily to escape control and act for themselves, without seeming wilfully defiant, in order to change their lives for the better before they resign their agency once again.

In *The Wanderer*, Burney's final exploration of issues related to female difficulties, both the heroine and the anti-heroine make use of performance to test out the social boundaries and possibilities for women. Because of this, there is a blurring of the lines between acceptable and transgressive female behaviour in this novel. Even though they are both characters associated with tragic and transgressive female figures, the heroine achieves a felicitous outcome. It is only because Elinor functions as a foil for the heroine and helps to "tread down the barriers of custom and experience" that the respectability of the wandering Juliet could be preserved.[146] Elinor's stage presence is a diversion which makes Juliet's transgressions less glaringly obvious. Juliet is an acceptable heroine who seems to follow gender conventions even though she is a wanderer.[147] While the novel shows that female reserve is not natural or ideal, it also demonstrates through Elinor that radically different and unfamiliar female behaviour is self-destructive for the individual who performs it. Elinor is sacrificed because she is demanding changes in female behaviour that her society is not ready for. Though Harleigh finds Juliet's "icy, relentless silence!" frustrating, the eccentricities of Elinor make Juliet's modesty and reserve appear much more appealing in contrast.[148] While Burney's novel contains traces of radical ideas, and the heroine hovers dangerously between respectability and impropriety, the novelist managed to preserve a reputation of

[146] Ibid., 863.
[147] Ibid., 343.
[148] Ibid., 861, 796, 865.

respectability and morality in her day because her heroine is eventually domesticated. Juliet shows an understanding that a woman cannot overstep her boundaries too far if she were to retain a place for herself in her society.

Frances Burney's novels demonstrate that there are ways to approach the issue of gender equality in the long eighteenth century without radical reform. Drawing on the experiences of Clarissa but ending each narrative with the marriage of the heroine, Burney brought together the tragic and the comic to allow her novels to arrive at "a middle state" after her explorations of female difficulties and distress.[149] The ambivalent nature of her endings, which depict neither "misery" nor "*unhuman happiness*",[150] suggests that women should strive to find contentment in their society. The portrayal of Juliet Granville's journey to finding happiness is an exploration of a woman trying but failing to take complete control of her own life. In her portrayal of a wandering heroine who eventually returns to the domestic sphere, Burney shows that an affectionate marriage was the best option for an eighteenth-century woman.

While vocal women such as Elinor are admirable for their courage to make a claim for equal human rights as men, to express themselves and to earn their own living, Burney showed an awareness that there were women who wished to expand their field of experience without losing their respectability and becoming outcasts of their society. Instead of following the example of women who took on a more radical stance and trying to match their great strides to become champions for the female sex, the more cautious women retraced their footsteps with smaller steps

[149] Letter to Samuel Crisp, April 6, 1782. in *The Early Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney: Volume V, 1782-1783*, 43-44.
[150] Ibid., 43-44.

towards progressive change. In adopting the ideas of unconventional women about gender equality without embracing their scandalous life choices, these women attempted to stretch the boundaries set by their society little by little, rather than to try and overthrow the ingrained beliefs and customs all at once. Rather than shocking their society with outrageously unacceptable behaviour, they tried to take the initiative to shape their own destinies in a more gradual, acceptable way with smaller, more easily accepted changes. This agency to act for themselves was accompanied with apologies and excuses. Without abandoning their socially-constructed sexual character entirely, such women were allowed to live richer lives and become more assertive. In doing so, they could enjoy the fruits of their efforts to better the female condition, instead of sacrificing their own happiness, by initiating too sudden and radical a change, for the benefit of future generations.

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